

# Mystic Valley Regional Charter School



2016-2017

## Parent/Student Handbook

4 Laurel Street Malden, Massachusetts (781) 388-0222  
[www.mvracs.org](http://www.mvracs.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT .....	3
LEADERSHIP .....	5
GOVERNANCE.....	6
HOURS OF OPERATION .....	6
STUDENT CONDUCT.....	6
<b>SECTION 1: CURRICULUM DESIGN.....</b>	<b>7</b>
INTERNATIONAL BACCAULAREATE.....	7
DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY READING and LANGUAGE ARTS K-6.....	7
SAXON MATH.....	7
ABILITY GROUPINGS.....	7
CORE KNOWLEDGE K-8 .....	8
HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM 9-12.....	8
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM .....	9
<b>SECTION 2: GENERAL POLICIES.....</b>	<b>9</b>
ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/DISMISSAL POLICY.....	11
SCHOOL CANCELATION POLICY – Weather Related.....	13
RETENTION POLICY.....	13
UNIFORM POLICY.....	14
PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM).....	17
HAIR/ MAKE-UP .....	17
COMPUTER USE AND POLICIES.....	17
HOMEWORK POLICY .....	19
ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY.....	22
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY .....	23
<b>SECTION 3: PROGRESS REPORTS &amp; REPORT CARDS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>SECTION 4: PARENT INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>SECTION 5: CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SECTION 6: ENROLLMENT, REENROLLMENT &amp; TRANSFERS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>SECTION 7: BREAKFAST, Snacks &amp; LUNCH.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>SECTION 8: HEALTH &amp; SAFETY .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>SECTION 9: VISITOR INFORMATION/ PICK UP/DROP-OFF/BUS INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>SECTION 10: CODE OF VALUES, SCHOOL RULES &amp; REGULATIONS .....</b>	<b>40</b>
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: .....	41
ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:.....	49
CORRECTING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT:.....	52
TIERED CONSEQUENCES.....	58
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.....	61
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN .....	62
SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE.....	66
NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY.....	68
DISCIPLINARY ACTION.....	68
<b>HONOR CODE.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>2016-2017 SCHOOL AND HOME COMPACT .....</b>	<b>70</b>

# SCHOOL OVERVIEW

## MISSION STATEMENT

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

The ultimate goals of the school are the following:

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

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

### An Effective Academic Design

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

#### Academic Placement and Performance Monitoring

- Use of the Appropriate Instructional Grouping Models

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

- Frequent Performance Monitoring for Each Instructional Group

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

#### Curriculum

- Research- Based Curriculum Models:

A master curriculum plan is used. The design of the plan was developed through the blending of

carefully chosen teaching and learning designs that reflect Mystic Valley's core academic values.

- Measurable Learning Standards:

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

- Frequent Monitoring of the Curriculum:

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

### High Academic Expectations

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

- Best-Practice Research:

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

- Curriculum-Specific Training for Instructional Faculty:

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

### Incorporation of Value-Based Character Education

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

### Character Education

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

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

### Classroom Management

- Uniform Approach to Classroom Management:

All faculty and staff, throughout all grade levels, uniformly implement a single student conduct, general school and classroom management strategy that are based on the principles taught in the Character Education program. An assertive discipline approach is used in conjunction with positive reinforcement strategies. The roles and responsibilities of parents in support for the behavioral standards that are expected in the general plan are highly valued.

## LEADERSHIP

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

**Mr. Martin Trice** – *Director*

**E-mail:** [mtrice@mvracs.org](mailto:mtrice@mvracs.org)

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

**E-mail:** [rveilleux@mvracs.org](mailto:rveilleux@mvracs.org)

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

**E-mail:** [cfinn@mvracs.org](mailto:cfinn@mvracs.org)

**Mr. Alex Dan** – *Assistant Director, 9-12*

**E-mail:** [adan@mvracs.org](mailto:adan@mvracs.org)

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

**E-mail:** [kkinnon@mvracs.org](mailto:kkinnon@mvracs.org)

**Mr. Zachary Shahan**, *Civil Rights Coordinator*

**E-mail:** [zshahan@mvracs.org](mailto:zshahan@mvracs.org)

**Mrs. Gina McKinnon** – *Professional Development Coordinator (K-2) and ELL Coordinator*

**E-mail:** [gmckinnon@mvracs.org](mailto:gmckinnon@mvracs.org)

**Mrs. Jennifer Mullen** – *Professional Development Coordinator (3-6)*

**E-mail:** [jmullen@mvracs.org](mailto:jmullen@mvracs.org)

**Ms. Dawn Fitzgerald**, *High School Dean*

**E-mail:** [dfitzgerald@mvracs.org](mailto:dfitzgerald@mvracs.org)

**Mr. Ernie Ardolino**, *Lower School Discipline*

**E-mail:** [eardolino@mvracs.org](mailto:eardolino@mvracs.org)

### OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

#### **Attendance Line**

Main School Number: 781.388.0222

(follow prompts)

#### **School Nurse's Office**

Kindergarten: 781.388.0222 ext. 2007

Main Building (3-6): 781.388.0222 ext. 7010

Annex Building (1, 2 - 7, 8): 781.388.0222  
ext. 3024

High School: 781.388.0222 ext. 4108

## GOVERNANCE

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A Board of Trustees governs the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. The Board conducts open meetings each month. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

## HOURS OF OPERATION

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The school's instructional day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. No student will be admitted into the school building before 7:20 a.m. No student should be on school property before 7:20 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. without the permission of a school official. After school help sessions are offered for all students on different days of the week from 3:30pm – 4:15pm. For Kindergarten through Sixth Grade, Mondays are focused on reading/homeroom subjects while Wednesdays are focused on math. For grades Seven through Twelve, the days are dependent on the teacher's schedule, which will be noted in the teacher's syllabus.

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

## STUDENT CONDUCT

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

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

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

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

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

## SECTION 1: CURRICULUM DESIGN

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The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School offers a highly structured, researched based curriculum that sets high expectations. Through the use of our curriculum mapping system, our curriculum is monitored by our Curriculum Leaders Team for any issues that may prevent our student from achieving the ambitious goals that we have set for them. The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will provide a strong academic foundation for your child that will prepare your child for the demanding academic program that we will implement in grades 9-12.

### INTERNATIONAL BACCAULAREATE

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

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

### DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS K-6

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

### SAXON MATH

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

### ABILITY GROUPINGS

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

## CORE KNOWLEDGE K-8

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

## HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM 9-12

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

### Overview

#### Guiding Principles:

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

#### Course of Study:

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

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

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

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



## COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

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Community Service is a graduation requirement for all students. A minimum of **150** hours is expected (**40 freshman + 40 sophomore + 40 junior + 30 senior**). For freshmen, sophomores and juniors, the entire 40 hours of community service must be completed on or before July 15. Failure to do so will result in the student not being promoted to the next grade. Failure to submit approved supporting documentation, including proposals and supervisors forms, could result in student not participating in end of year activities. For seniors, the entire 30 hours of community service must be completed prior to their graduation. Failure to do so will result in the student not graduating.

In order to prepare seventh and eighth grade students for the high school community service program's expectations students are required to complete a smaller amount of time engaged in service projects. Seventh grade students must spend five hours engaged in community service activities, while eighth grade students are expected to complete ten hours of work. Failure to do so by July 15 may result in retention.

## SECTION 2: GENERAL POLICIES

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### **SOLICITATION**

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

### **MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLE PROPERTY**

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

### **LOCKERS/CUBBIES/BACKPACKS**

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

### **BIRTHDAY POLICY**

If you desire to celebrate your child's birthday in school with a special treat or prize, please communicate with the classroom teacher two weeks prior to the day/event for approval due to wellness and allergy concerns. If you arrange such an event, all students must be included. Please be aware of the school's policies on candy and soda (which are not allowed). Teachers and staff will adhere to and enforce the school policy of having the student consume the safe snack provided by his/her parent when food is brought into the classroom by another family/parent. This would include parties, celebration and field trips. This would also include the school sponsored meal program as that food is provided by an outside vendor. For food brought into the classroom by the school, such as with a classroom reward, the teacher and nurse will ensure the food is safe for the student.

### **CANDY, SODA, GUM, AND TOYS**

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

### **STUDENT DEPARTURE**

Children who are not enrolled in the School's after school program or staying with a school employee for educational purposes are not permitted on School grounds after 3:30 p.m. If a child is left at or returned to the school after hours, the parent or emergency contact will be called to arrange for pick-up. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00p.m., the police will be notified. The school also reserves the right to

contact the local office of the Department of Children and Families. Beginning with the fifth late pickup and for every subsequent late pickup, the parent will be charged a fee of twenty-five dollars. The student will be ineligible for any extracurricular activities until the fee is paid.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School contracts a third party company (currently Champions) to provide after school care for those parents requesting it. More information is available at the school's office.

