

Student Handbook

2026-2027

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About Vista Meadows Academy

Vista Meadows Academy (VMA) is a co-ed community school offering a non-traditional educational setting. By non-traditional, we mean:

- Individualized instruction
- Extensive support
- Small class sizes
- Social-emotional skills
- Skills for academic effectiveness

Mission

Vista Meadows Academy's mission is to engage our students in a safe, innovative learning environment that will enable them to graduate and function as productive citizens of society.

Goals

The Vista Meadows Academy has a variety of goals:

- To create a learning community that helps students put meaning into their learning so they can succeed in college, have a quality life, know themselves well, and build positive and satisfying relationships with others.

- To teach students how to participate in making decisions that use different methods including comparison, systems, patterns and analytical thinking strategies.

- To encourage outstanding academic excellence for each of our students and recognize that academic success is only one factor shaping a well-rounded individual.

- To foster a strong work ethic through persistence and determination that is modeled and reinforced by adults.

- To create and maintain a positive learning environment for all students, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians and students must assume a responsible role in promoting behavior that enhances academic and social success. Courteous, respectful and responsible behavior fosters a positive climate for the learning community.

The Student Handbook sets forth student rights and responsibilities while at the Academy and Academy-related activities and the consequences for violating Academy rules. When determining the appropriate action to be taken as a consequence of student misconduct, School Leaders may use a variety of intervention strategies and/or disciplinary actions, depending upon the severity or repetition of misconduct; age and grade level of the student; circumstances surrounding the misconduct; impact of the student's misconduct on others in the school community; and any other relevant factors.

The Student Handbook will be administered uniformly and fairly, without partiality or discrimination. If you have any concerns or questions about the content of this Handbook, please contact the School Leader.

Academic Integrity

In order to foster a healthy and appropriate atmosphere for learning, Vista Meadows Academy (VMA) strives for its students to maintain certain standards of academic integrity. Students should use their own abilities to complete assignments and projects, unless instructed to work collaboratively with classmates or outside individuals. Plagiarism, cheating and dishonest behavior are not characteristic of a Vista Meadows student. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will be subject to academic consequences.

Academic dishonesty (cheating and plagiarism) is the willingly and knowingly copying or using the work of others to represent it as one's own and/or act of using books, notes, or other materials on an assessment without the knowledge or approval of the instructor. It is also considered cheating when one obtains copy of an assessment and/or assessment answers prior to taking an assessment with the intention or anticipation of using the information gained on the assessment. Consequences of cheating are the receipt of a zero grade on the assignment or assessment in question without the possibility of completing a make-up assignment or assessment.

Academic Probation

Students who fall below a 1.5 grade point average (GPA) or have a failing grade in any course in a single term or semester will be automatically placed on Academic Probation on a quarterly basis. Students will not be allowed to attend/participate in extracurricular activities/events when on Academic Probation. Determination for academic probation is completed at the end of each term and includes the term grade. When a semester has been completed, determination for Academic Probation is made using the semester grade. Mandatory tutoring and parent conference is required for students that are on Academic Probation. Failure to comply with the mandatory tutoring and the parent conference could result in removal it both conditions have not been met.

Behavior

Behavior Probation occurs when a student has demonstrated a persistent pattern of disruptive and/or disobedient behavior or as it is deemed necessary by the Administration. The student can be placed on behavior probation by the School Leader. Behavior probation is used as an intervention tool to correct student behavior and assist the student in remaining on the right track. Behavior probation may last as long as an entire semester, or the remainder of the school year. Student could be removed from the Academy if behavior is not corrected.

Alternative Credit Options

On-line programs

VMA students with 9 or more credits who are behind in credits may earn credit through our online program. In order to receive credit, the online program must be preapproved by the parent/guardian, the School Guidance Counselor and the School Leader. In addition, the student must achieve a grade of 70% or higher in the course.

Credit earned under this policy shall be based on a "pass" grade and shall not be included in a computation of grade point average for any purpose. Credit earned under this policy may be counted towards graduation, fulfillment of a requirement for a subject area course and fulfillment of a requirement as to course sequence.

Attendance/Absences/Tardy

It is very important that students arrive on time as well as attend school on a daily basis in order to fully maximize their learning and mastery of the core curriculum. There are many learning experiences that are provided in the school setting that cannot be replace through independent study. *In other words, school attendance is critical to successful school performance.* Developing habits of on-time, consistent attendance at school and work are important life lessons for our students.

School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Doors open at 7:30, if you arrive early be prepared to wait outside.

1. Parents must call the attendance phone line at (313) 240-4347, **before 8 a.m.,** if their student will be absent from school. The parent should state the student's full name and the reason for absence.

2. When a student is absent, Vista Meadows Academy requires a satisfactory explanation from the parent/guardian. A physician's verification of illness may be required when it is deemed necessary to confirm the reason for repeated or prolonged absence.

3. Classroom teachers will maintain daily attendance records for each of their assigned students. These records will then be reviewed by the School Administrator on a daily basis.

4. If any student is absent and notification has not been received, the parent/guardian will be contacted at home or at work to verify the student's whereabouts.

5. Tardy students must arrive at school no later than 9 a.m. Students must also arrive on time to each individual class. This is an important work and life skill that will enable our students to be successful at school and in the future. **A tardy is defined as being more than twenty (10) minutes late for class.**

6. The school will make contact with parents regarding any consecutive absences or attendance concerns for their students. When the parent is contacted, the importance of attendance will be discussed; as well as information will be sought about what the issues may be. In this way, we may be able to help the parent problem-solve (consider carpooling, other families that may be able to help as needed, etc.).

7. The School will **document** the day and time of every time contact was made with the parent, and a summary of the conversation for the record.

8. Students will be held **accountable for all work missed** during any absence. Excessive absences will prevent students from receiving credit in their classes for that term. If a student is absent on the due date of an assignment, the student must submit that assignment on the date that they return. A student has the same number of days to make up an assignment as they have been absent. For example, if a student is absent on Monday when an assignment is given. The student will receive the assignment when they return on Tuesday and must submit that completed assignment by Wednesday.

9. Although we strongly encourage families to take their family vacations during designated vacation breaks on the school calendar, we recognize that opportunities arise that necessitate a family trip during school time. In those situations, we ask parents to notify the school and teacher(s) of the trip at least one (1) week in advance of departure so that arrangements can be made to provide the student with suggestions and materials that are educational in content to extend the learning of the student, and to complete missed work, during their absence from school.

10. *Prearranged absences DO count towards the accumulation of these missed days. However, timely and specific communication by the parent to school personnel regarding the student's absences from school is very important and will be taken into consideration as to a decision regarding disciplinary action.*

11. Once each month, a **report** will be run to alert the school attendance officer of any student that has reached a benchmark number of absences and the corresponding actions will be taken:
    - @ 3 absences for a term = Send a letter & phone call
    - @ 5 absences for a term = Send second letter & parent meeting
    - @ 7 absences for a term = Send certified letter, parent meeting & attendance contract
    - @ 10 absences for a term = Contact truancy officer/appropriate government agency, Loss of credit or retention

12. The Academy will excuse any tardiness or absence related to a homeless student's living situation when applying any school policy regarding tardiness or absences.

13. **Appeal Process:** If the student/ parent wish to appeal this decision based on extenuating circumstances, that appeal must be submitted in writing to the School Administrator within two (2) days. Once received, the School Administrator will arrange a meeting to discuss the attendance issue. The School Administrator will contact the Leadership Team for input prior to that meeting. The administration reserves the right to use

discretion regarding this attendance policy. Every attempt will be made to ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all students.

14. If a student is absent a *total* of **ten (10) days** in a term, then the School Administrator will inform the parent that the student is being **dropped from the school due to lack of attendance**. A written notice to that effect will be sent to parents immediately. Any appeal must go through the process described above.

Truancy

Under Michigan's compulsory school attendance law, parents, guardians or others in charge of a child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) must send the child to school continuously and consecutively for the entire school year.

If the student excessive absenteeism from the Academy does not meet any of the exceptions stated by the law and the Academy administration has not been able to improve the student's attendance, the Academy shall notify the intermediate school district to start truancy proceedings according to the law.

This includes excessive tardiness, skipping class/school, and leaving school without permission.

Appeal Process

If the student, parent or guardian wishes to appeal this decision based on extenuating circumstances, that appeal must be submitted in writing to the School Leader within two days. Once received, the School Leader will arrange a meeting to discuss the attendance issue. If the student/parent is not satisfied with the School Leader's response, the student/parent has the right to appeal that decision by submitting a written appeal to the Superintendent within two days. The administration reserves the right to use discretion regarding this attendance policy. Every attempt will be made to ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all students.

Homebound Assistance

If a student needs homebound assistance, a plan should be designed by the parent/guardian, student, School Guidance Counselor and School leader. A physician, hospital, or treatment facility must provide written documentation that a student will be home bound with an illness or hospitalized for a period longer than five (5) consecutive school days.

A general education student must receive two 45 minute periods of instructional service per week. The Academy will provide this service within three (3) school days after being notified.

Student with an individualized education programs (IEP), instead of two 45 minute sessions, they shall receive a minimum of two (2) nonconsecutive hours of instruction per week. The two one hour sessions for a special education student may be on the same day, but there must be an adequate break between the sessions.

The Academy is responsible for the content of the instruction, providing textbooks and other materials related to the instruction, providing assignments and grading.

The student must make regular progress toward his/her credits during the term by the regular completion of assigned work. Any exception from the plan needs a written excuse from a medical professional. Failure to complete the homebound plan as agreed will result in the student losing credit and possibly being dropped from the Academy.

Check-In and Check-Out Procedures

All students are required to be checked-in before admittance into the buildings. The check-in procedure has been put in place to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Check-In

- Students must carry and display Academy ID to enter the Vista Maria campus.

- Students must enter through the designated door and follow Academy personnel directions for screening.
- Each student must allow staff to check all bags and purses brought to campus.
- **Cell phones and wireless communication devices are not allowed during the school day.**
- Each student must empty all pockets and may be required to take off shoes and momentarily loosen clothes upon request.
- Clear purses can be taken to class. Otherwise purses and book bags must stay in lockers.
- Each student must walk through the metal detector. If the metal detector is triggered, the student must step aside and cooperate with a second search.
- Each student must stay in sight of Academy personnel until check-in procedure is complete.
- Each student must go directly to his/her assigned area once the check-in procedure is complete.

Check-Out

- Once a student has recovered his/her valuables, he/she will exit the building. Students may not loiter in the building or on the Vista Maria campus.

Classroom Assignments

The School Guidance Counselor will assign each student to the appropriate classroom. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the School Guidance Counselor. Teachers are not allowed to re-assign students without administrative approval.

All traditional seated courses may also be held virtually. All virtual courses have two-way communication requirements and students must respond to teacher and/or mentor-initiated communications.

Closed Campus

The safety and security of students and staff is a primary concern. To assist in providing such conditions, the Vista Meadows will operate as a closed campus. Students shall remain on the school grounds from their time of arrival until classes are dismissed at the end of the school day. A student who leaves the school grounds without authorized permission or enters others buildings on the campus shall be considered truant.

Students are to remain on campus throughout the school day unless a parent/guardian has provided permission for a student to leave school for a specific need (i.e., doctor appointment, bereavement, work release) and this request has been approved by School Leader. For students under 18 years of age, the parent/guardian must sign-out.

Students over the age of 18, may be granted permission by the School Leader to leave campus early prior to dismissal. However, parents must be notified and frequent early dismissals shall be considered a matter of truancy.

College Planning and Preparation

What should my freshman student do to start preparing for college?

Vista Meadows Academy is dedicated to preparing al students for the rigors of a college level education. This journey begins during the freshman year as students complete their educational development plan that will guide them through choosing elective course in-line with their planned college field of study. The transition from middle school to high school can be difficult with the increased demand in study habits and course expectations. Below are some ways for your freshman to begin to preparing:

Freshman Year:

- Maintain good grades.
- Start building community service hours

- Participate in extra-curricular activities, clubs, athletics, Journey To Success (JTS) program
- Spend a minimum of 30 minutes of study and review time at home for every hour of instructional time in class. (approx. 180 minutes)
- Consider 7 possible choices for college and identify entrance requirements.

Sophomore Year:

- Continue to maintain good grades
- Continue building community service hours
- Participate in extra-curricular activities, clubs, athletics, Journey To Success (JTS) program
- Spend a minimum of 30 minutes of study and review time for at home for every hour of instructional time in class.
- Select 5 possible career choices.
- Consider 5 possible choices for college and identify entrance requirements.

Junior Year:

- Students will work with the counselor to be sure that selected courses and activities that will meet college entrance and post-secondary success requirements.
- Continue to maintain good grades
- Continue building community service hours
- Participate in extra-curricular activities, clubs, athletics, Journey To Success (JTS) program
- Narrow down college choices to 3. Decide if you want to stay close to home or attend college far away from home.
- Select 2 possible career choices.
- Contact your college choices to find out what each college has to offer.
- If possible, visit the schools your child is interested in to discover if a big college campus is okay or if a small campus would be more appropriate.
- Juniors will take the SAT in the spring.

Senior Year:

- Select your 1st choice for college attendance
- Make sure your college applications are completed by the college or university's priority deadline. This usually spans from November 1st through December 15th.
- Students should begin hearing from colleges or universities sometime in March/April. If you have applied to after the priority deadline your response will come later.
- Respond to all schools who accept you to save your spot and be prepared to pay any deposits.
- In January, complete FAFSA (Financial Aid applications) form to determine your eligibility for assistance with college tuition. Workshops will be held during the school year on this process.
- Continue to study until the end of your senior year to make sure you don't jeopardize your eligibility for graduation. (Your final grade count and many schools reserve the right to refuse admission if your final grade drops below a certain point.)
- Enjoy the end of the year festivities!

Complaint Policy

In order to preserve an environment based on courtesy, respect and responsibility, any requests, suggestions, or complaints concerning staff, curriculum, or operations of the Academy should be filed according to the following procedure:

1. Anyone wishing to present a request, suggestion or complaint shall discuss this matter with the instructor or staff member that has direct responsibility of the matter. If the discussion revolves around a particular incident, the complainant must initiate this process within seven (7) days of the incident.

2. If the issue deals with a violation of laws or with Academy-wide policies, the School Leader is the appropriate staff member.

3. If the School Leader is the accused perpetrator of harassment or other violation of law, then the complaint should be sent directly to CS Partners. However, if CS Partners determines that the issues/complaint do not fall into that category, then the complainant will be required to first address their issues/complaint with the School Leader. This procedure requires that the School Leader have an opportunity to resolve any issues/complaint that are not considered harassment or are illegal in nature prior to the involvement of CS Partners.

4. If the aggrieved person is not adequately satisfied with the results of that discussion, that person has seven (7) days to submit their complaint in writing to the School Leader.

5. The School Leader will conduct their own investigation of the incident by speaking to all relevant parties and try to resolve the issue through discussions with those people. After completion of that investigation, the School Leader will give a decision to the complainant and the reasons for that decision.

6. If the original discussion was with the School Leader, and the concern was not adequately resolved by the School Leader, then the complainant must submit their concern in writing to CS Partners' office using the CS Partners' complaint form no later than one month after the School Leader's decision is given to the complainant.

7. Upon receiving the written complaint, CS Partners shall investigate the incident/conduct. In determining whether the alleged conduct violates any policy or procedure, the totality of the circumstances will be investigated and reviewed. Appropriate action will then be taken. A response will be given to the complainant if requested.

