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SCHOOL OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to provide the opportunity of a world-class education characterized by a well-mannered, disciplined and structured academic climate. Central to Mystic Valley’s academic environment is the incorporation of selected core virtues and the fundamental ideals of our American Culture, which are embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

The ultimate goals of the school are the following:

- To demonstrate the heights of academic achievement that public schools can routinely attain when the advantages of charter school governance are coupled with new academic standards.
- To offer area families new choices in public school education.
- To create new professional opportunities for teachers that allows them to succeed.
- To graduate well-educated, civic-minded adults who are capable of thoughtful, logical reasoning.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will meet this mission statement through the three following principles:

I. AN EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC DESIGN

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School provides an opportunity of a world class education for children of all ages in a respectful, structured and academic learning environment using the incorporation of the following school design components:

A. Academic Placement and Performance Monitoring

- Use of the Appropriate Instructional Grouping Models

Instruction in Reading and Math is implemented through the use of ability-level instructional groups in grades K-6. Instructional groups are developed through the use of quantitative assessments that measure academic skills in the subjects mentioned above in accordance with the school’s curriculum matrix. In grades K-6, instructional groups for other subject areas are developed using a heterogeneous model. Ability-level groups are utilized for Math in grades 7-8. High school students receive instruction through three curriculum strata. They are College Prep, Honors and High Honors, which evolves into the International Baccalaureate Program in grades 11 and 12.

- Frequent Performance Monitoring for Each Instructional Group

Frequent monitoring of each instructional group is conducted in order to determine individual student progress in the successful attainment of academic performance standards. The standards used are based on the school’s internally developed learning and performance rubrics.

B. Curriculum

- Research- Based Curriculum Models:

A master curriculum plan is used. The design of the plan was developed through the blending of carefully chosen teaching and learning designs that reflect Mystic Valley's core academic values.

- Measurable Learning Standards:

The structure and scope of the curriculum is comprised of specific learning standards that are delivered consistently, systematically and uniformly through an instructional process that operates in an academic environment and is conducive to frequent instructional and curricular monitoring.

- Frequent Monitoring of the Curriculum:

The monitoring of curriculum progress is conducted in a centralized, systematic fashion on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. Monitoring is specifically focused on the pace of lesson delivery, targeted curriculum objectives taught and student academic progress as measured through internal and external assessments and performance rubrics.

II. HIGH ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Quality Instruction Based on Research-Proven Methods Supported Through Intense Training and On-Going Support

- Best-Practice Research:

Instructional methodology is based on best-practice research and applies specifically to the unique curricula designs that comprise the school's main curriculum plan spanning grades K-12.

- Curriculum-Specific Training for Instructional Faculty:

Successful introductory, intermediate and advanced training, specific to the areas of individual expertise, is required for all members of the faculty. Areas of training include best-practice techniques in classroom management.

III. INCORPORATION OF VALUE-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION

The school will promote and incorporate values that are embodied in both the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution.

A. Character Education

- School Climate Based on Key Virtues Taught in Character Education:

Character education is an important part of the K-12 curriculum at Mystic Valley. It is the first class taught each school day in all grades. Core virtues, important civic-oriented values particularly those embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution and positive character traits are the major objectives of the curriculum. Instructional methods vary in accordance with age and grade-appropriate curricular models.

B. Classroom Management

- Uniform Approach to Classroom Management:

All faculty and staff, throughout all grade levels, uniformly implement a single student conduct and general school and classroom management strategy that are based on the principles taught in

the Character Education program. An assertive discipline approach is used in conjunction with positive reinforcement strategies. The roles and responsibilities of parents in support for the behavioral standards that are expected in the general plan are highly valued.

LEADERSHIP

The school's highly skilled and experienced leadership team is eager to serve you and your child. The education of your child is the School's highest priority, so we hope you will contact the School's leaders with any questions or concerns:

Dr. Joseph McCleary – *Superintendent/ Director*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 2100

E-mail: jmccleary@mvracs.org

Mr. Christopher J. Finn – *Assistant Director, K-8*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 3018

E-mail: cfinn@mvracs.org

Mr. George Benzie – *Assistant Director, High School*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 4106

E-mail: gbenzie@mvracs.org

Mrs. Gina McKinnon – *Professional Development Coordinator (K-3), Core Knowledge and ELL Coordinator*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 3023

E-mail: gmckinnon@mvracs.org

Mrs. Jennifer Mullen – *Professional Development Coordinator (4-6)*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 7005

E-mail: jmullen@mvracs.org

Mr. Richard Veilleux – *Business Manager, Title VI and Title IX Coordinator*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 2005

E-mail: rveilleux@mvracs.org

Mr. Alex Dan – *Dean of Students for grades 7 and 8*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 3026

E-mail: adan@mvracs.org

Mr. Marc Arria – *Director of Athletics*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 4309

E-mail: pconnolly@mvracs.org

Mrs. Kathy Kinnon, *Special Education Director and Section 504 Coordinator*

Phone: 781.388.0222 ext. 2200

E-mail: kkinnon@mvracs.org

OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Attendance Line

Both Campuses: 781.388.0222 – follow prompts for appropriate school

School Nurse's Office

Main Building (K-1, 4-6): 781.388.0222 ext. 7010

Annex Building (2-3, 7-8): 781.388.0222 ext. 3024

High School: 781.388.0222 ext. 4108

GOVERNANCE

A Board of Trustees governs the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. The Board conducts meetings on the second Thursday of each month.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school's instructional day begins promptly at 8:00a.m. and ends at 3:30p.m., Monday through Friday. No student will be admitted into the school building before 7:30a.m. No student should be on school property before 7:20 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. without the permission of a school official.

We offer a longer school day (7-1/2 hours) and school year (200 instructional days) than traditional district schools. As a result, when compared to district public schools, our students will receive more than three additional "years" of instruction from kindergarten through grade 12.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School recognizes that effective instruction requires an orderly environment focused on learning, and that schools have an important role to play in supporting parents' efforts to teach basic values to their children. The School's Code of Values clearly defines expectations for student conduct. Our program focuses on these important values: responsibility, perseverance, respect, kindness, honesty, citizenship, courage, self-discipline, gratitude, generosity, forgiveness and hope. Parents and guardians can help reinforce such lessons by talking about these values at home and modeling these in their daily life.

The Code of Values is included in Section 10 of this handbook. The Code should be read thoroughly and discussed with your child. The compact of the last page should then be signed and returned to your child's homeroom teacher to indicate that you understand and agree to accept and support the School's rules and expectations. Students are also asked to sign the form.

In addition to the expectations described in the Code of Values, the following rules apply in every classroom, in the support areas and at all school events:

- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Be at an appropriate learning position at all times. For grades K-6, we call this the learner position (seated with feet flat on the floor and hands folded on your desk). For grades 7-12, we expect students to be sitting upright and paying attention at all times.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Get attention the right way.
- Transition quickly and quietly.
- Be prepared for each class and activity
- Speak to classmates and adults in a respectful manner.

Helping your child meet these expectations will facilitate the creation of a safe and orderly learning environment.

SECTION 1: CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School offers a highly structured curriculum that sets high expectations and provides individualized monitoring to insure that all students meet the ambitious goals that we have set for them. The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will provide a strong academic foundation for your child that will prepare your child for the demanding academic program that we will implement in grades 9-12.

INTERNATIONAL BACCAULAREATE ORGANIZATION (IBO)

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School was granted authorization by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) of Geneva, Switzerland to grant the distinguished International Baccalaureate Diploma to graduating seniors beginning in 2007. Mystic Valley became the first public school in the Metro Boston area, and the second among all Boston-area schools, to be recognized by the IBO. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is a two-year, college-preparatory course of study that is highly regarded for its academic rigor by universities around the world.

Critical thinking, international understanding and exposure to a variety of points of view are emphasized throughout the Diploma Programme's curriculum. Worldwide standards of learning and achievement are established by the organization. Courses are taught in English, French or Spanish in selected schools around the globe. Throughout nearly 40 years of operation, the IBO has demonstrated that students and teachers benefit from these challenging criterion-referenced benchmarks. Students have proven to be well prepared for university work. Subsequently, acceptance rates to the nation's most selective colleges are significantly higher for students who have earned the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Teachers have benefited from the required instructional training and the diverse array of professional development opportunities provided by the IBO.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY READING and LANGUAGE ARTS K-6

Direct Instruction (DI) is a curriculum and teaching methodology specifically designed to teach sophisticated strategies in reading, language, and other basic skill areas, such as spelling and cursive writing. The lessons are presented in a structured sequence, with each building on concepts and skills developed previously in the series. Parents are encouraged to contact their children's teachers for detailed information about the skills and knowledge taught at each level of the various DI programs. Direct Instruction has been proven to yield strong results with all types of students, including academically advanced children, average performers, and those with special needs.

SAXON MATH

Mystic Valley uses Saxon Math for its math program. Saxon Math was chosen for its excellent record of increased achievement scores on standardized tests.

ABILITY GROUPINGS

To ensure that *all* students are permitted to succeed, every child is assessed prior to beginning instruction in reading (K-6) and math (K-12). Instructional groupings are created based on student's demonstrated competency in these areas. Students who are performing below target receive instruction that ensures that they fill any learning gaps quickly and then accelerate. Likewise, students who are advanced in a subject receive instruction at a level and pace that provide an optimal challenge.

CORE KNOWLEDGE K-8

To provide students with a sturdy foundation on which to build future success, the School's curricula in grades K-8 for science, history, language arts, character education, music, art, and math are based on coherent and ambitious standards based on what students need to learn from the earliest grades. The Core Knowledge Sequence was developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation in Charlottesville, VA as a way to promote fairness and excellence in learning. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides MVRCS with a detailed outline of specific content to be taught in all core subjects. The specific content in the Sequence provides a coherent and sequential foundation of learning on which to build skills instruction. The Sequence leaves ample room for meeting state requirements. MVRCS has aligned the Massachusetts State Frameworks with our Core Knowledge Sequence and other curricula. We have

compiled Curriculum Guides for each grade. A parent matrix of each grade is accessible via our school website, www.mvracs.com.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM 9-12

The High School programs offered at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are designed to meet the needs of all children.

Overview

Guiding Principles:

- A 9-12 school with an emphasis on core academics
- Academic excellence and high expectations for all students
- Continued parental involvement
- Teacher directed instruction with strategies that insure prompt remediation and/or acceleration, depending on each individual student's needs
- The implementation of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB) in grades 11-12
- The acquisition of an in-depth knowledge base in ideas, science, history, politics, global geography and cultures, language and literature, the arts, the self, and society.
- Excellence in reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, and the use of technology
- Respect for self and others

Course of Study:

Each student's program of study will have a strong academic core including mathematics, science, language arts and history. All science, mathematics, language arts, and history courses listed will be offered to all students.

- 5 units of foreign language, including at least 1 unit of Spanish and 1 unit of Latin
- 4 units of English
- 4 units of history
- 4 units of mathematics
- 4 units of science
- 1 unit of Integrated Technology
- **150 hours of community service (40 + 40 + 40 + 30)**

Students at the High School will have three levels of classes available to them: College Prep, Honors and High Honors (IB for grades 11 and 12). Placement into each level will be decided by the prior year's grades, teacher recommendations and parental input. Students achieving a B+ or higher in a level will be encouraged to move up a level for the following year. Conversely, students achieving a C or lower will be encouraged to move down a level for the following year.

For freshmen, sophomores and juniors, the entire 40 hours of community service must be completed on or before July 15. Failure to do so will result in the student not being promoted to the next grade.

For seniors, the entire 30 hours of community service must be completed prior to their graduation. Failure to do so will result in the student not graduating.

For grades 7-12, students achieving marks greater than an A- in all subjects will be nominated for High Honors. For grades 7-12, students achieving marks greater than a B- in all subjects will be nominated for the Honor Roll.

SECTION 2: POLICIES

SOLICITATION

Solicitation of or by any student, parent, or staff member on School property for any cause except those authorized by the School Director is strictly prohibited.

MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLE PROPERTY

Students are expected to leave all money and other valuable property at home. The School assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such articles.

LOCKERS/CUBBIES/BACKPACKS

All children will have the use of a cubby or a locker. Lockers cannot be locked in grades K-6. The school will provide locks for grade 7-12 lockers. Lockers and cubbies are the property of the school and as such may be inspected by school authorities at any time. Backpacks must be stored in the lockers/cubbies and cannot be carried from class to class. Backpacks must fit into the locker provided by the school. Backpacks may not have writing or pictures that would be deemed distracting or inappropriate.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

If you desire to celebrate your child's birthday in school with a special treat or prize, please communicate with the classroom teacher prior to the day/event for approval. If you arrange such an event, all students must be included. Please be aware of the school's policies on candy and soda (which are not allowed).

