



Valhalla High School

2019-2020

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September 2019

Dear Students,

On behalf of the faculty, staff and administration, I would like to welcome you to the 2019-2020 school year. It is our sincere hope that you will have a successful year, enjoying all the experiences that the high school offers.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the rules, procedures, and activities that will help you to be an involved and responsible student. The information in it will assist you throughout the school year. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all of the information in this handbook.

Valhalla High School has an excellent reputation based not only on our programs but also on the character of our students. We want to continue enhancing this reputation and, with your help, we will reach new levels of excellence.

I'll leave you with this bit of advice, opportunities rarely come knocking, we have to seek them out. To get the most out of your high school experience, you need to step out of your comfort zone and try new things. Audition, sign up, try out, and/or run for office. Help make Valhalla go from great to better!

If I can be of assistance, please feel free to see me.

We are looking forward to another wonderful year.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Hirsch', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jon Hirsch
Principal

VHS ADMINISTRATION

Interim Superintendent

Mrs. Christina Howe

Principal

Mr. Jon Hirsch

Director of Health, PE and Athletics

Mr. Jamie Block

Assistant Principal

Mrs. Miriam Dobbs

Secretary to

VHS Administration

Ms. Maura Costello

Secretary to

Athletic Director

Ms. Francine Vincent

Attendance

Mrs. Linda Perrotta

Front Office

Mrs. Linda Perrotta

Mrs. Paula Soricelli

Nurse

Ms. Virginia Diamond

Mrs. Rea Davidson

DEPARTMENTS

English

Mr. Chris Cooper

Mrs. Kerry Dinsmore

Mrs. Anne Griffin

Mr. Joseph Ferraro

Mrs. Heidi Harwitz

Mrs. Patricia White

Fine/Performing Arts

Mr. Chris Czerw

Dr. Holly Lovegrove

Mrs. Ivana Saric

Mr. Matthew Norris

Dr. Anthony Maceli

Foreign Language

Mrs. Stephanie Albanese

Mrs. Maria Delaney

Ms. Lisa DeBiase

Mrs. Roxanne Franquelli-Beras

Mr. Richard O'Riley

Health & P.E.

Mrs. Tracy Bruno

Ms. Tara Lahm

Mr. Josh Wolfson

Mr. Kevin Martins

Mathematics

Ms. Caitlyn Brehm

Mrs. Liz Danko

Dr. Amy Fox

Mrs. Christine Hehman

Ms. Nicole McDonald

Mrs. Angela Molina

Mrs. Geraldina Monica

Science

Mrs. Christine Cirillo

Mr. Federico Duay

Ms. Kristin Free

Ms. Jennifer Granich

Mrs. Deidre Merante

Mrs. Lisa Muggeo

Dr. Bobbi Pinnow

Social Studies

Mr. Richard Austin

Mr. Luke Doran

Mr. Christopher Farley

Mr. John Philbin

Ms. Laura Booth-Freda

Mrs. Lorna McKenzie

Technology

Dr. Amy Fox

Library Media Center

Ms. Lourdes Torres

Library Media Specialist

Ms. Elizabeth Palma

Library Aide

Pupil Support Services

Ms. Genieve Holder

Director of Special Education

Dr. Christine Ricevuto

Psychologist

Mrs. Michelle McSherry

Psychologist

Ms. Jacqueline Alimena

Social Worker

Guidance

Mrs. Meghan Jacobsen, *Director*

Mrs. Toni Bonifacio, *Secretary*

Mrs. Eileen O'Connor

Mrs. Susana Reis

Mr. Russell Stevens

Special Education

Mrs. Diane Dolan

Mr. Robert Drysdale

Mrs. Stacey Gagliardi

Mrs. Christine Horton

Mrs. Cathy Redmond

Mr. William Suesholtz

Special Services Teachers

Mrs. Lorna McKenzie

Business Office

Mr. Kevin C. McLeod

Assistant Superintendent for Business

District Teaching & Learning

Mrs. Elizabeth Kimiecik

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction

Testing Center

Mrs. Denise Gomez

Teacher Aides

Mr. Gabriel Frabasile

Ms. Amanda Gonzalez

Ms. Danielle Papa

Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Peter Kelly, *Director of Facilities*

Custodians

Mr. Joseph Magaletti, *Head*

Mr. Steve Cerreta, *Head*

Mr. Todd Dooley

Mr. Steven Hagan

Mrs. Thi Si Huynh

Mr. Mario Pierre

Mr. George Sliter

Mr. Daniel Weston

PHILOSOPHY

The Valhalla schools are a democratic expression for the will of the community to give a formal dimension to the education of its young people. The schools carry out this mandate within the framework of pertinent New York State laws and the local educational budget. We have determined that at all stages and facets of our educational process, the needs and aspirations of our students remain central.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

The Valhalla Union Free School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, sexual orientation or gender in the educational programs and activities it operates. Inquiries concerning this policy may be referred to the Superintendent's Office, Columbus Avenue, Valhalla, NY 10595.

DIGNITY ACT

The Dignity Act (Education Law §11[7]) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. Such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, includes, but is not limited to conduct; verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender (which include a person's actual or perceived sex, as well as gender identity and expression).

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING/HARASSMENT/SEXTING

The VUFSD supports and follows the New York State Dignity Act. The NYSED Glossary of Terms defines Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing, and Bullying (IHMB) as "threatening, stalking or seeking to coerce or compel a person to do something; intentionally placing or attempting to place another person in fear of imminent physical injury; or engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability that substantially disrupts the educational process."

Cyberbullying is "the repeated use of information technology, including e-mail, instant message, blogs, chat rooms, pagers, cell phones, and gaming systems, to deliberately harass, threaten or intimidate others." Sexting is defined as "sending, receiving or forwarding sexually suggestive or explicit images, including nude or nearly nude photos through text message or email."

