

VASSALBORO COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Viking Pride: Respect, Responsibility, Kindness



STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to our school! This handbook has been developed to familiarize you with Vassalboro Community School's procedures and expectations. Guardians and students are asked to read and discuss this handbook carefully. It contains guidelines that students are expected to follow. Of course, other questions may arise that this handbook doesn't address. Please feel free to call us with concerns or questions at 207-923-3100.

Thank you -

Mr. Ira Michaud, Principal

Mrs. Tabitha Brewer, Assistant Principal

VCS Mission Statement

The mission of Vassalboro Community School is to provide a caring learning community where all students can achieve success to their fullest potential.

Vassalboro Community School strives to teach students to be respectful, responsible and kind in order to create a safe and effective school environment where they can experience academic and behavioral success.

VCS Vision Statement

Vassalboro Community School will be a high quality, forward looking public school district known for its student-first inclusive approach that, together with data informed academic and behavioral programming and meaningful planning, every person will be empowered to become responsible, respectful, kind and an effective, resilient member of society.

VASSALBORO COMMUNITY SCHOOL
1116 Webber Pond Rd.
Vassalboro, ME 04989
Phone: (207) 923-3100
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Website: www.vcsvikings.org

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VCS Staff

Principal:	Ira Michaud	Literacy Specialist:	Sonya Laramée
Assistant Principal:	Tabitha Brewer	Library/Media Specialist:	Erin Sirois
Special Education Director:	Judi Bouchard	JMG	Noah Caret
Superintendent of Schools:	Alan Pfeiffer	Educational Technicians:	Dori Rancourt
			Elizabeth Potter
Administrative Assistants:	Emily Giampetruzzi		Jennifer Pappas
	Lisa Church		Katie Boucher
	Ariel Nichols		Crystal Sylvester
CLASSROOM TEACHERS:			Jordan Cayouette
Pre-Kindergarten Teachers:	Jasmine Estes		Deb Austin
	Pam Dow		Tiffany Crommett
Kindergarten:	Kate-Lynn Tarr		Julie Chavez
	Andrea Lemelin		Kimberly Spear
	Amy Ireland		Eliza Lagasse
			Angel Hall
Grade 1:	Chad Dixon		Isaac Mercier
	Stacey Feyler		Aimee DuPont
	Jennifer Morneault		Melinda Hughes
Grade 2:	Crystal Uleau		Kelsie LaCroix
	Pamela Soule		John Hawksley
	Terri Gurney		
Grade 3:	Breanne Desmond		Danielle Plossay-PreK
	Stephanie Roy		Jill Spicer-PreK
	Patti Wormell		
Grade 4:	Chelsea Harrison		
	Rebecca Littlejohn		
	Jordan Turner		
Grade 5:	Sarah Keene		

Grade 5:	Destiny Poulin	Custodians:	Paul Gilbert
Grade 6:	Stephanie Tuttle		Ashley Smith
	Becky Fisher		Jim Boucher
	Nathan Dyer		Maurice Pare
Grade 7&8:	Amy Siviski-Bolduc		
	Traci Norwood	Kitchen Staff:	Sandra McCausland
	Crystal Smith		Christine Pullen
	Hannah Crayton		Ann Pelletier
	Christina Lougee	Bus Drivers:	David Jacques
Nurse:	Kasey Paquette		Eric Sander
Art:	Mia Sargent		Bob Hall
Gifted & Talented	Rod Robilliard		Bev Smith
Music:	Annie Nixon		Denielle O'Neal
Physical Education:	Joe West		Russell Allen
Tech. Teacher/Coordinator:	David Trask		Trevor Fields
Special Education:	John Jefferson		Mary Pullyard
	Tracy Jolicoeur		Maurice Pare (Sub)
	Jennifer Bonnet		Ellie Lessard (Sub)
	Tara Morse	Vassalboro School Committee:	Jolene Gamage-Chair
	Danielle Keller		Zach Smith
	Desarae Dearborn		Amy French
Occupational Therapist:	Pam Perry		Erin Loiko
OT Assistant:	Laurie Collins		Jessica Clark
Physical Therapist:	Regan Tyler		
Speech Pathologists:	Madison Martin	Valerie Cole (SLPA)	
School Counselors:	Gina Davis	Jamie Routhier	
Social Worker:	Megan Simmons		
IEP Coordinator:			

To reach any of our staff by email, use their first initial and last name with the domain @vcsvikings.org.

Behavioral Expectations:

These are our core values for students, staff and all stakeholders of Vassalboro Community School.

At Vassalboro Community School, our behavioral expectations are:

Be Respectful

Being respectful means that we use our manners, we respect all areas of our school, our classmates and adults that work with us.

Be Responsible

Being responsible means that we do our job. We take responsibility for our choices and we do our best to be our best. We clean up our messes, work hard to fix mistakes and remember that we learn from all of our experiences.

Be Kind

Being kind means that we treat others the way that we want to be treated. We are helpful and nice to others. We do not have to be best friends with all of our peers, but we do need to be kind to them.

School-Wide Expectations

The school-wide expectations for common areas are taught at the beginning of each school year using the steps outlined below. Students will be taught these expectations by staff using lesson plans found in the VCS resource library. This library is a work in progress and will be updated and added to as time goes on. Throughout the school year, the school-wide expectations are reviewed and emphasized on an as needed basis.