8. Only signed, written complaints are investigated. Anonymous complaints are not.

9. If the complainant is not satisfied with CS Partners' response, the complainant may present the concerns before the Board of Directors in accordance with the Public Participation procedures.

10. Parents cannot request limited staff interaction when the situation warrants the staff member to be involved in his/her professional role.

11. In order to complete a full and fair investigation, CS Partners cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a complainant. Anyone utilizing this procedure will not suffer any form of reprisal. All claims of retaliation will be investigated. Any retaliatory activity may result in discipline, up to and including, discharge.

Completion of Assignments

To prepare our students for the 21st century workplace and meet the standards set forth by the state, we have structured the curriculum to best distribute the learning goals over the course of the year. Since course topics build upon each other, it is important for students to meet deadlines and turn in assignments and projects on time in order to stay on

track for graduation. In keeping with the goal of developing good study habits, students are responsible for their own learning and for obtaining from their teachers and making up missed assignments/work. Students are expected to complete all assignments in a timely manner. Students that frequently miss assignments or incomplete work may be subject to academic interventions and/or probation.

To increase student accountability and higher expectations, we will work towards helping students develop habits of persistence, management of impulsivity and internal motivation for accuracy. During this process, students will work on the development of study skills and attributes necessary to achieve this goal. Much of this instruction will be a part of the student Advisory class, successful completion of which is required.

Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The Academy's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly transient pest such as lice.

Specific communicable diseases include the following: diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, pink eye, measles, rubella COVID-19 and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will be for only the contagious period as specified in the Academy's administrative guidelines and with the guidance of the Health Department and CDC

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the Academy office if their child has contracted a communicable disease, e.g., mumps, rubella, pink eye, COVID-19, etc. The Academy is obligated to communicate to other families and students the possibility that they may have been exposed to a communicable disease. The Academy is required to notify the local health department when a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified at the Academy. In addition, the Academy is required to cooperate with the health department in implementing department protocols for screening students, including contact tracing.

Any child who contracts a contagious illness or infection must have written notification from the doctor indicating the student is safe to return to the classroom. This written notification must be submitted to the Academy office before the student can be readmitted to class.

Uniform Dress Code

VMA students distinguish themselves through positive achievement and conduct that contributes to the whole community. A school dress code allows students to focus on building knowledge and skills without concern for status or worry about protecting possessions, and does not distract from the learning environment. A school dress code also allows students to prepare for the professional world. The dress code will be checked by School Leader, Security, and Teaching staff at Vista Meadows Academy.

Details of the uniform are as follows:
Please note all items must be purchased from School Bells. Code S2577. Shoes, socks, belts & stockings may be purchased elsewhere.

<u>For Girls</u>:

- White Blouse with collar- short or long sleeve
- Black or white polo style shirt with VMA logo
- Black, gray, or Khaki school pants, black jeans **(No cargo pants, yoga pants, pants/jeans with holes, jeggings, tight fitting pants or leggings)**

- Plain black belt with pants
- Uniform skirt
- White or black knee socks, tights or stockings with skirt
- Casual/gym shoes
- No excessive jewelry
- Boots only allowed during snow months **(must wear pants outside of boots)**

For Boys:
- White shirt with collar- short or long sleeve (tie required black, green, grey
- Black or white polo style shirt with VMA logo
- Black, gray or Khaki school pants, black jeans **(No cargo pants, pants/jeans with holes)**
- Black belt
- All solid black casual/gym shoes

For all students:
- VMA logo black or gray cardigan sweaters **(No jackets w/zippers**)
- VMA logo black or grey v-neck sweaters vest
- VMA school issued hoodie

All students are expected to come to the Academy in the required dress code each day. The Academy takes a progressive consequence approach to dress code violations. Consequences may include:

- Stage 1 - notification to parent/guardian,
- Stage 2 - conference with the Administration,
- Stage 3 - student sent home

In addition, parents will have the option to take their children back home to change into the appropriate uniform. If the student does not return, this will be counted as an unexcused absence. Secondly, parents can also bring the student uniform to the Academy so that the child can change into the appropriate dress code attire. Any student that continues to violate the dress code will be suspended until parent conference can be held.

The Academy recognizes the importance of individually-held religious beliefs. The Academy will try to reasonably accommodate students' sincerely-held religious beliefs that are in conflict with this Dress Code Policy unless the reasonable accommodation would be detrimental to the educational process or cause any issues to the safety or welfare of others. Students requesting such reasonable accommodations should contact the School Leader. Any other students requesting reasonable accommodations to the Dress Code Policy should also contact the School Leader.

Casual Dress

There will be appointed "casual dress" days. On these special days, students will be allowed to wear jeans with VMA spirit wear (t-shirt, polo or hoodie) or their typical white collared shirt). Tennis shoes or athletics shoes (excluding flip-flops or shower shoes, crocks) are permitted but must be worn with socks. No pants with holes/tears or tight fitting pants will be permitted.

No hats of any kind may be worn in the building unless it is an activity centered on "Spirit week."

Inclement Weather Dress Policy

Uniform sweaters may be worn as inclement weather dress. It is suggested that one of these items be kept in the student's locker for cold days. Black boots are allowed to be worn to school during snow months. Once the student arrives to school, they must change into appropriate school shoes.

Emergency Information

It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that their child has the most up to date emergency contact information, including a secondary contact person, completed and filed in the Academy office. **A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.** If your daytime phone number changes anytime during the school year, please promptly notify the office. If an emergency occurs, we need current phone information to reach you as quickly as possible. Please inform secondary contacts that you have listed them on the emergency card and confirm that they are willing to accept responsibility for your child if necessary. If your child becomes ill or is injured during school hours, we will make every effort to contact you first.

The student's parents/guardians also must complete an emergency authorization form indicating their preference of hospital or doctor for emergency treatment. In the event of an emergency, the student should be taken to the nearest hospital to receive appropriate medical care, regardless of medical preference. Typically, the decision is made by emergency medical technicians or other first responder.

Enrollment Process

There is a designated time period for open enrollment in the Vista Meadows Academy. New families must enroll their students on or before the last day of the annual open enrollment period to insure their child's placement into Vista Meadows Academy (VMA) –OR – to ensure their child's placement on the waiting list if there are more students that want to enroll in VMA than there are available seats.

Prior to the open enrollment period each year, all current VMA students must re-enroll to attend VMA the next year. During this period, siblings of current students not previously enrolled are allowed to enroll when and where space/seats permit.

The open enrollment period is announced to the public each year. For more information about the annual open enrollment procedures at the Academy, please contact an administrative assistant in the school office.

New students under 18 years of age must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. Prior to enrolling, parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to participate in a guided tour of the VMA to obtain detailed information and ask questions. Upon acceptance, parents/guardians must provide copies of the following:

1. Completed application—*it is important to fill out your child's enrollment form very carefully with home and work phone numbers and to notify us of changes during the year*
2. Birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity within 30 days of notification
3. Transcripts from previous school
4. Current Health Appraisal form
5. Court papers, if appropriate, allocating parent/guardian rights and responsibilities, or custody
6. Copy of the driver's license of the person enrolling the student

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll in VMA. Such students will under the direction of the school's liaison for Homeless Children (the social worker) the regard to enrollment procedures.

No applicant for admission shall, on the basis of, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, sex, (including sexual orientation or gender identity or expression), pregnancy, mental or physical disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry or genetic information be discriminated against.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by a previous school may be denied admission to the VMA pending a review of the records. Prior to denying admission, the School Leader will facilitate a thorough review, including an opportunity for a discussion between the parent/guardian and the School Leader regarding the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other relevant factors.

Event Guidelines

All Academy policies and procedures are applicable to events. Students must be in attendance the day of the event. Students will be given information prior to each event on the expectations of dress, behavior, etc.

Events are a privilege, not a right. Students must follow the VMA's guidelines for the event, the specifics in School Handbook, and/or the directions of the chaperones and staff in attendance of the event. Failure to do so may require removal of student from event; student may not be permitted to attend future events; and/or possible suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of the infraction.

Fees

Students who want to participate in VMA sponsored extracurricular activities may be charged a participation fee. Activities are not limited to those listed below. Examples of extracurricular activities that may have a cost are:

- Events associated with senior year and/or graduation
- Homecoming
- Prom
- Dances
- Field Trips

Fees may also be associated with extended learning opportunities such as summer school or credit recovery programs. In addition, a deposit may be assessed per student for locks, parking badges, and textbooks.

Fines, Fees, & Other Charges

The Academy will assess a fine when Academy equipment, property or supplies are damaged, lost or not returned by a student. The fee will be reasonable and charged to compensate for the loss or damage incurred.

Unsettled accounts such as, but not limited to, lost books, computers and hot spots, library fines, unreturned items that are the property of the Academy, are due at the end of the school year. Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of official transcripts, diplomas, caps and gowns, parking passes, dance tickets, or other privileges, up to and including, participating in commencement ceremonies. Unresolved obligations can be appealed to the School Leader or designee.

Food Policy

Students will only be allowed to eat their lunch during designated lunch times in the Cafeteria or other assigned eating areas. Due to destructive nature of gum, no chewing gum is allowed. No food in lockers please.

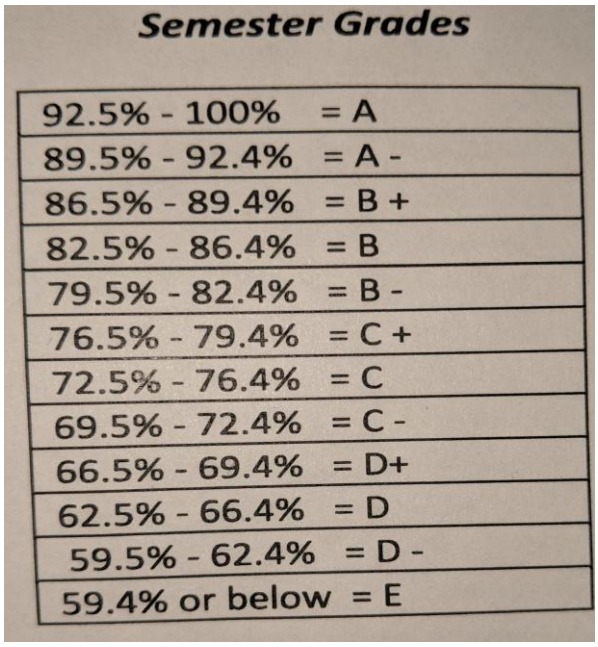
Students may not carry and/or eat food in class or in route to classes. At the discretion of teachers, light snacks will be served in classrooms. Glass bottles and open beverages are not allowed on campus. Absolutely no food or beverages will be allowed while using school technology.

Grading Policy

Grade Point Average

Each student's report card will indicate a grade point average for that term. VMA uses the 4-point grading system for all purposes. *A cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) for each student is computed only at the end of each term.* GPA is formulated by adding up the total number of points received, based on the percentage score received in the class, divided by the number of classes* taken. The following values have been assigned:

Point	Standards-Based Grade
4.0	4
3.0	3
2.0	2
0.00	0
---	Pass
---	Incomplete
---	Withdraw



Pass

The student receives a (P) pass grade when successfully completing the requirements for a given course. To earn a (P), the student must show mastery of 70% of the material or better. Successful completion of Life skills, Advisory, and Credit Recovery Course are identified by a (P). For the exception of Credit Recovery, courses scored with a (P) do not earn credit towards graduation.

Incompletes

When, in a teacher's opinion, illness or other valid reasons have interfered with the student's ability to meet class deadlines, an incomplete can be given rather than a grade. In such cases, each student will have three weeks to

complete the work. Failure to comply with this condition or make other administratively approved arrangements will result in a failing grade.

Withdrawal
A withdraw (W) may be assigned when a student is removed from the class roster or when a student withdraws from the academy between grading periods.

Honor Roll/Special Recognition
Honor status requires academic accomplishments supported by acceptable behavior in classes. All students with no negative comments in each class and who earn a *cumulative average of 3.0 points overall*, will be listed on the honor roll. The following list describes the types of honor and recognition a student could receive at VMA:

- Principal's List – Student's achieving a grade point average of 3.6 and above.
- Honor Roll List – Students achieving a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.59
- Valedictorian – Award given to a graduating senior that has the highest GPA over a 3.00, and has completed at least 51% of its credits at the academy.
- Salutatorian—Award given to a graduating senior that has the second highest GPA over a 3.00, and have completed at least 51% of its credits at the academy.
- Hall of Fame Award – Awarded to the students who have been with the academy all fours years.
- The Golden Wolf Award – Awarded to the student that exhibited the most school spirit through the planning, organizing, and implementing of school activities.

Recognition Assembly
Every semester the academy hosts an assembly recognizing student achievement, leadership, and effort. Nominees are determined and selected by Academy faculty/staff. Honor Roll is recognized during this assembly.

Semester Grades
For a student to receive a passing grade for the semester, he or she must demonstrate proficiency in at least 75% of the essential skills and core content identified in the course syllabus.

Progress Reports
At the discretion of parents/guardians or teacher, progress reports will be given. However, the academy encourages parents to access their child's grades and attendance through the PowerSchool parent portal. It is the obligation and duty of every parent/guardian to make sure that the Academy has the proper home/mailing address, telephone number, and email address, so that reports and correspondence is received in a timely manner.

Report Cards
The students will receive report cards at the conclusion of each quarter. Report cards will be mailed to parents. However, the academy encourages parents to access their child's grades and attendance through the PowerSchool parent portal. It is the obligation and duty of every parent/guardian to make sure that the Academy has the proper home/mailing address, telephone number, and email address, so that reports and correspondence is received in a timely manner.

Guidance and Counseling
The mission of the Vista Meadows Academy Guidance and Counseling Department is to enhance the educational process by providing support services that will foster academic achievement, social-emotional growth and career development, ensuring today's students become productive, contributors to society.

Guidance and Counseling services are:

- Individual/group counseling
- Academic counseling
- Career Counseling
- Educational Development Plans
- College Planning
- College Testing information
- Student scheduling
- Transcripts Requests

Individual/group counseling: Sessions may be scheduled with students to help them develop coping strategies related to academic success. Students will learn causes and personal triggers, appropriate ways to respond and helpful social problem-solving techniques.

Academic Counseling: Counselors will meet with students quarterly to discuss academic progress. Any concerns regarding grades, credits or grade classification will be discussed during this time. Individual academic counseling sessions require special permission and an advanced appointment with a pass from the counselor and the sending teacher.

Career Counseling: The Counseling Department has information on occupations for students to utilize in order to assist in their career planning. Each student will complete a High School Educational Development Plan (EDP) that assist the student in determining what career pathway they are interested in and what classes or future college selections will meet the pathway they selected.

College Testing Information: Testing information for major standardized test (ACT, SAT, PSAT) will be made available as needed.

Student Scheduling: All scheduling changes must be approved by the student's counselor, require a definite educational need and are dependent upon space available.

Transfer/Withdrawal Policy: Students must follow the same procedures as listed above for schedule changes. All withdrawal or transfers must be approved by the Counselor and the Building Administrator. All transfers must be completed by the end of first week of the semester.

Transcript Requests: Transcript request forms can be obtained from the Guidance and Counseling Office. Transcript request forms must be completed in it's entirely and signed by the Parent/ Guardian before they will be processed. The fee for transcript request is $3.00, the first will be provided free of charge. Please allow 5-10 school days for processing transcript requests. All official transcript requests will be mailed directly from Vista Meadows Academy.