Bullying, cyberbullying (a form of electronic aggression), harassment and sexting are inappropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated on school grounds or at school-sponsored events or functions, using either school or personal information technology equipment.

EMOTIONAL HARM

Emotional harm takes place in the context of "harassment or bullying" to a student's emotional well-being through the creation of a hostile school environment that is as severe or pervasive as to unreasonably and substantially interfere with the student's education.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a violation of the law and stands in direct opposition to District policy. Therefore, the Board prohibits all forms of sexual harassment by employees and students. Generally, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Offenders will be subject to serious disciplinary action, parental notification, and report to the District Sexual Harassment Officer.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board supports the view that a school exists primarily to educate. A calm, orderly atmosphere must exist if learning is to take place. Students must develop both academically and socially responsible behavior if the educational setting is going to function positively and productively. Such responsible behavior shall include:

- Respecting the rights of others (Dignity Act)
- Being courteous
- Showing respect for teachers, other students, the school and its property
- Dressing appropriately – see Dress Code
- Developing a consideration and mutual understanding for such differences as social, economic and cultural backgrounds, and attitudes
- Being regular and punctual in attendance and in meeting obligations
- Developing an awareness of responsibility for their actions
- Using school property responsibly; all students who have not returned school property will not be able to participate in end of the year activities, i.e., library books, textbooks, sports uniforms, etc.
- Coming to class with completed homework, books and materials needed for that class
- Behaving in all school facilities, including school provided transportation, with respect to decorum

If a student believes that he/she is being treated unfairly, it is imperative that the student immediately asks to go to a building administrator to register a complaint. By following this procedure, the student now has the opportunity to avoid being insubordinate to the staff member and also to avoid the serious disciplinary measures given for insubordination.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All students participating in extracurricular activities at Valhalla High School will be subjected to the Academic Eligibility Policy (AEP).

- **Student eligibility will be determined by the 1st progress report and the report card grades thereafter.**
1. If a student has ONE failure (based on the 1st progress report or report card grades thereafter):
 - a. Student may participate in extracurricular activities.
 - b. Student will meet with his/her counselor to form a plan of support to help student avoid future ineligibility.
 2. If a student has TWO failures (based on the 1st progress report or report card grades thereafter):
 - a. Student will be on probation until the next progress report /report card period. While on probation, the student will be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities.
 - b. The counselor will meet with the student to develop a plan for academic support.
 - c. Student must adhere to the plan of academic support, which will include mandatory extra help sessions in the failed subjects during the entire probationary period.
 - d. Each Thursday, student must submit, to the Director of Guidance, a progress report completed by teachers in all subjects.
 - e. A student who fails to adhere to the academic support plan or hand in a completed weekly progress report shall be considered ineligible for participation in all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the probationary period.
 - f. After the probationary period, if the student has 2 or more failures, he/she will be declared ineligible and may not participate in any extracurricular activities for the subsequent four-week period.
 3. If a student has THREE OR MORE failures (based on the 1st progress report or report card grades thereafter):
 - a. Student will be ineligible for participation in all extracurricular activities for a four-week period.
 - b. The guidance counselor will meet with the student to develop a plan for academic support.
 - c. Student must adhere to the plan of academic support, which will include extra help sessions in the failed subjects during the entire ineligible period. In addition, ongoing communication with their teachers and guidance counselor is mandatory.

Academic Appeals:

Students may appeal extracurricular restriction at the completion of the probationary period (appeals will not be considered in the middle of a grading period). Please see the Assistant Principal for the application process. All appeals must be submitted within 48 hour of notification. An Academic Eligibility Committee consisting of the Assistant Principal, Director of Guidance, Faculty Member, School Psychologist and/or the Director of Athletics shall hear any appeal by a student with respect to a determination of eligibility. His/her parent and guidance counselor may accompany the student to the eligibility hearing. **Students will only be granted ONE successful appeal during his/her high school career.**

ACCIDENTS

Accidents must be reported at once to the teacher in charge or to the **FRONT OFFICE**. Any student who becomes injured should first notify his/her teacher and then report to the Nurse.

ASSEMBLIES

Assembly programs will be scheduled throughout the school year to enhance our educational program and to provide students with worthwhile and interesting experiences.

AFTER SCHOOL DESIGNATED AREAS

When school is dismissed, all students staying after school for co-curricular activities must be in designated areas with their teachers, coaches or advisors at all times. All students who are staying for co-curricular activities, which do not begin upon dismissal, may not congregate in the halls. Students must be in Cafeteria A. All students taking the late bus must leave through Cafeteria A. Students are required to have a pass written from their teachers, coaches or advisor after their meetings/practice in order to board the late bus. If a student does not have a pass they will not be allowed on the late bus. All after school cafeteria supervision personnel must collect/check the student's bus pass prior to him/her riding the late bus.

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE

In order for the school to promote a healthful environment for learning and because of the serious threat that illicit drugs and alcohol constitute to a person's physical and emotional well-being, the possession, sale, use, or being under the influence of these substances in school, on school grounds, or at any school sponsored function is strictly prohibited.

The Valhalla Union Free School District Board of Education Drug and Alcohol Policy recognizes the school's responsibility to educate and motivate individuals to make responsible choices with respect to alcohol and drug use and to provide an alcohol and drug education program as an integral part of our total health education program in all grades.

In addition, the Board of Education and the school administration recognize the need to provide counseling, referrals, and other supportive assistance to drug and alcohol involved students, while maintaining respect for their legal rights.

It should be noted that the Board of Education policy states that students found to be in possession of illegal drugs, regardless of quantity, may be turned over to the proper authorities for appropriate legal action. Furthermore, the policy goes on to indicate that any student who is found to be in possession of, or under the influence of drugs, or alcohol while in school, on school grounds, or while participating in a school activity is subject to disciplinary action, including immediate suspension. In such cases, parents will be phoned to remove the student from school and an appointment will be made for a conference to discuss the conditions of the student's return.