Classroom Expectations

Classroom expectations are developed by teachers specifically for their individual classrooms. Classroom expectations are taught by the classroom teacher at the beginning of each school year and are taught throughout the year as needed and as outlined in the steps below.

- **Behavioral expectations are taught with fidelity.**

The behavioral expectations are taught to **all** students by **all** staff and in **all** school settings. Behavioral expectations are taught using the same teaching formats applied to other curricula. The general rule is presented, the rationale for the rule is discussed, positive examples ("right way") are described and rehearsed, and negative examples ("wrong way") are described. Students are given an opportunity to practice the "right way" until they demonstrate fluent performance. School staff and administration will place an emphasis on procedures and routines around teaching positive behavior and managing unexpected behaviors.

- **Staff remind students of behavioral expectations.** When students violate behavioral expectations, clear procedures are needed for providing information to students about what is expected. Many times this is a "teachable moment" where the teacher or staff member can address the behaviors immediately.

- **Expected behaviors are celebrated.** Once expected behaviors have been defined and taught, they need to be acknowledged and celebrated on a regular basis. Vassalboro Community School has designed a formal system that rewards expected behaviors.
- **Expected behaviors are retaught systematically when unexpected behaviors occur.** SWIS forms are used to document major and minor incidents of unexpected behavior. SWIS forms will be printed and sent home for parent signature and will be returned to the school. The teacher-managed vs office-managed chart is used to help teachers distinguish between classroom and office managed behaviors.

School-wide requests

Rules must be followed at all times when students are under the supervision of the school; whether in a classroom, on a bus, at a dance, or participating in a school sponsored activity. There are five school-wide requests, which have been developed to ensure both safety and a positive working environment.

1. **Complete School work to the best of your ability and on time.**
2. **Respect others – both staff and other students.**
3. **Respect school equipment and property and use it properly.**
4. **Use the appropriate behavior in the cafeteria, on the playground, and about the building.**
5. **Use appropriate language.**

Behavioral Consequences

Violation of school or classroom rules will be handled by the classroom teacher, the playground or cafeteria supervisor, or another staff member. We use a behavioral reporting form to notify of any behavioral issues involving students at VCS. Serious violations or repeated offenses will require action by the Assistant Principal or the Principal. Consequences are based on school policy, grade and age appropriateness and vary depending on severity of the behavior.

Detention

Students who violate rules and regulations may be required to stay after school for detention. Parents are notified via a phone call, email, or the behavioral reporting form.

All detentions are served from 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. on the assigned day. When given detention, the student is to bring the slip home, have a parent sign it, and return it to his/her homeroom teacher the next day (if the detention is assigned through a detention slip). The parent's signature does not indicate agreement with the detention; it just lets us know that the parent is aware of the detention and that they will arrange for the student to be picked up after serving it (if there is not an afterschool bus running). If the slip is not signed, the student will call their parent/guardian from the office to explain the detention and slip.

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension (ISS) is a suspension where students are asked to remain in school under the supervision of the office, but separated from the larger student population. ISS is generally assigned when the consequence of a student's behavior necessitates a student to remain in school and current with school work, but it also allows the student time to reflect upon behavior and to make a conscious effort in the future to follow school rules. A student may not attend co-curricular school functions on the day of a suspension. If a student is removed from ISS for behavior, he/she will be sent home for the remainder of the day and the ISS will be rescheduled in its entirety. While in ISS a student is expected to:

1. Report directly to the administrative office upon entering school and go directly to the bus or ride when dismissed from the ISS.
2. Work on school assignments.
3. Not communicate with others while assigned to ISS.
4. Remain seated at all times in their assigned seat unless given permission by the office staff.
5. Have a pen/pencil and schoolwork in their possession. All other personal material will be taken and held by the office staff until the end of the school day.
6. Follow all behavior rules generally expected while in school.

Note: Students who serve an in-school suspension may not participate in or attend any extra-curricular activities (day or night) on that particular day and are prohibited from attending the next dance.

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be used as a disciplinary measure when other means of correcting misconduct have failed, or in instances of misbehavior that threatens the safety of others or violates the rules of conduct set by the School Board. Suspended students are expected to keep up with course assignments. It will be the responsibility of the student and parent(s) to obtain assignments. They may not attend school functions or be on school grounds during suspension and they may not attend the next school dance.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of **all** students. The school day starts at 8:00 a.m. and extends until 2:30 p.m. Students should **not** be dropped off earlier than 8:00 a.m. unless they are attending child care. Students arriving after 8:20 will be considered tardy and must report to the office upon arrival to get a late pass to take to class. Students going directly to class without a pass will be sent back to the office to check in and get a pass. **Late students will not be allowed in class without a pass from the office.**

All students are expected to remain in school each day until 2:30 p.m. Exceptions to this rule, of course, would be granted in case of family emergencies or medical appointments, where early dismissal may be necessary. Teachers should be informed of appointments prior to the day of the appointment unless it is an emergency.

****An adult must sign out students who are dismissed early.**

****Students arriving after or leaving before 11:15 will be marked absent for ½ day.**

Absences

Under Maine State Law, parents or guardians are legally responsible for seeing that their children attend school. To be excused from school one of the following procedures will be followed:

1. A telephone call is made by the parent/guardian to the Main Office before School begins at 8 a.m.
2. A note from the parent or guardian is brought to the Main Office or homeroom teacher by the student before or after the absence;
3. The parent/guardian visits the Main Office with the student before or upon his/her return to school after the absence; or
4. Any other manner approved in advance by the Principal or Assistant Principal.