Hall Passes

Students must have a signed pass whenever traveling the hall during instructional time. Students without official hall passes may be disciplined according to the Academy Code of Conduct. Hall passes are only issued 10 minutes after class begins and 10 minutes before class ends.

Homework Policy

The purpose of homework is to increase student learning. It is a direct link to increasing engagement in learning and improving student achievement.

- Teachers assign homework judiciously, deliberately, and moderately to build on student skills and knowledge.
- Homework results are used to influence instructional decisions.

- Incomplete work will become homework in the event that a student has not finished a project or assignment throughout the school day or has been absent from school.

Due Dates

All homework is due at the beginning of the class on the specified due date or it will not be accepted. It is the student's responsibility to request missed material and homework assignments. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide this to the student in a timely manner (within 24 hours).

If a student or parent/guardian provides at least 24 hour notice of an upcoming absence, the teacher will provide material.

If the absence is unexcused the teacher does not need to provide make up work.

In cases of suspension, when the student returns, the student must request missed work and the teacher has 24 hours to respond.

Immunizations

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waiver, School Leaders may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. A certified immunization waiver will be provided to the parent/guardian by the local health department to provide to the Academy. Immunization waivers will not be accepted by the Academy unless signed and stamped by the local health department.

Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to a staff member in the office.

A student who has not been vaccinated due to a waiver is considered susceptible to the disease or diseases for which the vaccination offers protection. That student will be subject to exclusion from the Academy if an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs according to guidelines set by the public health department.

Inclement Weather

Sweaters and vests with the school logo on them may be worn as inclement weather dress. Hoodies are not allowed to be worn inside of the building. It is suggested that one of these items be kept in the student's locker for cold days. Black boots are allowed to be worn to school during snow months. Once the student arrives to school, they must change into appropriate school shoes.

Injury and Illness

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members working at the Academy are familiar with emergency procedures including fire and tornado drills, lock-down procedures and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, he/she must notify any staff person immediately.

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If a minor injury occurs, the student will be attended to and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the staff will follow the Vista Meadows's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the school office. We will make every effort to contact you first. The School Leader or designee will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parent/guardian permission. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the student.

In the interest of your child's health and for the protection of other students, we will expect you to pick up your child if he or she has a fever, cough, rash, head lice, pink eye COVID-19 symptoms or similar symptoms. The *school office needs to be notified if your child is absent with a communicable disease*. In this case, please see the section *Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests*. If your child has been ill, be sure that he or she is fully recovered before returning to school.

When to keep your child home

We want to work together to assure that our children and their health are protected. Please keep your child home when they are sick. As a general guideline, a student should not return to school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours, not vomited in 24 hours and/or rashes have been addressed by the family's physician.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please call the attendance line at 313-240-4347 by 8:00 a.m. A call may be made to the parent/guardian in the case of unreported absence, so please let us know when your child will be absent.

COVID-19

Monitor your children for symptoms of COVID-19. If your child has one or more of the following symptoms, a fever greater than 100.4, a new or worsening cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, runny nose and/or congestion, body aches and/or tiredness, vomiting and/or diarrhea and a new loss of smell or taste, keep the student home from school and follow up with a primary care provider.

Students who become ill with symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day will be placed in an identified quarantine area with a surgical mask in place until they can be picked up. Symptomatic students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.

Network and Internet Acceptable Use

The Academy is committed to the effective use of technology to both enhance the quality of student learning and the efficiency of Academy operations. It also recognizes that safeguards have to be established to ensure that the Academy's investment in both hardware and software is achieving the benefits of technology and inhibiting negative side effects.

In order for anyone to use the local and wireless network, Internet connection and/or data and exchange servers, he/she must read these guidelines and sign the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Agreement. **The contract must also be signed by a parent or guardian.**

A user name and password will be issued to users upon receipt of a signed Agreement. Until then, network use will not be allowed. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. **Inappropriate behavior or violation of the acceptable use agreement may lead to penalties including the revocation of a user's account, disciplinary action (including suspension and/or expulsion) and/or legal action.**

Inappropriate Internet and network use is not limited to the following:

- using offensive or inappropriate language or language that would promote violence or hatred;
- revealing one's (or other's) personal address, phone number or credit card information;
- harassing anyone by sending uninvited communication;
- sending or accessing electronic information from accounts that do not belong to you without the owner's authorization;
- accessing unauthorized or inappropriate areas of the network and changing or interfering with information found in the network;
- accessing areas blocked by the Academy's firewall without authorization;
- soliciting or distributing e-mail for non-educational or non-business purposes;

- misrepresenting oneself or others;
- making unauthorized copies of software or information, such as software pirating;
- printing of materials excessively;
- downloading and/or installing unauthorized software, including games, on Academy computers without specific permission from Administration;
- accessing, uploading, downloading, distributing, or transmitting pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, or threatening material or other materials harmful to minors;
- Violating federal copyright laws or otherwise using the property of another individual or organization without permission (plagiarism). All work must be original work. Copy and pasted material may only be used as a resource when properly cited;
- unauthorized use of artificial intelligence tools (e.g. Chat GPT);
- violating any local, state or federal statute; and
- Accessing personal social networking sites, such as but not limited to Tik Tok, Discord, Reddit, Facebook, X f.k.a. Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, Google+, Instagram, Snap Chat, Tumblr, Pinterest, Vine, Yik Yak, VK, Linkedin and Flickr etc. without specific permission from the Administration.

The assignment of a password does not guarantee confidentiality. There is no expectation of privacy as to prevent examination or monitoring. The Academy reserves the right to examine all data stored in the machines and/or network (including e-mail) to make sure that all users are in compliance with these regulations. The Academy reserves the right to monitor or review Internet files, including web pages and usage logs. Any flash drive used at the Academy must also be free of any inappropriate content.

The Academy monitors the on-line activity of all users in an effort to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors.

Students are prohibited from participating in the transfer of inappropriate or illegal materials or material that may be considered treasonous or subversive through the Network and Internet connection. In some cases, the transfer of such material could result in legal action against a student.

Students, who happen to find materials that may be deemed inappropriate shall refrain from downloading this material, immediately leave the Internet site, shall not identify or share the location of this material, and will immediately report it to a teacher or the Administration. The transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal, and punishable by fine or jail sentence.

All computers, local and wireless network, Internet connection and/or data and exchange servers are the Academy's property and shall be used for educational and business purposes only. The computer hardware (monitors, terminals, keyboards, mice, etc.) are Academy property and any mistreatment or damage will be considered destruction of property or vandalism.

The Academy makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Academy and any of the sponsoring organizations shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the Internet connection.

The Academy strongly condemns the illegal distribution of software otherwise known as pirating. Software piracy is a Federal offense punishable by fine or imprisonment.

Students are prohibited from allowing other individuals to use their account or use other individuals' accounts for Network and Internet activities.

Through the use of the Internet, any actions taken by students reflect upon the Academy system as a whole. As such, all students are required to behave in an ethical and legal manner.

Users agree to accept all financial and legal liabilities that may result from the use of the Academy's Network and Internet connection. Users release and agree to hold the Academy, and all other sponsoring organizations related to the Internet connection, from any and all liability foreseeable or unforeseeable for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the use of the Internet connection. Users also agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Academy, its Board members, staff and agents from and against any such claims, demands, suits, damages, liability, costs, and expenses (including reasonable attorney fees) incurred as a consequence either directly or indirectly of the granting of this agreement.

Students will be subject to disciplinary actions if Academy technology and/or networks are abused in any way or used in an illegal or unethical manner. Any inappropriate use of the computer networks or violation of these guidelines by students will result in the loss of the privilege to use network and possible disciplinary action (including suspension and/or expulsion).

The Academy administration reserves the right to change these rules at any time.

Electronic and Wireless Communication Devices

Games, cameras and other electronic items are not allowed at the Academy unless express permission is given by the School Leader. "Wireless communications device" means an electronic device capable of, but not limited to, text messaging, voice communication, entertainment, navigation, accessing the internet, sending and receiving photos and videos, or producing email. Wireless communications devices do not include a basic telephone. WCDs include, but are not limited to the following: cellular phones, personal digital assistants (PDA's), e-readers, iPads, MP3 players, smart phones, Wi-Fi enabled access devices, video broadcasting devices, tablets, laptops and smart watches.

Students are prohibited from using a wireless communication device on school grounds during official school hours. "School grounds" means a building, playing field, or property used for Academy purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by the Academy. The Academy may implement additional restrictions regarding the use of WCDs.

Exemptions to this policy include:

a. Medically necessary devices.
b. District-owned devices, including, but not limited to, school-issued tablets and laptops.
c. Devices designated by the district to be used for instructional purposes.
d. Devices used for special education programming or devices provided as an accommodation to students as required under section 504 of title V of the rehabilitation act of 1973, 29 USC 794, or as part of an individualized education plan under title II of the Americans with disabilities act of 1990, 42 USC 12131 to 12165.
e. Lesson-specific academic assignments, at the limited and direct discretion of a classroom teacher.
f. Emergency situations, as described in an emergency operations plan. Use of a wireless communications device must not interfere with school emergency protocols or the actions of first responders, and must not endanger students or faculty.

The Academy may choose to provide or allow students to use WCD's, such as but not limited to e-readers and laptops, as part of their course work. The student and the student's parents or guardians must sign the Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs)/Cell Phone Acceptable Use Agreement and Network and Internet Acceptable Use If a personal WCD is used on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle or at any Academy–sponsored event, students must only use the Academy's filtered Network for data access (either wirelessly or through a direct connection).

Academy owned devices must be returned at the end of the school year and the student will be responsible for the replacement cost of any device damaged by the student.

If the Academy chooses to allow WCDs, a permission slip should be completed and on file at the Academy office. A WCD policy shall be distributed to all students outlining the restrictions on the use of WCDs unless they have obtained specific permission from an administrator in advance. Students who obtain the necessary permission to possess or use WCD's must have them silent and stowed during the normal school day. Cell phone use is only permitted before or after official school hours. ***If cell phones are visible or heard during the normal school day, the item will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be notified.*** The equipment will be returned to the parent/guardian only.

Possession of WCDs on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle or at any Academy–sponsored event shall be consent to the search of those devices.

The Academy assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage of a personal wireless communication device brought to Academy property, in an Academy vehicle, or at any Academy-sponsored activity or event, or the unauthorized use of such devices. Students bring these devices at their own risk. If a theft occurs, the user should contact a school administrator to make him/her aware of the situation so it will be handled the same way as any other theft. Damage or theft is the sole responsibility of the owner.

Students are prohibited from using WCD's to capture, record or transmit audio and/or video of any staff member, students or other person on Academy property without express prior permission from the teacher or Academy administrator.

WCDs, cameras, video cameras or any equipment that has video and/or camera capability may not be activated or used at any time in any Academy situation. WCDs, cameras, video cameras or any equipment that has video and/or camera capability may not be activated or used at any time in any Academy situation where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists. Pictures or videos taken in locker rooms or restrooms are strictly forbidden. Additionally, if any prohibited pictures or videos are taken and subsequently posted to the Internet, it will be considered an additional infraction. These students will be considered insubordinate and will be disciplined under the gross misdemeanors section of the Discipline Code of Conduct.

The Academy prohibits any electronic item from containing inappropriate material (as determined by the Administration) including offensive or inappropriate language, pictures or images; language that would promote violence or hatred; and sending, receiving or possessing sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate pictures or images, commonly knowing as "sexting."

Students are prohibited from using WCDs in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person the impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.

Students are prohibited from using WCDs to transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, academic dishonesty or violating the student code of conduct.

Possession of a WCD is a privilege, not a right. Violation of WCD Academy guidelines will result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. If the violation involves an illegal activity, the School Leader will refer the activity to law enforcement officials.

Any equipment found in violation of this policy will be confiscated and returned to a parent or legal guardian only; permission to use the network possibly permanently revoked; may result in student discipline action (including suspension and/or expulsion); and possible referral of the matter to law enforcement if there is a suspicion of illegal activity (e.g., child pornography).

All students must turn in their cell phones to the teacher at the beginning of each class period. Cell phones will be returned to students at the end of each class period.

Students refusing to relinquish their electronic device immediately upon request of a staff member will be considered insubordinate and will be disciplined according to handbook guidelines.

Confiscated phones, cameras, and/or electronic devices will be discarded if not picked up by a parent or legal guardian/guardian within 30 days. A notification of that disposal will be sent to the student's mailing address on file in the Academy Office prior to such disposal.

These prohibitions are in effect any time on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle, or at any Academy-sponsored activity or event.

Locker Assignments

Students will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the semester and are responsible for that space for the entire year. Students are not allowed to share lockers or their locker combinations with other students unless they have been told to do so by administrator (this situation may occur as a result of space limitations). The Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items that are kept in the locker.

All lockers, cubbies, and other storage places assigned to students are the property of the VMA. At no time does VMA relinquish its exclusive control of these storage places. Students have no expectation of privacy in lockers, cubbies or other Academy-supplied storage areas.

The School Leader or his/her designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the School Leaders or designee. The School Leader or designee may search lockers, locker contents, cubbies or other Academy-supplied storage areas at any time, without notice and without parent/guardian or student consent.

VMA staff assigns lockers, cubbies and other storage places to its students for the students' convenience and temporary use. Students are to use these storage areas exclusively to store Academy-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, purses, footwear, grooming aids or lunch.

Students are solely responsible for the locker, cubby or storage place assigned to them. Students shall not use these storage areas for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by VMA board policy or the School Leader or designee, in advance of the student bringing the items to VMA. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers, cubbies and other storage place. Students should not share these storage areas with other students, nor divulge locker combinations to other pupils, unless authorized by the School Leader or designee. The Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

All lockers are required to be emptied two days before the end of the school year. Any items left inside the lockers after that time will be disposed of at the discretion of the School Leader.

Medication and/or Treatment Policy

The Vista Meadows has a plan for handling medical emergencies in the office. The following definition of "medication" is adopted for use at the Vista Meadows: medication includes prescription, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved non-prescription medications, preparations, and/or remedies, and includes those that are taken by mouth, by inhaler, by injection, applied as drops to the eyes or nose or applied to the skin. This policy also applies to any medically-prescribed "treatments". "Treatment" refers both to the manner in which a medication is administered and to health care procedures which require special training.

VMA's policy was adopted with your child's safety in mind. If you have any questions concerning this medication policy, please contact Academy personnel at 313-240-4347.

The Academy does not support or encourage over the counter medication use during school hours.