CANDY, SODA, GUM, AND TOYS

Students may not bring candy, soda, gum, trading cards, toys (including stuffed animals), or other non-school related items to school unless approved by the main office. The student assumes responsibility for any items brought from home. Toy weapons, headphones, iPods, MP3 Players, radios, games, virtual pets, etc., are not allowed on school property. Students may be subject to the confiscation of these items and disciplinary action.

STUDENT DEPARTURE

Children who are not enrolled in the School's after school program or staying with a school employee for educational purposes are not permitted on School grounds after 3:30p.m.. If a child is left at or returned to the school after hours, the parent or emergency contact will be called to arrange for pick-up. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00p.m., the police will be notified. The school also reserves the right to contact the local office of the Department of Children and Families. Beginning with the fifth late pickup and for every subsequent late pickup, the parent will be charged a fee of twenty-five dollars. The student will be ineligible for any extracurricular activities until the fee is paid.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will contract a third party to provide after school care for those parents requesting it. More information is available at the school's office.

POLICY ON EDUCATING PREGNANT STUDENTS

No students shall be excluded from any school program or school-sponsored activity because of pregnancy except when required by health considerations as stated by the student's physician.

OCCUPATIONAL VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The school will provide training for the Team Chairperson(s) regarding vocational and occupational options and services which relate to affording students with disabilities the skills and aptitude necessary to transition to adult life and work, as appropriate to the educational level and age of the students. The school will assure that individual student's educational team considers the student's need for such services at the time of each annual review meeting.

EDUCATIONAL SURROGATE PARENT POLICY

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School (MVRCS) willfully complies with the Educational Surrogate Parent Program (ESP Program) which exists in response to a federal special education law, the IDEA. MVRCS recognizes that the Department of Education is required to implement procedures to protect the rights of children entitled to special education services who are in the custody of the DSS (a ward of the state), or whose parent or guardian cannot be identified.

Upon receipt of the ESP Program appointment letter, MVRCS acknowledges that the assigned ESP has authority to provide for consent for evaluations and make other decisions regarding special education matters. The school will only communicate with the ESP regarding any special education matters. Appropriate school staff will be made aware of the above appointments of the ESP.

Furthermore, MVRCS acknowledges that if a court appoints a guardian *ad litem* (GAL) or educational advocate with special education decision making authority, and the parent had been making special education decisions for the child, the parent no longer has the right to ask for medication, consent to evaluations, to sign the Individualized Education/504 Accommodation Plan, or request a hearing to resolve special education disputes.

ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/DISMISSAL POLICY

ATTENDANCE

Instruction at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School begins promptly at 8:00a.m. It is critical that all students be prepared to begin at that time. A student who is late misses valuable instructional time, and conveys an unacceptable lack of regard for the School. Those electing to participate in the school's breakfast program must arrive at 7:40 a.m.

TARDINESS

Any student who arrives to their homeroom at 8:00 a.m. or later must report to the front office. The student will be considered tardy and the incident will be recorded. If a K-8 student arrives late, the parent must walk the child into the school to sign them in. For high school students arriving late, a note from the parent is required. During any given quarter, when a student reaches their fifth tardy, they will be given a detention for that tardy and each subsequent tardy. Parents could be asked to attend a conference with a member of the leadership team, or their delegate, to discuss the reasons for the excessive tardiness. Transportation for children who attend detention is the parent's responsibility. All tardiness will be factored in the total time missed from school for the year. A ratio of 3:1 will be used. Every three tardies for any reason will count as one absence.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it is necessary for a student to be dismissed from school before the end of the school day, parents must notify the school office no later than 9:00 a.m. the day of the early dismissal. In such cases, parents must inform the School of the specific time that the child will be picked-up and the person who will come for the child. Dismissal between 3:00pm and 3:30pm is NOT permitted. Only adults who are listed in the School's records as being authorized will be allowed to take students from the School in these cases, unless a note is sent in. Individuals not recognized by the office staff will be required to show identification proving their identity. K-8 students may not be dismissed to themselves. High school students may be dismissed by themselves with prior written parental permission. A ratio of 3:1 will be used. Every three dismissals for any reason will count as one absence.

ABSENCES

Parents must contact the School office by phone whenever a child is going to be absent, and send a written excuse to the teacher when the child returns to school. The School has a dedicated phone line for all calls related to attendance for K-8: 781.388.0222 ext. 2501 Parents are encouraged to use the extension 24 hours a day at their convenience to report absences at the main campus. **Grades 9-12** parents must call 781-388-2940, the High School office, if their student will be absent, tardy or leaving early.

ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WITH ADVANCE NOTICE

For Grades K-6:

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, the only areas of curricula to be handed out ahead of time will be Language Arts and Math. All homework assignments are due the day upon return.

Missed tests and assessments in Language Arts and Math shall be made up the day of the child's return. The teacher will determine the administration of the tests. All other subject areas (Spanish, History, Science, etc.) are the responsibility of the child and parent. The student will have the number of days they were absent to make up any missed class work, assessments, and tests.

Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return.

For Grades 7- 12:

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, each subject teacher will give the projected homework assignments to the student prior to prolonged absence. All Homework assignments are due the day upon return. Any missed tests and assessments will be made up the day of the child's return. All class work will be made up upon return.

Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return.

ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WHEN SICK

K-12 students who are out sick have the number of days they are out to make-up missed homework and missed tests.

ABSENCES AND MAKING UP WORK:

1. Please be aware of the attendance policy
2. It shall be the responsibility of the parent and child to make up all missed work
3. If the child is having difficulty making up missed work or staying with the class, the parent should look into hiring an outside tutor
4. If the child is falling behind in a teacher-instructed ability-based group, the child is subject to re-placement

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE POLICY

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter Schools' plan to address excessive absences includes communication with parents covering the reasons for the student missing school and, if necessary, notification of the local truant officer after the tenth day of absence. In the event that extraordinary circumstances require that the student be absent from school for three or more days, the teacher, the School Director, and the student's parent or legal guardian will develop a plan.

After five days of absence, parents will receive a letter/e-mail that details the school's procedure for addressing excessive absence and an official notification that five days of absence have been recorded.

After ten days of absence, parents will receive a phone call that will officially notify them that ten days of absence have been recorded.

Students who have ten or more days of absence – the members of the leadership team may exercise their option of notifying local truant authorities about the excessive absences.

After 15 or more absences – parents will receive a certified letter notifying them of the excessive absences. Students with 20 or more absences will be subject to automatic retention and will be required to meet with a representative of the leadership team. Extenuating circumstances may be recognized at the discretion of the School Director and upon Board approval. Please contact the School Director if you have any questions.

RETENTION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not practice simple social promotion of students from grade level to grade level. Promotions are based on the attainment of measured competencies as outlined in the specific curriculum criteria for each grade level. K-8 students who do not attain the grade-level measured competencies or place two grade levels below standard on two consecutive Iowa Tests of Basic Skills are subject to retention. Students in K-9 who score in the warning category of the Reading, Language Arts or Mathematics MCAS exam and place two grade levels behind in any of the same categories on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills during two consecutive tests will be automatically retained upon the School Director's recommendation. Grade 7-12 students failing two or more subjects for the year will also be retained. The gathering of data to determine the measured level of competency takes place on a weekly basis throughout the school year for each student. Frequent communication between parent, teacher and the professional development coordinator will take place in the event that a student has shown a significant lack of successful lesson progress.

In summary, in grades K-12, the school uses a combination of the factors below to determine if a child should be retained.

- A student failing to be at grade level in any area, as determined by the spring ITBS tests (grades K-3)
- A student 2 or more years below grade level in any area, as determined by the ITBS tests (grades 4-9)
- A student falling into the warning category on one or more of the previous/current year's MCAS tests
- A teacher recommending a student being retained for academic reasons

While none of the above alone will require a student to be retained, any combination of two or more could lead the School to decide to retain the child.

Students meeting one of the criteria, or coming close to meeting one or more of the criteria, could be promoted to the next grade level on the condition that significant academic progress is made by the student to ensure promotion the following year. When this occurs, the parents will be notified in the fall, but no later than two weeks after the school receives the previous year's MCAS results from the state. At that point, a meeting will be convened between the School and the parents, and a list of goals will be established that will determine if that student will be promoted at the end of the school year.

In all grades, a student having two or more failing grades on their year-end report card will be retained.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR RETENTION

The decision to retain a student, although the school reserves the right to make the ultimate decision, must be made on the basis of clear communication between the home and school. Individual reported scores on both MCAS and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills will constitute clear communication as outlined above. Communication must take place according to a time line. Both parties must attain a clear understanding of the student's progress over the course of the school year. Any academic modifications implemented must be clearly outlined. Results of modifications attempted must be communicated to parents. Under no circumstances should a decision to retain a student come as an unexpected solution to a parent. The time line for communication between the above-mentioned parties is outlined below.

COMMUNICATION TIMELINE FOR RETENTION:

January/February:

Initial meeting with the parent(s) and academic team is convened. Results of academic modifications attempted to this point are clearly explained to the parent(s) in attendance. Retention as a possible outcome is discussed. A plan for further modification strategies is determined.

June or July:

A final meeting with the parent(s) and the academic team is convened. Results of academic modifications attempted since January are discussed. Retention as a definite solution is discussed. A plan for an academic strategy that will be implemented at the beginning of the following school year is discussed if needed.

UNIFORM POLICY

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

In order to help create an environment conducive to learning, students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are required to wear simple uniforms. This policy is designed to permit students to focus their attentions on academics and on those aspects of their personalities that are truly important.

Uniforms must meet the requirements of the policy in terms of color and style. Students may not change out of uniform before 3:30p.m.dismissal unless required for MVRCS away games. The school uniform consists of the following:

Uniform Pants

For K-8:

- Regular straight leg, ankle length **dark** khaki dress pants must be worn.
- Corduroy, capris, denim, wide-leg, cargo, baggy, stripes, logos or designs of any kind are not allowed.
- Drawstrings are not allowed. Pants are to be worn at the waistline.
- Loose fitting or overly tight pants are not allowed.
- Shorts must be **dark** khaki in color and within two inches of the knee.
- Shorts are acceptable until October 1 and after May 1st.

For 9-12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the pants/shorts must be navy blue.

Uniform Shirt

For K-8:

- Short or long sleeve knit burgundy polo shirts with a collar. No other color or style is acceptable (i.e., no stripes, logos or designs of any kind.)
- Shirts must be worn tucked into pants.
- Turtlenecks are not allowed.
- Shirts must be of a thick enough quality to cover any undergarments that may be worn.
- Only white undershirts are allowed.
- Long sleeve white undershirts are prohibited when worn under a short sleeve shirt.

For 9-12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the polo shirts must be white.

Sweaters

For K-8:

- Solid burgundy cardigan, fleece pullover sweaters and appropriate fleece sweatshirts.
- No sweaters of other colors or sweatshirts are allowed.
- For safety reasons, no hoods are allowed.

For 9-12:

- For grades 9-12, the sweaters must be navy blue.

Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers

For K-8:

- Skirts, skorts and jumpers must be **dark** khaki in color and stay within the same guidelines as pants and shirts (i.e.: no denim, corduroy, cargo, baggy, stripes, drawstrings, logos or designs of any kind).
- All must be within two inches of the knee.

For 9 -12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the skirts/skorts/jumpers must be navy blue.

Shoes

- Black or brown (**not tan**) closed toe, closed heel casual or dress style shoe.
- No platforms, high heels or sandals of any kind are allowed.
- The only acceptable athletic shoe must meet the following criteria: all black including upper sole and laces, no stripes designs or logos.
- Shoes with a rise must be continual from toe to heel and no more than 2”.
- No boots of any sort are allowed for both boys and girls.
- During winter month’s boots can be worn to school but changed **immediately** into shoes or black athletic shoe.
- “Heelys” or similar sneakers/shoes that have wheels imbedded in them are not allowed.

Socks

- Socks must be worn at all times and may be any of the following solid colors: brown, black, burgundy or white. Grades 9-12, socks may also be blue.
- Socks must not have logos on them.

Stockings

- Burgundy, brown, white and/or black. At the Upper School, stockings may also be navy blue.
- Stockings must be plain, with no design, stripes or logos.
- Thigh highs or leggings are not acceptable.

Belts

- Black, brown or burgundy belts are allowed.
- If pants worn contain a belt loop, a belt must be worn.
- You are not allowed to cut off the belt loops.
- Belts must not dangle from the pants.
- Belts may not be decorative in nature (i.e. metal studs, metal rivets).

Jewelry/Accessories

- For safety reasons, the only jewelry permitted will be simple stud earrings in lobes only and no more than two studs per lobe.
- Necklaces, if worn, should not be visible.
- Watches are not allowed in grades K – 8, although they are allowed in grades 9-12.
- Only clear prescription contact lenses are allowed.
- Purses must be small in size (i.e. cannot carry books in them, no larger than an 8 X 11 piece of paper) and not be distracting or have writing on the exterior.