While we understand there may be a need for absences during the school day, not all needed absences are considered excused. Administration reserves the right to pass judgment on the validity of the reason for the student's absence(s) and may determine absences as unexcused.

The following circumstances are considered excusable absences under Maine State Law when considering truancy cases. Students are marked absent nonetheless.

1. Medical appointment that can not be scheduled at any other times,
2. Illness,
3. Family emergency,
4. Religious observations which must be celebrated on school days,
5. Planned absences must be approved in advance by the School Administration.

An automated robocall will attempt to call all absent students' homes on a daily basis. It is very helpful if parents call in the morning if their child is absent. The telephone number is 923-3100.

Procedures for Excessive Absences

Regular attendance is an important factor in academic success; failure is frequently the result of chronic absenteeism or truancy. Daily attendance is essential because most of what goes on in the classroom cannot be replicated for individual students who are absent. Absences and tardiness, therefore, have a negative impact on learning and may result in lower grades, missed key concepts, or retention. We take missed time very seriously because of the impact on student learning. The following procedures will be used for excessive absences and tardiness.

- After 2 consecutive absences without notification from the home, the classroom teacher will reach out to check on the student.
- After 3 consecutive absences, the student will need a doctor's note to excuse their absence.
- 5 Unexcused Absences - A Truancy Warning Letter from the Assistant Principal is sent to the home informing parents/guardians of the absences and request that they call to make a plan to improve attendance.

- 10 Unexcused Absences - A Truancy Letter and mandatory meeting (phone or in person) with the Assistant Principal to discuss truancy laws and develop a written plan of action to correct truancy.
- More than 10 Unexcused Absences - Letter to the parent/guardians, superintendent, and possible referral to DHHS/Law Enforcement.
- 10 Excused Absences - Letter from the Assistant Principal alerting parents/guardians to the absences and requesting a phone call to discuss a plan to remedy the situation.
- 15 Excused Absences - Letter from Assistant Principal and mandatory meeting (in person or by phone) with administration except in the case of prolonged medical absence that is verified with a doctor's note.
- Chronic Absence letters will be sent home regularly to families whose student(s) have reached the level of chronically absent.

Walkers

Walkers must not arrive at school before 7:50 a.m., or leave later than 2:35 p.m. because they cannot be supervised before and after that time. If you must leave your child before this time, please contact Jennifer Lizotte, Director of Child Care, to register for before or after school services.

School Cancellation and Early Dismissal

In the event of school cancellation or dismissal due to weather conditions or other emergency situations, we will post the cancellation on our school website at vcsvikings.org. There will also be a "robo" call and email from the school when we release early or cancel due to weather. If you need a number or email address added to the robocall, please contact the main office to have that change made.

Transportation

Bicycles

Students who ride bicycles to school are expected to ride them in a safe manner. Bicycle riders are expected not to arrive before 7:50 a.m. and are expected to leave the school grounds as soon as school is dismissed. Students are not to ride bikes on any of the brick walkways or around the main entrance. They may not ride their bikes while buses are moving.

Buses

Expectations for bus riders:

- Stay seated
- No eating/drinking
- Talk quietly
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Treat everyone & everything with respect
- The use of cellphones is at the bus driver's/administration's discretion

Consequences for bus rules violations

Bus slip documentation will be sent to the school administrator; consequence by administrator discretion. Families will be contacted if their child is seen in the office due to a bus concern.

Dismissal and Bus Changes

Should you wish to transport your child home, **PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL before 2 p.m.** Parent pick up students are dismissed to the gym at 2:30 and are picked up through the Parent Pick up line. If you need to pick your student up before dismissal, visit the office to sign them out. All students must wait by the office to be picked up for an appointment if it is before dismissal. Students CANNOT leave the building alone without adult supervision.

Due to potential overcrowding on our buses students are asked to ride to and from school on their assigned bus. Should an emergency situation arise, in which your child must ride a different bus we must have a note dated and signed by you for approval from the school administration.

Please note: Due to dismissal traffic, the office will no longer be dismissing students after 2:15. If you need to pick your child up between 2:15-2:30, please make plans to join the dismissal parent pick up line and pick your student(s) up in that manner.

Athletics

Philosophy – The primary purpose of interscholastic sports is to contribute to the overall development of the student consistent with the school's philosophy and goals. In this regard it is the goal of the athletic program to encourage the participation of all students who wish to be involved in any and all activities. We, at the Vassalboro Community School, believe strongly in the development of the total student-athlete and thus understand the athletic program to be an extension of our school program. We work to meet the individual needs and to provide for successful experiences for the student in the classroom: we extend these same goals to all of our extra and co-curricular programs. Students must have a current physical exam on file and students must be passing all courses to be eligible for sports, as outlined in the Athletic Handbook.

Athletic programs offered are:

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Fall: | Gr. 6-8 Soccer (boys & girls) |
| Winter: | Gr. 6-8 Basketball (boys & girls) |
| | Gr. 6-8 Cheerleading |
| Spring: | Gr. 6-8 Softball |
| | Gr. 6-8 Baseball |

*Winslow Jr. High offers field hockey, football, wrestling, track and field, and swimming to our students.