Should your child require **prescription or over-the-counter (OTC)** medication during school hours, please consider:

- All medications *must* be turned into the Academy office by the student's parent/ guardian or responsible adult.
- No student will be permitted to carry or possess any type of medication on his/her person at any time (except inhalers).
- The parent/guardian must sign a *Parent/Guardian Medication Authorization Form* before any medication can be administered at school. (Contact VMA Administrative Assistant)
- Any *prescription medication will* ***require the physician/prescriber signature*** *on the Parent/Guardian Medication Authorization Form* as well as the parent/guardian signature AND copy of prescription.
- All unused medications not picked up by the parents/guardians by end of the school year will be destroyed.
- Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan are included under the policy and procedures that govern the administration of medications. Note: The policy and procedures do not violate either the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Parents/guardians are responsible to inform the Academy in writing of any medical issue that involves a medical action plan. Examples of medical issues may include, but are not limited to, life-threatening allergies (requiring the need for an epinephrine auto injector, i.e., EpiPen®), diabetes, epilepsy, seizures, asthma or any condition of a serious nature affecting the health of the student.
- The Academy, parents/guardians and student's physician will participate in developing a medical action plan.
- Students may possess and self-administer a metered dose or dry powder inhaler for relief of asthma, or before exercise to prevent onset of asthma symptoms, while at the Academy, on Academy-sponsored transportation, or at any Academy-sponsored activity, if the following conditions are met:
- There is written approval from the student's physician or other health care provider and the student's parent/guardian to possess and use the inhaler; and
- The School Leader or his/her designee has received a copy of the written approvals from the physician and the parent/guardian.
- These students should be instructed by their parents/guardians to notify their teacher each and every time they use their inhaler so that frequent use can be communicated to the parents/guardians. It is recommended that an extra inhaler be kept in the Academy Office.

- Students may use a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved over-the-counter topical substance at school, such as sun screen, if both of the following conditions are met:
    - If the student is a minor, the student has written approval to possess and use the FDA substance from his or her parent or legal guardian.
    - The School Leader has received a copy of the written approval.

Epinephrine Auto-Injectors

Michigan Law allows the Academy to maintain a supply (a minimum of two per school building) of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors to be used during emergency situations where a student, not previously diagnosed with known allergies, may suffer a life-threatening allergic reaction or anaphylaxis. Staff members working at the Academy are properly trained in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors in case of an emergency.

Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)

High School Graduation Requirements

The Michigan Merit Curriculum requires students entering 8th grade in 2006, to obtain a minimum of 16 credits for graduation, which could be met using alternative instructional delivery methods such as alternative course work, humanities course sequences, career and technology courses, industrial technology or vocational education courses, or through a combination of these programs. In addition, students entering the 3rd grade in 2006 (Class of 2016) will need to complete two credits of a language other than English in grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 prior to graduation. Also, students must complete and pass their senior portfolio presentation in order to graduate.

Department	Credits	Clarification
English	4.0	Students must take four courses of English.
Mathematics	4.0	Students must take four courses of math: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and one other math course. One of those must be taken senior year. Career Technical Education (CTE) programs which incorporate Algebra II benchmarks may fulfill Algebra II requirement. Algebra II can be taken over two years as an "A" and "B" course to fulfill the requirement.
Science	3.0	Biology and either Physics, Chemistry, or Agricultural Science for the second Science credit, and a third science credit which may be fulfilled with Computer Science or Career Technical Education (CTE). Physics may be used for a math requirement (but not also a science requirement).
Social Studies	3.0	Students must take Civics, Economics, World History and Geography, and U.S. History and Geography. AP credits can act as substitutes or additional elective credit.
Spanish/Foreign Language	2.0	Two years of the same foreign language are required for class of 2013 and beyond. Colleges recommend at least two years. Courses taken during K-12 fulfill this requirement.
Visual/Performing Arts	1.0	A least one year of visual arts, music, or vocal music
Physical Education/Health	1.0	0.5 credit for each is required: Extracurricular activities count toward 0.5 for Physical Education.
Personal Finance	.5	The .5 credit of personal finance must fulfill .5 credit of mathematics, visual/performing arts or language other than English. This credit may be fulfilled by a formal career and technical educational program. (The .5 credit in

		economics cannot be fulfilled by the completion of the .5 credit in personal finance)
Online Learning		Throughout the High School required course of study, students must use technology as part of a course, as the primary means, or as an integrated learning experience.

Personal Curriculum

The personal curriculum option, as defined by state law, provides a process to modify the specific requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum based on the individual needs of a student. If the request for a personal curriculum is made by the student's parent or legal guardian or, if the student is at least age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the Academy shall develop a personal curriculum for the student. A meeting with the student, at least one parent/guardian and a teacher or advisor will take place to develop the personal curriculum. The personal curriculum shall incorporate as much of the subject area content expectations of the Michigan Merit Curriculum; shall establish measurable goals; shall provide a method to evaluate these goals; and shall be aligned with the student's educational development plan. Once the personal curriculum is agreed upon by the parent or legal guardian and the Academy administration, it will take effect and will be reviewed quarterly. If a student is not making adequate progress under the personal curriculum, it may be revoked and the student and parent/guardian will be advised that the student may not earn a high school diploma. Students with disabilities are assisted in meeting these graduation requirements as appropriate and as specified in their Individualized Education Program ("IEP").

Evaluation Credits

In most cases, VMA will accept transfer credits. The description of the class must be aligned with VMA and state standards and requirements. The guidance counselor will evaluate the credits in question and make a decision.

Students currently enrolled in VMA must receive advanced written permission from the Counselor before enrolling in any institution other than VMA for classes or courses for credit. Summer school, night school, and/or virtual high school classes require written permission. Only two core classes may be taken at night school for credit toward graduation.

Class Ranking

Class ranking is based on the number of credits a student has earned within the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC). The number of credit hours earned (as listed below) by a student determines their eligibility for class standing and graduation.

Freshman – 0 to 4.5 credits
Sophomore – 5 to 9 credits
Junior – 9.5 to 13.5 credits
Senior – 14 to 18 or more credits

College Admission Requirements and Planning

It is recommended that applicants to competitive colleges successfully complete the following high school program:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of mathematics
- 4 years of history
- 4 years of science
- 2 years (minimum) of foreign language.

Testing

All juniors will automatically take the SAT in the spring. Students may opt to take the ACT at their own expense by registering in advance online and by testing at one of several local high school test centers. All students will participate in the online NWEA academic computerized testing to determine college-readiness.

The Guidance Counselor will provide additional testing information for all students. Students and parents should schedule an appointment with their Guidance Counselor for further information on testing services, opportunities for financial aid and college entrance procedures.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment permits an eligible high school student to take a college class while still enrolled in high school. The college class may be taken for high school credit, college credit or both. The law that governs the dual enrollment program provides that a portion of the cost may be paid for by the Vista Meadows. It does not cover fees for books, transportation, parking costs or activity fees.

Eligible classes at college are generally in academic areas where the student has exhausted the high school curriculum or the class is not offered by the high school. The School Leaders must approve all dual-enrollment courses before the student registers. The student must register through the college's admissions office.

If the student does not complete the eligible course (including dual enrollment and CTE classes) or, if the student enrolls in the eligible course for postsecondary credit only and the student does not successfully complete the eligible course (including dual enrollment and CTE classes), and if the Academy has paid money for the course on behalf of the student, the eligible student shall repay to the Academy any funds that were expended by the Academy for the course that are not refunded by the postsecondary institution to the school. If the eligible student does not refund the money, the school may impose sanctions against the eligible student such as those outlined in the "Fines, Fees, and Other Charges" section of this handbook.

For additional information, please see the School Guidance Counselor.

On Line Courses

Students may take courses online through MI Virtual High School (http://www.mivhs.org/). A student may take up to two classes on line per semester. If the student is successful, then make take more than two classes on line if the Academy and the parents/guardians feel it is in the student's best interest. The Academy may reduce the student's schedule to accommodate on line classes. Students who choose this option must still meet graduation requirements and all requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The Academy only recognizes online courses from Michigan Virtual High School for credit while the student is enrolled full time at the Academy. If interested in taking an online course, please see the School Leader or guidance counselor for further details. There may be costs associated with choosing this option.

The Academy has the right to deny an online class as an option for a student for the eleven approved specific reasons for denial, including: 1) The student has previously gained the credits provided from the completion of the online course; 2) The online course is not capable of generating academic credit; 3) The online course is inconsistent with the remaining graduation requirements or career interests of the student; 4) The pupil has not completed the prerequisite coursework for the requested virtual course or has not demonstrated proficiency in the prerequisite course content. 5) The pupil has failed a previous virtual course in the same subject during the two most recent academic years; 6) The online course is of insufficient quality or rigor; 7) The cost of the virtual course exceeds the amount allocated to a course unless the pupil or the pupil's parent or legal guardian agrees to pay the cost that exceeds that amount; 8) The course enrollment request doesn't occur within the same timelines established by the district for enrollment and schedule changes for regular courses: 9)The request for a virtual course enrollment was not made in the academic term, semester, trimester, or summer preceding the enrollment. *This does not apply to a request made by a pupil who is*

newly enrolled in the Academy; (10) *The* course has reached capacity and the district has restricted enrollment to resident applicants; (11) The district does not support the enrollment in more than two (2) virtual courses in an academic term, semester, or trimester.

If the Academy denies a student enrollment because the online course is of insufficient quality or rigor, the district shall make a reasonable effort to assist the student to find an alternative online course in the same or similar subject that is of acceptable rigor and quality.

If an online class has met the approval requirements, then the costs for the online class will be paid by the Academy. If the cost of the classes exceeds the maximum amount the Academy is required to pay, the parents /guardians shall pay the extra cost. Upon successful completion of an online class; students must provide the Academy with a certificate of completion stating the final overall grade as well as the name of the Michigan certified instructor. The credit for the online class will show up on the student's transcript as a transfer credit (TC) without an actual grade and will not be calculated into the overall grade point average.

Credit Recovery Program and Policy

Vista Meadows Academy (VMA) offers free credit recovery for its students. Our academy understands that many students face challenges while trying to meet the demands from home, society, and the inherent rigor in the Michigan merit Curriculum. Therefore, we offer our student free credit recovery for students who qualify.

Credit recovery classes for students that are deficient in credits. Credit earned in this program may be counted towards graduation, fulfillment of a requirement for a subject area course and fulfillment of a requirement as to a course sequence.

APEX is the name of the online program used to offer credit recovery. Some of the features of the program are:

- The program is web-based which means the student can login to the program whenever they have access to a computer with Internet access.
- The student can access more than one subject.
- The program automatically gives feedback on performance.

Program Eligibility Requirements

- **Students must complete the courses with at least 70% mastery.**
- Must maintain a 2.5 grade point average in other classes
- Students can only take one credit recovery class at a time.

*Any student that receives a "NC-No Credit" grade for any classes previously taken at VMA is ineligible for free credit recovery. The academy reserves the right to offer credit recovery at nominal fee for students who don't meet the eligibility requirements for free credit recovery.

Parent Conduct

VMA understands that your child's education and well-being is your top priority. However, it is imperative that we maintain respect, order, safety on campus. We ask our parents to work with us to achieve this goal.

If you find yourself in a situation with a teacher, staff person, student, another parent, administrator or even your own child, please be mindful of your surroundings and remain calm and respectful at all times while on Academy premises/at an Academy related event.

Any display of inappropriate, disruptive, disrespectful, violent, verbally abusive conduct towards those mentioned above may lead to the Academy taking corrective action. This action may include, but is not limited to:

- Imposing particular rules and procedures the parent must follow when interacting with Academy personnel and students;
- Restricting the parents access to campus or main office premises
- Terminating the parent's access to campus or main office premises
- Taking legal action against parent
- Other action as deemed necessary

This also includes parent conduct in all discipline meetings, special programs, after-school activities (on and off site), Board meetings, etc.

Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences

VMA staff schedules at least three parent/guardian-teacher conferences per year. The Vista Meadows staff welcomes the opportunity to conference with parents/guardians as the need may arise. Parents/ guardians are encouraged to access this open and proactive line of communication.

Parent Portal

At Vista Meadows Academy, we are striving to increase our partnership with parent and guardians in the way, that will improve how we work together to support student academic success. Thus, we are launching the PowerSchool Parent Access. This computer data system will allow you to see important Academy information as it relates directly to your child. You will be able to see their grades, classroom assignments, and daily attendance.

To use this great communication tool, go to the PowerSchool Parent Access Website:
https://ps.cbfacademy.com/public/

It is simple to use. For example, once you log in to see Attendance, click on "Grade and Attendance," to view Attendance History, click on "Attendance History." If at any time you see a blue highlighted link, you can click on the blue text to find out more.

Parents will receive a letter in the fall with their specific login ID.

Photograph and Publicity Release Form

At the beginning of each school year, families are required to complete a *Photograph and Publicity Release Form* for their family to grant consent to the Academy to use the student's name, likeness, image, voice, and/or appearance as may be embodied in pictures, photos, video recordings, audiotapes, digital images.

Safety Drills

The Academy complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire, tornado and lockdown drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt and orderly evacuation of the building.

During practice lockdown drills, entering and exiting the buildings will be restricted for approximately 15 minutes.

During an actual situation, visitors will not be allowed entry on campus until it has been determined that the situation is under control. Situations may include external concerns such as hazardous material spills and police situations.

School Closing

If VMA are closed for inclement weather, the decision will be made by 6:00 a.m. It will be posted on the Academy website, accessed from www.vistameadowspsa.com, and broadcast on the following television stations after that time:

- WWJ 950 AM
- WDIV (channel 4) out of Detroit
- www.clickondetroit.com
- www.freep.com

If it becomes necessary to close school early, parents/guardians will be notified.

School Hours

Classes begin promptly at 8:00am; door open at 7:30 am –if you arrive early, be prepared to wait outside.

Vista Meadows Academy is located in the secured campus shared with Vista Maria. Car Tags are required for entrance onto campus (these can be obtained through the main office.) Carpool drop off is at the traffic turnaround next to the gymnasium. Parent/guardian should remain until their child has entered the Academy building. Vehicles are not allowed to drive through the campus to exit the grounds. Vehicles must use the turnaround and exit by the same route they entered. All students must enter the Academy through the center doors. All other doors will be locked and will only allow exit from the building. Students may not enter any other building on campus.

Carpool pick up is from 2:45- 3:00 p.m. on full days, (except Wednesday when it is 2:00-2:15). Students may not remain on campus before or after school hours unless they are participating in official Academy-sponsored activities, JTS or have permission to be on campus.

School Reach (Voice Messaging System)

In our effort to improve communication between parents and school, on February 1, 2012 the Village of Hope Academies implemented a telephone broadcast system that will enable Academy personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start. The service may also be used from time-to-time to communicate general announcements or reminders. This service is provided by School Reach, a company specializing in school-to-parent communications.

VMA will continue to report Academy closings due to snow or weather on the local radio & TV stations and will use this system as an overlay to the public announcements.

When used, the service will call all phone numbers in our selected parent contact lists and will deliver a recorded message from an Academy administrator. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answers (phones ringing over 40 sec.) and busy signals will be automatically retried twice in fifteen minute intervals after the initial call.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

1. This requires NO registration by the parent on the School Reach website.
2. All information and contact numbers are strictly secure and confidential and are only used for the purposes described herein.

Here is some specific information you should know:

- Caller ID: The Call ID will display 313-240-4347 which is the main number for Village of Hope number for Village of Hope Academies.

Live Answers: There is a short pause at the beginning of the message, usually a few seconds. Answer your phone as you normally would; "hello" and hold for the message to begin. Multiple "hellos" will delay the message. Inform all family members who may answer your phone of this process.

- Answering Machines: The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The phone will ring for up to 40 seconds. Make sure that your machine answers after four rings or you may miss the message.

- Message Repeat: At the end of the message you will be prompted to 'press any key' to hear the message again. This is very helpful when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then 'repeat' the message in its entirety.

- Attendance: If your school is using School Reach for daily attendance, you will be notified each day that your child misses a required number of classes. To minimize these calls, make sure to inform the school when you know your child will miss classes on a given day.