This also includes the use and/or possession of e-cigarettes, vapor pens and devices, and related products. The use and/or possession of e-cigarettes, and vaping devices will result in a five-day suspension and a referral to a superintendent's hearing. The vaping device will be confiscated and not returned.

Students are urged to exercise sound judgment in their own conduct. It is a student's responsibility to remove himself/herself from an area in which drug or alcohol use is taking place. Those who remain in close proximity to others who are drinking or using drugs must accept the risk of being held responsible as participants.

ATTENDANCE

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their children attend school in accordance with the district calendar. **It is the obligation and responsibility of each Valhalla High School student to attend all classes as specified on his/her schedule.** Continuity of instruction is a crucial part of any educational program. Regular school attendance is important because it is directly related to academic success. Further, it contributes to the development of discipline, which will play a part in future career success.

Valhalla High School recognizes the following as legal excuses for a student absence, each of which must be verified by the student's parent/guardian or by school personnel, where applicable:

1. Personal Illness
2. Death in the family
3. Approved school sponsored activities
4. Religious observance
5. Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
6. Quarantine
7. Required Court Dates
8. Military obligations
9. Attendance at Health Clinics
10. College visitation with prior knowledge and approval—so long as it does not exceed 3 days per year (juniors and seniors only)
11. Extraordinary circumstances (pre-approved 1 month in advance) by the principal and/or superintendent of schools

Any absence not provided for on the excused list shall be deemed an unexcused absence. Explanations, which indicate travel, vacation, and work or needed at home are examples of unexcused absences.

Students who arrive twenty (20) minutes after the start of class without a pass excusing them for one of the above reasons will also be considered absent unexcused.

Three (3) unexcused tardies will result in one (1) unexcused absence.

Teachers are not obligated to provide work for any student who receives an unexcused absence.

If a student is out beyond three consecutive days for illness, a physician's note must be provided or every absence thereafter will be considered unexcused. Attendance policy is also available online for additional information.

Students must be in attendance **five (5)** academic periods to participate or view the activity as a spectator in all after school activities (unless prior approval is received from a school administrator). In addition, any student who is sent home from school sick is not permitted to participate in any after school events.

Procedures to Follow for Absences: Each absence must be accounted for. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the office the morning of the absence. It is essential that parents/guardians provide a written excuse for each absence. Such excuses should contain the reason and date of the absence and be presented to the attendance officer as soon as a student returns to class.

A WRITTEN EXCUSE MUST BE PRESENTED WITHIN 72 HOURS OF A STUDENT'S RETURN TO A SPECIFIC CLASS OR SCHOOL. ONCE 72 HOURS HAVE ELAPSED, THE ABSENCE WILL BE PERMANENTLY RECORDED AS UNEXCUSED AND ALL PENALTIES, WHICH ACCOMPANY AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE, WILL BE ENFORCED.

CREDIT LOSS: A student will lose credit in a course for exceeding the following attendance benchmarks:

- 6 unexcused absences in a half-year or every other day course
- 12 unexcused absences in a full-year course

APPEAL FOR LOSS OF CREDIT: Students may appeal a loss of credit due to absences. A request for an appeal must be made within seventy-two (72) hours of the receipt of the Loss of Credit Letter. In any appeal by a parent, with respect to the loss of credit, there will be an appeals committee at the meeting consisting of the Assistant Principal, student's guidance counselor and the teacher(s) whose class in which the credit is being denied.

LATENESS: Students are expected to arrive to their first period class, study halls, and all assigned classes on time. Late arrivals cause disruptions and interfere with the learning process. If a student is 20 or more minutes late to class he/she is marked absent unless he/she is legally excused. Three (3) unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence.

LATENESS TO SCHOOL: Students who arrive late are to report immediately to the **ATTENDANCE CLERK (Mrs. Perrotta)** with a note from a parent/guardian detailing why he/she is late.

CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICE USAGE

In 2013, the Valhalla UFSD Board of Education adopted an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that included a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) component. Valhalla High School understands that technology, like cell phones, is an integral part of the learning experience and, therefore, encourages the use of such devices for **educational purposes**. Students and teachers are encouraged to use such devices as a way to enhance the learning experiences. (Please refer to the District's BYOD Policy in the Code of Conduct.)

The use of such devices for personal music listening is acceptable in non-academic areas such as the cafeterias, hallways, etc. at a reasonable volume level (students must be able to hear directions from staff at all times). Teachers will determine if using devices for personal music listening will be permitted in his/her classroom.

If a student is found using their personal device for any reason other than indicated above, his/her device may be confiscated. If a personal device is confiscated, it will be turned into the Principal or Assistant Principal and a letter will be sent home to parents. A student may pick up his/her cell phone device at 2:27 pm. After the second confiscation, parents will have to pick-up the cell phone from an Administrator. If there is a third offense, further disciplinary action will be taken and parents once again must pick up their child's cell phone. Other disciplinary responses may be enforced as per the Valhalla UFSD AUP.

CUTTING CLASSES

Students are expected to attend all classes and other school activities for which they are scheduled. Missing one of these assignments is considered a cut. Cutting classes has a significant negative effect on the educational process. For students who leave school property without permission, the minimum penalty is one-day suspension. The **ONLY** school personnel who can grant a student permission to leave school grounds early is an **ADMINISTRATOR**. Furthermore, a student who cuts a class will be declared ineligible for any after school activity that day.

CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE

In order for any student to participate in after school athletics, clubs, or any other school-sponsored activity, he/she must be in school for **five academic full periods**. Furthermore, if a student is absent from any class, without teacher or administrative permission, he/she may not participate in co-curricular activities.

Co-Curricular Participation Agreement

Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege for each student; therefore, it is imperative students, parents, and community members are aware of the following policies and procedures of Valhalla High School regarding participation in co-curricular activities.