## **POLICY ON EDUCATING PREGNANT STUDENTS**

No students shall be excluded from any school program or school-sponsored activity because of pregnancy except that, if the school has safety or welfare concerns for the pregnant student relating to participation in sports, the school shall so inform the student and may request the student to obtain a physician's approval.

## **OCCUPATIONAL VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

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

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SURROGATE (SESP) PROGRAM**

Special Educational Surrogate Parent (SESP) Program (formerly Educational Surrogate Parent Program)- it is the responsibility of MVRCS when a student is without parental representation and requires an educational surrogate parent to be appointed in accordance consistent with federal and state special education regulations. The SESP Program was created to assign individuals to stand in the place of parents for the purpose of making special education decisions for children in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF, formerly DSS), and for children whose parents cannot be identified or located. The SESP Program depends upon volunteers to fulfill this vital role. Section 28:07 (7) of the Massachusetts Special Education Regulations indicate that when a student requires a SESP, that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) may request assistance from the district responsible for services to the student in identifying a person willing to serve as an educational surrogate parent. Federal special education regulations now require efforts to ensure that appointments are made within 30 days from the day that the student is determined to need one. Prompt appointment of an SESP is a high priority in serving special education students. The SESP Program actively seeks the participation of MVRCS in identifying individuals who are willing to step into the SESP role for eligible students.

(a) In order to be appointed as an SESP, a person must be at least eighteen years old, and not be employed by an agency involved in the care or education of their assigned student (such as the DESE, MVRCS, or the student's social worker). The individual may not have personal or professional interests that conflict with the assigned student's interest. The individual must have, or be willing to obtain, adequate knowledge in special education and the Individualized Education Program process. Volunteers must complete an application, provide two references, and complete a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check.

(b) Upon assignment by the DESE, such educational surrogate parent shall have all the rights and responsibilities as a parent with respect to the special education decision-making process regarding eligibility and services for special education for the assigned student. The DESE shall provide notice of appointment to MVRCS and any state agency with custody of the student. Upon receipt of notice from the DESE, MVRCS acknowledges that the assigned SESP has the authority to make decisions regarding special education matters. The SESP may meet with their assigned student, observe proposed or current programs, attend school meetings, review school records, and approve the IEP for the student or discuss changes if deemed appropriate. SESP's do not work directly with the student, but stand in the place of the parent in the special education process and as a Team member.

It should be noted that if a court appoints a GAL (guardian ad litem) with education decision making authority that the SESP no longer has the right to consent to special education decision-making processes (e.g. consent to evaluations, sign an IEP or to ask for mediation or a hearing to resolve special education disputes). By appointing

the GAL and conferring education decision making authority on that individual, the court effectively takes away from the SESP any authority he/she may have had to act on behavior of the student in this area.

For information to become a Special Education Surrogate Parent, please contact Kathy Kinnon, Special Education Director at 781-388-0222 x 2200 or kkinnon@mvrcs.org for a SESPP Volunteer application.

In addition, the SESP Program provides training sessions across the state that will review special education laws and regulations, the IEP process, and the role of the SESP. The schedule is posted on their website at [www.sespprogram.org](http://www.sespprogram.org).

## **BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY**

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School ensures that all campus buildings are accessible to all students. Building-specific procedures are as follows:

### **High School**

- 306 Highland Ave.: A chairlift is located at the rear, center entrance of the building, off of the parking lot. The lift provides physical accessibility to the lower and first levels of the building. In the event that a student or parent with challenged mobility requires access to classes on other floors of the building, entire classes are moved in order to meet specific needs. Access for study halls may also be provided in a study carrel in the Dean of Students' office.
- Emerson: An elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's north entrance.

### **Lower School**

- 576 Eastern Avenue: an elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's south entrance.
- 770 Salem Street: an elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's east entrance (fishbowl).
- 30 Laurel Street: in the event that a student or parent with challenged mobility requires access to classes on other floors of the building, entire classes are moved in order to meet specific needs.

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## **ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/DISMISSAL POLICY**

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### **ATTENDANCE**

Instruction at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. It is critical that all students be prepared to begin at that time. Students who are late miss valuable instructional time, and conveys an unacceptable lack of regard for the School and their education. Those electing to participate in the school's breakfast program must arrive at 7:30 a.m.

### **TARDINESS**

Any student who arrives to their homeroom at 8:00 a.m. or later must report to the front office. The student will be considered tardy and the incident will be recorded. If a K-8 student arrives late, the parent must walk the child into the school to sign them in. For high school students arriving late, a note from the parent is required. During any given quarter, when a student reaches their fifth tardy, they will be given a detention for that tardy and each subsequent tardy (for grades 4 and above) or the loss of 30 minutes of free time (for grades K through 3). Parents could be asked to attend a conference with a member of the leadership team, or their delegate, to discuss the reasons for the excessive tardiness. Transportation for children who attend detention is the parent's responsibility. All tardiness will be factored in the total time missed from school for the year. **Every 3 days of tardiness will count as one absence.**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

If it is necessary for a student to be dismissed from school before the end of the school day, parents must notify the school office no later than 9:00 a.m. the day of the early dismissal. In such cases, parents must inform the School of

the specific time that the child will be picked-up and the person who will come for the child. Dismissal between 3:00pm and 3:30pm is NOT permitted. Only adults who are listed in the School's records as being authorized will be allowed to take students from the School in these cases, unless a note is sent in. Individuals not recognized by the office staff will be required to show identification proving their identity. K-8 students may not be dismissed to themselves. High school students may be dismissed by themselves with prior written parental permission. **A ratio of 3:1 will be used. Every three dismissals for any reason will count as one absence.**

## **ABSENCES**

Parents must contact the School office by phone whenever a child is going to be absent, and send a written excuse (such as a doctor's note) to the teacher when the child returns to school. The School has a dedicated phone line for all calls related to attendance for K-12: 781.388.0222 (follow prompts). Parents are encouraged to use the extension 24 hours a day at their convenience to report absences at the main campus.

## **ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WITH ADVANCE NOTICE**

### **For Grades K-6:**

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, the only areas of curricula to be handed out ahead of time will be Language Arts and Math. All homework assignments are due the day upon return. Advanced notice of at least one week is required. Missed tests and assessments in Language Arts and Math shall be made up the day of the child's return. The teacher will determine the administration of the tests.

All other subject areas (Spanish, History, Science, etc.) are the responsibility of the child and parent. The student will have the number of days they were absent to make up any missed class work. Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return. The teacher will determine the administration of any missed tests.

### **For Grades 7- 12:**

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, each subject teacher will give the projected homework assignments to the student prior to prolonged absence. Advanced notice of at least one week is required. All homework assignments are due the day upon return. Any missed tests and assessments will be made up as soon as possible at the teacher's discretion. All class work will be made up upon return. Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return.

## **ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WHEN SICK**

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

## **ABSENCES AND MAKING UP WORK:**

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

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCE POLICY**

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

After five days of absence, parents will receive a letter/e-mail that details the school's procedure for addressing excessive absence and an official notification that five days of absence have been recorded. Five unknown absences will require a conference with parents to develop a plan of action.

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

have been recorded.

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

Upon the receipt of the physician’s written order of verifying that a student must remain at home or in a hospital for a period of not less than 14 school days in any school year, arrangements will be made the provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Students with chronic illnesses must provide evidence from a medical professional that specific days absent were due to medical reasons. A general notice acknowledging the illness is not sufficient.

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## SCHOOL CANCELATION POLICY – WEATHER RELATED

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Unless there are extenuating circumstances, Mystic Valley only cancels an entire day of school if the Governor calls a state of emergency or tells all state employees that they are not to come to work. As conditions may vary greater in different locations, parents should exercise prudence in their decision to send their children. The school may, in certain weather conditions, delay the start of school, or hold an early release. In any of these scenarios, parents will be notified through the use of the SchoolMessenger notification system, school website, Facebook, and on WHDH channel 7 television.

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## RETENTION POLICY

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### POLICY STATEMENT

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not practice simple social promotion of students from grade level to grade level. Nor does the school retain a student unless Promotions are based on the attainment of measured competencies as outlined in the specific curriculum criteria for each grade level. Automatic retentions will take place for all grades when a student has two or more failing/warning grades on their year-end report card. In grades 7-12, students failing to meet the minimally required service hours for each grade will also be automatically retained.

The gathering of data to determine the measured level of academic competency takes place on a weekly basis throughout the school year for each student. Frequent communication between parent, teacher and the professional development coordinator will take place in the event that a student has shown a significant lack of successful lesson progress.