**Recreation programs are offered by the Towns of Vassalboro and Winslow.

***5th Graders are allowed to play on teams when there are not enough numbers from grades 6-8.

Physicals – In order to participate in any sport at VCS a Sports Physical examination is required before the season begins. Students are not allowed to try out for a team unless a sports physical has been given. A copy of their sports physical form for the nurse is required. If your child has had a sports physical after June of their 5th grade year they do not need another one until they enter high school. In the event that a child's medical information changes, parents need to notify the school immediately and provide documentation from their doctor.

After School Academic and Enrichment Programming –

These programs are available for students in grades 3-8 to stay after school early fall through May. Scheduled programming will vary throughout the year. More information will be going home near the start of school. Parents have the option to pick up their child, however transportation will be provided.

School Group Sponsored Fun Nights –

Fun Nights will be held throughout the year for students in grades 6-8. The Fun Nights will be chaperoned by staff. The following rules apply to Fun Nights:

1. Students must be in school the day of the event.
2. Students will be expected to follow school rules. (If not, in serious cases, students may not be allowed to attend future events.)
3. Students will not be allowed to leave the building during the event unless the parent comes early to take the child home.
4. Students on the set-up committee must be at school 15 minutes before the event starts.
5. We ask that students be picked up promptly at the end of the fun night.
6. Students who have received three detentions or a suspension (including bus suspension) since the last event will not be allowed to attend the fun night
7. Students are not allowed to bring their own drinks to the fun night.
8. Only VCS students and homeschooled students that are residents of Vassalboro can attend the VCS fun nights.
9. Cell Phones will be checked in at all School Sponsored events.

Math Team

Students in grades 6-8 may participate in a competitive math league. Students are selected to the teams based on ability and compete with other area middle schools three times per year.

Emergency Drills

We hope there will never be an emergency in our school, but precautions must be taken to guarantee safety. Each student will be notified by his/her classroom teacher at the beginning of the school year of the proper exit path to take if the alarm sounds. Students are to exit the building with their teachers in a quiet and orderly manner. No one is to re-enter the building until notified to do so.

Technology

School issues devices and associated chargers and cases issued by the school to all students are educational tools and are to be used only in that capacity. Any inappropriate use or neglectful care of the chromebook and chargers may result in loss of use of the device and potential billing for damages.

The following is a list of procedures and guidelines for responsible use of devices:

Care of your computer:

- Keep all food and drinks away from your computer.
- Do not stack any material on top of the device.
- Do not physically mark up the device, its storage case or label, i.e.: no stickers, tape, etc.
- Do not charge your computer in its case-students should arrive at classes with their device fully charged.
- You are responsible for your laptop, charger, case, and any content on the device at all times.

- You will be responsible for any charges incurred as a result of negligence.

General Rules, Reminders, and Guidelines:

- You are the only person to use your computer and charger. Never share or swap with others.
- Keep passwords confidential.
- No downloading of anything without teacher permission.
- Print with teacher permission only. Preview first before you print.
- The computers should never be left unattended (during lunch, in the locker room, hallways, gym, after school, before, during, or after extracurricular activities, etc.)
- Computers are returned to homerooms at the end of the day for storage and charging except groups that are taking them home.
- Computers that are brought home for work completion **must be charged** for school the next day. There will be consequences for failing to have one's device charged for the following school day.
- Computers are not to be used while waiting outside for the bus or used while riding the school bus.
- The school's acceptable use policy should be followed at all times.

Email Rules, Reminders, and Guidelines:

- Your emails may be monitored at any given time.
- Any inappropriate use of your email will result in your email privileges being taken away for a period of time.

*Laptop privileges may be revoked at administration's discretion.

- If families elect not to participate in the program, or the device is taken for disciplinary reasons, the student will be able to complete curriculum work with alternative options.

Lockers

Students in grades 6-8 are provided with lockers. The lockers are school property. It may become necessary for school personnel to conduct a search of lockers if there is reason to suspect activity which is illegal or against school policy such as drugs, alcohol or tobacco use, weapons, theft, etc. If students choose to bring a lock for their locker, students must provide the office with the combination, or a key for the lock.

Lunch

Students are to remain on school grounds at lunch time. Every student has an assigned lunch period. Students 18 years old and younger can have school lunch and breakfast at no cost. Students may bring cold lunch if they wish, but it must be ready to eat—we do not heat up food for students.

Applications for free and reduced lunches have been sent home. Even though meals are free, we still need these forms back. This helps us receive funding for programs. These forms need to be completed by all families and returned to school as soon as possible. ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL.

Students are expected to behave in an orderly and polite fashion in the lunchroom. They are asked to display good manners and to respect their fellow students and school property. Many students

use the lunchroom every day; therefore, it is important for each student to do his/her part in keeping it clean. Please remember the following:

1. Students should remain seated while eating;
2. Students should clean the table and surrounding floor area before dismissal;
3. Students should remember that eating time is to be relaxing and without excessive noise.

Recess

Parents are asked not to send notes requesting that their children stay indoors during recess time, unless there are very unusual circumstances or it is recommended by a doctor's note. This procedure is based on our attempt to treat all students fairly and consistently. When determining if students go outside for recess we follow the "feels like temperature". If it feels like below 10 degrees the students will stay inside for recess.

Care of School Property

Equipment and materials loaned or issued to students remain the property of the school and may be recalled at any time. Students are responsible for the care and upkeep of such property and will be required to pay for items lost or stolen, or pay a reasonable cost for replacement taking into account the condition of the item.