All Valhalla High School students participating in co-curricular activities are subject to the following guidelines:

1. All Valhalla High School students are subject to the disciplinary procedures of the middle school and high school for any and all actions that take place during the school day, on school property, as a part of a school activity/event, or at any other school chaperoned function off school grounds. Violations of school policies may result in participation restriction as outlined in the co-curricular code of conduct.
2. Valhalla High School strongly believes in the character of its students. Students who are involved in co-curricular activities including, but not limited to, performing arts, student government, athletics, etc. are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which exemplifies good moral character. Self-reported and/or police reported involvement in illegal/improper activities (possession, use, sale of drugs/alcohol, etc.) off campus will result in co-curricular restriction as outlined in the co-curricular code of conduct.
3. Coaches and advisors have the ability to make participation restriction decisions when incidents occur within the team/activity setting under the direction of school administration.
4. All students must be academically eligible to participate in co-curricular activities as outlined in the Valhalla High School Eligibility Policy.

Both the student and parent/guardian for the student to participate in co-curricular activities must sign the Participation Policy.

Valhalla Co-Curricular Policy

Extracurricular clubs and athletics for all students are an integral and desirable part of the district's secondary school educational program. The Board believes that all students should conduct themselves in a manner that will not jeopardize their health, affect their performance, nor reflect negatively upon the Valhalla Union Free School District. To be a member of an extracurricular club or athletic team is a privilege and each student is expected to perform to the best of his/her potential.

Because the use of alcohol and drugs prevents the development of a healthy mind and body, the following code of behavior has been established:

No student involved in extracurricular activities or athletics will possess or consume a beverage containing alcohol at any time or place during the duration of the club or during the sports season.

No student in extracurricular activities or athletics will possess, sell, or use illegal drugs at any time during the duration of the club or during the sports season. This also includes the use and/or possession of e-cigarettes, vapor pens and devices, and related products.

No student in extracurricular activities or athletics will use prescription drugs without the consent of a physician and/or parent at any time during the duration of the club or during the sports season.

Alcohol Violations, Drug Violations & any other violation that results in three days or more suspension will be based on the following:

Athletics and Performance Based Activities

1st Offense:

- Loss of Leadership Positions – Team Captain
- The student will be suspended from participation for 20% of the games/competitions/performances.
- The student must attend all practices and games during the probation period.
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession) or if there is less than 20% of the games or performances remaining in the season/activity **

2nd Offense:

- The student will be removed from all athletic teams or performance based activities for the remainder of the season.
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession)**

3rd Offense:

- The student will be suspended from participation in sports and performance based activities for the balance of the school calendar year.
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession) or if extreme circumstances exist**

All Other Clubs and Activities:

1st Offense:

- Loss of Leadership Positions
- The student will be assigned 15 hours of community service.
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession)**
- ** The National Honor Societies must adhere to national guidelines when violations occur that may impose additional sanctions**

2nd Offense:

- Student is removed from all clubs and activities for the remainder of the school year on a seasonal basis.
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession)**

3rd Offense:

- The student will be removed from participation in all clubs/activities for the remainder of the school year
- The student will meet with the school psychologist for three mandatory meetings.
- ** Student will meet with Review Board for multiple violations (intoxication, possession) or if extreme circumstances exist**

Tobacco Use on School Property---Clubs/Athletics:

1st Offense:

- Loss of leadership positions
 - Student is assigned 6 hours of community service
 - 3 mandatory meetings with the counselor
- ** School Participation restricted on day of in-house suspension (1 day)**
** The National Honor Societies must adhere to national guidelines when violations occur that may impose additional sanctions**

2nd Offense:

- Student is assigned 12 hours of community service
- ** School Participation restricted on days of in-house suspensions (2 days) **

3rd Offense:

- Review Committee will meet to decide if student is permitted to continue on athletic team or in club/activity & determine additional sanctions.
- ** School Participation restricted on days of in-house suspensions (3 days) **

The Review Committee shall consist of the Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, one Coach, and one Club Advisor.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to arrive to class promptly and to have with them all necessary materials, including a notebook, pen or pencil, and any books they were instructed to bring.

Certain consistent standards of behavior and organization help to create a positive atmosphere of respect and courtesy between student and staff members. Disciplinary measures shall be appropriate to the seriousness of the offense and, where applicable, to the previous disciplinary record of the student.

Respect for others is a fundamental responsibility of all persons in a school building. If a student feels he/she has been treated unfairly, he/she should report such instances to the administration. Arguing, shouting or creating a scene will do nothing to alleviate the problem. Every effort will be made to support and respect a student's rights. It must be remembered, however, that no student has the right to:

1. Refuse to comply with any reasonable request made by a staff member (e.g. move when asked, report to office, stop horseplay, refrain from entering a restricted area, etc.).
2. Refuse to give his/her name when a staff member requests it.
3. Use abusive or disrespectful language or engage in behavior, which is inappropriate.

STUDENT ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION, SUSPENSION PROCESS & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Alternative Instruction

A student will be assigned Alternative Instruction (AI) for any violation of the Code of Conduct that is more egregious than requiring a simple detention, yet not to the level that would require an Out of School Suspension.

Students who are assigned to Alternative Instruction:

- Will report to the Library on the designated Saturday to which they are assigned
- Will report at 8 a.m. and will be dismissed at 12 p.m.
- Will be required to bring his/her own school related material (Independent Reading will be considered acceptable material).
- Will not be provided transportation by the school system
- Students are not allowed to use or have access to any electronic devices including cell phones, iPods, iPads etc. while serving AI.

Out of School Suspension

An Out of School Suspension is reserved for egregious acts of misconduct, insubordination and/or those actions that are deemed to be a danger to the safety of the student/students, faculty or staff in the building.

If a student is suspended from school, s/he shall not be permitted to participate in any extra-curricular or co-curricular activities, as well as any other school events or activities which take place on the days of suspension (including intervening weekends)

Penalties

The range of penalties which may be imposed include, but are not limited to, the following: verbal and/or written warning, written notification to parent, probation, reprimand, detention, suspension from transportation, athletic participation, social or co-curricular activities and other privileges, AI, out-of-school suspension, involvement of local law enforcement agencies, and a Superintendent's hearing. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited as per Board policy.