The school considers a number of additional factors to determine if a child should be retained:

- A student failing to be at grade level in any area, as determined by the spring Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests (grades K-3)
- A student 1 or more years below grade level in any area on two consecutive ITBS tests (grades 4-9)
- A student falling into the warning category on one or more of the previous/current year’s MCAS tests
- A teacher recommending a student being retained for academic reasons

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

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

## COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR RETENTION

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

## COMMUNICATION TIMELINE FOR RETENTION

### **January/February:**

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

### **June or July:**

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

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## UNIFORM POLICY

### SCHOOL UNIFORMS

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

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

### **Uniform Pants**

For K-8:

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

For 9-12:

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

### **Uniform Shirt**

For K-8:

- Short or long sleeve knit burgundy polo shirts with a collar. No other color or style is acceptable (i.e., no stripes, logos or designs of any kind.)
- Shirts must be worn tucked into pants.
- Turtlenecks are not allowed.

- Shirts must be of a thick enough quality to cover any undergarments that may be worn.
- Only white undershirts are allowed.
- Long sleeve white undershirts are prohibited when worn under a short sleeve shirt.

For 9-12:

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

## **Sweaters/Fleece**

For K-12:

- Solid burgundy cardigan, fleece pullover/jacket, sweaters and appropriate sweatshirts.
- No sweaters or sweatshirts of other colors are allowed.
- For safety reasons, no hoods or drawstrings are allowed.
- For grades 9-12, colors must be navy blue.

## **Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers**

For K-8:

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

For 9-12:

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

## **Shoes**

- Solid black or solid brown (**not tan**) closed toe, closed heel, casual or dress style shoe.
- No platforms, high heels or sandals of any kind are allowed.
- The only acceptable athletic shoe must meet the following criteria: all black including upper sole and laces, no stripes designs or logos.
- Shoes with a rise must be continual from toe to heel and no more than 2”.
- “Heelys” or similar sneakers/shoes that have wheels imbedded in them are not allowed.
- No boots of any sort are allowed in the Lower School, except on dress down day
- High School Only - During the winter months of December – February, boots made for inclement weather may be worn to school. Final determination of acceptable design will be made by Dean of Students.

## **Socks**

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

## **Stockings**

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

## **Belts**

- Black, brown or burgundy belts are allowed.
- For Grades 9-12, belts may be navy blue.
- If pants worn contain a belt loop, a belt must be worn.
- Students are not allowed to cut off the belt loops.
- Belts must not dangle from the pants.

- Belts may not be decorative in nature (i.e. metal studs, metal rivets).

### **Jewelry & Accessories**

- For safety reasons, the only jewelry permitted will be simple stud earrings in lobes only and no more than two studs per lobe.
- Necklaces, if worn, may not be visible.
- Watches are not allowed in grades K – 8, although they are allowed in grades 9-12. The use of smartwatches and “wearable” technology is prohibited (see Electronics section for more detail).
- Only clear prescription contact lenses and prescription eye glasses are allowed.
- Purses must be small in size (i.e. cannot carry books in them, no larger than an 8 X 11 piece of paper) and not be distracting or have writing on the exterior.

## **UNIFORM INFRACTIONS**

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

### Step One

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

### Step Two

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

## **DRESS DOWN DAY**

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

All aspects of the uniform policy are in effect with the exception of clothes and shoes. Pants, skirts, dresses, shorts and skorts must be of appropriate length. Cotton sweatpants, pajama bottoms, tights, and yoga pants cannot be worn. Shirts must be appropriate length and not have any logos or writing on them that would be deemed inappropriate. Hoods are not allowed. Midsections must not be seen. Shirts must have sleeves. Children



not in compliance must change into clothes from the school's uniform bank. For grades 9-12, students can wear either school sports uniform tops or school colors. For all grades, students not in compliance will forfeit the privilege of participating in the next "dress-down day" or "spirit days". If a student is non-compliant twice in a year, they will forfeit their privilege of participating in the "dress-down day" or "spirit day" for the rest of the year.

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## PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM)

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Students (K-8) remain in school uniforms during physical education classes. Students must wear soft-soled shoes to gym class. Students at the upper school (grades 9-12) remain in school uniform. The school reserves the right to provide alternative clothing if it is deemed what is being worn is inappropriate. Mystic Valley occasionally holds PE classes at city owned parks near the schools. Parents are required to sign a release allowing their child to travel and participate. Students without a signed form will not be allowed to travel to the park and will be given an alternative assignment to be completed on those days.

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## HAIR/ MAKE-UP

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Students must keep their hair neat and out of their eyes. Students may not wear drastic or unnatural hair colors or styles such as shaved lines or shaved sides or have a hairstyle that could be distracting to other students (extra-long hair or hair more than 2 inch in thickness or height is not allowed). This means no coloring, dying, lightening (sun-in) or streaking of any sort. Hair extensions are not allowed. Hair elastics must be worn in the hair and not on the wrist. No make-up of any sort is allowed. Nail polish or artificial nails are not allowed. Tattoos are not allowed. Students are not allowed to write or draw on themselves. Bandanas or hats are not allowed during school hours. Headbands may be worn, but must be functional in nature and not worn over the forehead. Facial hair is not allowed. Unshaven young men will receive a warning in the first instance and detentions thereafter.

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## COMPUTER USE AND POLICIES

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### **ELECTRONIC MAIL**

In addition to voice mail, administration and faculty may be contacted via e-mail. Refer to individual staff members or visit the school website [www.mvracs.com](http://www.mvracs.com) for phone extensions and e-mail addresses.

### **INTERNET FIREWALL**

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

### **CONTENT FILTERING POLICY FOR UNDESIRABLE MATERIALS**

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

### **SECURITY**

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

## **PARENTAL PERMISSION**

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

## **E-MAIL**

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

## **SOCAL MEDIA**

Use of such social media as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, etc. are not permitted during school hours.

## **SEXTING**

Sexting is the act of minor children electronically transmitting words or receiving and retaining nude, partially nude, lewd, sexually explicit, or graphic images of themselves or others or graphic or sexually explicit messages.

Massachusetts Law prohibits sexting and includes, but is not limited to, consensual images shared between youth.

Engaging in sexting may carry felony charges in the State of Massachusetts and label the youth as a sex offender.

The school considers sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or e-mails that contain a sexual message or image a violation of this policy that will result in school discipline. Sexting will be handled as a matter of sexual harassment and will follow the disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

## **COPYRIGHT and CITATIONS**

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

## **DOWNLOADING**

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

## **ELECTRONICS**

### **Mobile Phones**

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to school for emergency purposes only. Any use of cell phones during school hours must be approved. Cellular phones must be off and stored in the locker during school hours. If they are seen or heard during school hours they will be confiscated. The device will be stored in the school's office and a parent will be contacted to retrieve it. The offense will also incur a one-hour detention. Subsequent offenses could be considered insubordination and will be handled according to Mystic Valley's disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

### **Personal Electronic Devices (High School Only)**

High school students may use Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) in the library and study halls to complete tasks directly related to coursework. Students may not use PEDs for non-academic purposes, including (but not limited to) casual web browsing, purchasing items, accessing social media accounts, sending and receive messages (text or voice), taking photos or videos, listening to music, and consuming audiovisual media stored on the device or available on the web. Internet access may be limited or unavailable in study halls. Students may not use the cellular data capabilities of their PEDs. In addition, PED use must not be disruptive to other students, staff, or to the school environment at large. Students are expected to turn off and store all PEDs before departing from study hall or the library, as the use of PEDs in hallways is prohibited.

Mobile phones (including smartphones) and any devices primarily intended for gaming fall outside of the scope of this policy and, therefore, are prohibited for use in study halls and in the library.

If a student is found to be in violation of the PED policy, his or her device will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian. The student will receive a consequence of no less than a one-hour detention. Subsequent offenses will be considered insubordination and will be handled according to Mystic Valley's disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

Students are solely responsible for PEDs during school hours. As such, the school is not responsible for theft, vandalism, or accidental damage to PEDs as a result of their use during the school day.

### **Other Personal Electronics Devices**

Any other electronic devices, other than those governed by Mystic Valley's Personal Electronic Devices policy, including headphones, smartwatches, and "wearable" technology are not permitted on school grounds. Headphones may only be used on buses traveling to or from Mystic Valley athletic events, but not on school property. The consequences for the use of other electronic devices, if not governed by the Personal Electronic Devices policy, are the same as that of cellular phones.

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## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

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

### **HOMEWORK (K-12)**

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

**Grades K-3:** Homework may be sent home in a folder weekly with a signature page; please initial this page prior to sending it back to school with your child to verify that you have seen the homework.

**Grades 4-6:** If in the planner, please sign the planner weekly to verify you have seen the homework. Students should visit the school's website for access to PowerSchool, the student information system utilized by the school. After clicking on the link, students will be able to access their grade book, where they can transfer the assignments for the upcoming week into their planner. Students should accomplish this task on the Friday just ending, and then present their planner to their parent for signature. Parents should only sign the planner after confirming the upcoming week's assignments have been transferred to the planner in a neat and clear manner, and after discussing with their child any comments in the bottom of the planner for the week that just ended put there by the teacher. After doing both of those tasks, parents should sign at the bottom of the Monday column of the new week. Failure to have the planner completed or sign will result in the student receiving a detention.