Harassment Policy

The Vassalboro Community School has passed a policy on harassment. The goal of the policy is to help create a safe and comfortable atmosphere free from intimidation for all members of the school community. Please be aware that students should be reporting behavior or speech that is intimidating, whether by children or adults at school or school-related activities to school officials. All issues of harassment will be reported to the Principal and Assistant Principal. Please be aware that the policy includes disciplinary action for people participating in sexually inappropriate actions, which may include suspension for students and other actions for adults. A complete copy of the policy is available upon request.

Student Dress

No form of dress shall be permitted that presents a safety hazard or creates undue distraction. Students are expected to keep the following guidelines in mind as they dress for school:

1. Hats, hoods, head coverings, and pajamas are not allowed in the building unless it is an activity for spirit day or a special classroom event;
2. Shoes are to be worn at all times while on the school property;
3. The wearing of jackets in the classroom is discouraged;
4. Students should not wear anything that is representative of any illegal activity or causes distraction (i.e., the wearing of T-shirts with alcohol, tobacco, drug captions or sexual connotations as well as depicting violence will not be allowed);
5. Appropriate school clothing should be worn (midriff tops, tube tops, excessively short skirts, low cut shirts, undergarments visible, high rips/holes in jeans, etc. are considered inappropriate school dress). Tops must cover undergarments. Shorts, skirts, and rips or holes in jeans must keep private parts private. It is permissible to wear a garment (such as biker shorts, tights, or leggings) under ripped garments in order to avoid exposing private parts. Students will be

asked to change if these guidelines are not followed. Appropriate student dress is based on staff discretion.

Consequences for Inappropriate Clothing

Students will be asked to put on appropriate clothes, provided by the school, or call home to get a change of clothing for any school related event. The student will remain in the office until they have changed the clothing; work will be collected for the student during this time.

Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy

Students shall not use, possess, or distribute alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other substances defined by law as an illegal drug, or paraphernalia, or look-alike drugs at school, on school property, on the bus, or at school sponsored events. Students must leave prescribed medication and over the counter medications with the school nurse for safekeeping. Disciplinary actions will include suspension in addition to parent and student meeting with the Chemical Health Team, and may include clinical assessment and legal action.

Weapons Policy

Possession or use of a weapon in a school building, on school property, on the bus, or at school sponsored events or activities are prohibited. Weapons include any object, which can inflict bodily harm. A student found to be in possession of a weapon is subject to administrative and/or legal action. Articles designed for other purposes but which have been used to inflict bodily harm or intimidate (such as belts, pencils, scissors, etc...) may also be considered to be weapons.

A student using a weapon in a fight or altercation or to intimidate will be administratively judged to be a danger to others and/or self, and will be subject to suspension, expulsion and/or other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the school administration.

Bomb Threats

Students found guilty of issuing a bomb threat in any manner, at any time will receive serious and severe consequences. At a minimum the students will be suspended from school and reported to the police for criminal prosecution. In addition, the school committee may determine expulsion from school for up to one calendar year. A safe environment, free of threat of harm, is vital to the learning atmosphere.

Health/Medical

Accidents

Any accident or injury occurring during school or at a school-sponsored activity must be reported to the activity advisor or teacher in charge immediately.

Emergency Information

It is very important that the emergency information forms sent home at the beginning of the school year be completed, and returned to school. Be sure to give your current phone number, current place of employment and work phone, etc... THIS INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE UPDATED IF CHANGES OCCUR. If you wish to subscribe to our website (no fees) include your email address. You will receive updates automatically, including school cancellations and closings.

When to Send Your Child To School/Health Guidelines

1. Students who run a fever of 100.3 or higher, must not return to school until they are symptom free and fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
2. Students who experience diarrhea/vomiting should remain at home until 24 hours after symptoms stop (without the use of medications).
3. Students who are out of school sick for more than 3 days will require a doctor note to excuse their absence.

Medication

There may be times when it is necessary for your child to take medication while at school. If that should happen, the following procedure will be strictly enforced. This will ensure that a student is given the correct medication at the correct time and the right dosage.

1. Fill out and return the Parental Request for Dispensing Medication in School. This must be returned within 24 hours for short-term medications such as antibiotics. For long-term medications, written instructions by the prescribing doctor must be sent to school. These instructions must include: name of medication; reason for medication; dosage; time to be administered; possible side effects and action to be taken.
2. The medication must be in the original container. The label must include: name of student; name and dosage of medication; time to be given; and doctor's name. No other containers will be accepted. Over-the-counter medications such as cough syrup will not be given unless a note accompanies them from the prescribing doctor.
3. All medication will be kept locked in the health office, and will be dispensed by the school nurse or her/his designee.
4. NO medication is to be kept by the student at school. Due to the seriousness of dispensing medication, we request that parents read this notice carefully and save for future use.

Beverages:

With the exception of water bottles containing water, open containers of any kind are not permitted during school hours.

Suicide Prevention Policy

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to Vassalboro Community School. The school board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

- Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems and seeking help for themselves and

friends. Lessons will be conducted each school year PK-8 with age-appropriate curriculum by a trained designated school staff member.