Student Code of Conduct

VMA's emphasis is on preventing discipline issues through integrating an effective Social-Emotional Learning component by teaching students' self-regulation skills and social skills that can help them control their emotions, make more responsible choices, and get along with others. It recognizes that we do not have the ability to change our student's daily challenges that they experience outside our walls. The ultimate goal of all discipline is to shape the student's behavior, allowing them to develop self-control and make appropriate decisions that ultimately will enhance success in the community. To this end, a "one size fits all" discipline system does not effectively address the depth and breadth of our student population.

Schoolwide Behavior Expectations

Classroom	Hallway	Bathroom	Main Office	Activities	Lunch/breakfast	Arrival/Dismissal
• Help our classmates • Share materials • Be on-time and prepared • Raise your hand for permission • Follow all directions the first time given • Use kind words and manners	• Use "inside" voice • Be on time • Follow directions the first time given • Use hall passes appropriately • Use kind words and manners • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself	• Keep it clean • Report all issues • Use materials appropriately • Flush Toilets • Wash hands • Honor privacy	• Enter quietly • Greet office staff • Ask for permission • Follow directions the first time given • Use kind words and manners	• Obey "quiet" prompt • Give undivided attention • Ask for permission • Follow directions the first time given • Use kind words and manners • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself	• Obey "quiet" prompt • Throw away all trash • Reports all issues • Raise your hand for permission • Follow directions the first time given • Use kind words and manners • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself	• Enter/Exit school quietly • Remove hats and hoods • Report all issues • Follow all directions the first time given • Display parking pass • Display I.D student badge • Use kind words and manners • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself

As a Michigan public school academy, VMA is required to follow laws relating to safe schools. The Board of Directors at VMA endeavors to ensure that the VMA campus is a safe place for teaching, learning and working.

Physical and/or verbal assaults committed by a student against Academy personnel and/or other student(s) are not tolerated. Student possession of any dangerous weapons or use of any object as a weapon is not tolerated.
The Academy will take swift and appropriate disciplinary action for a violation of any of the infractions listed in the student handbook or inappropriate behavior where notice has been provided.

The Academy will take swift and appropriate disciplinary action for a violation of any of the infractions listed in the student handbook or inappropriate behavior where notice has been provided. All Academy rules will be enforced while on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle, at all Academy activities, and at any other Academy-sponsored activity or event, whether or not it is held on Academy premises.

Additionally, the Academy reserves the right to discipline students for off campus behavior that has a nexus to and/or directly impacts the operation, order, discipline or general safety and welfare of the Academy.

Violations of any of the infractions listed, including violations of the wireless communications devices and network and Internet use policies may result in an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of the offense and the requirement of the law.

The Academy will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 when disciplining students with disabilities.

Progressive Discipline

The VMA Academy School Leaders use progressive discipline to determine the severity of the consequences for the student. Progressive discipline involves increasing the severity of the penalty each time the student displays inappropriate conduct. This process is intended to correct the behavior of the student, not to punish the student.

The investigator will take into account all of the circumstances surrounding the incident, including but not limited to:

- the nature, severity and frequency of the misconduct
- the student's age,
- the student's disciplinary record
- whether the student has a disability
- development and maturity of the students involved
- whether the violation or behavior threatened the safety of any other student or staff
- whether a lesser intervention would address the violation or behavior
- whether restorative practices will be used
- the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

Restorative practices shall be considered as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion.

Disciplinary Measures

Violations of any of the infractions listed will result in referral/detention, teacher suspension, in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term suspension) or expulsion depending on the severity of the offense and the requirement of the law.

VMA recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's constitutional rights, particularly when subject to the VMA's disciplinary procedures. All students suspended and/or expelled will be provided notice and an opportunity to be heard in accordance with a student's due process rights under the law.

Except when emergency removal is warranted, a student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and the opportunity to respond prior to the implementation of a suspension. When emergency removal has been implemented, notice and opportunity to respond will occur as soon as reasonably possible.

Referral

Students may be referred to an administrator, counselor, and dean of students or be assigned an after-school detention for an infraction of a classroom or Academy rule that is not serious enough to warrant a suspension or expulsion. Students who receive a referral may be sent to the office for intervention. Interventions may include, but may not be limited to, a phone call to parent, student conference, after-school detention, etc.

After-school Detention/In-school Suspension

Students can be issued an after-school detention which is scheduled on a predetermined day of the week. Usually the detention will begin at least 5min after school has ended for the day and will last approximately 45 minutes.

In-school suspensions are issued for other infractions that are more severe in nature, but may not necessarily warrant an out-of-school suspension. During an in-school suspension, students are allowed to report to school. However, they are not to report to their regularly scheduled class. Students who are issued an in-school suspension must report to the main office. The School Leader, or designee, will assign the students to the class that they will serve the in-school suspension.

In-school suspensions begin at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. During the in-school suspension, students will not be allowed to perform their regular routine such as, go to locker(s), share lunch with classmates, etc. Students will be confined to one room for the entire day. Students will not be allowed to complete class assignments. However, they will be completing task assigned by the In-School Suspension coordinator.

Teacher Suspension

A teacher may suspend a student from class or an activity for conduct that disrupts the educational process. The student may be suspended for up to one (1) full school day. The student will be removed from the classroom or activity and will return to the classroom only with the concurrence of the teacher and the School Leader. The teacher must report the suspension and the reason for the suspension to the School Leader.

As soon as possible after the suspension, the teacher will meet with the parents/guardians. If practicable, a school counselor, psychologist or social worker also will attend the conference. The School Leader will attend if the teacher or parents/guardians request it.

If the suspension results in a short-term suspension, long-term suspension and/or expulsion, then due process must be ensured and a hearing must be held by the School Leader or his/her designee according to the suspension and expulsion guidelines below.

Out of School Suspensions

A student who is placed on out of school suspension will be the responsibility of the parents or guardians during the course of the suspension. The student who is placed on out-of-school suspension will be the responsibility of the parents or guardians during the course of the suspension. Parent/guardian will be notified of the out-of-school suspension as soon as possible. The School Leader will contact and offer to meet with the parent/guardian and student to discuss the reason(s) for the suspension within 24 hours of the incident. Suspensions will be served immediately following parental notification. The School Leader initiates the suspension/expulsion process, determines the Lead Investigator and is responsible for all paper work.

If the student has an IEP or 504 plan, contact the Special Education Director at CS Partners if the student has eight (8) or more cumulative days of suspension in the current school year.

During a suspension or expulsion, a student is not allowed on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle or to participate in or attend any before or after school activities (including, but not limited to the student's attendance as a spectator, participation in sport activities, or weekend activities occurring during the suspension/expulsion).

The student will be allowed on campus once the suspension has been completed and/or the student has met with the School Leader or his/her designee.

A short-term suspension is defined as the denial to a student of the right to attend classes and any Academy function or event for up to ten (10) days.

For suspensions of ten (10) school days or less, the student will be provided:

- Oral or written notice of the charges
- Length of the suspension
- An opportunity to be heard
- Parent notification

A long-term suspension is defined as the denial to a student of the right to attend classes and any Academy function or event for 11-59 school days, but less than an expulsion. To ensure due process, expulsion procedures will be used for long-term suspensions.

An expulsion is defined as the denial to a student of the right to attend classes and any Academy functions for 60 or more school days, but can be permanent. Expulsions can occur as a result of severe cases of inappropriate behavior, repeated violation of Academy policies, and/or as required by law.

For suspensions of more than ten (10) school days and expulsions, the student will be provided:

- Oral and written notice of the charges
- Length of the long-term suspension/expulsion
- An opportunity to be heard
- An opportunity for a hearing before the Discipline Committee which includes the right to present evidence and call witnesses on the student's behalf as well as to cross-examine witnesses who testify on behalf of the Academy administration

Where a recommendation is made for a long-term suspension or expulsion, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian of the student informing them of the following:

- The alleged act of misconduct
- The recommended disciplinary action
- Length of proposed long-term suspension and/or expulsion
- Date, time and location of the disciplinary hearing (if known)
- Copy of the Academy Code of Conduct
- Right to Appeal to the Academy Board for due process violations only
- The rights afforded to the student if he/she attends: right to review the information supporting the charges and proposed penalty; right to dispute the information supporting the charges and proposed penalty; right to introduce information on the student's behalf; and the right to be represented by counsel.
- The fact that the disciplinary hearing is not a legal proceeding
- The hearing will be closed to the public if the parent and/or student makes that request
- The need for parent/student to notify the Academy within 48 hours if counsel is retained (specify date and time)

If legal counsel is retained by the student/parent, the School Leader must be notified at least 48 hours prior to the hearing, so the Academy can make arrangements to have its own attorney present. The hearing is not a formal legal proceeding and will not be conducted in accordance with court rules or rules of evidence.

Offenses

Gross Misdemeanor or Persistent Disobedience

Under the Revised School Code, a student guilty of gross misdemeanors or persistent disobedience may be suspended or expelled. Examples include, but are not limited to, aggressive behavior, inappropriate language, inappropriate physical contact, insubordination, theft, academic dishonesty, failure to cooperate with school personnel, disruption of educational environment, any violation of Academy policies or procedures, etc.

Weapons, Arson or Criminal Sexual Conduct

Any student in possession of a firearm on the Academy property, in an Academy vehicle or at an Academy sponsored event shall be permanently expelled from the Academy, subject to reinstatement under the law.

Any student in possession of a dangerous weapon (excluding firearms), or commits arson or criminal sexual conduct, as defined by law, on Academy property, in an Academy bus or vehicle or at an Academy sponsored event or commits criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the same school may be permanently expelled from the Academy, subject to reinstatement under the law.

A student who pleads to or is convicted of or is adjudicated for criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the same school shall be permanently expelled (after considering mitigating factors) from the Academy, subject to reinstatement under the law.

Dangerous weapons are defined as firearms, daggers, dirks, stilettos, knives with blades over 3 inches in length, pocket knives opened by a mechanical device, iron bars and brass knuckles.

"Firearm" is:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
- The frame or receiver of any such weapon
- Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
- Any destructive device

A student in possession, use or threatening the use of any weapon (not included in the legal definition above) or any dangerous item may result in the student being suspended or expelled. A dangerous item is any object capable of inflicting bodily harm as determined within the sole discretion of VMA administration (including but not limited to knives, bullets, fireworks, smoke bombs and any parts of weapons or toy weapons). A student will not use a legitimate tool, instrument, or equipment as a weapon with the intent to harm another. These items include, but are not limited to, pens, pencils, compasses, or combs.

Arson is defined as any student who willfully or maliciously burns any Academy building or other real property, or the contents thereof, or the property of persons employed by the Academy.

The term "burn" shall mean setting fire to, or doing any act which results in the starting of a fire, or aiding, counseling, inducing, persuading or procuring another to do such acts.

Physical Assaults against Academy Personnel

Under the Revised School Code, physical assault is defined as intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

If a student engages in a physical assault on any Academy personnel, volunteer or contractor on Academy property, in an Academy bus or other Academy vehicle, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event, the student will receive

disciplinary action of a Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension. Other disciplinary action may include a long-term suspension (11-59 days) or a recommendation for expulsion, subject to reinstatement under the law.

Under the Revised School Code, any student in grade 6 or above who commits a physical assault against an Academy employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor for the Academy on Academy property, in an Academy bus or other Academy vehicle, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event may be expelled permanently, subject to reinstatement after 180 days.

Physical Assaults against Students
Under the Revised School Code, physical assault is defined as intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

If a student engages in a physical assault on another student on Academy property, in an Academy bus or other Academy vehicle, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event, the student will receive disciplinary action of a Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension. Other disciplinary action may include a long-term suspension (11-59 days) or a recommendation for expulsion, subject to reinstatement under the law.

Under the Revised School Code, any student in grade 6 or above who commits a physical assault against another student on Academy property, in an Academy bus or other Academy vehicle, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event may be suspended or expelled for up to 180 days.

Verbal Assault
Verbal assault is a threat of an immediate harmful or offensive touching, coupled with an apparent immediate ability to commit same, and which puts a person in a reasonable apprehension of such touching; or the use of offensive language directed at a person, where such language is likely to provoke a reasonable person (example: excessive taunting or teasing, bullying or other verbal harassment); a bomb threat (or similar threat) directed at a VMA building, other VMA property, or an VMA event.

For purposes of this policy, the definition of assault also includes written threats.

Under the Revised School Code, any student in grade 6 or above who commits a verbal assault on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle, or at an Academy sponsored activity or event against an Academy employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor for the Academy, or another student may be suspended or expelled.

A student shall not be involved in any physical contact that could result in injury to another person. Special consideration may be given to a student who does not "fight back"; however, students should use precaution when engaging in an altercation, as students involved in a fight (whether perceived self-defense or otherwise) may be subject to consequences at the discretion of the school administration. Bystanders who promote a fight or who film a fight with a cell phone or other recording device are subject to disciplinary action.

Truancy
Under Michigan's compulsory school attendance law, parents, guardians or others in charge of a child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) must send the child to school continuously and consecutively for the entire school year.

If the student excessive absenteeism from the Academy does not meet any of the exceptions stated by the law and the Academy administration has not been able to improve the student's attendance, the Academy shall notify the intermediate school district to start truancy proceedings according to the law.

This includes excessive tardiness, skipping class/school, and leaving school without permission.

Profanity
Swearing, obscene language and obscene gestures are forbidden at all times in the Academy, Academy bus or vehicle and Academy sponsored on-campus or off-campus events.

Academic Dishonesty
Dishonesty is considered a grave offense. This includes cheating on class assignments and tests. Please refer to the policy on Academic Integrity. In addition, a student's unauthorized use of artificial intelligence and language processing tools (e.g., Chat GPT) to create work as the student's own is considered a form of plagiarism.

Failure to Cooperate with Academy Personnel
Students are required to obey all directives given by Academy personnel.

Horseplay
Any physical/verbal communication and/or activity made by student(s) in a manner that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the Academy environment or learning process is referred to as horseplay. Acts include, but are not limited to, play fighting/wrestling, running in undesignated areas, etc.

Destruction of Academy Property
Vandalism and disregard for VMA property will not be tolerated. Actions include, but are not limited to, writing in textbooks or library books, writing on desks or walls, carving into woodwork, desks or tables, damaging Academy equipment, spray painting surfaces (graffiti is considered vandalism) and tampering with or otherwise interfering with video and/or monitoring equipment. Violations could result in physical or financial restitution.

Violation of Wireless Communication Device Policy
Please refer to the wireless communication device policy.

Gangs
Gang activity intended to commit illegal acts under state and federal law and/or intended to violate Academy policies and procedures, specifically under the Code of Conduct, is not tolerated and is prohibited at all times on Academy premises, on an Academy bus or vehicle or any Academy sponsored events.

"Gang" means an ongoing organization, association or group of five (5) or more people, other than a nonprofit organization, that identifies itself by all of the following:

- a unifying mark, manner, protocol, or method of expressing membership, including a common name, sign or symbol, means of recognition, geographical or territorial sites, or boundary or location
- an established leadership or command structure
- defined membership criteria

Alcohol/Drug Policy
In line with the Safe and Drug Free School Policy, it is the belief of the Academy administration that drug and alcohol abuse in any school is a threat to the safety and health of students, staff and the school community as a whole. It is the policy of the Academy to take positive action through education, counseling, parental involvement, medical referral, and police referral in the handling of incidents violating this policy. Disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to substance abuse assessment, participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation program, drug and alcohol prevention activities, suspension and/or expulsion.