**Grades 7-12:** Acceptance of personal responsibility, strong organizational skills, and independent work habits are three essential attributes of successful students that we seek to develop during seventh through twelfth grade. During these years the amount of homework assigned is greater than in the elementary grades, and the responsibility for recording, completing and returning assignments is placed squarely on the student's shoulders.

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

Students will have homework every day, but will have access to the homework assignments for the following week on the preceding Friday via PowerSchool, which can be accessed via the school's website. If the school's website is not up to date, the teacher will be required to provide a written outline of all assignments due for the following week on the preceding Friday.

Over the weekend, parents should examine the planner, or visit the website, to see what assignments are due and

when. Parents must review and sign at the bottom of the Monday column the planner of the new week and return each Monday when homeroom teachers conduct planner checks. For long-term work such as projects and reports, students are expected to write in the due dates for the intermediate stages and the final copy as soon as the assignment is announced.

Students who do not bring their planner to class and/or homeroom will receive an A-Plan warning. Students who fail to present their homeroom teacher with a signed planner on Monday morning will receive a one-hour after school detention.

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

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

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

## **KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND GRADE**

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

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

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

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

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES K-2**

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

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

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

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

### **THIRD THROUGH SIXTH GRADE**

All homework is assigned on PowerSchool every Friday for the following week with the exception of math. It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and return it on day specified by teacher.

All homework and tests below an 80% are sent home in the sign and return folder on Fridays. This work must be corrected, signed (by the parent) and returned. This is a homework assignment and should be treated as such.

Homeroom teachers post homeroom assignments in the Character Ed. section of the gradebook. Spanish is the only other subject that would be assigned in grades 3-6.

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

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

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES 3-6**

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

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

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

**Fourth and Subsequent Quarterly Offenses:** The student will be assigned after school detention for every subsequent infraction. The teacher will be listing the after school detention earned because of the infraction on the monthly calendar (grade 3), or in the student planner (grades 4- 6) showing the date the detention is to be served. If a parent has a conflict with the date, they need to contact Mr. Ardolino, ([eardolino@mvracs.org](mailto:eardolino@mvracs.org) or 781-388-0222 ext. 3017) to reschedule. **Parents should not contact teachers about rescheduling detentions.**

Any assignments not completed during class time will be graded and the unfinished work will be sent home to complete as homework. If your child is unable to complete the work as homework, a homework infraction will be assigned.

### **STUDY HALL POLICY (9-12)**

Study halls must be silent. Students must come prepared for study halls and detention, as they will not be permitted to go to their lockers. They must have a reading book at all times and are not permitted to put their heads on desks. Only one student may leave the classroom at a time. Students may not be out of the room for longer than 5 minutes unless the nurse/office calls back for the student. Students may not leave the classroom to obtain a pass from another teacher, and must do so before school or during transition time. Students are permitted to use approved Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) only in the library and study halls to complete tasks directly related to coursework. (See PED section above).

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

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### SECTION ONE – POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

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

### GIVING CREDIT

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

### MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

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

### DAILY HOMEWORK

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

### EXAMINATIONS, TESTS AND QUIZZES

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

### COMPUTER USE

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

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

### FONT SIZE, MARGINS, AND SPACING

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

### THESAURUS

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

## CONSEQUENCES

School administrators and the student's parents will be notified of each instance of plagiarism, and copies of each notification will be kept in the student's academic file. All offenders in K-12 will be required to **re-do** the plagiarized assignment honestly. In grades K-6, the Administration will determine the appropriate consequence. For grades 7-12, they will receive only **one-half of the credit** the assignment would otherwise have received and will be required to serve a one-hour after-school detention. The student may have up to five days to do this if the assignment is a major essay or project; otherwise, the student must hand in the assignment the next day. Second and subsequent offenses will result in **zero credit on the assignment** and two hours of after-school detention. Third and subsequent offenses will result in **zero credit for the quarter** in that course and a one-day in-school suspension.

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

## SECTION TWO –FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q – Can my family help me complete the assignment?**

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

**Q – Can my friends and I work together?**

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

**Q – Is It Plagiarism if I use an online literature study guide?**

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

**Q – Can I use the same paper or project for more than one class?**

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

## PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

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Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

All physical restraints shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

Physical restraint shall not be used:

- (a) As a means of discipline or punishment;
- (b) When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- (c) As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or

imminent, serious, physical harm; or

(d) As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Limitations on use of restraint. Physical restraint at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint, seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 is prohibited.

Time out. Time-out shall mean a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

Seclusion. Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02 and is prohibited at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School.

Referral to law enforcement or other state agencies. Nothing in these regulations prohibits:

- (a) The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual;
- (b) Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or
- (c) The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to G.L. c. 119, § 51A. 603 CMR 46.00 shall not be used to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Staff training procedures. All staff are required to complete training regarding restraint regulations and procedures annually within the first month of the school year. Employees hired after the start of the school year will complete said training within one month of the date of hire. Further, the Director will select staff members at each campus to site receive in-depth training in the use of de-escalation and protective measures. The training will be competency based and at least sixteen hours in length, with refresher trainings provided thereafter.

Reporting and complaints. All instances of restraint must be reported to the Civil Rights Coordinator within one business day of occurrence and, subsequently, to the DESE annually pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06. All complaints regarding restraint practices should be reported to the Civil Rights Coordinator and the School Director.

Parent notification. Parents will be notified of the use of restraint on a student within 24 hours of the restraint. Further, written notification will be provided to the parent within three school working days following the use of restraint to an email address provided by the parent, or by regular mail to the parent postmarked within three school working days of the restraint.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

**For more information, please go to our website at [www.mvracs.com](http://www.mvracs.com).**



## SECTION 3: PROGRESS REPORTS & REPORT CARDS

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

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

<b>READING</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
Recognizes Sounds	Assessment of Sounds RM 1 and RM 2.
Reads Fluently and Accurately	Average score of Oral Story Check-Outs. RM 1-6.
Comprehends What is Read	Mastery Tests for RM 1-6.; Novels tests and quizzes.
Completes Workbook Accurately	Average score of Workbook Grades/Comprehension Work.
<b>SPELLING</b>	
Spelling Lessons/Applied Spelling	Average score of Spelling Tests & Applied spelling in daily writing assignments.
<b>WRITING</b>	
Language for Learning/Reasoning & Writing	Average score of workbooks/tests scores in program Gr. K-6.
Applies/Correct Use of Grammar and Punctuation	Assessment of grammar worksheets and application of grammar to writing assignments across curricula. Grades K-6.
Forms Letters Correctly	Assessment of cursive program lessons and/or daily writing assignments for quality printing/cursive. Grades K-6.
Ability to Express Ideas in Paragraph Form.	Assessment of content for paragraph/writing assignments. Gr. 1-6.
<b>MATHEMATICS</b>	
Accuracy of Homework	Homework average of guided practice/problem set.
Completes Math Facts and Problems Accurately	Average score of math fact sheets and meeting/mental math.
Accuracy of Tests	Average score of tests (oral and written).
<b>HISTORY</b>	
Understands and Applies Historical & Geographical Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
<b>SCIENCE</b>	
Understands and Applies Science Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
<b>SPECIALTY CLASSES</b>	Grades K-4: Grades 5-8: Graded.
<b>ART</b>	Average based on participation, behavior, and care of materials.
<b>MUSIC</b>	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior.
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	Average based on participation, effort, and cooperation.
<b>LIBRARY</b>	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior. Gr. K-6
<b>SPANISH</b>	Average based on participation, class work/homework, and assessments.

## **BIWEEKLY ACADEMIC WARNING NOTICE**

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

Mystic Valley requires parents to sign all major assessed work (Tier 1 tests, projects, essays, etc.) that receives a grade of under 80%. To ensure parental cooperation with this policy, teachers must verify parent signatures the following day. Students who do not have their assessments signed should be given an A-Plan warning (the teacher should include the assessment score as part of the A-Plan warning). Only students who earn less than 80% are required to have their assessments signed.

## **SECTION 4: PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

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### **VOLUNTEERING**

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

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

The Mystic Valley Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an independent 503[c3] non-profit organization for the purpose of enhancing the educational experience of the students at MVRCS. It is run by a group of parents dedicated to supporting student learning and the overall success of the School.