Community Service

The Valhalla Union Free School District believes that satisfaction and pride that comes from helping others within your school community are important reasons to utilize community service as a discipline option as well as an educational tool. It strengthens your community and organization providing important services and learning opportunities. When a community is doing well as a whole, its individuals are better off, too. Community Service can function alongside or in lieu of behavioral consequences requiring a student who has broken the Code of Conduct to work on school grounds, with appropriate supervision, in order to benefit the school community. Four hours of Community Service may be assigned or in place of one day of Alternative Instruction. Utilizing community service as a disciplinary option is at the discretion of building administration. In addition, before any Community Service can be enforced parents will have to give consent. Community Service can include but is not limited to custodial assistance.

VALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT*

***Please refer to the *Valhalla Union Free School District Code of Conduct* for specific guidelines on the High School website under the Students tab – School Policies**

STUDENT RIGHTS

The Board of Education supports the **rights of students** where these rights do not interfere with those of others, the general social order, or laws, rules, and regulations. Such rights shall include:

- a free and appropriate education
- involvement in school government and long-range curriculum planning as appropriate to the age of the student
- free speech or expression where such speech or expression is not slanderous, and/or vulgar, does not incite others to damage property or physically harm others, or does not interfere with the normal operation of the school
- distribution of literature, subject to school approval, with respect to time, manner, place, duration and content, which does not interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school
- symbolic expression which does not intrude upon the orderly process of the school or the rights of others
- individual personal appearance except where dress or appearance interferes with the learning process or where health, safety, or full participation factors are at issue
- appropriate personal counseling
- confidentiality of communication when the content does not breach the school's responsibility to the parent or guardian
- access to student records if over the age of 18 and as allowed by law
- due process in matters of suspension and/or expulsion

DETENTION

Students who are to serve detention after school will report to the front office. Detention will be held from 2:40 pm – 3:20 pm every day, except Friday. Students are expected to serve detention on the day it is given unless a building administrator approves an alternate day, due to an extenuating circumstance. This will allow all students the time needed to adjust their after school schedules in order to serve their detention.

Students who have violated school regulations will be assigned to detention. No student because of membership or participation in a club, student activity, after school employment, or because of transportation arrangements shall be exempt from detention. If a student fails to report to a teacher for classroom misconduct after school, when given 24 hours notice, the teacher may assign the student a school detention.

Students who are absent from detention without prior administrative approval will be subject to alternate instruction plus a detention. Frequent absences from detention will be dealt with more severely.

It will be the student's responsibility to report to the detention room on time. During the detention period, the student will remain quiet and cooperative. Students may use detention time to complete assignments, do homework, read, or involve themselves in some other quiet, constructive endeavor. Failure to comply with these responsibilities will result in further disciplinary measures.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress and groom themselves in an appropriate manner. Students must be dressed in appropriate clothing and protective equipment as required for physical education classes, participation in athletics, science laboratories and home and careers skills classes.

The following are considered to be inappropriate dress, grooming and appearance and are prohibited in school or at school functions:

- Any dress or appearance, which constitutes a threat or danger to the health and safety of students.
- Any dress or appearance which is vulgar, lewd, obscene or indecent or profane or which exposes to sight the private parts of the body.
- Any dress or appearance, which encourages or advocates the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and/or tobacco.
- Any dress or appearance, which advocates discrimination or denigrates others based upon race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- The wearing of any article on the head in the building as they are a sign of disrespect (unless worn for religious or medical reasons).
- Any dress or appearance, which constitutes a disruption of the educational process.

DRILL PROCEDURES

Both announced and unannounced safety drills will be held periodically during the year, according to New York State guidelines. Directions for exiting the building are posted near each classroom door and will be explained by the teacher of each class.

It is vital that students adhere to the following regulations during all drills:

1. There must be no talking once the classroom is exited.
2. Students must move through the hall and away from the building in an orderly fashion.
3. Students should take their book bags, purses, etc. with them.
4. Students must remain with their classes throughout the drill.
5. No students may re-enter the building until the "all-clear" signal sounds.

During drills or during an actual emergency situation, an exit or stairway may be blocked. If the normal exit route is blocked, continue past it to the next exit or stairway. If the normal exit route is at the end of a hall, turn back and use the first stairway or exit. Do not attempt to go through a blocked area.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students who must leave school early for a legitimate reason must present a note to **the Attendance Clerk**. Before an early dismissal is granted, the **Attendance Clerk or Assistant Principal** may contact the parent for verification of the note. Students who become ill during the school day must report to the Nurse's Office. The nurse will determine if an early dismissal from school is warranted and will make the appropriate parental contact. The nurse will then give a pass to the student, who will bring it to the **Attendance Clerk**. Under no circumstances are students to go home during the school day without prior authorization.

FIELD TRIPS

All students participating in a field trip must return written parental consent to their teacher. Teachers, well in advance of any scheduled trip, will distribute permission slips. Students are reminded that, while on a field trip, they are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply while they are in school.

Students must meet two of the following to be eligible for field trips:

1. Students must be academically eligible to participate in field trips.
(The Assistant Principal and their guidance counselor prior to all field trips will review Students who are academically ineligible.)
2. Behavior- Subject to review and recommendation of the administration. Documented referrals and anecdotal input (when elicited) from faculty and staff will determine whether that student should be excluded from the field trip. Purposeful instruction must be provided to students who do not attend trip.
3. Students must attend all classes prior to departing on a school field trip. In addition, students are responsible for any missed work while on the school field trip.

EXTRA HELP

Students are encouraged to seek extra help from their teachers either before or after school or at some mutually convenient time during the school day.