When handling violations of this policy, the School Leader will take into account all of the circumstances surrounding the incident, including but not limited to:

- nature, severity and frequency of the misconduct;

- type of substance;
- the context in which the alleged incident occurred;
- past incident or continuing pattern of behavior

The Academy prohibits the use, possession, concealment, sale, delivery, and distribution of alcohol, drugs (including marijuana), and/or any other mind-altering substances and/or related paraphernalia on Academy property, in any Academy bus or vehicle or at any Academy sponsored event. Students under the influence of such substances on Academy property, in any Academy bus or vehicle or at any Academy sponsored event will be subject to this policy regardless of amount taken.

Possession includes any substances described below; including, but not limited to prescription drugs, bath salts, K-2, etc… and/or related paraphernalia found on the student's person, purse, backpack, locker, vehicle, etc. Any searches will be conducted as outlined in the Search and Seizure section in the Student Handbook.

The term "drugs" includes:

- Controlled substances as so designated by the state and federal law;
- All chemicals which release toxic vapors or water vapors;
- All alcoholic beverages;
- Mind altering substances and any otherwise legal substances which, when used or consumed in an inappropriate manner, create alteration in perception, mood consciousness, cognition or behavior. Mind altering substances are not intended to include caffeine and like substances when consumed in moderation;
- Marijuana;
- Any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use at the Academy has been granted pursuant to Academy policies and procedures;
- "look-alikes";
- Performance-enhancing drugs as determined annually by the Department of Community Health; and
- Any other illegal substance so designated and prohibited by law.

Also, if a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent/guardian authorization, he/she will be brought to the school office and the parents/guardians will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received. Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's drug policy and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision below.

<u>Medical Marijuana & Prescription Drug Policy</u>
The Academy prohibits the abuse, possession, sale, or distribution of prescription drugs and medical marijuana. If a student disobeys this prohibition, the student will be subject to disciplinary action in line with board policies and Academy disciplinary policies and procedures.

The Michigan Medical Marijuana Act states that a person shall not sell or possess marihuana or otherwise engage in the use of marijuana, even if for medical use, in a school vehicle or on the grounds of any preschool or primary or secondary school.

<u>Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing</u>
The Administration will require a student to submit to drug testing if the Administration has a "reasonable suspicion" that the student is using or is under the influence of any illegal drug, alcohol or any mind-altering substance (whether illegal or not). Reasonable suspicion may arise from the following:

1. A student's behavior, along with physical appearance, action and/or odor, indicating that the student has used an illegal drug, alcohol or any mind-altering substance (whether illegal or not);

2. The student's possession of an illegal drug, alcohol or any mind-altering substance (whether illegal or not) and/or related paraphernalia; or

3. Information communicated to an Academy Administrator by a teacher, parent, law enforcement, or a student that indicates a student is using, possessing or under the influence of an illegal drug, alcohol or any mind-altering drug (whether illegal or not). Any such report will be investigated by the Academy Administration and will be substantiated by other physical indictors or physical appearance, if deemed necessary.

The Academy Administrator will look at the totality of the circumstances when determining "reasonable suspicion".

After reasonable suspicion has been established and the student denies using drugs, the student will be asked to take a drug test administered by an Academy staff member. The student is suspended pending the drug test results. The Academy Administration will contact the student's parents/guardians as soon as practicable. The cost of the test will be paid by the Academy and will be used for disciplinary action.

The student is expected to cooperate fully with this policy and the direction of staff in the administration of the drug test. If the student refuses to take the test; the student will be advised that such denial will be considered insubordination under the student code of conduct with the same consequences listed below. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.
If the results of the drug test are positive:

1. First Offense – Up to ten (10) day suspension, with the possibility of long term- suspension or expulsion, depending on severity of the circumstances. Law enforcement contacted.
2. Second Offense - If a student violates the drug policy a second time, the student will be given a long-term suspension or permanently expelled from the Academy. Law enforcement contacted.

Drug test results are considered confidential, but may be discussed with the student's guidance counselor or other Academy staff member if it is deemed necessary by the Administration in order to provide assistance to the student or for use in disciplinary action.

During a suspension or expulsion, a student is not allowed on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle or to participate in or attend any before or after school activities (including, but not limited to the student's attendance as a spectator, participation in sport activities, or weekend activities occurring during the suspension/expulsion)

It is the policy of the Academy that a student's eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics will be affected the use of any performance-enhancing substance as provided by statute, including but not limited to those performance enhancing substances banned in bylaw 31.2.3.4 of the bylaws of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, identified on any list developed by the Michigan Department of Community Health and any other substances within the discretion of the State Board of Education.

Bullying
It is the policy of the Academy to provide a safe educational environment for all of its students in compliance with the law. Bullying is strictly prohibited. All students are protected under this policy while on Academy property, in an Academy vehicle, at any Academy–sponsored event, or while using an Academy owned and/or operated telecommunications service provider or Academy owned and/or operated telecommunication access devices.

Under state law, bullying is defined as any written, verbal or physical act or electronic communication including but not limited to cyberbullying that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits or programs.
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the Academy's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health.
- Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the Academy.

Bullying is equally prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

The School Leader shall be responsible for establishing procedures for the effective implementation of the Board's policy.

Any student who believes he/she has been or is the victim of bullying shall immediately report the situation to the School Leader. The student may also report the situation to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the School Leader. Any complaints against the School Leader should be filed directly with the ESP.

A report may be filed with the School Leader by the victim of bullying, a witness or anyone who has credible information about the incident. A written or oral report is considered an official means of reporting. An anonymous report can be filed and will be investigated, but formal disciplinary action will not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

A staff member, school volunteer, student, or parent/guardian who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the School Leader and who makes that report in compliance with these procedures is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The School Leader shall report the occurrence of a bullying incident to the parents or legal guardians of all students involved. The notification shall be via e-mail, telephone, personal conference and/or in writing and all notifications shall be documented. All parent notifications shall be done consistent with student privacy rights under FERPA regulations.

The School Leader is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of the Board's policy. Once a complaint has been received, the School Leader shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made if at all possible.

Restorative Practices will be considered in the correction of bullying behavior. Restorative practices means practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by the student's misconduct.

The Academy prohibits retaliation or false accusations against a target of bullying, a witness or another person with reliable information regarding an act of bullying. The highest level of confidentiality shall be maintained for an individual, who reports an act of bullying,

Harassment
The Academy prohibits any type of harassment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against an individual that places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property, has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or a staff member's work performance, or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the Academy.

Harassment may be based on an individual's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity or expression), pregnancy, mental or physical disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, or genetic information that are protected by Federal and State civil rights laws. Harassing conduct is not limited to in-person activity; it may include the use of cell phones or the Internet. Such behavior may take many forms, including, but not limited to, stalking, name-calling, taunting, cyberbullying, and other disruptive behaviors.

Harassment does not have to include the intent to harm another individual, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment based on race, color, or national origin creates a hostile environment when the conduct is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by the Academy.
All administrators, staff, parents, volunteers, and students are expected not to tolerate harassment and to demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil towards all other individuals associated with the Academy. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a student's actual or perceived gender identity or expression are to be taken seriously and handled in the same manner as other discrimination, bullying, or harassment complaints.

Since bystander support of harassment can encourage these behaviors, the Academy prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment. Such active and passive support can result in disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment is defined as:

1. An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the public school academy on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo sexual harassment); or
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive **and** objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person's equal access to the Academy's education program or activity; or
3. Any incident of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as defined under federal law.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Physical assaults (e.g., intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, or brushing against another individual's body);
- Unwelcome sexual advances, comments, requests for sex, sexual activities concerning one's employment or advancement, regardless of whether they are accompanied by promises or threats concerning one's grades, safety, job or performance of duties;
- Sexual displays or publications such as calendars, screen savers, sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, verbal or written harassment or abuse, or graffiti; and
- Other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of any gender against a person of the same or another gender.

No staff member or student in the Academy shall be subjected to any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, on Academy premises, on an Academy bus or vehicle or at any Academy sponsored event or activity. Students, who engage in harassment, including sexual harassment, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Factors for determining consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- degree of harm
- surrounding circumstances
- nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- relationship between the parties involved and
- context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

The Academy prohibits intentionally making a false report of alleged sexual harassment, submitting a false formal complaint, or making or submitting false statements or information during the Title IX grievance process. Violation of this prohibition will result in disciplinary action.

Hazing
Hazing is a violation of state criminal law and prohibited at all times.

Hazing is defined as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act by a person acting alone or acting with others that is directed against an individual and that the person knew or should have known endangers the physical health or safety of the individual, and that is done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition. The term "organization" includes, but is not limited to, a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, service group, social group, athletic team, or similar group whose members are primarily students at an educational institution.

A student who commits hazing on Academy property, in an Academy bus or vehicle, or at an Academy sponsored event will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and legal action.

Smoking
VMA prohibits the use, possession, and/or distribution of any tobacco or nicotine product on VMA property, on a VMA bus or vehicle, or at any VMA sponsored event, before or after school. Any tobacco or nicotine advertising or promotion is strictly prohibited.

This prohibition includes tobacco products, tobacco-related devices, imitation tobacco products, lighters, vaporizers (including any substance used in vaporizers), electronic cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes or other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance.

Gambling
There will be no participating in games of chance for money or profit in any form at any time on Academy premises, on an Academy bus or vehicle, or at an Academy l sponsored on-campus or off-campus events.

False Fire Alarm
Students shall not cause a false fire alarm and/or fire within a VMA building or vehicle. A student who engages in this conduct shall be reported to the Police Department. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any fines/fees associated with the false fire alarm.

Public Displays of Affection
Demonstration of one's affection toward another person has an appropriate time and place. Public displays of affection should be limited to those types of displays that are deemed appropriate by staff as proper decorum in a school setting.

Sexual Activity
Students shall not engage in any sexual activity on Academy property, in an Academy bus or vehicle, or at an Academy sponsored event.

Sexting
Students may not send, receive or possess sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate pictures or images via cell phone, computer or other digital device.

Hall Sweep
Students must **arrive on time** to each individual class. Hall sweeps are announced before conducted. Students that remain in the hallway during the sweep will be issued a consequence.

Leaving School without Permission
Students shall remain on the Academy grounds from their time of arrival until classes are dismissed at the end of the school day. A student who leaves the Academy grounds without authorized permission (also known as 'skipping') or enters others buildings on the campus shall be considered truant.

Contraband
In addition to illegal items under state and federal law, contraband items that are not to be brought to school include, but are not limited to, water pistols, toys, wireless communication devices (WCDs), lighters, matches, smoke bombs or stink bombs and other items deemed to disrupt the instructional environment. The administration may add to this list at any time. Items confiscated by the Administration pursuant to this policy will be returned to the parent/guardian.

Theft or Possession of Stolen Property
A student may not, without permission of the owner or custodian of the property, take property of have in his or her possession property which does not belong to the student.

Forgery
Students will not fraudulently write the name of another person or falsify times, dates, grades, addresses or other data.

Violation of Wireless Communication Device Policy
Please refer to policy section.

Insubordination
A student will not willfully ignore or refuse to comply with directions or instructions given by Academy staff.
A student may not interfere with school administrators, teachers or other school personnel by threat of force or violence.

Other Illegal and/or Prohibited Acts
Students shall not engage in any activity that constitutes a violation under city, state or federal law on VMA property, in a VMA vehicle, or at a VMA sponsored event or on-line classroom.

Application of Disciplinary Measures to Students with Disabilities
This policy shall be applied in a manner consistent with the rights secured under Federal and State law to students who are determined to be eligible for special education programs and services. The Academy will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 when disciplining students with disabilities.

Implementation
The Academy shall develop procedures for dealing with discipline of students authorized by this policy. The regulations shall include procedures for reporting violations of this policy to the student's parents/guardians, School Leader and Board, procedures for referring permanently expelled students to appropriate family independence agencies or county community health agencies, specifics of the appeals process and the process for the reinstatement of students.

Annual Review
As part of its oversight function, the Board will revisit this policy annually and review the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, consider any policy or procedural changes that may increase the policy's efficacy.

LEGAL REF: MCL 380.1311; 750.82; 759.235.891 (Weapons Free School Law). MCL 380.1309 (Teacher Suspensions); MCL 380.1311a (Physical and Verbal Assaults Against School Personnel); MCL 380.1310 (Physical Assaults against Students.

Student Drivers
Students are not allowed to drive or have a car on the Vista Maria campus.

Student Identification (ID) Cards
Students must wear ID cards every day. They must be visible upon entrance into the Academy and throughout the day. Replacement ID cards are $5.00 due at the time the picture is taken. All payments must be paid by money order only made payable to Vista Meadows Academy.

Student Rights of Expression
VMA recognizes the right of students to self-expression. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following Academy guidelines:

A material cannot be displayed if it:
- is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasive or vulgar
- advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law
- intends to be insulting or harassing
- intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event
- presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations or the commission of an unlawful act

Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building. Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet Academy guidelines may present them to the School Leader 24 hours prior to display.

Student Surveys
Student surveys may be conducted as determined necessary by the Academy.

Testing Out Policy
High school credit may be granted to any pupil who can demonstrate mastery in the subject area content expectations or guidelines for that credit. Teachers will establish the assessment process that will measure a student's understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines that apply for each credit. Teachers will provide all students that wish to test out of a course: the learning objectives for that course; a summary of the course or syllabus; a sample written examination; a description of the final assessment required to establish mastery; and student/parent/teacher agreement. The teacher will ensure that the assessment used to determine whether a student has mastered the subject area content expectations or guidelines is comparable to those required of students taking the actual course for credit.

If a student wishes to test out of a particular credit, students must register for testing out with the School Guidance Counselor in the spring prior to summer break. Testing will then be held during a specified time in August. The testing out policy only applies to classes students must take to fulfill graduation requirements. The testing out policy isn't applicable as an alternative credit option.

The teacher will determine whether sufficient mastery has been achieved to grant credit. Mastery can be achieved in the following manner:

- Achievement of attaining a grade of not less than 80% on a final exam in the course
- Exhibiting mastery through the basic assessment of that course, which may include a speech, a portfolio, performance, paper, project or presentation.
- The standards must be comparable to the standards used for the regular course.

The School Guidance Counselor is responsible for notifying the student and the parent/guardian of the student's performance and whether credit will be issued. Credit earned under this policy shall be based on a "pass" grade and shall not be included in a computation of grade point average for any purpose. Credit earned under this policy may be counted towards graduation, fulfillment of a requirement for a subject area course and fulfillment of a requirement as to course sequence. Once credit is earned under this policy, a pupil may not receive credit thereafter for a course lower in course sequence concerning the same subject area.

If a student wishes to test out of a particular credit, please see the School Guidance Counselor for additional information.

Textbooks
Textbooks are assigned to students based on the official schedule of the school year. Textbooks numbers are recorded as assigned. Students are responsible for the condition of their textbooks. Fines for damaged and lost books are assessed based on replacement cost. Textbooks are the property of Vista Meadows Academy, therefore, falls under "Academy property." Destruction of Academy property is not allowed and falls under the Code of Conduct. All textbooks are to be returned upon withdrawal from the Academy.

Transferring out of the Vista Meadows
If for some reason, a decision is made to transfer a student to another school within or out of the state, the parent/guardian must notify the School Leader as soon as possible. Transfer will be authorized only after the parent/guardian and/or student has completed the arrangements, returned all Academy materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. Academy records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact an administrative assistant in the office for specific details.