### **MYSTIC VALLEY BOOSTER CLUB**

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

### **PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)/SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)/Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) is an organization for parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. This group works towards providing respect for, understanding, awareness, and a network of support for students with special needs and their families. The PAC/SEPAC will meet with school administration in order to plan, develop and evaluate Mystic Valley's special education and other programs that can improve the school.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

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

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

### **PARENT INFORMATIONAL LETTERS**

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

## **FIELD TRIPS**

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

Occasionally, parents may be needed to serve as chaperones on class field trips. No parent should feel obligated to serve in this capacity, but parents are encouraged to volunteer. The primary responsibility of a chaperone is to ensure appropriate supervision for students. Parental chaperones are asked to take this responsibility seriously and to remain vigilant and attentive to the students' needs throughout the trip. All chaperones are required to attend a chaperone meeting every 3 years. Children who are not enrolled in the class may not accompany the chaperones. If there are more volunteers than needed, a lottery will be held by the lead teacher to determine which parents may go on the field trip.

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# **SECTION 5: CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS**

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School recognizes the importance of extra-curricular activities in the development of its students. The school offers high school students a variety of programs to explore, all of which are directly connected to the school's Curriculum. All of these clubs have a direct correlation with Mystic Valley's academic course offerings, and have advisors and/or founding faculty members with subject-area expertise. Clubs will be approved based upon having a teacher-advisor and a minimum of 15 paying members. Student paying members will offset the cost for the advisors. Approval of the school Director and the Board of Trustees for the attempt to create a new club is necessary in the annual budget process. Clubs will be approved once per year when the budget is approved for the next year. All Clubs which apply after that will be placed in wait until the next year for consideration. Complete plans for the need of the club, number of participants expected, mission, connection to the school's curriculum and advisor assigned by the school shall be submitted to the Board of Trustee's for approval by the appropriate Board Function.

## **CLUB POLICIES**

- I. The student cost to participate in a school-sponsored club or activity is \$50 per year.
  - A. Any additional fees due to the sponsoring organization (e.g., Key Club International) will be added to the \$50 Mystic Valley participation fee.
  - B. Waiving of individual fees is prohibited. Those students who need assistance with payment of fees will be given opportunity to work for the school in order to cover the fee (based upon being eligible for free lunch from completing a school Free and Reduced Application as determined on a case by case basis).
- II. The participation fee will be assessed at the beginning of the year and are due by the second Monday in September of each year.
  - A. Fees shall be collected by the club/activity advisor and submitted to the business office by the second Monday of September.
  - B. Determination of bona-fide club status will be based upon a minimum of 15 paying members by this date and having an approved teacher/advisor with approved schedule.
  - C. Approved clubs for that year will be announced by the third Thursday in September of each year.

- III. Students who are delinquent in paying the participation fee will not be allowed to participate in club/activity meetings or events until payment is received.
- IV. All clubs are required to have an advisor who must be a teacher in the school, approved by the administration, and paid by Mystic Valley. The only exception to this rule would be in the case of an ROTC or military-like organization.
  - A. Advisors must volunteer and they must apply for the position each year by September 1 for all existing clubs.
  - B. Students who wish to start a new club must find a teacher willing to be the advisor. New proposals must be brought forward by February 28 of the previous year to be considered for status in the upcoming year.
  - C. The fees charged will be used to pay the cost of the stipends. The school will not subsidize a club advisor. Club advisors will be paid based upon a portion of the fees collected to be determined by a schedule set periodically by the school.
  - D. The approved number of advisors for each club will be commensurate with the size of the club. The goal is to have one head advisor for the first thirty students and additional assistant advisors based on further demand.
- V. Club advisors, working with the assistant director (high school), will create an annual schedule of meetings to be approved by the assistant director no later than the first Monday of September each year.
  - A. Every club schedule will be posted by the second Tuesday of each September in the respective campus on a bulletin board for students to understand.
  - B. All clubs are to have a minimum of 30 scheduled meetings a year (with a minimum duration of 45 minutes each). These meetings must occur once per week except during Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday weeks.
  - C. All meetings will take place before or after school and in pre-designated club meeting rooms, assigned by the assistant director, in the schedule provided. High School meetings will occur in the afternoon at 238 Highland Ave. in one of two rooms designated as club rooms and in the mornings at 306 Highland Ave. in one of two designated club rooms. No other rooms will be authorized for use. No meetings are to be scheduled the day of the annual K-8 holiday show.
  - D. Any changes to the schedule or facility changes must be approved in advance by the assistant director and put on the calendar at a minimum of three days in advance.
  - E. Meetings can occur Monday through Friday.
  - F. Determination of meeting times will be based upon the previous year's schedule and seniority and membership of club. The assistant director of that campus will determine the schedule in consultation with the club advisors who will make requests.
- VI. Agendas for all scheduled meetings must be submitted to and approved by the assistant director at least two weeks before each scheduled meeting. Longer lead times are encouraged.
- VII. All material to be distributed on school property relating to extracurricular activities must be submitted and approved to the assistant director at least two weeks before scheduled meeting. Longer lead times are encouraged.
  - A. Expenses related to materials will be the responsibility of the extracurricular group. For example, copies of flyers shall be made outside of school and will be funded by the group.
- VIII. Approved meeting notifications are limited to one sheet to be placed on a school bulletin board at the high school. Extracurricular groups are not authorized to put notices on the school's web site or to blast out notices to families within the school.

### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School strives to offer many different and challenging programs to our students. All students must meet certain academics and behavioral standards before they are allowed to participate. (See below). This applies to any after school activity including but not limited to: athletics, drama, band, etc.

Students will not be eligible for any school activity if they owe money to the school for any reason, i.e. failure to pay user fee or failure to pay for the replacement of school property. These parents should contact the Business Manager to make payment schedules or to dispute the School's position. The School's Finance Committee on a monthly basis will hear all financial disputes. In the event of a dispute, the student will be allowed to participate until the Finance Committee makes a decision. Parents are responsible for providing a recent (within 13 months) physical of each child before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD AT CLOSE OF MARKING PERIOD**

Any student receiving a failing mark in a subject for any of the first three marking periods will be prohibited from participating in extra-curricular activities for the following marking period (quarter). If athletic or activity seasons extend beyond the marking period and a student improves academically to meet the eligibility guidelines, they will be deemed eligible to participate in the activities, granted they would have met any qualifying criteria established by the coach, instructor or school. If the activity in question has a user fee, the parents of said student would be required to pay a pro-rated amount of the user fee.

If a student fails a course for the year they will be ineligible for fall sports or activities unless an approved course is passed in a recognized summer school. Students that are dismissed from the team because of being deemed ineligible will not qualify for a refund of any user fee paid to the school.

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD DURING MARKING PERIOD**

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

- **Homework**
- **Class Work**
- **Time on Task**
- **Special Projects**
- **Test Preparation and Results**

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

### **STUDENT CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY STANDARD**

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

- **Following Directions the First Time Given**
- **Transition in Hallways to Specialty Classes and Recess**
- **Conduct During Instruction**
- **Conduct in Specialty Classes, Recess Periods & Lunch Periods**
- **Respect for Adults**
- **Respect for Peers**

Failure to comply in any of the areas above may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Suspension from the regular classroom setting will result in suspension from participation in games and practices, meetings that coincide with the duration of the suspension, but no less than 1 game for athletes. Serious behavioral infractions may result in dismissal from the team, squad, or organization.

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

## USER FEES AND SUSPENSION

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

## NON-DISCRIMINATION

The school provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports, extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school and does not exclude students on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

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# SECTION 6: ENROLLMENT, REENROLLMENT & TRANSFERS

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### **\*ENROLLMENT** (*Additional information may be found on the school's website.*)

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

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

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Students who are entering kindergarten must be five years of age before September 1 of the school year for which they are applying. For more information, please view the school's enrollment policy which can be found at [www.mvrcs.com](http://www.mvrcs.com).

### **RE-ENROLLMENT**

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

### **SIBLING PREFERENCE**

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

### **TRANSFERS**

Parents who need to withdraw their child are asked to call the Registrar at 781-388-0222 ext. 2014 to schedule an exit interview, receive a transfer slip and return school property such as books. The school's office will attempt to meet all requests but parents should give a 24-hour notice to allow for the preparation of needed materials. Once the parent receives a transfer slip, their child is no longer a student at MVRCS and must accompany the parent home.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Every student is required to complete and submit the following forms as part of the registration process. Forms are available in a family's primary language. Mystic Valley protects the confidentiality of any

personally identifiable information we collect, use or maintain according to state and federal requirements. Any parent can view or have copies made of their child's records within three (3) days after the initial request has been made with written notice. The school reserves the right to charge parents for copies made of records at twenty-five cents per copy. For assistance in completing these forms call the Registrar at 781-388-0222 ext. 2014.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### *Photographs, Video Recording and Press Releases*

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

## SECTION 7: BREAKFAST, SNACKS & LUNCH

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### MEAL PROGRAM K-12

All meals require a ticket:

**Tickets can be purchased at the lower school and high school main buildings. Please visit each office for their operating hours.**

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

The cost for tickets (school year 2016-17) will be as follows:

Milk	\$ .35
Breakfast	\$1.85
Lunch	\$3.40

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

After the fifth time a child is sent to school without a lunch, the parents will be contacted.