- Vassalboro Community School will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.
- When a student is identified as being at risk, they will be assessed by a school employed mental health professional (school counselor or school clinical social worker) who will work with the student and their family to help connect them to appropriate local resources.
- Students will have access to national and state resources which they can contact for additional support such as:
 - a. Maine Crisis Hotline (call or text) 1-888-568-1112
 - b. National Suicide prevention Lifeline: 24 hour, toll free 1-800-273-273-8255
 - c. The Trevor Project: Suicide prevention hotline for LGBTQ+ young people. 1-866-488-7386
- All school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.
- While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.
- For a more detailed review of policy changes, please see Vassalboro Community School's full suicide prevention policy and protocols.

Articles Brought From Home

Toys are not permissible at school unless it is part of an educational plan, or event within the classroom. Children who bring items from home do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for lost, broken or stolen items. Books brought from home should be school and age appropriate literature. Live creatures/animals/pets should not be brought to school. Glass containers are not to be brought to school for safety reasons.

Flowers, Balloons, Gifts

Please do not send students floral or balloon arrangements to celebrate birthdays or other occasions. Due to allergies, we are a Latex free school. These gifts also create hard feelings for students that don't receive them and are typically a problem on the bus ride home. Deliveries sent to the school will be delivered to students after 2:15 to avoid classroom disruptions-unless they are for a classroom activity.

The Vassalboro Before/After Care

The Vassalboro Before/After Program focuses on child-initiated programming and provides careful supervision by caregivers who truly like to be with children. The State of Maine Department of Health

and Human Services, Office of Child Care and Head Start issues our license. Our license is renewed every two years with off year inspections.

- **Mission**

The mission is to provide a quality, valuable community service for school age children ages 5-12 who live in our community. This is a safe, flexible, affordable program for parents to place their children while they are at work. An atmosphere is encouraged where children feel free to be themselves. This is accomplished by the creative ways the children are encouraged to become active participants in their program. The children have an opportunity to participate in physical, social and creative skill building activities that they may not receive otherwise.

- **Goals**

A collaborative effort between program staff and the school community helps to create a smooth transition from a very structured day to an afternoon of exciting, fun activities with friends in a semi-structured environment. Enrichment activities such as baking, crafts, intramural sports, library use and quiet time are available to meet the program philosophy. Outside play and snack time are also important parts of the day.

The community is encouraged to become active participants as well. Monthly enrichment programs by community businesses and/or services come to the program to share unique skills, talents or collections, which the children are oftentimes asked to participate in with a hands-on approach.

- **Parent Open Invitation**

Parents are welcome to visit The Vassalboro Before/After Program at the Vassalboro Community School at any time. Hours are: 6:45-8:00 AM and 2:30-5:30 PM during the school year. We are also open from 6:45-5:30 during non-school days (except full day-snow day cancellations) and vacations. Set up an orientation and special visit with your family to tour the facility and learn about the schedule and meet program staff. We encourage a buddy system for new children who help with daily routines. The program keeps an open door policy at all times and you are welcome to voice your concerns, as there are always new and exciting ways to do things or to improve the existing program.

Several ways parents can become involved in the program in addition to sharing a talent may include: reading the monthly newsletters, donating supplies, providing a special snack, being on the parent board, participating in special enrichments, volunteering, completing parent evaluations and visiting with your children at the program. The children would be enriched by your involvement. Thank you for your support, encouragement and willingness to participate in this program. Come visit us!

Lost and Found

Lost and found articles are kept on a rack in the lobby. Students and parents are encouraged to check the rack if they think that any item has been lost at school. Any articles that are not claimed will be given to Goodwill.

School Visits

If you are visiting the school for a meeting or to pick up your child, you are to remain in the lobby at the window or seated at the bench while waiting. If you wish to visit a classroom, please call or email the classroom teacher in advance and arrange a mutually convenient time. Families and students are not permitted to go to classrooms and school spaces when teaching staff are not in the building.

All visitors are to sign in and pick up a visitor's pass from the Administrative Assistant upon arrival during the school day. Visitors will not be permitted to go to classrooms while school is in session unless there is an appointment with a staff member scheduled. If you are volunteering at school, the front office will have instructions for you also at the lobby window. Because we are responsible for the safety of all students, we must monitor the arrivals and departures of all visitors who enter the building.

If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher, please make arrangements with the teacher in advance. Conferences may be arranged by calling the school, emailing your child's teacher or by sending a note to your child's teacher.

Open House is held in the fall and provides parents with an opportunity to visit the child's classroom and to talk informally with the teacher. We also have parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring.

There are also programs and activities throughout the school year that are presented by teachers, the various specialists, PTO, and the youngsters themselves. If you are visiting the school for a program, we ask that you remain in the program area. We look forward to your interest and participation in your child's school life!

Smoke-Free Environment

The Vassalboro Community School, and its grounds, are a smoke-free environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

Telephone Use

Students cannot use the telephone or be called out of the classroom during school hours unless it is an emergency. Arrangements for after-school activities need to be made IN ADVANCE. If you need information about extracurricular activities or need to make arrangements for rides, please feel free to call the school. Staff members will not be called out of the classroom for a telephone call unless it is an emergency. A message will be transmitted to the staff member in their voicemail and he/she will respond at their earliest convenience.

Cell Phones

The use of electronic devices is prohibited during the school day. Students should have phones (or devices with cellular capabilities (i.e. smart watch) turned off upon entering the building and left in their lockers during the school day. Students can leave their phone in the office during the school

day as well. **If a student needs to contact a family member, they are allowed access to do that with permission from their teacher.

First Offense - Phone taken from student and sent to office and student may take the phone home at the end of the day. Parents will be notified of the offense.