Note: When transferring student records, School Leaders are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

Receipt of a request of records from another school is a statement from the parent/guardian confirming that their student is removed from the Vista Meadows Academy enrollment, and their student's seat is no longer reserved at the Vista Meadows from that point forward.

Video Surveillance on Campus

Academy buildings and grounds are equipped with electronic surveillance, which may include video and audio recording, for the safety of students, staff, and visitors. Your actions may be recorded and preserved. The content of the video surveillance may be used in student disciplinary proceedings.

Visitors

All visitors including volunteers, parents/guardians and other family members must call the Academy before arriving on the Vista Maria campus so arrangements can be made to pass through Vista Maria security. Vista Maria security will direct visitors to the Vista Meadows Academy building. Children accompanying visiting parent/guardians must be directly supervised at all times inside the Academy building, in the parking lot and on the walkways.

All visitors must enter through door 11 and proceed directly to the Vista Meadows Academy office, register with the administrative assistant and receive a Visitor badge. This badge must be displayed prominently at all times, and returned upon exiting the building. Visitors will then be directed to the appropriate room.

The Academy strictly prohibits visitors from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon in any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Academy for the purpose of Academy activities. These settings include Academy-sponsored events (both on and off Academy property and traveling to and from such events), Academy premises (leased, owned or used by the Academy), Academy vehicles, and at any activity authorized or approved by the Academy. Any person who violates the policy will be referred to law enforcement.

Visitors, who are rowdy, commit a verbal assault on the premises, or who are otherwise disorderly, will be asked to leave the premises; this type of behavior is unacceptable.

Sex Offenders

Visitors, including parents, who are registered sex offenders, are required to so notify the Academy administration before they visit the Academy and to strictly comply with all applicable school safety legislation. The Academy administrator may impose conditions on the presence of registered sex offenders on Academy premises, or at Academy functions, as he or she deems reasonable and appropriate.

Parents/Guardians, who are registered sex offenders, must safely and expeditiously drop off their children and pick them up during the prescribed times for drop off and pick up and then promptly and safely exit the Academy premises. The Academy administration may allow additional access for registered sex offenders, who are parents/guardians of a registered student, to school grounds under the following conditions:

- Prior permission from the Academy administration is required.
- The offender must check in at the school office immediately upon arrival.
- May not observe or visit a classroom when students are present except for specified family events. During these family events, the offender must stay in view of a staff member at all times.
- If a staff escort is assigned to them, the offender must stay with that escort during their entire stay.
- The offender must leave school grounds immediately upon conclusion of their business.

- The offender must leave school grounds immediately if requested to do so by an Academy administrator or his/her designee.

Work Permits

Any student wishing to obtain the necessary paperwork to receive a work permit should make that request in the Academy office.

Legal Notices

Access to Student Records

The Academy maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Educational records of students at the Academy are safeguarded by policies under the federal legislation entitled Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and Michigan law. Parents/guardians and/or students (eighteen years of age or older) may inspect and review their student's records, request amendment or changes to their student's file, may prevent disclosure to third parties (certain limited exceptions) and may file a complaint concerning alleged failure of the Academy to comply with FERPA. The Academy is not required to provide copies of student records, unless for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for the parent/guardian to review the records. The Academy may charge a fee for copies of the student's records.

If the Academy receives a record request from another school the Academy will send, without consent, personally identifiable student information to that other school. FERPA authorizes the release of personally identifiable information from the student's education records to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The term "school official" includes Academy administrators, staff, teachers, supervisors, Board members, support staff or contractors to whom the Academy has outsourced institutional services or functions. A school official has a" legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

If requesting student records, please contact the Academy office to begin this process and allow up to 45 days for the school to comply with your request.

Parents or eligible students who wish to amend a student record should contact the School Leader or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want to amend, and specify why it needs to be amended. If the Academy wishes not to amend the student record as requested, the Academy will notify the parent or eligible student of their decision and of their right to an appeal regarding the decision.

Any complaints regarding FERPA should be directed to:

Family Policy and Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202 -5920

Children and Youth in Transition

It is the policy of VMA to ensure that students who meet the Federal definition of children and youth in transition have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other students. These students are given meaningful opportunities to succeed at the Academy. The Board annually appoints a McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison to perform all duties as legally required. The Academy's Homeless Liaison is the Academy Social Worker.

VMA is committed to ensuring that there is no barrier to enrollment, attendance or the success of children and youth in transition. In addition, children and youth in transition will not be discriminated, stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status.

VMA's Homeless Liaison collaborates and coordinates with state coordinators, community service providers and Academy personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to children and youth in transition. If you notice any of the common signs of homelessness or have any other information that is pertinent to a child's living arrangement, contact the Academy Social Worker.

Directory Information

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") requires that VMA, with certain exceptions, obtain the written consent of the parent/guardian of a student prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from their child's education records.

However, VMA may disclose appropriately designated *directory information* without written consent, unless you have submitted a signed opt-out form to the Academy.

The primary purpose of information is to allow VMA to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain Academy publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your child's role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook
- Individual or group recognition of achievement and /or accomplishments
- Graduation programs
- Sports activity sheets

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent/guardian's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks

If you do not want VMA to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must submit a signed opt-out form to the Academy.

VMA has designated the following information as Directory information:

- student's name
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- address (except for students participating in the address Confidentiality Program Act)
- telephone numbers (e.g., home, cell, etc.)
- weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Academy assigned electronic mail address
- photograph/video/DVD/electronic image
- honor roll and awards received
- date and place of birth
- dates of attendance
- grade level and/or classroom assignment

Legal Ref.: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 USC §7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (PL 107-110); the Education Bill; 10 USC §503, as amended by §554; the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (PL 107-107); Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC §1232g.

Equal Education Opportunity/Civil Rights Designee

It is the policy of the Academy to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex**,** (including sexual orientation or gender identity or expression), pregnancy, mental or physical disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, while at the Academy, or an Academy activity, should immediately contact the School Leader or designee below. "Race" is inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. For purposes of this definition, "protective hairstyles" includes, but is not limited to, such hairstyles as braids, locks, and twists.

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the administration's guidelines, established by the Academy. Any student making a complaint or participating in an academy investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The School Leader or designee can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

Parents or students who wish to file a complaint or believe any of their Federal or State rights have been violated (including nondiscrimination under Title II, Title IV, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Americans with Disability Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) should contact:

Civil Rights Representative/Compliance Officers: Principal and School Social Worker

Website Accessibility Coordinator: Rhonda Dail-Robertson Office Manager, 20651 West Warren, Dearborn Heights, MI, 48127, (313) 240-4347, r-dail@vistameadowspsa.com.

or the Office for Civil Rights, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, Email: OCR.Denver@ed.gov.

Title IX Notice of Nondiscrimination

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities in federally funded schools at all levels. Title IX protects students, staff members, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sexual harassment, sexual violence and sex discrimination.

The Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities, and is required by Title IX and its implementing regulations not to discriminate. This requirement extends to admission and employment at the Academy.

The Academy's Title IX Coordinator is Kimberly Carroll, Guidance Counselor. She may be reached at (313) 240-4747, via email at k-carroll@vistameadowspsa.com or at 20651 West Warren, Dearborn Heights, MI, 48127.

Any questions related to the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations to the Academy may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

The Academy's grievance procedures provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that is prohibited by Title IX and its implementing regulations. These procedures address how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to report or file a formal complaint, and how the Academy will respond.

These grievance procedures are posted on the Academy's website and are available here- http://www.vistameadowspsa.com/

English Learners

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extracurricular programs at VMA. It is, therefore, our policy that students, identified as English Learners, will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extracurricular programs offered by the VMA. Parents should contact the School Leader to inquire about procedures and programs offered by the Academy.

Mandated Reporter

Academy administrators, teachers, counselors and social workers are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Children's Protective Services at the Department of Human Services.

Military Recruiters

Two Federal laws require that the VMA provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses (except for students participating in the address Confidentiality Program Act) and telephone listings.

If you do not want the VMA to disclose this information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must submit a signed opt-out form to the Academy.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Vista Meadows does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973), or age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975) in its programs or activities.

Individuals with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the School/Academy's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the Principal to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs. Brian Harvey and Darrick Donald are the Section 504 Coordinators.

Pesticide Notice

State of Michigan law requires that schools that may apply pesticides on school property must provide an annual notification to parents or guardians of students attending the facility.

Please be advised that Vista Meadows Academy utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that utilizes all suitable techniques in a total pest management system with the intent of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize sanitation, pest exclusion, and biological controls. One of the objectives of using an IPM approach is to reduce or eliminate the need for chemical applications of pesticides. However, certain situations may require the need for pesticides to be utilized.

As required by State of Michigan law, the school will provide advance notice regarding the non-emergency application of a pesticide such as an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide, other than a bait or gel formulation, that is made to the school buildings or grounds. Advance notice will be provided, even during periods when not in

session. Advance notice is not given for the use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants or anti-microbial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without advance notice to prevent injury to students, but the school will provide notice following any such application.

Advance notice of pesticide applications, other than a bait or gel formulation, will be given by at least 2 methods by which advance notice of the applications of a pesticide will be given at least 48 hours before the application. The first method will be by posting at the main entrance to the school. The second method will be on the Academy's website.

Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school are entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the pesticide application, if they so request. If you prefer to receive the notification by first class mail, please contact the school office by calling (313) 240-4347.

Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school may review the school's Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request. Contact Akeem Blackshire at Vista Maria, 313-271-3050 x 153, ablackshire@vistamaria.org.

Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards

VMA is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State laws and regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of Academy officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the Vista Meadows's *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Hazard Policy* and asbestos management plan will be available for inspection at the Academy office upon request.

Review of Instructional Materials and Activities

Parents/guardians have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the Academy. They also may observe instruction in any classroom. Any parent/guardian who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the School Leader prior to coming to the Academy. Parents/guardians rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

Search and Seizure of Student's Person, Academy Property and Motor Vehicles

All lockers, cubbies, and other storage places assigned to students are the property of the Academy. At no time does the Academy relinquish its exclusive control of these storage places. Students have no expectation of privacy in lockers, cubbies, desks, other school-supplied storage areas, computers, tablets, iPads or other electronic and digital equipment owned, leased, or provided by the Academy to the student. The School Leader or his/her designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the School Leader or his/her designee. The School Leader or his/her designee may search lockers, locker contents, cubbies, desks, computers, tablets, iPads or other electronic and digital equipment owned, leased, or provided by the Academy, or other school-supplied storage areas at any time and for any reason, without notice and without parental/guardianship or student consent.

The Academy assigns lockers, cubbies, and other storage places to its students for the students' convenience and temporary use. Students are to use these storage areas exclusively to store Academy-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, footwear, grooming aids, or lunch. Students shall not use these storage areas for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by Academy board policy or the School Leader or his/her designee, in advance of students bringing the items to the Academy. Students are solely responsible for

the contents of their lockers, cubbies and other storage places and must not share these storage areas with other students, nor divulge locker combinations to other students, unless authorized by the School Leader or his/her designee. The locations at which searches of students and student property may be conducted are not limited to the Academy building or at Academy property, but may be conducted wherever the student is involved in an Academy-sponsored function.

The School Leader or his/her designee may search a student and/or a student's personal items in the student's possession (such as but not limited to purses, backpacks, lunch boxes, book bags, etc.) when there is a reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the particular student has violated, is violating, or is about to violate either state law, Board policies or Academy rules. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered insubordinate and will be disciplined under the gross misdemeanors section of the discipline code of conduct. Reasonable suspicion shall not be required for the use of canines to search a student's possessions as part of a random drug sweep.

The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to the objective of the search and not excessively intrusive given the student's age, gender and the nature of the infraction. If a pat down search of a student's person is conducted, it will be conducted in private by an Academy official of the same sex and with an adult witness of the same sex present. Strip searches are prohibited.

The School Leader or his/her designee shall not be obligated, but may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer in conducting a search. The School Leader or his/her designee shall supervise the search. In the course of a search, the School Leader or his/her designee shall respect the privacy rights of the student regarding any items discovered that are not illegal or against Academy policy and rules.

When conducting searches, the School Leader or his/her designee may seize any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of board policy or rules, or any other items reasonably determined by the School Leader or his/her designee to be a potential threat to the safety or security of others. Such items include, but are not limited to the following: firearms, explosives, dangerous weapons, flammable material, illegal controlled substances or controlled substance analogues or other intoxicants, contraband, poisons, and stolen property. Law enforcement officials shall be notified immediately upon seizure of such dangerous items or seizure of items that schools are required to report to law enforcement agencies under the Statewide School Safety Information Policy. Any items seized by the School Leader or his/her designee will be seized and held by Academy officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over to law enforcement officials. The parent/guardian of a minor student, or a student eighteen years of age or older, shall be notified by the School Leader or his/her designee of items removed from the storage area.

Motorized Vehicles

Student use of a motorized vehicle on Academy property is a privilege. Motorized vehicles brought onto Academy property by students are subject to search by the School Leader or designee, without notice or consent. In the case of a locked motor vehicle, every effort will be made to have the vehicle unlocked by the student before proceeding with the search.

Students who refuse to cooperate in allowing a search of a vehicle brought by them onto Academy property may be subject to disciplinary action.

Selective Service Registration

Male students age 18 or older are required by law to register for the Selective Service within thirty (30) days of their eighteenth birthday.

Teacher and Para-Professional Qualifications

All VMA teachers are properly certified and are teaching in the areas that they are certified to teach. Each teacher holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree and a valid State of Michigan Teaching Certificate.

Academy teachers and paraprofessionals are all considered highly qualified. Any parent/guardian that wants to know the particular teacher qualifications of his/her child's teacher(s) can contact the School Leaders at any time.

Student Assessments

It is the policy of the Academy to monitor individual student academic growth in each subject area at least twice during the Academic year using a combination of competency-based on line and paper-pencil assessments and classroom mid-term and year-end exams. The results of the assessment shall be communicated to the students and parents/guardians.

The Michigan Merit Exam (MME) assesses students in grade 11. This required test is administered to all public school students in the State. Parents may review test information for their child upon request.

Concussions

Before a student may participate in an athletic activity (physical education classes, organized practices and competitions) operated by the Academy, student athletes and parents/guardians must review and sign the parent/athlete concussion information sheet and turned the signed form into the Academy office.

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a "ding", "getting your bell rung" or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?
Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of a concussion listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he/she should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluation for concussion, says he/she is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

Signs observed by coaching staff:

1. Appears dazed or stunned
2. Is confused about assignment or position
3. Forgets an instruction
4. Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
5. Moves clumsily
6. Answers questions slowly
7. Loses consciousness (*even briefly*)
8. Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
9. Can't recall events *prior* to hit or fall
10. Can't recall events *after* hit or fall

Symptoms reported by athletes:

1. Headache or "pressure" in head
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Balance problems or dizziness
4. Double or blurry vision
5. Sensitivity to light
6. Sensitivity to noise
7. Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
8. Concentration or memory problems
9. Confusion
10. Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

Concussion Danger Signs:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body he/she exhibits any of the following danger signs:

1. One pupil is larger than the other
2. Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
3. A headache that not only does not diminish, but gets worse
4. Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
5. Repeated vomiting or nausea
6. Slurred speech
7. Convulsions or seizures
8. Cannot recognize people or places
9. Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
10. Had unusual behavior
11. Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

Why should an athlete report their symptoms?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is still healing, he/she is much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brain. *They can even be fatal.*

What should you do if you think your athlete has a concussion?