FUNDRAISING

The Assistant Principal must approve all fundraising projects. According to Board of Education policy, only a limited number of projects may involve the selling of merchandise to residents of our community. If the fundraising involves a prize, it may not be a cash prize. Fundraising should not interfere with the educational process. Fundraising for non-school purposes will not be permitted on school grounds.

GRADE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for a specific grade level, a student must have successfully completed and earned the following credits:

9th Grade: No credits needed (first year in high school)

10th Grade: 5.5 credits

11th Grade: 11 credits

12th Grade: 16.5 credits

To be eligible for grade level events and activities the student must be on the appropriate grade level as indicated above. (i.e. if a student would like to attend the Junior/Senior Prom the student then must have a minimum of 11 credits to be eligible.)

GRADING POLICY

Valhalla High School uses a numerical grading system. Student grades are reported to parents and pupils four times each year on the Parent Portal. In addition, progress reports are posted on the Parent Portal at the halfway point within each marking period and will include comments and an estimated average. School examinations are conducted at the same time Regents examinations are administered, in June. In order to pass a course, a student must attain a final average of 65. A student’s final grade is the average determined by the following:

1 st Marking Period -	22%	4 th Marking Period -	22%
2 nd Marking Period -	22%	Final Exam or Regents	12%
3 rd Marking Period -	22%		

Half-year courses are dealt with in a similar manner. Each of the two marking periods and the final exam will count equally. If a course does not have a final or Regents, each quarter has a value of 25%.

Grades are not calculated merely on the basis of test performance. Each grade that a student receives takes into consideration other important areas of achievement, such as homework, class work and class participation.

Teachers are always available to speak to parents regarding their child’s progress. All appointments with teachers should be arranged through the Guidance Office.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

SUBJECTS	REGENTS DIPLOMA
English	4
Social Studies	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Health	0.5
The Arts	<u>1</u>
Core Credits (subtotal)	15.5
Languages other than English	*
Physical Education	2
Sequence Courses/Electives [LOTE, CTE, the Arts]	<u>4.5*</u>
Total Required (Minimum)	22.0

GUIDANCE SERVICES

During their years at Valhalla High School, students will have the services and help of a guidance counselor. A counselor is a person who is specially trained in this area and whose role it is to assist students every way possible and appropriate in these important years. A counselor will meet with students in groups for discussion and, more importantly, will meet with each student individually to discuss those things, which are particularly important to him/her. These may be school, studies, friends, personal difficulties, ideas, future plan – whatever is vital to his/her growth and well-being. A counselor respects the student’s right to make decisions, helps him/her to learn how to make those decisions appropriately, and how to be aware of all the factors, which affect these decisions and their consequences.

Counselors will always be available to students. Please remember there are proper procedures to follow in order to meet with a counselor.

1. Students should always try to obtain a pass to the Guidance Office during free time.
2. If a student's counselor is in conference then he/she should see the secretary in the Guidance Office. The secretary will assist students with making an appointment and obtaining a pass.
3. The Guidance Office is for student use; however, students must always have the proper permission to be there.

Senior Exemption---Final Examinations

For a senior to be exempt from a final examination in a course, he/she must have an overall average of 85 with no grade less than a 75 in any marking period and no less than a 75 for the midterm examination grade (if applicable).

STUDY HALLS

Study halls are designated periods for students to complete work and other assignments in an undisruptive environment. Students must be on time for study hall classes. Pass use will be limited to five times per semester for each student. iPods/electronic devices may be used at the discretion of the supervising teacher(s) provided it does not interfere with the others trying to complete work. Students are not permitted to play card games in study hall or other areas on campus.

HOMEWORK

Home preparation is a natural extension of class work and is assigned regularly. Students are expected to complete assignments promptly and carefully and to plan appropriately for the completion of large projects or term papers. Homework has a dual purpose:

- 1. To reinforce work covered in class and**
- 2. To introduce new material for the next class.**

Teachers will inform students and parents about ground rules/expectations for homework at the beginning of the year or the semester, in the case of second semester courses. Academic teachers will assign homework, which will average 20 minutes per night per subject, although it may be more or less on any particular night. In the event of honors and advanced placement courses, homework in excess of an average of 20 minutes per course per night may be assigned. Teachers will have a procedure in place for correcting/providing feedback to students regarding homework and holding students accountable for the completion of homework in terms of impact on report grades.

Make-up Work

Students are responsible for making up all work missed because of absence. If a student is illegally absent on the day work is due, a grade of zero is given and the work may not be made up. Make-up work must be completed in a reasonable period of time, as determined by the individual teacher. Work not made up by the established deadline will not be accepted for credit and the student's grade will be reduced. Contact classroom teacher via website for missed work. In addition, if an 'I' (Incomplete) is given as a marking period grade the student will have 10 days to complete his/her work. At the end of the 10 days, if the work is not completed, the 'I' will be converted to a failing grade.

HONOR ROLL

Following each marking period, the achievement of certain students is exemplary. Students who attain high standards will be designated for the Honor Roll as follows:

HIGH HONORS HONOR ROLL –a total cumulative average of 95 or above (with no grade on the report card below an 85).

HONOR ROLL –a total cumulative average of 90 or above (with no grade on the report card below an 80).

NOTE:

1. The Honor Roll is based on a simple numerical average of the current marking period grades, not on the midterm or final average.

2. Any student with a failing grade (i.e., less than 65) in any subject as a marking period grade **for the current marking period** is not eligible for the Honor Roll. A failing grade in a previous marking period will not exclude a student from the Honor Roll for the current marking period.
3. Any student with an **I** (incomplete) in any subject as a marking period grade **for the current marking period** is not eligible for the Honor Roll.
4. A student must be taking the equivalent of at least four (4) two semester courses, to be eligible for the Honor Roll.

HONOR SOCIETIES

Students who are eligible for membership in the **National Honor Society** will be notified and invited to apply for membership. A Faculty Selection Committee must approve all new members for entrance into the Society.

In compliance with the National Constitution, a student must have attended Valhalla High School for a minimum of one semester prior to his/her election to the National Honor Society.