ELECTRONICS

Students are allowed to bring cellular phones to school for emergency purposes only. Any use of cell phones during school hours must be approved. Cellular phones must be off and stored in the locker during school hours. If they are seen or heard during school hours they will be confiscated and the child will receive a consequence no less than a detention. The device will be stored in the school’s office and a parent will be contacted to retrieve it.

HAIR/ MAKE-UP

Students must keep their hair neat and out of their eyes. Students may not wear drastic or unnatural hair colors or styles or have a hairstyle that could be distracting to other students (extra long hair or hair more than 1 inch in thickness or height is not allowed). This means no coloring, dying, lightening (sun-in) or streaking of any sort. Hair extensions are not allowed. Hair elastics must be worn in the hair and not on the wrist. No make-up of any sort is allowed. Nail polish or artificial nails are not allowed. Tattoos are not allowed. Students are not allowed to write or draw on themselves. Bandanas or hats are not allowed during school hours. Facial hair is not allowed. Unshaven young men will receive a warning in the first instance and detentions thereafter.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM)

Students (K-8) remain in school uniforms during physical education classes. Students must wear sneakers to gym class. Students at the upper school (grades 9-12) must wear an all white or white shirt with the school logo on it. They must wear blue shorts or sweatpants. Sneakers must be worn. Students must change back into their uniforms before dismissal. The school reserves the right to provide alternative clothing if it is deemed what is being worn is inappropriate.

DRESS DOWN DAY

Most early dismissal days are considered “dress-down days” in grades K-8 but “spirit days” for grades 9-12. On these days children may attend school out of uniform for a suggested one-dollar donation. The donations are given to the homeroom teachers/grade level to support school incentives or donated to a charitable cause.

All aspects of the uniform policy are in effect with the exception of colors of clothes and shoes. Pants, skirts, shorts and skorts must be of appropriate length and may not be overly tight. Cotton sweatpants and pajama bottoms, cannot be worn. Shirts must be appropriate length and not have any logos or writing on them that would be deemed inappropriate. Hoods are not allowed. Midsections must not be seen. Shirts must have sleeves. Children not in compliance will be forced to change into clothes from the school’s uniform bank. For grades 9-12, students can wear either school sports uniform tops or school colors. For all grades, students not in compliance will forfeit the privilege of participating in the next “dress-down day” or “spirit days”. If a student is non-compliant twice in a year, they will forfeit their privilege of participating in the “dress-down day” or “spirit day” for the rest of the year.

UNIFORM INFRACTIONS

To ensure that the School’s uniform policy has its desired effect, it is important that it be implemented consistently. The School’s administrative team will attempt to resolve all uniform infractions in an amicable manner with the parents but the policy will be enforced consistently for all children. School leaders, faculty, and staff will respond immediately to violations of the policy in the following manner:

STEP ONE

Upon observation of a uniform infraction, a Uniform Compliance Form will be sent home to the parent. If the infraction is clothes related, the student will be required to change into an appropriate uniform from the school’s uniform bank. If the infraction is due to jewelry or make-up, the student will remove the item(s) in violation. If the infraction is due to hair color/style, a member of the administration team will contact the student’s parents before the student returns to class. The parent will be asked to correct any infraction before the next day of school and return the signed Uniform Compliance Form. Parents that are unable to correct the infraction before their child returns to school must contact the Lead Teacher or a member of the Leadership team immediately. A deadline date for resolution of the problem will be set. If the dress code violation is not solved by the agreed upon date or the parents do not agree to respond to a date, step two of the enforcement plan will be instituted.

Step Two

If a student does not correct the dress code violation, or repeats an earlier addressed violation, then enforcement of the next step will begin. For grades K-8, the student will receive recess detention each day the infraction is not corrected for five days. After the fifth day, the student will receive after school detention of 60 minutes in addition to the recess detention. For students in grades 9 and above, where there is no recess, the student will receive 60 minutes of detention. K-12, the student will not be allowed to participate in any after school activities or other privileges until the situation is resolved. This includes

sports, clubs and after hours events like dances. Parents will be notified before the child receives after school detention. Transportation will not be provided to those children affected by the after school detention.

COMPUTER USE AND POLICIES

For both campuses, Mystic Valley Regional Charter School has in place a state of the art Local Area Network (LAN) that provides e-mail and Internet services. All classrooms (K-8) are equipped with computer workstations available for teacher access. The school library is also automated through this network. The school also has two extensive technology rooms located at the High School.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

In addition to voice mail, administration and faculty may be contacted via e-mail. Refer to individual staff members or visit the school web-site www.mvracs.com for phone extensions and e-mail addresses.

INTERNET FIRE WALL

MVRCS currently has a public Internet connection through Comcast that is protected by a firewall system. The firewall protects our internal network from the Internet while permitting access to Internet services by staff members and/or student. Since Internet content is constantly changing, MVRCS had selected to use a Content Filter List that automatically updates itself on a weekly basis.

CONTENT FILTERING POLICY FOR UNDESIRABLE MATERIALS

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will take all possible precautions to restrict access to undesirable materials including, but not limited to, installing content filtering software/hardware solutions on its network or using an Internet provider which uses content filtering software on its equipment to screen all Internet web sites by URL and/or by keyword search. However, students and teachers must also accept responsibility for restricting access to these materials. Students who gain access to undesirable Internet materials must report this material to their teacher. Teachers who gain knowledge of undesirable Internet materials must report this material to an administrator.

SECURITY

Students and teachers must not allow others to use their network accounts (both Internet and School accounts). Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Designated school personnel may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on school file servers would always be private.

PARENTAL PERMISSION

Student and parent signatures on the Acceptable Use Internet policy will allow independent student use of the Internet. Their teachers will give instructions on Internet use to students.

E-MAIL

E-mail accounts will be assigned to teachers on a continuing basis. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other inappropriate behaviors are prohibited on the network. Receipt of inappropriate mail should immediately be reported to a teacher and to an administrator. The use of encryption will not be permitted. No right of privacy exists in favor of any employee of the firm in respect to this information.

CHAT and USER GROUPS

Independent student use of chat and user groups is not allowed.

COPYRIGHT and CITATIONS

Any copyrighted materials are subject to the Fair Use provision of copyrighted materials as it relates to education. Internet materials used in reports or other documents must be cited. If there is no direct citation, the Uniform Resource Location (URL) must be cited.

DOWNLOADING

Downloading from the Internet without approval from a teacher or building principal is not allowed.

PRIVATE INTERNET PROVIDERS

Students may not use school computers to access private Internet providers.

HOMEWORK POLICY

The primary mission of Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to provide its students with a world-class education. This education includes a comprehensive homework policy for the students. The homework should be academic and purposeful for all students.

HOMEWORK (K-12)

Your child will be given homework assignments daily. Students can expect approximately 30 minutes of homework per night per subject starting as early as 7th grade.

Grades K-8: Homework may be sent home in a folder weekly with a signature page or in a planner; please initial this page prior to sending it back to school with your child to verify that you have seen the homework.

Grades 6-8: If in the planner, please sign the planner weekly to verify you have seen the homework.

The following are some suggestions to assist you and your child gain the most from his or her homework experience.

- Make homework rules together with your child. Decide when it will be done, where it will be done, and what will happen if it is not completed.
- Provide a quiet place for your child to do homework, such as a desk in his or her room or the kitchen table. Make sure there is sufficient light and that distractions are limited.
- Show an interest in your child's homework and ask him or her about it each night.
- Give your child a healthy snack before he or she begins homework. This should help with concentration.
- Give your child a short break from his or her work if needed.
- Encourage your child to work independently. Assist him or her if needed.
- Give you child positive words of encouragement, such as, "I'm proud of you," or "I knew you could do this all by yourself!"

Please feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher if you have any questions about homework.

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND GRADE

The kindergarten through second grade students will receive homework assignments on Friday and the completed work is due the following Thursday. Each week the student will receive weekly binder homework in addition to nightly math homework. Each student is expected to bring his/her homework binder to school every day to encourage responsibility and organizational planning. There is a consequence if they do not bring their binder to school.

The teachers will sign the assignment sheet before sending it home with the student and a parent signature is required upon return. Teachers will provide the homework in multiple facets either on the assignment page/packet, website, and/or posted in the classroom.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and return it when due. A parent/guardian is required to sign the assignment page weekly for Thursday morning to be checked by the homeroom teacher. Students will receive a homework infraction if the homework assignment page is not signed.

There will be one project assigned quarterly and assignment for completion will be determined by grade level.

CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES K-2

All Homework infractions will be noted in the teachers' grade book.

First Quarterly Offense: A notation on the monthly calendar in the daily blue folder will be noted to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Second and subsequent Quarterly Offenses: A notation on the monthly calendar in the daily blue folder will be noted to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework assignment must be returned the following day. This will be the last warning.

When homework is repeatedly incomplete there will be recess detention and a meeting with the teacher. The student will complete the homework in school the following day. The teacher will determine the time of completion. Times can include, but are not limited to: recess, gym, music, art, library, homeroom and lunch.

THIRD THROUGH SIXTH GRADE

The third through sixth grade students will receive homework assignments on Friday and the completed work is due the following Thursday. Each week the student will receive weekly binder homework in addition to daily homework.

Each student is expected to bring his/her homework binder/planner to school every day to encourage responsibility and organizational planning. There is a consequence if they do not bring their binder/planner to school.

Teachers will provide the homework in multiple facets either on the assignment page/packet, website, and/or posted in the classroom. It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and return it when due. A parent/guardian is required to sign the assignment page/planner weekly for Friday (K-4) Monday (5th – 8th) morning to be checked by the homeroom teacher. Students will receive a homework infraction if the homework assignment page /planner is not signed.

Each month students are required to complete a content area project or book report that is an extension of their in class unit. The project will be assigned on the first Monday of the month and is due on the last Friday of the month.

CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES 3-6

All Homework infractions will be noted in the teachers' grade book.

First Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Second Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Third Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. A card change will be given to the student. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Fourth and Subsequent Quarterly Offenses: The student will be assigned after school detention for every subsequent infraction. The teacher will be listing the after school detention earned as a result of the infraction on the monthly calendar (grade 3), weekly homework sheet (grade 4) or in the student planner (grades 5 & 6) showing the date the detention is to be served.

If a parent has a conflict with the date, they need to contact Mr. Turner (cturner@mvracs.org or 781-388-0222 ext. 3864) to reschedule. **Parents should not contact teachers about rescheduling detentions.**

SEVENTH THROUGH TWELFTH GRADES

Acceptance of personal responsibility, strong organizational skills, and independent work habits are three essential attributes of successful students that we seek to develop during seventh through twelfth grade. During these years the amount of homework assigned is greater than in the elementary grades, and the responsibility for recording, completing and returning assignments is placed squarely on the student's shoulders.

Each student (grades 5-12) will be issued a Student Planner, at no cost, which will be placed in the 3-ring organizational binder that students are expected to bring to each class every day. Failure to bring their planner to class will result in a warning. Planners should not be altered or folded in any way. If a student loses their planner, they will be required to purchase a new one from the school.

Teachers will announce homework at the beginning of each class and allow students an opportunity to write their assignment(s) in their Planners. Students will have homework every day, but will have access to the homework assignments for the following week on the preceding Friday via the school's website. If the school's website is not up to date, the teacher will be required to provide a written outline of all assignments due for the following week on the preceding Friday.

Parents should examine the planner, or visit the website, to see what assignments are due and when. Parents must review and sign the planner every Friday. For long-term work such as projects and reports, students are expected to write in the due dates for the intermediate stages and the final copy as soon as the assignment is announced.

For grades 9-12, students must keep the binder of the planner given to them by the school for their entire high school career at Mystic Valley.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

SECTION ONE – POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

The Golden Rule of academic honesty is simple: always do your own work. When you use someone else's work, you must give them credit for it. Never claim credit for someone else's work. If credit for an idea, illustration or specific language is not given, the teacher assumes that the work is your own. Using the words or work of another without giving credit is **plagiarism**.

GIVING CREDIT

Sources must be credited in two ways: in the bibliography (which lists all the sources consulted during the preparation of the assignment), and in footnotes or endnotes (which identify the precise source of each idea, illustration or passage which is duplicated, quoted or paraphrased). It is not enough simply to list a source in the bibliography if material from that source appears in the assignment.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Book reports, lab reports, research papers, and special projects require advance planning, sound time management, a great deal of preparation, and several drafts. For this reason, such major assignments often represent a significant proportion of a student's grade. On all such assignments students are expected to express only your own ideas unless credit is otherwise given.

DAILY HOMEWORK

Unless the teacher specifically says otherwise, students must do their own homework. Doing your own homework gives you the benefit of the assignment. You learn nothing by simply copying someone else's work, and it is dishonest to claim that someone else's work is your own. Copying someone else's assignment is **plagiarism**. Giving another student your homework to copy is also academically dishonest, and is subject to the same consequences.