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

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

#### Breakfast

Those electing to participate in the school's breakfast program or bring homemade breakfast from home must eat between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.

#### Snacks

The number of snacks will vary by grade. Morning snacks should be healthy snacks. In all cases, only non-carbonated, non-flavored water will be allowed with snacks.

### MEALS SENT FROM HOME

In the event that you discover your child forgot his or her food from home, please do not bring fast food items to school. Please quickly make a homemade lunch/snack for your child clearly marked with his or her name. If food and beverages from an outside establishment are sent into the school, the school will provide the student with an alternative lunch/snack and give the food from the outside establishment to the child upon dismissal.



## SECTION 8: HEALTH & SAFETY

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### **SCHOOL AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

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

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

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

- Vision and Hearing
- Heights and Weights
- Postural screening

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

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Unless legally exempted, students must meet the following immunization requirements as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Failure to meet these requirements could result in removal from school or other disciplinary actions.

#### **Entering Kindergarten:**

- 5 doses of DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus)
- 4 doses of Polio
- 2 doses of Measles, 1 dose of Mumps and 1 dose Rubella (MMR)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 dose of Varicella or documentation of Chicken Pox
- Test and Results of Tuberculosis (TB) or note from a doctor for exemption (low risk)—(see note below)
- Results of a Physical Examination – no more than 6 months old
- Results of the most recent Lead Screening showing a numerical value

#### **Entering Grade 4:**

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

#### **Entering Grade 7:**

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

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

**Exemptions:** The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will honor the request made by parents when it comes to exempting them from Massachusetts Immunization Regulations due to religious beliefs with the understanding that:

- Parents request the exemption in writing to the school’s nurse and administration prior to the first day of each school year,
- Parents requesting the exemption sign an acknowledgement that their child will be excluded from attending school in the event of an incident of a communicable disease at the school for the duration established by the state in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health “Immunization Exemptions and Vaccine Preventable Disease Exclusion Guidelines in School Settings.”

## **INJURIES OR ILLNESS**

In the event of a major injury or onset of a serious illness the school will immediately contact 911 and then the parent. If necessary the school will transport the child to the Melrose Wakefield Hospital or Winchester Hospital for emergency treatment. If the decision to contact 911 is made, the cost of any subsequent treatment and transportation shall fall to the parents.

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

Please note that the school does not cover injuries incurred by parents or children while attending or participating in school related activities. All parents should carry personal health insurance for their children.

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

## **MEDICATIONS**

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

### **Prescription medications:**

The school must have on file a signed parent acknowledgement form.

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

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

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

### **Epipens:**

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

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

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

### **Inhalers:**

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

The school must have documentation from a physician including the diagnosis. All inhalers must be labeled with the child’s name.

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

### **Over the counter medication:**

1. The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

They need to be sent in their original container labeled with the child’s name and teacher’s name. Parents need to notify the nurse in writing of dosage and time to distribute.

**Nebulizer Treatments:**

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

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

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

**ACCOMODATIONS MADE TO INJURIES/ILLNESS**

From time to time children's injuries will result in their needing crutches; wheelchairs or accommodations to be made that will allow them to participate in school. A doctor's note should be sent to the nurse's office after any medical treatment that might affect the child's ability to participate in any activities at school. The Nurse will contact the 504 Coordinator to develop a 504 Accommodation Plan to address the student's needs during the period of time designated on the Doctor's note. If necessary, the child will be allowed to use the elevator. If a child cannot participate in Physical Education the nurse must receive a doctor's note and a note should also be given to the child's teacher.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

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

Some of the more common communicable diseases are:

**Head lice** – Any student with lice must be treated before they return. Nurse must clear child before being able to return. (The nurse should be consulted to assist in eliminating the head lice.)

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

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

**FIELDTRIPS AND MEDICATION**

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

**Communication with Parents**

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

**PHYSICALS**

All physicals will be collected and filed by the School Nurses for each building. This is true for academic as well as athletic purposes.

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

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## **VISITOR IDENTIFICATION**

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

## **PICK UP AND DROP OFF**

### **PROCEDURE #1 GRADES 1-8**

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

### **PROCEDURE #2 FOR DROP- OFF ONLY Main Building Lower School, 770 Salem St**

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

### **PROCEDURE #3 for DROP- OFF ONLY Annex Building, 30 Laurel St**

Parents may choose to drop off for the Annex Building on the side of Laurel Street where the building is located. Parents should pull up to the curb and let their children out of the passenger's side (side closest to building) of the car. Parents are not allowed to park along the school side of Laurel Street, or get out of their car for any reason during morning drop off.

### **PROCEDURE #4 DROP-OFF/PICK UP FOR KINDERGARTEN**

#### **Morning Procedures:**

**Bus students** will continue to go to 770 Salem Street and will line up in the church parking lot. If there is inclement weather, the children will gather inside 770 Salem Street. A shuttle bus will then transport all Kindergarten bus students from 770 Salem Street to Eastern Avenue. A staff member will travel with the children on the bus between the two campuses.

**Morning drop off** will follow procedures similar to those followed at the 770 Salem Street location. Cars will enter the new facility from either the Eastern Avenue or the Cross Street entrance. A staff member will be there to greet cars and open doors so that your child can get out and enter the building. Cars will then exit by turning left onto Cross Street. Students may be dropped off at Eastern Avenue after 7:30 a.m.

#### **Afternoon Procedures:**

**Bus Shuttle:** We will shuttle the following students from Eastern Avenue to 770 Salem Street:

- Kindergarten students who take the bus home

- Kindergarten students who have siblings in first through eighth grade and are being picked up by their parents from the lower school campus
- Kindergarten students who go to the Champions after school program
- Kindergarten students who participate in the after school Student Action Club (when in session)

Once the students arrive at 770 Salem Street, they will be escorted by a staff member as a group (based on above designations) to their final location.

### **Afternoon Pick Up:**

Kindergarten students, who do not fall into one of the four categories above, will be picked up directly from Eastern Avenue at 3:30 p.m. Parents should park and come to the designated pick up area, which will be reviewed during the orientation.

### **PROCEDURE #5 HIGH SCHOOL**

Many of our students will be traveling to the high school, via MVRCS school bus, from the main campus. Students must arrive at the main campus no later than 7:20 a.m. so that they can board the buses for the high school. Parents are responsible for transporting those that miss the bus.

Students who will be walking or traveling to the high school via car or public transportation are asked to arrive between 7:40 am and 7:55 am. Students will not be allowed into the building prior to 7:30 am. The school day ends at 3:15 pm. Bus dismissal procedure begins at the dismissal time.

Those students receiving after school detention will serve the detention at the high school facility until 4:20 pm. Parents are responsible for picking up student at 4:20 pm from the high school facility or for making other transportation arrangements.

### **PARKING INFORMATION K-8**

Our school property does not lend itself to parking availability. In the interest of safety, we will not be able to allow parking in *any* of the lots. Parking is available on surrounding streets. **Please be respectful to our neighbors when considering where to park.**

### **PARKING INFORMATION 9-12**

Parking is not allowed in the lot at the high school sites, and is limited in the surrounding areas. If your child drives to school, please instruct him or her to be respectful of our neighbors and to be aware of local parking policies. Students are not allowed to park on Highland Ct.

### **STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

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

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

Unless the school is notified in writing by a parent or guardian, no child attending K – 2 will be allowed to disembark a bus without an adult. Parents or guardians should wait for the child on the *right side* of the bus, so the student will not be required to cross in front of the bus or behind it.

In the event that an adult guardian is not waiting for the child at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the School and the parents or emergency contact will be notified. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00 p.m., the police will be notified. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop three times which results in children being returned to the school will forfeit their privilege to use the bus for the rest of the year.

## **BUS INFORMATION:**

### **SAFE BUS RIDING**

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

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

Parents that utilize the bus must notify the Business Manager in writing about any life threatening allergies children may have that would require the use of an EpiPen on the bus. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop, resulting in the child to be returned to the school, three times will forfeit the privilege of riding the bus. The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School utilizes Vocell Bus Company. They can be contacted at 781-393-0220.

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON BUS**

#### **Introduction and Rationale**

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

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

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

### **BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES**

#### **Proper Bus Riding Behavior**

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

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

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

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

### **PHYSICALLY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR**

- Students should not touch other students for any reason. Students should not engage in horseplay or roughhousing.
- Acts of violence against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.
- Serious acts of violence against another student may result in immediate removal of the student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.
- Physical intimidation against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

### **DEROGATORY COMMENTS TOWARD OTHERS**

- Derogatory comments toward others in any way are not allowed. Name-calling is not allowed.
- Laughing at the expense of another is not allowed. Imitating other students in a negative way is not allowed.
- Asking other students to join in any of the above activities is not allowed.