Candidates eligible for selection to the chapter shall have a minimum unweighted cumulative GPA of 92% AND a minimum number of 36 student service hours documented. Hours must be from 9th grade up to application date. Seniors are required to document an additional 12 hours from spring junior year to spring senior year.

To be eligible for the **World Languages Honor Societies**, students must meet all the following criteria:

Students must be actively enrolled in a level IV or College level language class. Students must have a 90% overall average in World Language classes in levels I, II, III, IV, and/or College. Students must maintain an 80% or above in all of their subjects. All inductees must complete 15 hrs of community service after induction in April/May. Seniors must complete 15 hours of community service due by February. Annual society dues are \$5.00

LIBRARY

The library is a resource center where all students, regardless of age or ability level, should be able to seek advice, locate information and do research free from disturbance by other students. Group work is allowed on a short-term basis. Students must be considerate of other students and the library staff. If they are not, they will be removed for a specific period of time. Any student who is removed will still have library privileges before and after school. Students may use the library before first period, during lunch, and after school until 3:15 p.m. Students may use the library during a study hall based on the library's availability, but must have a subject pass from their teacher. No food or beverages are permitted in the library.

End of the Year Book Returns: Any library book that has been checked out during the course of the school year **MUST** be returned at the end of the year or the student will be held financially liable. In addition, students will not be permitted to participate in co-curricular, or end of the year functions until their library book has been returned or the financial debt has been resolved. Students who are late returning books during the year will be notified by mail.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

Locker assignments are made through the **ADMINISTRATION**. Each student in the school will be assigned a locker, which must be secured by an authorized combination lock. Sharing of lockers is not permitted. Unauthorized locks will be cut off. It should be noted that **lockers are the property of the school** and are subject to administrative inspection or search at any time during the year.

Any materials discovered during a search will be admissible in a court of law (Moore v. Constantine). Students are responsible for the care and cleanliness of their lockers. To maximize security of their lockers, students are advised not to share their combinations with others. The school can assume no responsibility for the contents of any lockers. All problems with lockers must be reported to the **High School Office**. Vandalism to lockers will result in serious disciplinary actions as well as financial liability for any damage caused to school property.

All locks must be removed and lockers emptied before the end of the school year. Materials found in lockers after the last day of classes will be discarded and students will be held financially responsible for any school property involved.

LOST AND FOUND

The cafeteria functions as the school's Lost and Found. Students who find lost articles are asked to first bring them to the **FRONT OFFICE**. Items, which are not claimed within a reasonable length of time, are donated to local charities.

LUNCH/EATING AREAS

Valhalla High School operates two lunch periods. Students may purchase a full lunch, sandwiches, milk, ice cream and other items or bring lunch from home. Menus are distributed monthly. **NO FOOD MAY BE DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL from any outside eating establishment.**

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

The following procedures should be followed in the event that a student requires medication during the school day:

- The parent/guardian must give the school a signed authorization from the student's doctor indicating the name of the medication prescribed, the dosage and time to be given, and a description of any adverse reactions, which might result from the medication. Long-term medications require a physician's note and a note from the parents at the beginning of each school year.
- The parent/guardian must sign a release form giving the school permission to administer the medication prescribed by the physician.
- The parent/guardian must give the medication to the school nurse in its original bottle from the pharmacy with the label attached. **NO STUDENT** is to bring any medication into the building.

PASSES

Students should not be in the halls while classes are in session, unless they possess a hall pass from a teacher.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students are urged, whenever possible, to attend religious services before or after school when holidays occur on days when school is in session. Students who are absent because of religious observances must submit a parental note to the **Attendance Clerk** (Mrs. Perrotta) indicating the reason for the absence.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Four report cards are posted on the Parent Portal during the school year. Report cards are posted in November, February, April and June. In addition to course grades, teachers will indicate mid-year or final examination grades, and other related comments. By February 15th, the Guidance Office sends a copy of each senior's second quarter report to all colleges to which formal application has been made.

Progress Reports are also posted on the Parent Portal at approximately the middle of each marking period (usually in October, December, March and May). Parents are encouraged to respond to Progress Reports and Report Cards by contacting the teachers involved or the student's guidance counselor. Every effort should be made to correct problems before they become seriously detrimental to a student's performance.

SCHEDULING OF CLASSES

By January of each year, a list of anticipated course offerings is distributed to all students to assist in schedule planning for the following year. In March, guidance counselors will schedule individual meetings with each student to discuss the offerings, which are recommended and answer questions or provide advice. Eighth graders and their parents will be scheduled for a similar planning meeting. In addition, teachers will discuss their department's course offerings prior to the pre-registration period.

Once pre-registration is completed, a master schedule will be developed, reflecting student interest in various courses. In those cases where anticipated enrollment is extremely low, courses may be dropped from the schedule. Schedules with required, elective and alternative courses are computer generated for all students. By late August, schedules for the new school year are mailed to all students.

Dropping of Subjects:

No student may drop a course without first consulting his/her guidance counselor. If the counselor approves the drop, the student will be given a form requiring a parent's signature. **Students who drop a class after five weeks will receive a withdraw/fail on their transcript for the course.**

All students are required policy to carry 5 Physical Education. **counselor or make a schedule**

Change of Schedule:

Guidance Counselors school opens in necessary changes in changes will be made to for a different teacher or in classes with friends.