EXAMINATIONS, TESTS AND QUIZZES

Cheating on an exam, test or quiz is a form of plagiarism, because the cheater is falsely claiming credit for mastery of the material. Helping another student cheat is also dishonest. The same consequences apply.

COMPUTER USE

The Internet is a wonderful source of information, but only when used honestly. Material taken from an online source must be cited, or that use is plagiarism.

Downloading an assignment or purchasing an assignment (which includes paying someone else to complete an assignment) is very serious violations of the Mystic Valley Code of Values. The most blatant forms of plagiarism could result in the student **receiving a zero for the quarter in that course** as well as appropriate disciplinary action.

FONT SIZE, MARGINS, AND SPACING

Unless the teacher specifies otherwise, all assignments are to be in 12-point type in a standard font such as Times New Roman or Arial, regular style, with 1” margins, and double-spaced. Manipulating these dimensions to make a paper seem longer than it is will result in a lower grade.

THESAURUS

Simply changing words by using the thesaurus function on your computer does not make the text yours. The passage that was superficially altered through the thesaurus must be cited.

CONSEQUENCES

School administrators and the student’s parents will be notified of each instance of plagiarism, and copies of each notification will be kept in the student’s academic file. All offenders in K-12 will be required to **re-do** the plagiarized assignment honestly. In grades K-8, the Administration will determine the appropriate consequence. For grades 9-12, they will receive only **one-half of the credit** the assignment would otherwise have received. The student may have up to five days to do this if the assignment is a major essay or project; otherwise, the student must hand in the assignment the next day. Second and subsequent offenses will result in **zero on the assignment**. Third and subsequent offenses will result in **zero for the quarter** in that course.

For High School students, third offenses in the same year will also result in a **notation on the student’s transcript**. Offenses are cumulative across the curriculum in each academic year. Thus a ninth grade student who plagiarizes in Math, then English, then History, would be required to re-do the assignment for half-credit in math, would receive a zero on the English assignment, and would receive a zero for the quarter in history. Students who plagiarize may also be subject to disciplinary as well as academic consequences, which will become increasingly serious with each incident. **Detention, suspension, and retention are among the possible disciplinary outcomes when a student plagiarizes.**

SECTION TWO –FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q – Can my family help me complete the assignment?

A – Yes, but there are important limits. The work you turn in needs to be yours, not a parent’s. Again, the important thing is that you give credit to anyone whose idea or work you use.

Q – CAN MY FRIENDS AND I WORK TOGETHER?

A – Yes, up to a point. You can help each other, but you cannot simply copy from each other. If you have questions about what the difference is, ask your teacher for clarification.

Q – IS IT PLAGIARISM IF I USE *CLIFFS NOTES*?

A – Not if you read the book, and use your own ideas in writing the report. If you get an idea from *Cliffs Notes*, you must footnote it. Otherwise, it is plagiarism. **When in Doubt, Cite Your Source.**

Q – CAN I USE THE SAME PAPER OR PROJECT FOR MORE THAN ONE CLASS?

A – Almost never, although your teachers may agree in advance to allow you to do this. Usually you may use an assignment only once, for one class. Using a paper a second time without permission is self-plagiarism – claiming credit for work that is not original for that second class.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

In compliance with Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations (603 CMR 46.00), the MVRCS ensures that every student attending our school is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

1. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and
2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Use of restraint – Physical restraint may be used only in the following circumstances:

- When non-physical interventions would not be effective; and
- When the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others

Limitations on use of restraint – Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:

- As a means of punishment; or
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm.

For more information about this policy, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

WELLNESS POLICY

For more information, please go to our website at www.mvrCS.com

SECTION 3: PROGRESS REPORTS & REPORT CARDS

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress reports will be sent to parents 4 times each year to provide specific descriptive information about student progress in each subject. At the end of each semester, parents will receive a report card with cumulative data on their children's performance and progress.

The following is a description of the K-6 report card:

READING	Definitions
Recognizes Sounds	Average score of Mastery Tests (when applicable) gr. K-1.
Reads Fluently and Accurately	Average score of Story Check-Outs. Gr. K-6.
Comprehends What is Read	Mastery Tests for RM 1-6.; Novels tests and quizzes.
Completes Work Accurately	Average score of Workbook Grades.
SPELLING	
Spelling Lessons/Applied Spelling	Average score of Spelling Tests & Applied spelling in daily writing assignments.
WRITING	
Language for Learning/Reasoning & Writing	Average score of workbooks/tests scores in program Gr. K-6.
Correct Use of Grammar and Punctuation	Average score of grammar worksheets and application of grammar to writing assignments across curricula. Grades 1-6.
Forms Letters Correctly	Assessment of cursive program lessons and/or daily writing assignments for quality printing/cursive. Score is S, S+, S-.
Ability to Express Ideas in Paragraph Form.	Average score of content for paragraph/writing assignments. Gr. 1-6.
MATHEMATICS	
Understands & Demonstrates Math Concepts	Homework average of guided practice/problem set.
Completes Math Facts and Problems Accurately	Average score of math fact sheets and meeting/mental math.
Accuracy of Tests	Average score of tests (oral and written)..
HISTORY	
Understands and Applies Historical & Geographical Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
SCIENCE	
Understands and Applies Science Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
SPECIALTY CLASSES	
Grades K-4: S/S+/S-. Grades 5-8: Graded.	
ART	
	Average based on participation, behavior, and care of materials.
MUSIC	
	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	
	Average based on participation, effort, and cooperation.
LIBRARY	
	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior. Gr. K-6 S/S+/S-
SPANISH	
	Average based on participation, class work/homework, and assessments.

BIWEEKLY ACADEMIC WARNING NOTICE

In grades 7-12, if a student is averaging below an 80% in between progress reports and report cards, they will receive a Biweekly Academic Warning notice in the mail/email. This notice will describe the reason for the grade, current averages and opportunities for improvement. In addition, the teacher and subject will be listed for each area that is below an 80%. This additional communication for these grade levels is to assist parents with their connection between home and school. If a child scores below an 80% on any given test the test will be sent home for parent signature.

SECTION 4: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are encouraged to participate in school-related activities. Volunteers may also be involved in monitoring the playground and assisting with School events. In addition, parents are encouraged to contribute their time and talent to organizing extracurricular activities and community outreach projects. All School volunteers must complete a CORI (Criminal Offender) check, which must be done annually. If an activity occurs that is not in keeping with the School policies, the School Director may discontinue your services.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) was founded by the school administration and a group of parents dedicated to supporting student learning and the overall success of the School.

MYSTIC VALLEY BOOSTER CLUB

The Mystic Valley Booster Club is an organization composed of school officials and parents dedicated to supporting the development of athletics and after-school activities for the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Parent Advisory Committee is an organization for parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. Part of the mission of this group is to work towards providing respect for, understanding, awareness, and a network of support for students with special needs and their families. The PAC will meet with school administration in order to plan, develop and evaluate Mystic Valley's special education programs, as well as other programs that can improve the school.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year to facilitate open communication between parents and teachers regarding students' progress. Refer to the School calendar for specific dates.

We maintain an open door policy at the School. Parents are encouraged to visit their children's classrooms. Parents are required to sign in, give a 24-hour notice for observations and be accompanied while in the building. Arrangements should be made directly with the classroom teacher. Informal conferences or conversations may also be scheduled with teachers or School leaders at any time throughout the year.

PARENT INFORMATIONAL LETTERS

Periodic letters from the School Director on issues of educational interest will be posted on the school's website and e-mailed to parents. Intended to supplement the regular news items available on the school's website, these letters will provide broader perspectives on the life and mission of the school.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be planned throughout the year for various academic, enrichment and extracurricular purposes. Parents will receive advance notice of all such trips. A permission slip must be signed by a student's parent in order for the student to participate in a field trip. Students without signed permission slips will remain at the School in another class. Participating students should bring a bag lunch unless otherwise noted. Although the School absorbs most of the cost of the field trips, parents are sometimes asked to contribute. Occasionally a student may lose their privilege of participating in a field trip for behavioral reasons. If this were to happen, and the money has already been sent to the third party, the parent will not be reimbursed.

Occasionally, parents may be needed to serve as chaperones on class field trips. No parent should feel obligated to serve in this capacity, but parents are encouraged to volunteer if possible. If chosen, you will be asked to attend an orientation. The primary responsibility of a chaperone is to ensure appropriate supervision for students. Parental chaperones are asked to take this responsibility seriously and to remain vigilant and attentive to the students' needs throughout the trip. Children who are not enrolled in the class may not accompany the chaperones. If there are more volunteers than needed for room parents, a lottery will be done by the lead teacher of the grade to determine which parents may go.

SECTION 5: CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School strives to offer many different and challenging programs to our students. All students must meet certain academics and behavioral standards before they are allowed to participate. (See below). This applies to any after school activity including but not limited to: athletics, drama, band, etc. Students will not be eligible for any school activity if they owe money to the school for any reason, i.e. failure to pay user fee or failure to pay for the replacement of school property. These parents should contact the Business Manager to make payment schedules or to dispute the School's position. The School's Finance Committee on a monthly basis will hear all financial disputes. In the event of a dispute, the student will be allowed to participate until the Finance Committee makes a decision. Parents are responsible for providing a recent (within 13 months) physical of each child before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD AT CLOSE OF MARKING PERIOD

Any student found to have failed a subject for any marking period will be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activities for the following marking period (quarter). This eligibility will carry over from one school year to the next. Therefore, if a student fails a course for the year they will be ineligible for fall sports, unless the course is passed in a recognized summer school class. Students that are dismissed from the team because of being deemed ineligible will not qualify for a refund of any user fee paid to the school.

If athletic or activity seasons extend beyond the marking period and a student improves academically to meet the eligibility guidelines, they will be deemed eligible to participate in the activities, granted they would have met any qualifying criteria established by the coach, instructor or school. If the activity in question has a user fee, the parent's of said student would be required to pay a pro-rated amount of the user fee.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD DURING MARKING PERIOD

All members of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School competitive sports/co-curricular teams must maintain consistent academic progress in all subject areas. Consistent effort and forward progress must be evident in the following areas:

- 1. Homework**
- 2. Test Preparation and Results**
- 3. Class Work**
- 4. Special Projects**
- 5. Time on Task**

Failure to meet the above standards, as determined by the teacher and administration, will result in a short-term suspension and /or dismissal from the team or squad. Students that are dismissed from the team because of being deemed ineligible will not qualify for a refund of any user fee paid to the school.

STUDENT CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY STANDARD

All students participating in extracurricular activities, as defined above, must maintain an excellent student conduct standing. Compliance with the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School Code of Virtues will be especially monitored in the following areas:

- 1. Following Directions the First Time Given**
- 2. Conduct During Instruction**
- 3. Transition in Hallways to Specialty Classes and Recess**
- 4. Conduct in Specialty Classes, Recess Periods & Lunch Periods**
- 5. Respect for Adults**
- 6. Respect for Peers**

Failure to comply in any of the areas above may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Suspension from the regular classroom setting will result in suspension from participation in games and practices that coincide with the duration of the suspension, but no less than 1 game

ATTENDANCE

Any student absent from school the day of a scheduled activity will not be allowed to participate in a scheduled activity for that day. A student must be in attendance at school prior to 11:00 a.m. Students dismissed before 11:00 a.m. would not be considered in attendance that day and will therefore be prohibited from participating from a scheduled activity that day. Students must be present on Friday (or last school day) before a weekend/vacation activity, or they are prohibited from participating from a scheduled activity during that weekend/vacation. Suspended students are ineligible to attend or participate in school activities while they are suspended. The school's Director must approve any exception to this policy in advance.

USER FEES AND SUSPENSION

User fees are non-refundable in the event that a student is declared ineligible due to an academic or behavioral suspension or in the event the student quits or is dismissed from the team.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION, RE-ENROLLMENT, & TRANSFERS

ADMISSION

All students in the Commonwealth are eligible for enrollment at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Preference for admission into the school is given in the following order:

- Siblings of current or admitted students
- Regional Applicants-applicants from communities specifically named in the charter: Malden, Medford, Melrose, Everett, Stoneham and Wakefield
- Non-Regional Applicants-applicants from all other communities

The school does not discriminate based on race, religion, sex, learning ability, or any other basis prohibited by law. Students who are entering kindergarten must be five years of age before September 1 of the school year for which they are applying. For more information, please view the school's enrollment policy which can be found at www.mvracs.com.

RE-ENROLLMENT

To secure your child's place at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School for the next school year, you must officially re-enroll him or her. In early spring, re-enrollment packets will be sent home along with the spring deadline for initial re-enrollment. Students whose re-enrollment packets are received after the deadline will have to re-apply for the following lottery. All students must participate in a final re-enrollment for the subsequent school year in July. Those not participating in either the initial or final re-enrollment will forfeit their spot at the school.