### **ILLEGAL ACTS**

Acts of theft, vandalism, or use of illegal substances may result in the immediate removal of a student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year. Any behaviors that disrupt other drivers will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

### **STEPS OF CONSEQUENCE FOR BUS INFRACTIONS:**

#### **Step 1**

Students who commit an act of misconduct will be warned.

#### **Step 2**

Students who commit a second act of misconduct will receive a bus suspension for one or two days. The Asst. Director will contact the parents of the student in order to have the student reinstated to ride the bus.

#### **Step 3**

Students who commit a third offense will receive a longer suspension of at least a week and not more than a month, except in extreme cases. The parents of the student must attend a conference with the Assistant Director in order to have the student reinstated to ride the bus.

#### **Step 4**

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

### **VIDEO TAPE POLICY (On Bus)**

#### **RATIONALE**

The hiring of bus monitors is a financial impossibility. The lack of bus monitors could make it necessary to institute the use of video cameras to monitor behavior of the children on the bus, as well as the driver

#### **PROCEDURE**

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

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

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

## **SECTION 10: CODE OF VALUES, SCHOOL RULES & REGULATIONS**

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

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

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

### **CODE OF VAULES**

#### **Responsibility and Respect:**

Responsibility means you understand that you have agreed to do something even when it is not easy to do.

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

#### **Honesty:**

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

#### **Gratitude:**

Thankfulness for the gifts in life and the gift of life

#### **Kindness/Compassion:**

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

#### **Perseverance:**

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

#### **Courage:**

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

#### **Self-discipline:**

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



**Good Citizenship/Generosity:**

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

**Forgiveness:**

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

**Wonder / Hope:**

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

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**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

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

**Classroom Teachers**

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

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

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

Teachers will strive to interact frequently with each student when the student is behaving correctly. When misbehavior occurs, teachers will calmly and consistently implement appropriate consequences for corrective action. Teachers will insure that no less than four positive interactions occur for each corrective action.

**School Director**

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

In certain cases, the Director, or Designee, may initiate time-out periods, parent conferences, in-school suspensions, out of school suspension or recommend expulsion. The Director may also contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities if circumstances warrant.

**Support Staff**

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's administrative staff includes two Assistant Directors, Professional Development Coordinators, a Business Manager, a Human Resource Director, a Facilities Manager, a Special Education Director, 504 Coordinator, nurses, and other support personnel to assist with instruction and help meet students' needs.

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

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

### **Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)/Child Study Team**

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

The TAT will include the teacher dealing with the concern, the grade level Lead Teacher and at least two other teachers, the special education teacher and Professional Development Coordinator (PDC). The TAT will help develop creative approaches to assist your child at school. Each Grade Level Team may meet and discuss behavioral issues once a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. The Team recommends accommodations for the teacher. If after 45-60 school days the accommodations are unsuccessful, the lead teacher brings concerns to the Professional Development Coordinator (PDC) or Assistant Director who then refers the documentation to the **Child Study Team (CST)**. This Team made up of the Special Education Director, PDC and specialists (psychology, S/L, OT &/or PT) to determine if additional accommodations or recommendations are warranted. If success is not met then the next step is a referral to the special education department. The CST will meet weekly and meetings will follow a prescribed format.

### **Special Education Services**

In accordance with federal and state law, MVRCS provides special education services to students who have been identified as having a disability and who require specialized instruction in order to access the curriculum. The Special Education Department provides an array of services for special education students. The special education staff works in collaboration with the grade level classroom teachers to coordinate with regard to the curriculum, introduce and monitor the student's IEP and to identify alternative teaching strategies. When necessary, support services may be provided either inside or outside of the general education classroom for short periods of a student's school day.

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

The decision to refer a child for a team evaluation to determine the need for special education services usually originates with the classroom teacher (see Teacher Assistance Team/Child Study Team). Parents who feel that their child is in need of more than regular remedial services should consult with the Assistant Director and/or Professional Development Coordinator before a referral is made to the Special Education Department.

Upon receipt of evaluation results, if a parent disagrees with an initial evaluation or reevaluation completed by MVRCS, then the parent may request an independent educational evaluation (IEE).

(a) All independent education evaluations shall be conducted by qualified persons who are registered, certified, licensed or otherwise approved and who abide by the rates set by the state agency responsible for setting such rates. Unique circumstances of the student may justify an individual assessment rate that is higher than that normally allowed.

(b)The parent may obtain an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at private expense at any time.

(c)Public funding of independent education evaluations - When the parent provides a request for public funding for an IEE, MVRCS shall abide by the following provisions for a sliding fee scale:

1. If the student is eligible for free or reduced cost lunch or is in the custody of a state agency with an Educational Surrogate Parent appointed in accordance with federal law, then MVRCS shall provide, at full public expense, an independent education evaluation that is equivalent to the types of assessments done by

- MVRCS. No additional documentation of family financial status is required from the parent.
2. If the family financial status is not known, MVRCS shall offer the parent information about the sliding fee scale and the opportunity to provide family income information to determine if the family may be eligible for public funding of all or part of the costs of an independent education evaluation. Provision of financial information by the family is completely voluntary on the part of the family. The lack of financial information provided by the family will disqualify the family from such additional public funding of all or part of the costs of an IEE under 603 CMR 28.04 (5)(c) but shall not limit the rights of the parents to request public funding under 603 CMR 28.04 (5)(d).
  3. If the family agrees to provide financial information, such information shall include anticipated annual income of the family, including all sources of income and verifying documents. Financial information shall be reviewed by MVRCS and shall be kept confidential during review by MVRCS, shall not be copied or maintained in any form at MVRCS except to note that information was provided and reviewed and met or did not meet the sliding fee scale standards. Financial documents shall be promptly returned to the parent upon MVRCS's determination of financial income status.
  4. MVRCS shall consider family size and family income information in relation to Federal Poverty Guidelines and shall contribute public funds to the costs of the IEE according to the following standards:
    - (i) If the family income is equal or less than 400% of the federal poverty guidelines, the district shall pay 100% of the costs of an independent educational evaluation.
    - (ii) If the family income is between 400% and 500% of the federal poverty guidelines, the district shall pay 75% of the costs of an independent educational evaluation.
    - (iii) If the family income is between 500% and 600% of the federal poverty guidelines, the district shall pay 50% of the costs of an independent educational evaluation.
    - (iv) If the family income is over 600% of the federal poverty guidelines, the district shall have no obligation to cost-share with the parent.
  5. When the parent seeks and receives public funding for an IEE under these provisions, the parent may request independent assessments in one, more than one, or all of the areas assessed by MVRCS.
  6. The right to this publically funded IEE under 603 CMR 28.04 (5)(c) continues for sixteen (16) months from the date of the evaluation with which the parent disagrees.
    - (d) If the parent is requesting an IEE in an area not assessed by MVRCS, the student does not meet income eligibility standards, or the family chooses not to provide financial documentation to MVRCS to establish family income level, MVRCS shall respond in accordance with the requirements of federal law. Within five (5) school days, MVRCS shall either agree to pay for the IEE or proceed to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals to show that its evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate, then MVRCS shall not be obligated to pay for the IEE requested by the parent.
    - (e) Whenever possible, the IEE shall be completed and a written report sent no later than thirty (30) days after the date the parent requests the IEE. If publically funded, the report will be sent to the parents and to MVRCS. The independent evaluator shall be requested to provide a report that summarized, in writing procedures, assessments, results and diagnostic impressions as well as educationally relevant recommendations for meeting identified needs of the student. The independent evaluator may recommend appropriate types of placements but shall not recommend specific classrooms or schools.
      - (i) Within ten (10) school days from the time that MVRCS receives the report of the IEE, the Team shall reconvene and consider the IEE and whether or new or amended IEP is necessary.

## **Section 504 Policy**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a section of a federal law that prohibits discrimination against an individual that has a disability or impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working and learning. In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, MVRCS has a responsibility to identify, assess, and if a student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, afford access to appropriate education services. Implementation of a 504 Accommodation Plan developed in accordance with the federal and state education laws is one means of meeting these requirements.

- If a student is referred for special education, is found to have a disability, but is not found eligible under the federal and state special education laws, the school will proceed promptly to consider whether the student needs regular education and related accommodations under Section 504.

## English Language Learner Program Goals and Philosophy

State law, G.L.c.71A, requires that most Limited English Proficient (LEP) students be educated in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), consisting of both sheltered subject matter instruction in English and English language instruction. State and federal laws require that all students in our public schools who meet the criteria for an English Language Learner will receive instruction that is specifically designed to assist them both in learning English and in learning subject matter content. These students are often referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs) or as Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. For consistency, we will use “ELLs” in this document.