Second Offense - Phone taken from student and sent to office. Parents will be notified and parents will pick up the phone from the office.

Third and Subsequent Offenses - Phone taken from student and sent to the office. Parents will be notified and students will not be allowed to bring devices back to school. Students will receive after school or recess detention for restorative practice purposes.

Parent Organization – PTO

PTO, our Parent/Community Support Group, is composed of involved parents who are focused on enhancing the school curriculum through parental and community support.

The goals of PTO are threefold; Organize volunteers to help in the classrooms and other areas of the school, raise funds to support special needs and programs, and increase communication between the parents, school and community. Thanks to the support of the parents and the community, PTO has been an extremely successful organization. Money has been raised to support the library and our playground, provided school supplies, and sponsored classroom presentations. Each grade is provided with funds for field trips. We are extremely fortunate to have the PTO organization here at the Vassalboro Community School, and welcome you to become an active member.

Volunteers

The staff of Vassalboro Community School encourages citizens who are sincerely interested in working with our children to volunteer their time. Those interested in volunteering must complete paperwork and have a background check completed as part of the paperwork process.

We want to enrich children's experiences beyond what is normally available in school through the unique resources, which can be contributed by volunteers. Although services will vary according to the individual needs of the classroom, volunteer assistance generally falls into one of the following areas:

1. Classroom – Perform clerical, monitorial, and teacher reinforcement tasks under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher.
2. General School – Perform a variety of school duties as assigned by principal or designated teacher; may assist in office, library, clinic, classroom, but is not assigned to a single station.
3. Library – Works under the supervision of the Library Specialist to assist in operating the school library. Shelving, filing, clipping, circulation, and book processing are some of the tasks performed.
4. Special Enrichment – Speaks to classes or other groups on topics related to occupation or special interest.
5. Field Trip Assistants – Assists on field trips or excursions to cultural events.

School Counseling Services

Services are available for all students by the school counselors. The counselors see children individually and in groups as well as conducting classroom activities. Guidance topics focus on helping students learn in school, getting along better with other people, and improving decision making and problem solving skills. The counselors are available to consult with parents and teachers and to coordinate services with local agencies for students. Parents may contact the school counselors by calling the school at 923-3100.

Homework

Appropriate to the developmental age of students, teachers may make independent practice assignments or ask students to complete unfinished class work at home. Additionally, students may be assigned long-range projects from time to time for the purpose of developing and using research and study skills. Students should get into the habit of doing their assignments well and on time. Teachers will explain what their homework policies are, when assignments are given, how much homework counts in a grade, etc. If there are any questions about any assignment, students should ask the teacher. They can get extra help by making an after school appointment with a teacher.

Infinite Campus

Infinite Campus is our student management program. This program allows parents and students to log in and see live student grades. You will receive a username and password that will allow you access to this program. If you do not have a username/password contact the school office and the secretaries can assist you.

Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG)

The middle school JMG core program helps students develop communication, team-building, leadership, and problem-solving skills through project work and adventure-based activities. It includes a hands-on community service component, which teaches students about the importance of giving back. The middle school program also provides continued support for students as they transition from middle school into high school. It is staffed by a JMG Specialist who works closely with teachers, guidance, administration and families.

Library

Students will have the opportunity to visit the school library regularly. When students are in the library they will be there for a number of reasons:

1. Check out books for book reports
2. Check out books for recreational use
3. Research information for reports
4. Learn to use the automated card catalog
5. Understand how the library can help them to be better prepared students in the future

Everyone must always follow the rules of the library. It is important that each and every student respects each other's rights to select library materials that meet their needs.

When students check out library books they are responsible for returning them in a timely manner. Materials that are lost or damaged must be paid for. Library privileges will be lost until the student's record is cleared.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Regular parent conferences are held in the fall and spring but may be scheduled individually whenever needed. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if they wish to schedule a conference.

Progress Reports

Midterm progress reports for grades 6-8 are issued approximately halfway through each ranking period. Progress reports are an important means of letting students and their families know what their achievement is in a subject.

Report Cards

Grade report cards will be issued to parents at the end of each of the four quarters of the school year. The grade report will show the student's grades and appropriate comments regarding performance.

Grading System and Honor Roll policies being updated at Board Meetings (August 25 and September 25)-They will be added after they have been adopted/updated.

Viking Pride Assemblies

Viking Pride assemblies are designed to recognize good work and deeds of students and staff. Academic achievements are awarded quarterly while other actions are recognized weekly. Viking Pride (honor roll) cards consist of gold (high honors) and blue (honors). Students are not eligible to receive a Viking Pride Card if they are absent more than three unexcused times, receive three detentions, or are suspended. This resets at each quarter.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework that helps educators provide academic and behavioral strategies for students with various needs. This system was previously referred to as Response to Intervention. Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and whole group interventions with all children in the general education classroom (Tier I). Tier II is more intense targeted instruction delivered in a small group setting. Tier III is typically a more intense daily intervention delivered in a 1:1 setting. The goal of RTI, in a nutshell, is for students to receive help before falling behind.

General education interventions involve regular benchmark assessments of all students, using curriculum based measurements, to monitor student progress and identify those students who require additional interventions to target lagging skills (academic or behavior). General educators are encouraged to confer with specialists and other teaching professions, but general education teachers are responsible for the implementation of the interventions.

Student and Staff Information

Names, addresses, and personal phone numbers of students and staff members are not routinely given out in order to ensure confidentiality for all.