SIBLING PREFERENCE

Siblings of current students who are not enrolled at Mystic Valley will be granted sibling preference, and will be offered enrollment in the school when there is a vacancy in the respective grade. If a family fails to transfer the non-enrolled sibling when offered an opening, that sibling will forfeit their sibling preference and will be subject to the enrollment policy of the school. **If a student leaves the school, but has one or more siblings remain at the school, they forfeit their claim to sibling preference and would be subject to the enrollment policy of the school.**

TRANSFERS

Parents who need to withdraw their child are asked to call the Office Manager at 781-388-1961 to schedule an exit interview, receive a transfer slip and return school property such as books. The school's office will attempt to meet all requests but parents should give a 24-hour notice to allow for the preparation of needed materials. Once the parent receives a transfer slip, their child is no longer a student at MVRCS and must accompany the parent home.

STUDENT RECORDS

Every student is required to complete and submit the following forms as part of the registration process. Forms are available in a family's primary language. Any parent can view or have copies made of their child's records with a 24-hour written notice. The school reserves the right to charge parents for copies made of records at ten cents per copy. For assistance in completing these forms call the Office Manager at 781-388-1961.

Proof of the Child's Age. Child must be 5 years old prior to September 1 of the current school year to be eligible for Kindergarten.

Registration Form. This form is used to record all basic information about the student and the family, including home, work, and emergency telephone numbers. It is extremely important that a parent or guardian sign this form. All sections must be completed.

Free and Reduced Price Meals Application. This form allows families to apply for federally funded meals, and it must be completed for all students. Student name, address, signature, and monthly income or federal assistance number must be included; all such information must reflect the student's status no more than 30 days prior to the first day of school. These applications will be distributed by the end of the first week of school and must be returned within 10 days. All family members must be listed on the same form.

Transportation Application. This form allows families to apply for and receive transportation from the School. The form must be completed for each student enrolled wishing to request transportation. The home address and telephone number should be indicated on this form, in addition to the nearest major cross street in the student's neighborhood. Notification of the student's assigned bus stop will be sent via regular mail. Students are not allowed to ride the bus without a signed transportation contract. To be eligible for transportation, a child must live more than 1 and ½ linear miles from the school building they attend and within the region (Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield). The school will revoke the privilege of transportation for those students that do not abide by the contract.

Medical Forms. This set of forms, which must be submitted for all students within the first 30 days of attendance, includes immunization schedules; family medical information; the child's medical history, including allergies; and a Medication Permission Form, which will permit the school to dispense specified medication to the student, as necessary. More information is provided in the Health and Safety section.

Record Release. This form gives the School permission to obtain all records pertaining to a given student from his or her previous school. This form must be completed and should include the telephone number and address of the previous school, as well as the signature of the parent or legal guardian.

It is critical that the School is notified immediately of any changes in a student's name, address, phone number, responsible parent, or any other information provided at the time of registration. Such changes should be communicated in writing and addressed to the School's Business Manager.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School complies with all Federal and State laws concerning student records. Information regarding a student's progress will be shared only with parents or guardians, appropriate members of the School's faculty and staff, and any professional consultants retained for the purpose of measuring an/or improving instructional quality. When information regarding student performance is made public, it will be presented in such a way as to avoid the identification of specific individual students.

The School may not provide name, phone, or address lists to parents wishing to organize with other parents/guardians of students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Parents must find alternative ways to acquire such information, such as circulating forms at parent events or meetings of the Parent Teacher Organization.

Photographs, Video Recording and Press Releases

People and groups interested in our programs may visit the school. If for any reason, you do not wish to have your child photographed, video taped, or otherwise contacted by the media, you must notify the school office in writing

SECTION 7: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

MEAL PROGRAM K-12

All meals require a ticket:

Tickets can be purchased in the Malden lower campus only. Please visit each office for their operating hours.

Please remember tickets will not be sold or given to children of any grade. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements with the school for tickets in the event they cannot come to school during the hours listed above. If a parent is having difficulty obtaining tickets, please contact the business manager to work out alternative arrangements.

The cost for tickets (school year 10-11) will be as follows:

Milk	\$.35
Breakfast	\$1.50
Lunch	\$2.75

Parents are encouraged to buy tickets in bulk (maximum 2 sheets per child) to avoid running out of tickets unexpectedly. If a child is sent to school without a lunch ticket a box of cereal will be provided and a note will be sent home with the child.

After the fifth time a child is sent to school without a lunch, the child **may not** be given cereal and his/her parents will be required to bring a meal to school for the child.

Families that qualify for **free or reduced meals** must also acquire tickets from the office. The tickets used by those families qualifying for free or reduced meals will not reflect the status of any child. Families that qualify for free or reduced meals cannot exchange or share tickets with other families. If this practice is discovered, the family will be warned. If it happens again, the family will be removed from the program and forfeit their eligibility.

Families may complete a free or reduced form at anytime during the school year if they experience a change in their income. If the form dictates a change in the student's meal status, the new status will take effect from the date of the new application forward, not retroactive to the beginning of the school year.

LUNCHES SENT FROM HOME

In the event that you discover your child forgot his or her lunch at home, please refrain from purchasing and bringing any fast food items to school. Please quickly make a homemade lunch for your child clearly marked with his or her name. If a meal made from an outside establishment is sent into the school, the school will provide the student with an alternative lunch and give the food from the outside establishment to the child upon dismissal.

SECTION 8: HEALTH & SAFETY

SCHOOL AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student's parent/guardian is primarily responsible for the health of the child. Parents should not send children to school if they are showing signs of illness.

The school is responsible for the student's well being during school hours. The school, through its nurse's office, will handle any illness, injuries or emergencies that arise throughout the day. The parents will be responsible for any follow up medication or treatment and should keep the school's nurse informed of all developments.

Parents are responsible for providing a recent (within 13 months) physical of each child before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

The following health screenings are performed on students as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

- Vision and Hearing
- Heights and Weights
- Postural screening

Children found to be at risk will be re-tested and the nurse will notify the parents.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students must meet the following immunization requirements as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Entering Kindergarten:

- 5 doses of DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus)
- 4 doses of Polio
- 2 doses of Measles, 1 dose of Mumps and 1 dose Rubella (MMR)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Varicella or documentation of Chicken Pox
- Test and Results of Tuberculosis (TB) or note from a doctor for exemption (low risk)—(see note below)
- Results of a Physical Examination – no more than 12 months old
- Results of the most recent Lead Screening

Entering Grade 4:

- Results of a Physical Examination – no more than 12 months old

Entering Grade 7:

- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Measles, 1 dose of Mumps and 1 dose of Rubella (MMR)
- 1 dose of a Tetanus booster if no documentation of booster within 5 years
- 1 dose of Varicella if younger than 13 years old
- 2 doses of Varicella if 13 years old or older
- Results of Physical Examination – no more than 12 months old

Tuberculosis (TB) is a growing concern regarding health. According to the Director of the Division of Tuberculosis Prevention and Control as part of the Massachusetts Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Diseases, a student is to be assessed for risk. If a student is at low risk no TB test is required. If a student is at high risk, per the department's standards above, they need to be tested for TB. Any new student that is new to the country would be considered at risk. In this event the student could not enter the school until the test is performed and the child needs to be cleared of TB by a doctor.

INJURIES OR ILLNESS

In the event of a major injury or onset of a serious illness the school will immediately contact 911 and then the parent. If necessary the school will transport the child to the Melrose Wakefield Hospital or Whidden Memorial Hospital in Everett for emergency treatment.

If the injury/illness is less severe and does not require immediate hospitalization, the school will contact the parent for directives. In the event the parent cannot be reached, the school will contact the individuals listed on the student's emergency list. If after exhausting the list and no one is reached, the school will have the student transported to the closest hospital (Melrose Wakefield K-8 and Whidden Memorial 9-12) for care.

Parents should not send their child to school if they show signs of illness. Children should not attend or return to school until they have had a normal temperature (with no medication) for at least 24 hours. If a child becomes ill the parent, or its designee, will be notified to come pick up the child. In the event that no one can be contacted, and the illness does not require hospitalization, the child will remain with the nurse until such time as the parent can be contacted.

MEDICATIONS

Students may require medications to return to school after illness or for other reasons. The following parameters have been established concerning medications:

Prescription medications:

The school must have on file a signed parent acknowledgement form as well as a medical consult. Faxes will be accepted but nothing verbal.

The medicine must be in a labeled prescription bottle from a pharmacy including student's name, name of medication and directions for administration (dose and time).

Prescription bottles must not contain anything more than a 30-day supply.

Prescription medicine must be delivered to the nurse **by the parent**, not by the student.

Epipens:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form and an emergency form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the allergy and side effects.

The epipen must be given to the school in the original box from the pharmacy. It must have on the original label with the child's name.

Inhalers:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form and an emergency form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the diagnosis.

All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name.

Parents should send an extra inhaler into the nurse's office.

Over the counter medication:

1. The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

They need to be sent in their original container labeled with the child's name and teacher's name.

Parents need to notify the nurse in writing of dosage and time to distribute.

Nebulizer Treatments:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the diagnosis and frequency of treatment.

Any associated medications or tubing should be labeled and given to the nurse.

ACCOMODATIONS MADE TO INJURIES/ILLNESS

From time to time children's injuries will result in their needing crutches; wheelchairs or accommodations to be made that will allow them to participate in school. A doctor's note should be sent to the nurse's office after any medical treatment that might affect the child's ability to participate in

any activities at school. The Nurse will contact the 504 Coordinator to develop a 504 Accommodation Plan to address the student's needs during the period of . If necessary, the child will be allowed to use the elevator. If a child cannot participate in Physical Education the nurse must receive a doctor's note and a note should also be given to the child's teacher.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A communicable disease is one that can be transmitted from one child to another. Some of these are listed below. If your child appears to have any of the symptoms (sore throat, red eyes, blotchy skin or unusual rashes, etc.) they must be kept out of school and seen by the doctor.

Some of the more common communicable diseases are:

Headlice – All lice/nits must be removed before return. Nurse must clear child before being able to return. Parents should accompany the student to school the next day. (The nurse should be consulted to assist in eliminating the head lice.)

Chicken Pox – Student should stay out of school for one week after onset. They must have a doctor's note verifying their ability to return.

Strep Throat, Conjunctivitis and Scarlet Fever– Student should return to school 24 hours after medication is started accompanied by a doctor's note.

FIELDTRIPS AND MEDICATION

If a child receives medication (including an EpiPen), a permission form is needed authorizing a specific individual (teacher for example) to administer in order for the child to participate in the field trip.

Communication with Parents

The school nurse or staff member will administer first aid or medical treatment in the event of minor injuries. First aid treatments are procedures that require only the application of simple procedures. Some examples are ice packs, bandages antibacterial ointments. Medical treatments are more advanced procedures that require more extensive treatment. Some examples are the application of pressure to halt bleeding and the care of more serious cuts and bruises. In the event of a student receiving first aid, a note will be sent home with the student informing the parent of the incident. The communication with the parent will be based on the student's diligence in insuring that his/her parent receives the note. In the event of a student receiving a medical treatment for an injury, the parent will be notified through a telephone call.

PHYSICALS

All physicals will be collected and filed by the Head Nurse of the School in Malden. This is true for academic as well as athletic purposes.

SECTION 9:VISITOR INFORMATION/PICK UP/DROP-OFF/BUS INFORMATION

VISITOR IDENTIFICATION

To help ensure a safe and secure learning environment for your children, all visitors to the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are required to sign-in at the appropriate school's office, show identification and wear a visitor's pass. Faculty and staff have been instructed to escort anyone not having a pass immediately to the office for identification.

PROCEDURE #1 GRADES K-8

Parents find parking in the surrounding areas and escort their children to the lines that form in the playground of both buildings from 7:20-7:30a.m. Students enter either building at approximately 7:30a.m. Pick up your children for all grades in the same lines as the morning. No pick-up is allowed in the fishbowl after 3:00 p.m.

PROCEDURE #2 FOR DROP- OFF ONLY GRADES K, 1, 4, 5 AND 6

Parents may also choose to drop off in front of the school lobby (fishbowl) that is located on the Jacob street side of the school property. This procedure allows for parents to drive into the rear parking lot for drop-off only **–no parking**. This lot is designated as one way. Please enter on Jacob Street and exit on Salem Street. As is our practice, staff members will be assigned to supervise the children on the sidewalk in front of the school lobby from 7:20a.m.-7:40a.m. Students will line up in front of the fishbowl until they enter the building, at approximately 7:30a.m. For the first week of school, staff members will be assigned to specifically help younger students with any difficulty they may have in finding their classrooms.