SCHEDULE – DAILY		SCHEDULE FOR A TWO HOUR DELAY OPENING	
Period 1	8:00 – 8:43	Period 1	10:00 – 10:27
Period 2	8:46 – 9:26	Period 2	10:30 – 10:57
Period 3	9:29 – 10:09	Period 3	11:00 – 11:27
Period 4	10:12 – 10:52	Period 4	11:30 – 11:57
Period 5	10:55 – 11:35	Period 5	12:00 – 12:27
Lunch 6	11:38 - 12:18	Period 6	12:30 – 12:57
Period 7	12:21 - 1:01	Period 7	1:00 – 1:27
Period 8	1:04 – 1:44	Period 8	1:30 – 1:57
Lunch 9	1:47 – 2:27	Period 9	2:00 – 2:27
Period 10	2:30 – 3:10	Period 10	2:30 – 2:57

by Board of Education academic classes plus **Only a guidance administrator can change.**

necessitated by summer school attendance, class failure, or scheduling error will be made. No change of schedules will be made during the first two weeks of school. Once school opens, all schedule changes will be made by the guidance counselors in the Guidance Office, subject to approval by the Principal. Schedule changes are transmitted to students directly or through their first period teacher’s mailbox.

are available before September to make students’ schedules. No accommodate requests to enable students to be Only those adjustments

Students are reminded that they are obligated to attend all classes until official drop or change of schedule is processed. Those who cut before being officially changed or dropped are subject to the discipline penalties for cutting.

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) & SAT II

Current information on SAT and SAT II Test dates is always available in the Guidance Office. The Valhalla School Code Number is 335-707. Applications must be obtained in the Guidance Office and mailed with the appropriate fee directly by students. See your guidance counselor if you have any questions.

SCHOOL EMERGENCIES

In the event of severely inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or the starting time delayed. The decision will be made by 6:30 a.m. If the decision is to delay, the delay will be a one-hour or two-hour delay and a decision will be made by 7:40 a.m. as to whether the school will be open or closed. Households will be contacted by phone using the Connect Ed System.

Announcements will be made on the following radio stations:

WFAS White Pains 1230 AM on AM dial
Channel 12 News

Please do not phone the station, the police or the school to inquire about delays and closing. Telephone lines must be kept open for emergencies.

When school is closed because of inclement weather or some other emergency, the entire operation involving programs and students shall close; including rehearsals, sports practices, and other organized school activities.

STUDENT SENATE

Elections occur each year so that new officers can be brought into office. Students interested in running for a class office during campaign time must obtain a petition sheet from the advisor. Next, the candidate must prepare a short speech stating his/her qualifications, to be presented to all social studies classes during the campaign. All student officers must have enough course credits to be considered a member of a class that he/she is representing. If not, another election must be held. **The Eligibility Review process may be used to determine students’ eligibility for the privilege of holding current and/or future class office.**

STUDENT ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Valhalla High School is proud of the wide range of extracurricular activities it offers to students. All activities, clubs and teams are conducted under teacher supervision but are designated to promote maximum student responsibility for selecting, organizing and evaluating the events and their outcomes.

For a list of current interscholastic sports and clubs please refer to the Clubs and Activities tab in the Departments section of our webpage: <https://vhs.valhallaschools.org/apps/departments/clubs.jsp>

TECHNOLOGY USE AGREEMENT

It should be understood that the use of technology, and especially the Internet, is a privilege not a right. Valhalla High School reserves the right to specify who may use its equipment and the information contained therein, for what purpose and under what circumstances. Just as there are acceptable rules, behaviors and procedures for students and staff to follow while on school grounds, there are certain acceptable rules, behaviors and procedures associated with using the VHS technology. Those who wish to use the computer network must acknowledge that they understand these rules and will demonstrate their willingness to follow these rules upon logging into the network on a yearly basis.

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

The school is responsible for the safety of its students both on school property and to and from all school sponsored activities. The school will provide transportation to and from all school-sponsored activities, which are not held in Valhalla, and all students involved must travel by means of school-provided transportation.

Therefore, teachers, coaches, and chaperones are not to release any of the students under their supervision, except to ride with their own parents. Request for this permission must be made in person by their parents to the supervisor. Phone calls or notes will not be acceptable in place of the personal request. Permission will not be given to ride with friends, relatives, or parents of other students. Violation of this policy may result in a student's loss of privileges, including team membership or participation in subsequent field trips or other activities held off school property

VALUABLES

Valhalla High School is not responsible for any articles or equipment lost or stolen. Students are advised not to bring large amounts of money or other valuables to school. If it is necessary to bring such items, students may bring their property to the **FRONT OFFICE** and it will be placed in the school safe.

The school, however, can assume no responsibility for such items it holds for students. Under no circumstances should valuables be placed in student lockers.

VISITORS

All visitors are required to report to the Security Desk, show picture identification prior to sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge prior to entering the building and will be escorted to and from their destination. In addition, to ensure the safety of all persons and to maintain an educational environment free from disruption, students are not permitted to invite guests to accompany them to school (in rare instances, school administration may consider extenuating circumstances).

WEBPAGE

The Valhalla High School webpage is an informational resource for students, parents, relatives, community members, faculty and staff. Event information as well as an up-to-date calendar can be found on the site. Additionally, the site gives teachers a forum through which to provide general and/or specific information about their classes. It can be accessed via the following address: **vhs.valhallaschools.org**.

WITHDRAWAL AND TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL

New York State Law requires student attendance until 16 years of age. Students contemplating withdrawal or seeking transfer should see their guidance counselors to be informed of the various procedures and receive the necessary forms. All students must clear their book accounts, return all school property, and pay any accumulated fines before withdrawal or transfer may be completed

WORKING PAPERS

According to New York State laws, any minor between the ages of 14 and 18 must have working papers in order to secure employment. To obtain working papers, a student must apply in person at the High School Health Office. Students may be asked to bring in proof of their age. A parent must sign the working papers applications. The student must have a Social Security number and, if he/she has not had a sports physical examination performed by the school doctor, the student must have had a physical examination conducted by the family physician within the past six months.

Listed below are the kinds of working papers available:

1. Student Non-Factory Employment Certificate for boys and girls 14 to 15 who plan to work during vacations or after school hours.
2. Student General Employment Certificate for boys and girls 16 and 17 who attend school and plan to work during vacations or after school hours.
3. Full-time Employment Certificate for boys and girls who are not attending school or who are leaving for full time employment.