Student Records

Pupil records are collected and maintained to promote the instruction, guidance, and educational progress of the pupil and for legitimate educational reasons.

Parents of eligible students (age 18 years or older) are entitled to certain rights and protection under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A complete copy of the Vassalboro student record policy may be obtained by contacting Administration. However, the following items outline your rights.

The parent or eligible students have a right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Request the amendment of the student's educational records;
3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent allowed in accordance with 34 CFR, Section 99;
4. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education; and
5. Obtain a copy of the Vassalboro Community School student record policy by contacting Administration.

The three types of student records maintained by the school include:

1. Academic Information - such as grades, progress reports, student work samples, achievement test data, etc.;
2. Statistical Information - including aptitude scores, mental ability, permanent school health records, etc.; and
3. Directory Information - on students, such as names, ages, addresses, telephone number, grade, participation in officially recognized activities, and sports and awards received.

All directory information may be made public without notice, unless the school is notified in writing within 30 days of the start of school that such information is to be withheld. Information from academic and statistical records will not be released to persons other than authorized school personnel without prior written consent. The Vassalboro Community School forwards educational records to other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

Student Services

The following student services are available to Vassalboro Community School students:

1. Title I - Students who would benefit from supplemental help in reading or math may be eligible to receive services in the Title I Program.
2. School Counselor - We have 2 full-time school counselors who provide a needed and valuable service to our children. If you wish to investigate guidance services for your child, please call and make an appointment with one of our school counselors.
3. Special Education - If you are concerned that your child may be in need of special education services and you would like information on how to make a referral, please contact the Special Education Director, Principal or Assistant Principal for support. Students identified as having a disability that requires services or support through special education may receive varied types and amounts of instruction within the regular classroom or special education setting.

Child Find Notice

Vassalboro Community School seeks to ensure that all students within its jurisdiction are identified, located and evaluated who are school-age (5) through the school year in which they turn 20 and who are in need of special education and supportive assistance – including state wards, state agency clients, students who have been suspended or expelled, children attending private schools and home schools, institutional residents, highly mobile children with disabilities, and children who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education and supportive assistance even though they are advancing from grade to grade. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the Individualized Education Team.

If the child find process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the Pupil Evaluation Team to determine the student's eligibility for special education services. If you know of a child with a disability who is not being served please notify the school. If you wish more information regarding Special Education or have questions about this notice you can contact the Special Education Office at 923-4352.

Assessment

Testing at VCS is designed as an integral part of the evaluation of students and programs. They are utilized primarily for furnishing needed information to decision makers including school committee, administration, teachers, parents, and students. They are limited to obtaining information, which is necessary and useful with regard to the users listed above. VCS participates in the statewide assessment of student progress as required by Maine State Law.

Textbooks

Students are responsible for all textbooks, which are issued to them. To add to the life of the text we request that all texts are covered. If a book is lost or damaged it will be the responsibility of the student and his/her parents to pay to replace the book.

Unified Arts Program

Art

Students in grades Pre-K - 8 receive specific art instruction from an art specialist once a week. Opportunities for students to display their work are provided.

Computer Technology

Students in grades PreK - 8 receive instruction in Computer Technology once a week.

Health

Students in grade 8 participate in health topic quarterly units. For questions on those topics, please reach out to the 8th grade teaching staff.

Classroom Music

All students in grades Pre K through 4 participate in a weekly music class. Students will learn to be tuneful, beatful, and artful while they sing, dance and play.

Vocal Music

5th Grade Chorus

All 5th grade students participate in the VCS 5th Grade Chorus. Students rehearse once a week during the school day. All students are encouraged to perform in the Winter and Spring concerts.

Senior Chorus

Students in grades 6-8 elect to participate in the VCS Senior Chorus. Students rehearse for the entire school year and meet 2-3 times a week during the school day. All students are required to perform in the Winter and Spring concerts as well as at the VCS 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony.

Instrumental Music

5th Grade Band

Students in the 5th Grade may elect to participate in the VCS 5th Grade Band. Information about joining 5th Grade Band is provided to students in September. Students who elect to participate in 5th Grade Band participate in weekly instrument lessons that are given during the school day. All students are required to perform in the Winter and Spring concerts.

Senior Band

Students in grades 6-8 elect to participate in the VCS Senior Band. Students who elect to participate in Senior Band must have one year or more of experience playing a band instrument. Students rehearse for the entire school year and meet 2-3 times a week during the school day. All students are required to perform in the Winter and Spring concerts as well as at the VCS 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony.

Both Band and Chorus for Grade 6-8 students begin promptly at 8:00. Students who are late to school are late for these lessons and practices. This could affect grading and material learned.

Physical Education

All students receive physical education once per week.

Life and Career Readiness Class (LCRC)

Students in grade 5-8 participate in this class weekly taught by school counselors. It is graded using the standard scale.

Library Class

Students in grades PK-6 have a weekly library class. Students in Grade 7-8 have access to the library during open library times. Library class is graded using the standard scale.

Communication with School

If you have a question, complaint, or problem, or just wish to talk over something that is bothering you, don't hesitate to call and make an appointment to discuss it with us. If you should find it necessary to work to resolve a problem or misunderstanding, the order in which you should approach school staff is as follows:

1. The Teacher/Staff Member
2. The Assistant Principal and/or Principal
3. The Superintendent
4. The School Board