PARKING INFORMATION K-8

Our school property does not lend itself to parking availability. In the interest of safety, we will not be able to allow parking in *any* of the lots. Parking is available on surrounding streets. **Please avoid parking in the former firehouse parking lot that is adjacent to the annex. Cars that obstruct the openings to the former fire station and/or its parking lot are subject to being towed.**

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the pick-up and drop-off points and visitor parking areas at the School, and carefully follow the School's instructions for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of the School and its students. Parents utilizing the entrance off Jacob Street in the morning (fishbowl side) should know that it is both a one-way and drop off only access road. Those parents wishing to park and enter the school themselves should park on a nearby street.

Certain faculty and staff members will greet buses in the morning and dismiss the children in the afternoon, ensuring that each student boards the appropriate bus in a safe and orderly fashion.

Unless the school is notified in writing by a parent or guardian, no child attending K – 2 will be allowed to disembark a bus without an adult. Parents or guardians should wait for the child on the *right side* of the bus, so the student will not be required to cross in front of the bus or behind it. In the event that an adult guardian is not waiting for the child at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the School and the parents or emergency contact will be notified. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00p.m., the police will be notified. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop three times which results in children being returned to the school will forfeit their privilege to use the bus for the rest of the year.

BUS INFORMATION:

SAFE BUS RIDING

Students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are expected to conduct themselves according to the Code of Values and to practice such virtues as respect, responsibility, and kindness, in all School settings – including on the bus. Following the School rules on the bus is essential not only for developing good character, but for ensuring students' safety.

Students are taught to wait for and board the bus in an orderly fashion. The following rules are posted in the front and the back of each bus, and students are expected to abide by them at all times. Bus transportation is a privilege and not something the school is required to provide

Parents that utilize the bus must notify the Business Manager in writing about any life threatening allergies children may have that would require the use of an EpiPen on the bus. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop, resulting in the child to be returned to the school, three times will forfeit the privilege of riding the bus.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School utilizes Vocell Bus Company. They can be contacted at 781-393-0220.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON BUS

Introduction and Rationale

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School Student Bus Behavior Policy is consistent with the Code of Values. All behaviors expected of students during instructional time are also expected while riding the school bus. Students will be given instruction on the proper behaviors expected on a periodic basis throughout the school year. Procedures for the enforcement of those behaviors, consequences in sequential steps, and limitations in the amount of misbehavior allowed, and rewards for good behavior will be similar in nature with those procedures that are implemented in the classrooms.

Parents play an important role in this process. When an incident of misbehavior occurs with a particular child, the parents of that child will be called. The incident will be discussed and the steps of increasing consequences will be reviewed. Parents are then expected to take an active role in communicating with the child about proper behavior while riding the school bus. Along the same lines, it is important that both students and parents communicate with the school director about acts of misconduct performed by other students. Communication about these incidents must take place quickly in order for the school director to enforce behavior policy effectively. All reports of misconduct that parents receive from their children must be reported immediately. Failure to do so will only add to an already existing problem.

Once an incident is reported, a school official, will talk with all parties involved including the bus driver to determine the nature of the occurrence and how to best proceed with the steps of consequence that are part of the policy. Parents of the student or students in question will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school for a conference to discuss the incident.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Proper Bus Riding Behavior

Students must always respond to directions given by the bus driver, in lieu of an employee of the school being on the bus. The bus driver is the adult in charge of implementing all of the policies and procedures for good behavior during the course of the bus ride. Students must always respond to directions the first time they are asked.

Students are required to remain in their seats for the duration of the bus ride. Students may be assigned seats at the discretion of the school administration and the bus driver. Students should keep their feet and hands out of the aisle.

Students must maintain a “hands off” policy with other students. Students are to refrain from horseplay and rough play that can cause conflict and may lead to physical violence. Students must follow the directions of the bus driver or school personnel the first time the directions are given.

Students should never put or throw anything out of the window. No food, drink, games or toys are allowed on the bus.

PHYSICALLY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR

Students should not touch other students for any reason.

Students should not engage in horseplay or roughhousing.

Acts of violence against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

Serious acts of violence against another student may result in immediate removal of the student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Physical intimidation against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

DEROGATORY COMMENTS TOWARD OTHERS

Derogatory comments toward others in any way are not allowed.

Name-calling is not allowed.

Laughing at the expense of another is not allowed.

Imitating other students in a negative way is not allowed.

Asking other students to join in any of the above activities is not allowed.

ILLEGAL ACTS

Acts of theft, vandalism, or use of illegal substances may result in the immediate removal of a student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Any behaviors that disrupt other drivers will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

STEPS OF CONSEQUENCE FOR BUS INFRACTIONS:

Step 1

Students who commit an act of misconduct will be warned.

Step 2

Students who commit a second act of misconduct will receive a bus suspension for one or two days. The parents of the student must attend a conference with the school’s assistant director and director in order to have the student reinstated to ride the bus.

Step 3

Students who commit a third offense will receive a longer suspension of at least a week and not more than a month, except in extreme cases. Parents of the student must attend a reinstatement conference.

Step 4

Students who commit a fourth offense or more will be removed from riding the bus for at least a month up to the remainder of the school year. Parents of the student must attend a reinstatement conference with the school director at the beginning of the following school year.

VIDEO TAPE POLICY (On Bus)

RATIONALE

The hiring of bus monitors is a financial impossibility. The lack of bus monitors makes it necessary to institute the use of video cameras to monitor behavior of the children on the bus, as well as the driver. All buses have cameras on them and the school’s personal will view the tapes from time to time to ensure safety protocols are being followed as well as proper behavior is being exhibited.

PROCEDURE

The school can and may request the transportation provider to install cameras on the buses. If so, these tapes will be reviewed by the school director at the report of an act of misconduct. Facts discovered from the tapes will be used in deciding upon a course of action.

If a student breaks a rule on the bus, the driver will notify the School Director, and swift action will be taken. Serious misbehavior may lead to the suspension of bus riding privileges.

Parents with specific complaints about bus service should contact the School's Business Manager. Transportation is only allowed to and from the student's home address. No other address will be considered when determining eligibility or for transporting the student.

SECTION 10: CODE OF VALUES, SCHOOL RULES & REGULATIONS

The faculty and staff at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are dedicated to providing our students with the skills necessary to reason, communicate, and live with dignity in a civil society. Central to this mission is the creation of a school community characterized by caring, discipline, order and respect.

The Code of Values has been designed to guide the efforts of teachers and staff in creating a safe, orderly environment and to reinforce the primary mission of the school, which is rigorous academic learning. The Code, which states clearly all school-wide rules governing student behavior, as well as, the consequences for breaking the rules, will serve as a compact among parents, students and our staff.

The Code of Values identifies eleven character values that will be at the center of our school's character education curriculum.

THE CHARACTER VALUES:

Responsibility and Respect:

Responsibility means you understand that you have agreed to do something even when it is not easy to do. All members of the student body and staff are expected to be respectful to each other. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated. All members of our school community are encouraged to interact in a warm and friendly manner. Students are expected to demonstrate respect by walking quietly in the halls, without pushing, shoving, or hitting others. Respect for others begins with respect for one's self. This is shown in how you dress and behave both at school and at home. Respect for one's self and others is part of building strong personal character.

Honesty:

Telling the truth is essential. Cheating, stealing, lying or other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be honest and tell the truth.

Gratitude:

Thankfulness for the gifts in life and the gift of life.

Kindness/Compassion:

At the school, students will learn to care for one another: to be proud of what they and their fellow students do in class and at school activities. Kindness for one's classmates is a building block for school spirit.

Perseverance:

Perseverance means that you learn to stick to a task until you get it done. Pushing on despite difficulty and hardship.

Courage:

Courage is the ability to know what the right thing to do is, and to be able to do this in the face of adversity. You will learn how to tell right from wrong and what it means to have the conviction of your beliefs.

Self-discipline:

Self-discipline means controlling one's wants and balancing what you want to do with what others may want to do. Self-discipline leads to self-control, which is essential to building strong character.

Good Citizenship/Generosity:

Generosity at the school also helps to develop school spirit and promote responsibility to the community. Citizenship also includes respect for your country and flag. Patriotism means loyalty to our country and its principles. Students are encouraged to demonstrate patriotism by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance each day, reading about our many national heroes and developing an understanding of our democratic form of government.

Forgiveness:

The ability to forget wrongs done to us. Finding it in your heart to pardon or excuse.

Wonder / Hope:

To delight in beauty and mystery. To find the light in the darkness.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each member of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School community has a role to play in creating a safe, orderly environment that is conducive to learning.

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

The classroom teacher of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is the center of the school's character education and discipline policy. Teachers will continuously emphasize to both students and parents the school's Code of Values. The Code of Values will be the basis for all classroom and school rules.

Three basic principles of classroom management and discipline will be implemented in each classroom. Students will be taught how to behave responsibly in each type of classroom activity, and these lessons will be reinforced throughout the year:

- Respect for Adults
- Respect for other Students
- Respect for Self

Teachers will strive to interact frequently with each student when the student is behaving correctly.

When misbehavior occurs, teachers will calmly and consistently implement appropriate consequences for corrective action. Teachers will insure that no less than four positive interactions occur for each corrective action.

SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The role of the School Director with regard to discipline is to guide staff and students in their efforts to ensure student success, which is the mission of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. The School Director will assist staff in responding to severe misbehavior, such as insubordination, physically dangerous and/or illegal acts, as well as any chronic or recurring problems. At the Upper and Lower School, the Assistant Director or Professional Development Coordinator will assume this role if the Director is not present.

In certain cases, the Director may initiate time-out periods, parent conferences, in-school suspensions, out of school suspension or recommend expulsion. The Director may also contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities if circumstances warrant. At the Upper School, the Assistant Director will assume this role if the Director is not present.

SUPPORT STAFF

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's administrative staff includes an Assistant Director, two Professional Development Coordinators, an Assistant Director to the High School, a Business Manager, a Human Resource Director, a Facilities Manager, a Special Education Coordinator, three nurses, and other support personnel to assist with instruction and help meet students' needs.

All members of the administrative staff play an important role in evaluating the disciplinary policies and procedures and assisting staff in dealing with chronic misbehavior.

A nurse is available to faculty, staff and students for consultation on such matters as personal hygiene, nutrition, substance abuse, depression, child abuse, or neglect. The nurse also provides medical care for students who are ill or injured. If the nurse is not on school grounds, their designee will assist students in need and will determine whether parents should be contacted and the student sent home.

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM (TAT)/CHILD STUDY TEAM

Even after establishing a positive classroom environment with clear behavioral expectations, one or more students may still have academic difficulties or behave inappropriately. In such cases, your child's teacher may wish to explore additional academic or behavioral interventions that may help the student(s) be more responsible. The School's **Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)** may be convened to assist in this effort.

The TAT will include the teacher dealing with the problem, the grade level Lead Teacher and at least two other teachers, and in some cases other staff members who work with the student. The TAT will help develop creative approaches to assist your child at school. Each Grade Level Team meets and discusses behavioral issues once a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. The Team recommends strategies for the teacher. If after 30 school days the strategies are unsuccessful, the lead teacher brings concerns to the **Child Study Team (CST)**. This Team made up of the PDC, Special Education Director, and specialist (psychologist, OT, S/L, or PT) to determine additional strategies. If the additional strategies do not meet with success, the next step is a referral to the special education department.

To convene a Child Study Team, the lead teacher should contact the Special Education Director to review concerns. The CST will meet within five days. Meetings will follow a prescribed format and will be limited to 25 minutes in length.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Mystic Valley provides academic support to students with special needs that will enable all students to benefit from a variety of classroom-based activities and to learn from each other. It is our belief that we all have the ability to learn and that we all have valuable learning experiences to share.

The special education staff works in collaboration with individual classroom teachers, to coordinate curriculum objectives, introduce and monitor modifications and to identify alternative teaching strategies. When necessary, supportive services may be provided outside the regular classrooms for short periods of a student's school day.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School contracts with local providers for psychological services (PSYCH), speech & language (S/L), occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and other related services as identified by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan.

The decision to refer a child for a team evaluation to determine the need for special education services usually originates with the classroom teacher (see Teacher Assistance Team/Child Study Team). Parents may request a special education evaluation and consult with the Special Education Director.

Upon receipt of evaluation results, if the parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, then the parent may request an independent educational evaluation. The parent may obtain an independent educational evaluation at private expense at any time. When a parent provides a request for public funding for an independent evaluation, the district abides by the provisions for a sliding fee scale set by the Department of Education (see Education Law/Regulation 603 CMR 28.04) based upon documentation provided by the parent of the family's financial status. The district shall either agree to pay for the independent educational evaluation or within five school days, proceed to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals to show that its evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate. If the Bureau of Special Education Appeals finds that the school district's evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate, then the school district shall not be obligated to pay for the independent educational evaluation requested by the parent.

PARENTS

As customers of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, parents will be encouraged and expected to participate fully in the education of their children. The support and cooperation of parents are vital to helping each student reach his or her full potential. Parents are being expected to support the academic learning of their children by maintaining high expectations for both the students and the School. Parents also need to serve as role models for their children. Parents will be kept informed of students' efforts through conferences, monthly progress reports, report cards, phone calls, and notes, and/or e-mail. Parents must supply the school with e-mail address if they have them, and inform the school of any changes.