1. If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove the athlete from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says he/she is symptom-free and it is OK to return to play.

2. Rest is key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working the computer, or playing video games, may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.

3. Concussions affect people differently. While most athletes with a concussion recovery quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

Did you know?

1. Most concussions occur *without* loss of consciousness.
2. Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk for another concussion.
3. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

For more information regarding concussions please visit - https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/index.html.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide

The Michigan Department of Education requires schools with grades 6-12 to disseminate the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide found in this student handbook.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual remarks or behaviors. It can be verbal, physical, or visual. Here are a few examples of sexual harassment.

Verbal:

- Making sexual jokes, comments, or spreading rumors targeted at someone (in person or online)
- Making sexual jokes or comments about students' bodies or how they look or act
- Making jokes or comments about students' masculinity or femininity and/or who they are attracted to or love



Physical:

- Pulling at or touching someone's clothing in a sexual manner (like pulling down someone's pants or snapping a bra strap)
- Touching, pinching, or grabbing someone in a sexual way
- Brushing up against someone's body on purpose

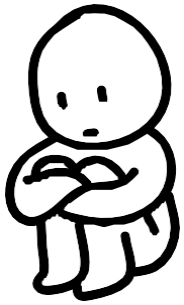


Visual:

- Posting or sharing sexual comments, pictures, or videos
- Pressuring someone to take or send sexual pictures or videos ("nudes")



Sexual Harassment can make someone feel many emotions.



- You may feel scared, uncomfortable, upset, embarrassed or angry.
- When it comes to sexual harassment, what matters is how the action makes a person think or feel--not the intention of the person who did it.
- Sexual harassment can happen anywhere or to anyone. It can take place in person or online. But no matter where sexual harassment happens, it is never OK. It is wrong and it is against the law.



What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual assault is any sexual act that one person chooses to do to another person without consent (permission) through physical force, threats, or pressure (verbal or emotional).

Here are a few examples of sexual assault:

- Touching someone's genitals, breast, or butt without their permission (consent)
- Unwanted behavior or touch over or under clothes
- Unwanted kissing
- Physically forcing someone to perform a sexual act
- Threatening or pressuring a person to do any sexual act
- Unwanted vaginal, oral, or anal penetration with a body part or object (also known as rape)

Sexually assaulting another person is wrong and it is against the law. In Michigan statute, this is called "Criminal Sexual Conduct".

About Consent

- Consent means that each person agrees or gives permission.
- Anyone can change their mind at any time.
- Consent means each person understands what is going on and agrees to all of it.
- Someone needs to get consent every single time.
- Just because someone said "yes" before, does not mean "yes" now.
- It is not OK to use threats, emotional pressure, or the fact that another person is drunk or high to get what you want.

If someone doesn't consent to sexual acts it is sexual assault.

What if This is Happening to Me?

IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

- **No one has the right to sexually harass or assault anyone else.**
- **You have the right to feel safe and respected.**
- **If you feel like you will be harmed, tell them this is not okay and to stop.**
- **Consider telling a trusted adult if any of these behaviors happen to you. If the trusted adult is a teacher, coach, or school staff, them may have to tell someone else (like a principal, parents, etc.). If you're not sure if you are ready or want to tell a trusted adult at your school, you can talk to them without saying it happened to you ("I have a friend who …")**
- **If the person isn't helpful, keep trying until you find someone who is.**
- **Speaking up is a brave thing to do. Don't be afraid to seek help from someone you trust.**
- **Resources listed on page 4 are available 24/7 to support you.**

Scientific research tells us that people who experience traumatic events like sexual harassment and sexual assault have many different responses in their brains, bodies, feelings, and behaviors. However, YOU respond to trauma is OK and is normal.

What if This is Happening to Someone I

BELIEVE. LISTEN. SUPPORT.



- Believe them! If someone tells you that someone has sexually harassed or assaulted them, know that it is very hard to tell someone about this and that person trusts and respects you enough to share this information. Let them know that what happened is not their fault and you are there to support them.

- Listen without judgment. Give them space and time to tell you what they feel comfortable sharing.

- Ask how you can support them. What you would need might differ from what your friend needs, so always ask. Let your friend decide who else can know.

Resources

There is Help.

You can call or chat with any of the resources below 24/7. People who are trained are there to listen and support you no matter what. **You don't have to tell them your name.** They can connect you with people and organizations nearby who can help you with questions or needs.

Michigan's Sexual Assault Hotline (VOICES4)

Text: 866-238-1454 **Call:** 855-864-2374

Chat: https://mcedsv.org/sexual-violence-hotline-chat/

Michigan's Domestic/Dating Violence Hotline (VOICEDV)

Text: 877-861-0222 **Call**: 866-864-2338

Chat: https://mcedsv.org/hotline-domestic-violence/

Youth Resources Web Page

https://mcedsv.org/resources

School Title IX Coordinator

If someone sexually assaulted or sexually harassed you at school or at a school event, you can choose to talk to your School District's Title IX Coordinator. Part of their responsibilities is to prevent and respond to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and discrimination based on sex and gender. Note: If you report to a Title IX Coordinator, they are required by law to follow up and may conduct an investigation.

If you report a sexual assault or sexual harassment incident, the policies forbid someone from retaliating or doing something to get back at you. See page 5 for your school's Title IX information and other related policies.

This resource was developed in response to Public Act 57 of 2023 by the Michigan Department of Education in partnership with the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCEDSV).

Appendix

Parent Involvement Plan

The Vista Meadows Academy Parental Involvement Plan is critical to the effective educational development of children. These demands are often too burdensome for one person to bear independently all of the time. The implied motto of the academy is: It takes a village to rear a child." Therefore, the academy recognizes the importance of a Parental Involvement Plan and Student-Parent Compact.

A. **Parents are notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and to, the extent practicable, provided in a language that parents can understand.**

In an effort to ensure The Parent Involvement Plan and Student-Parent Compact is communicated in a format conducive to every demographic, to the extent practicable, the documents will be published in both English and Spanish.

B. **The school's parent involvement policy/plan is made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet challenging needs of parents and the school.**

The Parent Involvement Plan and Student-Parent Contract will be posted on the academy's website as well as the parent resource center. In addition, the plan will be distributed to parents each year at Orientation, Open House and Annual Title IA Meeting and all other parent meetings throughout the year. The parent involvement plan of the Vista Meadows Academy is based upon three fundamental pillars: parent support, parent participation, and parent development.

C. **The school has convened an annual meeting to inform parents about the school' parental involvement programs and rights of parents to be involved.**

At the beginning of the year, the Academy hosts an annual Title I meeting to share with parents the tenets of the program. Coordination meetings will be held in the fall, winter, and spring to make certain each child is able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available at the academy as outlined in the plan and compact. Parents are regularly encouraged to attend these meeting.

D. **The school offers flexible number of meetings.**

The opportunities for parents to participate are extended to various dates, including but not limited to, parent-teacher conferences.

E. **Parents, or an adequate representation of parents, are involved in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent involvement policy and joint development of the school wide program plan.**

The Parental Involvement Plan and Student-Parent Compact are designed by a committee of parents, teachers, and administrators who review this plan and contract annually. The Student-Parent Compact is used as a necessary component during parent-teacher conferences and due process hearings. The committee conducts an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent Involvement Policy/Plan and distributes the results to the schools. The findings are used to design strategies for more effective parental involvement. The academies implement the following strategies:

- Host four (4) Parent Meetings throughout the year
- Host a parent Orientation
- Offer on-going parent meetings to assist parents in helping children at home
- Provide parents with individual plan to meet their child's needs when needed.
- Ensure opportunities for the full participation of parents with disabilities and English language learners.
- Newsletters will be sent home to provide strategies for parents to help their children.
- At-risk students must meet with School Social Worker to discuss strategies for behavior
- Conduct parent surveys to determine parent opinions regarding school/district performance.

F. **The school provides parents with timely information about school programs under NCLB section 1118.**

Parent support refers to activities that relate to the overall management of the classroom and academy. The academy will distribute relevant and timely materials to families using the Internet, email, postal service, and flyers in a language parents can understand.

G. **The school provides parents a description and explanation of the curriculum the school, uses, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.**

Curriculum standards are reviewed and discussed during out annual curriculum nights. The academy will host several programs annually to ensure parent awareness of curricular and instructional information, and various academic policies.

H. **Per parent request, opportunities for regular meetings formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to education of their children, and respond to any suggestions as soon as practically possible.**

The parental involvement goal of the Vista Meadows Academy is that every parent/guardian has an opportunity to visit or support the academy at least twice per year.

I. **A process is in place to submit parent comments on the school wide program if it is not satisfactory to the parents when the school makes the plan available to the district/LEA.**

Parent-teacher conferences, progress reports, and other activities are scheduled in advance to encourage participation.

These materials can further be found in the main office and discussed during parent-teacher conferences, curriculum meetings, annual education report meetings, etc. In addition, a parent will serve on every school wide (Parental Involvement, Culture and Climate, etc.) committee to foster more meaningful interaction and outcomes/objectives. In addition, academy personnel will receive training on effective interactions with parents, i.e., effective communication and cultural sensitivity.

J. Building capacity for involvement – Assistances provided to parents in understanding topics such as the State's academic content standards, State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve student achievement.

Parent development relates to activities that educate and inform parents of curriculum and instructional matters. The academy will host several programs annually to ensure parent awareness of curricular and instructional information, i.e., state curriculum standards and various academic policies. The Parent Academy is designed to assist parent understanding of the instructional strategies used in the classroom as well as the understanding local/state assessment data.

K. Building capacity for involvement-Materials and training are provided to help parents work with their children to improve their achievement, such as literacy training and using technology to foster parental involvement.

Parents will be provided opportunities during orientation, open house, curriculum nights, and parent teacher conferences to understand and learn how to best support their child toward high school completion and a post-secondary plan.

L. Building capacity for involvement- Staff are educated with the assistance of parents in the value and contributions of parents; and working with parents- how to reach out, communicate with, work with as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, build ties between parents and the school.

Parent participation bespeaks to the overall parent presence and participation in Academy activities. The staff will be trained annually on customer service skills in order to improve communication with parents under various conditions.

M. Building capacity for involvement- Title I A – parental involvement strategies are coordinated and integrated with other programs, such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, State-run pre-school programs, and Title III language instructional programs.

We are a high school and we are looking to develop partnerships with other K-8 academies to make high school transitioning easier.

N. Building capacity for involvement – Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to parents in a format and, to the extent practical, in a language the parents understand.

Every effort is made to accommodate and assist parents with limited English proficiency. Although the academy has a very limited number of students that speak English as a second language, the Academy has a documented plan in place to assist parents that may need it.

O. **Building capacity for involvement – Provide other reasonable support for parent involvement activities per parent request.**

In addition, the parent may solicit involvement opportunities at-will through contact with the Principal via phone, email, etc. [Section 1118 (e) (14)]. Should a parent/guardian not be able to volunteer, a representative should be established and authorized through school administrator.

The following list offers a few ways a parent(s) can be involved:

- Arrival/dismissal hallway monitors
- Lunchroom monitors
- Tutor
- Participate in Career Day
- Participate in assemblies
- Field trips
- Recruitment
- Join School Improvement Team or other committees

- Mentoring, Job-Shadowing or Internship Opportunities
- Join the School Board

P. Accessibility – Local educational agencies and schools, to the extent practicable, shall l provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

Every effort is made to accommodate and assist parents with limited English proficiency. Although the academy has a very limited number of students that speak English as a second language, the academy has a documented plan in place to assist parents that may need it. Furthermore, the materials will be developed using the language and terminology appropriate for optimal understanding.

Student Parent Compact

Vista Meadows Academy
Commitment to High School and Adult Success

Vista Meadows Academy is not just a school; it's **your key to a successful life.** Every day is designed to get you to your goal of high school graduation and to improve quality of life for you, your families, your neighborhood, and your community. This commitment is shared by all of us: the staff at Vista Meadows Academy, you

_____, and _____,
Student Parent/Guardian

who reside at _____ and it
Address of Student
defines the collaborative "No Excuses" spirit of the academy.

Student's Commitments: I fully commit to Vista Meadows Academy in the following ways:

- I will arrive on time and will remain for the entirety of my scheduled school day.
- I will attend any mandatory tutoring sessions, afterschool groups,
- I will complete my work as expected and will get help with any projects I am unsure on how to complete
- I will raise my hand and ask questions
- I will stay after school as required if I choose to disrespect the VMA, CBF, Vista Maria or JTS staff, or my fellow students.
- I will always behave in a way that protects the safety, interest, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. This also means that I will always listen to my VMA teammates and respect everyone in the VMA family
- I will adhere to the Vista Meadows Academy dress code.
- I will always work, think, and behave in the best way I know how, and I will do everything I can to be a part of the solution and not a part of the problem.
- For the whole time I am a student at VMA, I commit to the work required of me, and do Whatever It Takes in order to graduate from high school and to have a plan for life as a successful adult.

*If I break one of the commitments above, I could lose privileges or the right to remain at Vista Meadows Academy
** All YES Prep students will be reevaluated at the end of the school year and after the summer program.
I have read the above, and by signing, I agree to LIVE by this contract.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parents'/Guardians' Commitments: I/We fully commit to Vista Meadows Academy in the following ways:

- I/We will make sure our child arrives to VMA on time, if our child will be absent we will notify the office, and I/we understand that it is our responsibility that our child makes it to school every day.
- I/We understand and will support that our child may be required to attend after school for tutoring, detention or other support or activities and we will pick our student up on time from those events.
- I/We will make ourselves available to our child and the school should any concerns arise.
- I/We will always help our child in the best way we know how, we will provide a quiet place to study to home, and will emphasize the need to achieve and to develop a strong work ethic.
- I/We will encourage him/her contact the teacher if there is a problem and will contact the school or a teacher ourselves for help should the need arise.
- I/We will actively support and reinforce the behaviors necessary to achieve high school and adult success.
- I/We will support the academy dress code and cell phone policy.
- I/We understand that our child must follow all VMA rules in the handbook in order to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the school.
- I/We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior and actions of our child.
- For the whole time my child is a student at VMA, I will do Whatever It Takes to support the work required of me and my child.

I have read the above, and by signing, I agree to LIVE by this contract.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Teachers' Commitments: We fully commit to YES Prep in the following ways:
• We will arrive at VMA on time and will remain for the entirety of the school day.
• We will attend and participate in all staff meetings and professional development.
• We will teach VMA students in the best way we know how and we will do **Whatever It Takes** for our students to learn
• We will make ourselves available to work with students and parents, and we will address any concern(s) they might have.
• We will be the first to both correct AND congratulate our students.
• We will respond to communication from students, parents, and fellow staff members within 24 hours.
• We will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals in the classroom.
• We will provide a rigorous and flexible curriculum along with necessary support in order to prepare our VMA students for post-secondary success.

I have read the above, and by signing, I agree to abide by this contract.

Teacher/Staff Member's Signature: _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and reviewed the 2026-2027 Vista Meadows Academy Student Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained in the handbook, including the Student Code of Conduct.

List all children attending the Academy:

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ Date: _____
Student Signature

_____ Date: _____
Student Signature

_____ Date: _____
Student Signature