Parents may be asked to help teach their child specific skills, such as remembering homework, learning to be more independent or managing anger in a mature way. If parents are asked to assist staff, specific information will be provided on ways to help the student.

If there is a severe or recurring problem, parents will be asked to help staff teach the student an alternative set of behaviors. In such cases, it is important to recognize that teaching a student to behave appropriately as a contributing member of the school community will enable him or her to succeed in school. By working together, parents and staff can help the student acquire the skills that will increase opportunities for success throughout life. Failure to comply with the specifics of the School's plan for teaching appropriate behavior may result in the student's expulsion.

Parents who have concerns about their child's adjustment to the School or any aspect of the school's program and policies will be asked to discuss their concerns first with their child's teacher. Every teacher at the School will be prepared to work with parents and will respond to parental concerns appropriately and expeditiously. The School's Lead Teachers, Professional Development Coordinator and the School Director will also be available if there are issues that exceed the scope of a parent-teacher conference.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMON AREAS

The School's common areas include the playground, hallways, rest rooms, and the multipurpose rooms. Because students from every grade and class will be using these areas under the supervision of various faculty and staff, it is important to establish rules and expectations that are commonly understood and consistently applied. With such rules in place, staff can focus on encouraging good character among students rather than correcting misbehavior.

Staff will continuously encourage appropriate behavior in the School's common areas through positive and friendly interactions with students. Verbal praise will be used to recognize students who exercise courtesy, safety, and respect. The School Director will visit classrooms or use the intercom to compliment good behavior in the School's common areas. In addition, small rewards will be granted for especially good conduct; for example, two or three times a year, the entire student body will be allowed an extra ten-minute recess at the end of the day as a reward for consistently good conduct on the playground. Or, when students demonstrate appropriate behavior during lunches over a long period, the School Director may provide ice cream as a special treat.

Following are the School's goals for student conduct in each of the common areas.

Playground: Students will play safely in all games and on all equipment, showing consideration and respect for others.

Hallways: The hallways of the School will be a safe and quiet environment where people interact with courtesy and respect. Walk with hands clasped or by your side.

Restrooms: The restrooms at the School will be clean and safe.

Meals: Breakfasts, lunches, and snacks at the School will be enjoyed in a safe, clean and friendly environment where people interact with courtesy, manners, and respect.

Assemblies: Students will demonstrate respectful behavior during assemblies by listening, participating, and following directions.

Before and After School: Students will arrive at and depart from the School in a safe and orderly manner.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

At the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, students will be encouraged to make appropriate choices regarding their personal conduct. Following are the chief means by which faculty and staff will ensure order and support the development of good character at the School.

STUDENT OF THE DAY/ MYSTIC MERIT AWARDS

At the end of each day, teachers will grant Student of the Day Awards (K-6) to acknowledge and reward students for demonstrating exceptionally responsible behavior, trying their best, cooperating, or showing respect. Award-winning students will receive special certificates.

In addition, the school will announce a Student of the Week (K-8). Each week there is an assigned Virtue for the students to strive for. The homeroom teacher will grant a Student of the Week who exemplifies the specific virtue. The students are then announced over the loud speaker during the morning announcements and rewarded with a certificate.

Any student who has earned five Student of the Day Awards will receive a High Five Mystic Merit Award. The names of the High Five winners will be displayed in the school.

CLASSROOM POSITIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

At the beginning of each day, K-6 teachers will issue all students green cards, indicating a clean slate for student conduct. These cards will be placed in a pocket wall chart in the front of the classroom.

Teachers will maintain a wall chart with every student's name on it and a record of who maintains their green cards throughout the day. These students will be recognized as members of the Green Team and will be able to receive certain classroom rewards. After five green days the class may have a special celebration.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: CARD CHANGES

The attending teacher will first adapt a proactive plan to encourage good behavior. Praise statements will be made in the ratio of four positive to each negative behavior addressed. Nevertheless if a student still misbehaves, teachers will first attempt a proactive approach. Teachers, when appropriate, will give a verbal warning to the student. If the student continues to show noncompliance, then they will receive a card change.

Green Card

Students begin each day on the green card. This card indicates the student has followed all school rules. The student is respectful to himself, his classmates and his teachers.

Yellow Card

A student has a card change to yellow after receiving a warning from the teacher. This warning is for each separate behavior during the day. Behavior is always discussed with students before cards are changed.

When students have a change to yellow an immediate “skill builder” or writing assignment should follow for grades 3-6. These skill builders should take less than 3 minutes to complete.

Blue Card

A student has a card change to blue after the initial warning and the turn to yellow. The blue card indicates some significant difficulty following directions or the school rules. After a card is changed to blue, the student must complete additional immediate “skill builders” and/or writing assignments. This infraction will also require a loss of 10 minutes of free time determined by the assistant director. This is not an infraction for recess detention. The student can sit out of recess with the class for 10 minutes with an adult observing.

Red Card

A student with a red card is demonstrating severe difficulty following the rules of the school. This student should have some immediate redirection from the teacher. The red card should also result in:

1. immediate “skill builder” and/or writing assignment
2. immediate phone call or note home to the parents signed and returned
3. loss of 30 minutes of free time/recess.

No Color

A student who does not change his behavior after the red card should then move to no color. This is when the student receives an office referral to a member of the Leadership Team. No color generally means in-school or out of school suspension. This suspension should only happen for the most serious cases of misbehavior or when the misbehavior is re-occurring.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN: 7th –12th Grade

The attending teacher will first adapt a proactive plan to encourage good behavior. Praise statements will be made in the ratio of four positive to each negative behavior addressed. Nevertheless if a student still misbehaves, teachers will first attempt a proactive approach. Teachers, when appropriate, will give a verbal warning to the student. If the student continues to show noncompliance, then they will receive an A-Plan warning, which will be kept in the student’s planner.

The student will be asked to report to office under the following conditions:

- At the discretion of the teacher depending on the degree and severity of any A Plan Warning – possible consequence will be given and the parent may be contacted. Examples of this would be, but not limited to, disrespectful behavior, physical or dangerous behavior.
- If a student receives 3 A Plan Warnings in a five day period or five A-Plan warning in a month, they will receive a one hour detention.
- Once the student is given the consequence, an administrator will draw a line and initialize it. This will allow the student to start a new sequence of warnings and not penalize them for previous warnings.

Possible consequences for excessive A-plan warnings may include after school detention(s), in school and out of school suspension(s), loss of privileges to participate in school sponsored sports, clubs, school sponsored events and/or any extra curricula activity.

All A-Plan warning will be kept in the student's planner. Students that fail to bring their planner to school or class will receive a one hour detention. If the planner is lost, students will be required to purchase a new one from the school, and will receive a one hour detention for each day until they complete the purchase. Students that lose or misplace previous days of the planner, from the current month, will receive a one hour detention. Parents will be required to sign their child's planner every Friday. Failure to do so will result in a one hour detention for the student.

CLASS-WIDE GOAL OF THE MONTH

Each class at the School will be encouraged to identify a specific goal toward which it will strive during each month. As students identify class-wide goals, teachers will help them understand how their objectives relate to school-wide goals. For example, if a class chooses to focus on timely homework completion as its goal for the month, teachers will discuss how that relates to the school-wide goal of always trying one's best. Once the class has determined its monthly objective, teachers will plan to conduct a weekly lesson on how to achieve the goal, including such exercises as role playing, positive practice, related read-aloud stories, writing assignments, or art projects. Students will collectively explore ways to reach their goal, practicing problem solving, planning, and establishing benchmarks for achievement.

At the end of each month, each class will evaluate their progress through discussion or a simple evaluation procedure established by the students. During this process, students may decide to continue striving toward their goal or shift their focus to a new objective. Upon achieving its goal of the month, the class will be presented with a certificate documenting its accomplishments.

CORRECTING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

CONSEQUENCES FOR MINOR MISBEHAVIOR

It is expected that the great majority of students at the School will strive to meet the expectations for responsibility and self-discipline outlined herein. It is also understood, however, that no single set of procedures will be effective in helping every student develop the skills and attitudes necessary for success. Therefore, a series of interventions will be designed for students who have not been motivated by the school-wide procedures. As teachers and faculty adapt disciplinary procedures to meet individual needs, the focus will remain positive and an emphasis will be placed on the continuing need for calm and consistent consequences.

Students will learn that certain actions are unacceptable at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School and misbehavior has consequences that are neither amusing nor pleasant. Students, who engage in any type of misbehavior, whether minor or severe, will be required to make amends and/or restore the situation. Restitution may involve an apology; community or school service; or fixing, replacing, and/or paying for damage caused. The School Director and/or teacher will determine the type of restitution required for a particular infraction. If possible, the restitution assignment will be communicated to the student's parents prior to his or her completion of the task. In all cases, parents will be informed of the child's inappropriate behavior and the restitution requirement.

CONSEQUENCES FOR SEVERE MISBEHAVIOR

Most misbehavior will be handled with discussion or the use of mild consequences. However, severe misbehavior will be met swiftly with equally severe consequences. Such behavior is defined as belonging to at least one of the following categories:

- Insubordinate behavior
- Physically dangerous behavior
- Illegal behavior

Insubordinate behavior is the direct refusal to comply with a reasonable staff instruction within a specified period of time. In such cases, the staff member involved will first explain to the student why his or her actions are inappropriate and could issue a mild consequence or a more severe consequence

for the offense. If the student continues to disregard the staff member's instruction, he or she will be sent to the office and be spoken to by a member of the leadership team.

Insubordination is a breakdown in communication. When a student has been referred to the office for this offense, the School Director will arrange a conference between the student, the staff member involved, and possibly the student's parent or guardian. The purpose of the conference will be to establish a plan that will help the student communicate more responsibly in the future.

In cases of physically dangerous behavior – fighting, assault, and physical intimidation – staff will firmly inform the students to stop the physical altercation. If the students do not respond, staff will use professional judgment to determine whether or not to intervene physically. Staff will not be required to take action that could be physically dangerous; in such cases, another student will be sent immediately for assistance. The School Director will notify parents and make all decisions regarding whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

If a staff member is aware that a student has been or is engaged in illegal activity, the staff member will refer the case to the School Director's office. The Director will notify the student's parent or guardian and make all decisions regarding whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

EXCLUSIONARY TIMEOUT

At the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, exclusionary timeouts from reinforcement will be used for students who need a neutral environment to help manage their own behavior, or to cool down to reflect on inappropriate behavior. Such timeouts involve removing the student from the instructional setting to a supervised area, such as the back of a classroom or the office. An exclusionary timeout from reinforcement may also be imposed as a consequence of misbehavior.

Faculty, staff, and school leaders will adhere to the following procedures when imposing an exclusionary timeout from reinforcement. No student shall ever be unsupervised during a timeout situation.

Upon the behavioral infraction, the student will be sent on a three-minute timeout away from the instructional setting. The student will be told in a firm, non-emotional voice, that he or she has made the choice to continue the inappropriate behavior, and that a timeout is the consequence.

When the three minutes have passed, the student will be required to complete a compliance set – roughly ten simple tasks to be completed (e.g., touch your nose, stand up, touch your ear, raise your hand).

The student's chair will then be moved close to the room or instructional group, and he or she will be required to do a more limited compliance set (about five tasks).

Upon the successful completion of the set, the child will be allowed to rejoin the group.

The child will be required to make-up the time spent in timeout during an activity that is relatively rewarding (e.g., recess or unstructured activities).

If the child does not follow the directions during any of the previous steps, the timeout procedures will be repeated. The student will owe this extra time.

Records of the number of exclusionary timeouts from reinforcement imposed and the students involved will be maintained and reviewed by the Leadership Team at least four times a year. These records will be used to make judgments about the efficacy of the School's timeout procedures for helping students learn to be responsible.

DETENTION

Assigned detentions take place during the following times: before school, recess, after school, and/or on Saturday.

SUSPENSION

In response to cases of severe misbehavior in which a student violates school policies, rules or regulations, or otherwise interferes with the orderly operation of the School, the School Director or a designee may suspend or temporarily remove the student from school for up to ten calendar days. Suspension will be regarded as a serious consequence and students will be removed immediately. If there are extenuating circumstances preventing immediate removal from the school grounds, the Director or designee will assume full responsibility for the student until he or she is removed. The student's parents will be required to meet with the School Director and any staff members involved in the suspension prior to the student's return to the School. A suspended student must make up missed work, and will not be allowed to be on the school grounds or to attend any school-related functions at any time during the suspension. A suspension is also considered an absence from school. In addition, the student may be required to complete homework related to the disciplinary infraction. In the event that a student receives 5 days of suspensions in a marking period, a report will be filed with the Special Education Coordinator in accordance with state and federal law.

Suspension could be an automatic consequence for:

- Disrespect towards a teacher or faculty member
- Any physical behavior (hitting, pushing, etc...)
- Foul or inappropriate behavior

RE-ADMITTANCE MEETINGS FOLLOWING A SCHOOL SUSPENSION

After serving a suspension, a re-admittance meeting must take place in order for a student to be admitted back into the school building. A parent or legal guardian must be in attendance. If extenuating circumstances exist that prevent a parent or legal guardian from attending the re-admittance meeting, a proxy may be chosen to represent the parent or legal guardian with the approval of the Director. An educational advocate or anyone acting in such a capacity is **not** allowed to accompany a parent or legal guardian to a re-admittance meeting. Parents or legal guardians hold the sole responsibility to support the standards of conduct that the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School adheres to in both policy and practice. Parent communication with the School Director is an essential part of this process. The School Director holds the authority to determine the parameters and settings of personal meetings with parents. The School Director acts as the chair and school authority while conducting re-admittance meetings. The School Director decides the order of discussion topics and at which point the student in question joins the School Director and the parent(s) or legal guardian in the re-admittance meeting. In the event of non-compliance on the part of the parents or guardians regarding the above procedures for a re-admittance meeting, the School Director will issue restrictive sanctions for the student in question until compliance is met. These restrictive sanctions will be solely directed towards any and all non-educational activities and will not be directed towards the student's academic program. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Recess
- All extra-curricular sports
- All extra-curricular clubs
- All extra-curricular arts activities
- All non-educational classroom celebrations
- All non-educational school activities
- All non-educational occasional or special event activities

EXPULSION

Expulsion is defined as the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend the School under the conditions set by the School's Board. The School Director will have final authority in

recommending the expulsion of a student to the Board in accordance with State statute. A student who brings a weapon to school or uses an implement in school in any way that makes another student or staff member feel threatened will be subject to an expulsion hearing before the Board of Directors. An expelled student will not be permitted on school grounds or at any school-related functions for the duration of his or her expulsion. If the expulsion is for a limited time, such as one year, the expelled student may choose to attend another school during this period. Students under the age of fourteen may be expelled for the duration of the existing school year.

The tables outline the specific procedures that will be applied in response to severe misbehavior. Each of the consequences listed for the various offenses will be imposed.

Problem	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Insubordinate Behavior e.g., disrespect toward staff members and peers, refusal to follow direction, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 1-3 day suspension (no longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 1-3 day suspension (no longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school. . Intervention Planning Team convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan. . Parent may be asked to accompany child to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior . Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline action plan may result in expulsion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff and Director prior to student re-entering school . Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion . Parent must attend school with child to assist with teaching appropriate behavior in the classroom

Problem	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Physically Dangerous Behavior e.g., fighting, assault, physical intimidation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 1-3 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), mandatory meeting between parent and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school . Intervention Planning Team to establish instructional discipline plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 3-5 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting between parent and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school. . Intervention Planning Team convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan . Parent may be asked to accompany student to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior <p style="text-align: center;">Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline action plan may result in expulsion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff and Director prior to student re- entering school . Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion . Parent must attend school with child to assist with teaching appropriate behavior in the classroom

Offense	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
<p>Illegal Acts e.g., theft, vandalism, use of illegal substances, violation of a student’s or staff member’s civil rights, harassment and physical abuse against another student based on their race, disability, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.</p> <p>The School Director may contact the appropriate authorities depending on the nature of the offense and the age of the student involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 1-3 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense) and mandatory meeting between parent and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school . Intervention Planning Team convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 3-5 days suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense) and mandatory meeting between parent and Leadership Team prior to student re-entering school . Intervention Planning Team convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan. . Parent may be asked to accompany student to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior . Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline plan may result in expulsion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff member, and Director prior student re-entering school . Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion . Parent must attend school with child to assist with appropriate behavior in the classroom

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE

At MVRCS we understand sexual harassment to be a form of sexual discrimination that occurs when one person subjects another person to unwanted sexual attention, coerces him or her into sexual activity, and/or punishes his or her refusal. Sexual harassment may be manifested verbally (which includes, but is not limited to, propositions, innuendoes, and/or subtle pressure for sexual activity) and/ or physically (which includes, but is not limited to, touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another’s body, physical assault, rape, subtle pressure for sexual activity, or any type of sexual abuse).

The accusation of sexual harassment (or sexual abuse) is a serious one, and all cases will be given immediate individual attention with the strictest confidentiality imposed. A student should contact his/her teacher or another member of the school faculty. Parents should call the School Administration should they wish to file a complaint of any possible sexual harassment or sexual abuse.

Note: ALL instances of sexual harassment deserve an official response. Some instances of sexual harassment may best be dealt with through mediation, others, by direct involvement of the Director (or his/her designee).

By law the MVRCS is required to give the legal definition of sexual harassment, which for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is as follows:

“Sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

(a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

Since we are an educational institution, the definition of sexual harassment also includes the following:

Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for participation in School programs or activities; or such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance, education or participation in School programs or activities by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a faculty member in exchange for actual or promised benefits, such as favorable evaluations of course requirements or favorable recommendations constitutes sexual harassment and/or sexual abuse.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace or educational environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to males or females may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life
- Comment on an individual’s body, comment about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one’s sexual experiences
- Discussion of one’s sexual activities

Sexual Abuse includes the infliction of sexual contact upon a person by forcible compulsion or the engaging in sexual contact with a person who is below a specified age or who is incapable of giving consent because of age or mental or physical incapacity. MVRCS will not tolerate any act of sexual abuse, whether such is committed by a faculty member or by another student.

All employees and students should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the School.

COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE

MVRCS is committed to equitable, swift and confidential resolution of claims of harassment. Any student or employee experiencing harassment should follow any or all of these measures:

1. Let the offender know you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Do not apologize.
2. If you are not comfortable confronting the offender alone, ask a friend to accompany you, or write a letter to the offender, keeping a copy.
3. Make a record of when, where and how you were mistreated; include witnesses (if any), direct quotes, and other evidence.
4. If you are a student, notify your advisor or the Director, or if you are uncomfortable doing so, speak with another adult. A member of the Leadership Team or a third party will most likely be requested to negotiate the matter.
5. If you are an adult, notify the Director, your immediate supervisor or a member of the Leadership Team. The Director will initiate an investigation into the complaint and will insure appropriate follow-up measures are taken. Parents may telephone the Director to report any complaint.
6. If your complaint concerns any act of sexual abuse or assault, report it immediately to the Director, your advisor, or your parent(s). If you are unable to do so, tell a friend and ask the friend to speak with the Director.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees or students, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, suspension or expulsion, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action, as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has short time periods for filing a claim (EEOC and OCR - 180 days; MCAD - 6 months).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
10 Congress Street - 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200
(Employment Cases)
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
Boston Office:
One Ashburton Place - Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990
(Employment Cases)
3. Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
Regional Office
John W. McCormick Post Office and Courthouse
Room 22
Boston, MA 02109-4557
(617) 223-9662
(Student Cases)

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Students with disabilities have the same responsibilities and rights as other students and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses in accordance with federal and state regulations.

CHANGE OF PLACEMENT FOR DISCIPLINARY REMOVALS

For purposes of removals of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement, a change of placement occurs if—

- (a) The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days; or
- (b) The child is subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year, and because of factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

To the extent removal would be applied to children without disabilities, the removal of a child with a disability from the child's current placement for not more than 10 consecutive school days for any violation of school rules, and additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement.

SUSPENSIONS NOT TO EXCEED 10 SCHOOL DAYS (CUMULATIVE)

The school can suspend a child for a maximum of 10 school days (cumulative). There is no requirement for the school to provide the student with Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) during these 10 days as long as non-disabled students do not receive educational services.

SUSPENSIONS THAT EXCEED 10 SCHOOL DAYS (CUMULATIVE)

Before the 11th day of suspension (and before each subsequent series of suspensions) the IEP Team must reconvene to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the disability. Parents must be notified of the disciplinary action and be provided the procedural safeguards notice.

Either before or not later than 10 business days after either first removing the child for more than 10 school days in a school year or commencing a removal that constitutes a change in placement (including removals for drugs and weapons misconduct), the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop a functional assessment plan (if the school did not already conduct a functional assessment and had not implemented a behavioral intervention plan).

Beginning with the 11th day of suspension and for subsequent removals, the student must continue to receive FAPE as determined by the IEP team.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION REVIEW

First the IEP team must consider in terms of the behavior subject to disciplinary action, all relevant information, including

- Evaluation and diagnostic results, including the results or other relevant information supplied by the parents of the child
- Observations of the child
- the child's IEP and placement

The IEP team then determines that

- The IEP and placement were appropriate
- The special education services, supplementary aids and services were provided
- Behavior intervention strategies were provided consistent with the child's IEP and placement
- The child's disability did not impair the ability of the child to understand the impact and consequences of the behavior subject to disciplinary action

- The child's disability did not impair the ability of the child to control the behavior subject to disciplinary action.

RESULT

No Manifestation

If the result of the review is a determination that the behavior of the child with a disability was not a manifestation of the child's disability, the relevant disciplinary procedures applicable to children without disabilities may be applied to the child in the same manner in which they would be applied to children without disabilities. Child continues to receive FAPE. If the child's parent disagrees with a determination that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of the child's disability or with any decision regarding placement, the parent may request a hearing.

Manifestation

If the result of the review is a determination that the behavior of the child with a disability was a manifestation of the child's disability, the child's placement cannot be changed except through an IEP. Student can be placed in an Interim Alternative Setting if weapons/illegal drugs are involved or by order of a Hearing Officer if the student is "dangerous".

WEAPONS/ILLEGAL DRUGS

If the child carries a weapon or the child knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance to school or to a school function, then the school may place a child to an appropriate Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 days. The IEP team determines the Alternative Educational Setting (IAES).

The IAES must enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described in the child's current IEP, that will enable the child to meet the goals set out in that IEP; and include services and modifications to address the behavior, that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Either before or not later than 10 business days after either first removing the child for more than 10 school days in a school year or commencing a removal that constitutes a change in placement, the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop a functional assessment plan (if the school did not already conduct a functional assessment and had not implemented a behavioral intervention plan).

As soon as practical after developing the plan and completing the assessments required by the plan, the school shall convene an IEP meeting to address, develop, and implement appropriate behavioral interventions.

If the child already has a behavioral intervention plan, the IEP team shall meet to review the plan and its implementation, and, modify the plan and its implementation as necessary to address the behavior.

DANGEROUS/LIKELIHOOD OF INJURY

If school personnel maintain that it is dangerous for the child to be in the current placement (placement prior to removal to the interim alternative education setting) while the due process proceeding is pending, the school may request an expedited due process hearing.

PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES.

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services under this part and who has engaged in behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct of the school, may assert any of the protections provided for in this part if the school had knowledge that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE

A school must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if

- The parent of the child has expressed concern in writing (or orally if the parent does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement) to personnel of the school that the child is in need of special education and related services.
- The behavior or performance of the child demonstrates the need for these services; the parent of the child has requested an evaluation of the child;
- The teacher of the child, or other personnel of the school, has expressed concern about the behavior or performance of the child to the principal and/or director of special education or to other personnel in accordance with the school's established child find or special education referral system.

EXCEPTION.

The school would not be deemed to have knowledge if the school performed any of the following:

- Conducted an evaluation based on the Procedures for Evaluation and Eligibility, and determined that the child was not a child with a disability under this part; or
- Determined that an evaluation was not necessary; and
- Provided notice to the child's parents of its determination.

CONDITIONS THAT APPLY IF NO BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE.

If the school does not "have knowledge" that a child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures as measures applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors.

Limitations

- If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.
- Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.
- If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and information provided by the parents, the school shall provide special education and related services.

School and Home Compact

The success of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's Code of Values depends on the support of each member of the school community. Working together, faculty and staff, parents, and students can promote academic achievement and good character, and ensure the success of students as they grow to mature adulthood.

On behalf of the administration, faculty, and staff of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, I pledge to fulfill the responsibilities and uphold the expectations outlined in the Code of Values.

Sincerely,

Chris Finn

Chris Finn
Assistant Director, K-8

George Benzie

George Benzie
Assistant Director, 9-12

As the parent of _____, I agree
(Student's Printed Name)

- To demonstrate consistent interest in my child's progress at school
- To model the character traits described in the Code of Values
- To support and work with school staff to promote my child's learning
- To support the school's policies, particularly the uniform policy and attendance policy

I have read the Handbook and support the rules and policies outlined within.

(Parent's Signature) Date _____

As a student at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, I agree to abide by the rules and policies outlined in the Handbook and will strive to make my own behavior reflect the character traits highlighted in the Code of Values.

(Student's Signature) Date _____

Please return your signed compact to your child's teacher. Thank you.