The goal of the English Language Learner Program of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to implement research-based instructional approaches to ensure English Language Learners (ELLs) attain English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening that will assist our ELLs to achieve success both academically and as productive members of our community. To that end, the program’s goals are:

- To ensure high academic achievement of English language learners through high quality, standards-aligned curricular experiences and a safe and respectful school environment.
- To provide multiple opportunities for ELL students to communicate orally and in writing every day across all grade levels and content classrooms allowing them to reach their full academic potential.
- To ensure all ELLs are provided with equal access to all academic programs and services consistent with monitoring practices, as well as all non-academic and extracurricular programs.
- To promote parental involvement in the education of their child.
- To ensure staffing levels are in place to comply with the requirements of licensure and/or credentialing related to Sheltered English Immersion and English as a Second Language.
- To monitor program effectiveness yearly through observations and an evaluation.

### Identification of English language Learners

State laws require that ELLs receive instruction that is specifically designed to assist them in learning the English language and subject matter content, and that parents participate in the decision-making process (G.L. c.71A § 4,5). When a new student enrolls in a school district, it is the district’s obligation to determine whether the student is an ELL and to place the student in the appropriate instructional program to support content area and language learning (603 CMR 14.02). In order to ensure that ELLs’ diverse needs are met, districts must start by properly identifying students who need English language support. The diagram below provides the process for determining whether newly enrolled students are designated as ELLs. A discussion of each step follows this diagram:

**Step 1:** Administer a home language survey to all new enrolling students.

**Step 2:** Assess the English proficiency of any student whose *Home Language Survey* indicates a language other than English is spoken at home or whose dominant/primary language appears not to be English.

**Step 3:** Determine whether the student is an ELL using screening test results and make initial placement decisions.

**Step 4:** Notify parents and/or legal guardians of language screening assessment results and initial placement. Inform parents of their rights to “opt out” or to secure an SEI program waiver in a language they understand.

**Step 5:** Code all students determined to be ELLs correctly in all future SIMS reports submitted to the Department.

### ***Home Language Survey***

Mystic Valley will utilize a Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify limited English proficient students. This survey will be completed by the parent/guardian of any student at the time of enrollment. The purpose of this survey is to determine if a student's primary/dominant language is anything but English, or if a language other than English is spoken in the student's home.

During the enrollment process, a member of the school's ELL department will orientate each new parent to the survey, and be available for questions regarding the survey. Surveys are available in English and in all the major languages spoken in the district. Copies of the completed HLS will remain in the student's cumulative and ELL File. There are three possible outcomes regarding LEP after completion of the HLS.

#### ***Student's Primary/Dominant Language is English***

If the survey shows that English is the primary/dominant language of the child and no language other than English is spoken at home, the student would not qualify as an ELL. The child's home language would be entered into the school's student information system (SIS) with English as the home language.

#### ***Student's Dominant Language is a Language Other Than English***

If any responses to the questions on the HLS indicate that the primary/dominant home language is not English or languages other than English are spoken in the home, the child will be screened using the WIDA W-APT by a qualified member of the ELL staff. The child's home language would be entered into the school's student information system (SIS) with the appropriate language code provided by MA DESE. The child's parent/guardian will be notified of the screening process prior to the screening taking place.

#### ***HLS Completed in Another School/District***

If an HLS was completed in another school prior to enrolling at Mystic Valley, then the ELL staff should compare the responses on the two forms for consistency and to determine the ELL status of the student prior to entry. If an HLS was completed in another school prior to enrolling at Mystic Valley then the ELL staff shall no later than (30) thirty days after enrollment in Mystic Valley test the student to determine the student's ELL status. The results of the test administered by Mystic Valley shall determine the placement of the student in the appropriate ELL setting if at all while the student is attending Mystic Valley. If the student was designated as ELL by another district and then reclassified as FLEP, the student would not be placed in an ELL program but in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) classroom initially and be monitored by ELL staff member for two years. The child's home language would be entered into the school's Student Information System with the appropriate language code provided by MA DESE.

#### ***Initial Assessment***

The W-APT is administered by a qualified member of the ELL Staff.

This Assessment measures oral language proficiency and pre-literacy skills as well as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Results will determine the proficiency level of the student and guide the ELL coordinator in creating a plan that would best suit each learner. Upon determination of the recommended program for the student, the parent/guardian will again be notified.

Testing and parental notification must be completed within:

- 30 days from the child's first day of school,
- 2 weeks for a child who enters school after the first 30 days of the school year.

The results of the assessment procedures will be included in the students ELL file at school. Other relevant information about the student (progress reports, later test scores, etc.) will also be included in the student's ELL file as it is gathered.

A special education student being screened to determine if they are an ELL will receive all appropriate accommodations shown in that student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). W-APT results are reported to the SPED team. If the student is NOT found to be eligible for ELL services, then the Special Education Team indicates this in the IEP. If the student IS identified as an ELL, an ELL staff member will collaborate with the grade level Special Education teacher to support the student as it relates to the IEP. .

### ***Initial Assessment***

Grade	Domains Assessed	Identified as Not LEP	Identified as LEP
Kindergarten – 1 <sup>st</sup> 30 days of school	Speaking & Listening	Combined Speaking & Listening Raw Score 29 or higher.	Combined Speaking & Listening Raw Score 28 or below.
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade – 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing	Combined Speaking & Listening Raw Score 29 or higher and Reading Score 11 or higher and Writing Score 12 or higher.	Combined Speaking & Listening Raw Score 28 or below or Reading Score 10 or below or Writing Score 11 or below.
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester And higher grades	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing	Composite Score 5.0 or higher and no Domain Score below 4.0.	Composite Score below 5.0 or any Domain Score below 4.0.

A student identified as an ELL after a language screening assessment should be placed in a language program that will provide sheltered content area instruction in English and English language instruction appropriate for the student’s level of English language proficiency - unless the student’s parent chooses to “opt out” of such language programs or requests a waiver.

The student is required by state and federal law to be annually assessed on the state mandated English language proficiency test until the student meets the exit criteria. The assessment currently used and administered annually is the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State –to-State for English Language Learners).

### ***Parent/Guardian Notification***

Parents should be notified about the screening test results and the placement decisions **no later than 30 days** after the beginning of the school year or within **two weeks** if the student enrolls in the school district during the school year. Such notifications shall be provided in English and in a language that the parents can understand, to the maximum extent practicable.

Massachusetts law requires districts to inform parents of their rights to “opt out” of language programs or to request a waiver from the state-mandated sheltered English immersion (SEI) program model.

- **“Opt out” Requests.** Parents of ELLs may notify the district of their wish to have their child “opt out” of language programs. In such cases, the district must inform the parent of the services the child would have received if enrolled in the district’s language programs, as well as the type of support that will be provided to the student if the parent decides to “opt out”. If parents of ELLs decide to “opt out” of language programs, districts must place the student in an English language mainstream classroom and maintain appropriate documentation of the parent “opt out” notice in the student’s file. However, federal and state law requires that districts provide instructional support to ensure *all* ELLs, including those whose parent(s) has chosen to “opt out” of language programs, have access to the curriculum and meet the same academic standards as their native English speaking peers (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, 20 USC §1703(f); G.L. c. 71A § 7). Districts are also required to annually assess the language proficiency of all ELL students through ACCESS. Therefore, in practice, a parent’s choice to “opt out” means their child will not receive separate English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction focused on language development, but the district still must ensure that it continues to meet the student’s English-language and academic needs. ELL students whose parents have “opted out” of language programs will still be classified as ELL in the school’s SIS.
- **Waiver Requests.** Parents may also request a program waiver to allow their child to attend a different program from the state-mandated sheltered English immersion program model (G.L. c. 71A § 5). Such waivers may be considered based on parent request, providing the parent annually visits the

school and provides written informed consent. Parents will be informed of their right to apply for a waiver and provided with program descriptions in a language they can understand.

**The circumstances under which a parental exception waiver may be applied for are as follow:**

- Children who already know English: the child already possesses good English language skills, as measured by oral evaluation or standardized tests of English vocabulary comprehension, reading, and writing, in which the child scores approximately at or above the state average for his/her grade level or at or above the 5th grade average, whichever is lower; or
- Older children: the child is age 10 years or older, and it is the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the child's overall educational progress and rapid acquisition of basic English language skills; or
- Children with special individual needs: the child already has been placed for a period of not less than thirty calendar days during that particular school year in an English language classroom and it is subsequently the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that the child has such special and individual physical or psychological needs, above and beyond the child's lack of English proficiency, that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the child's overall educational development and rapid acquisition of English.

In addition, parents/guardians must be notified in writing of their options for each subsequent year their child qualifies for ELL services.

***Program Placement and Structure***

Under state and federal law, English language learners must be taught to the same academic standards and be provided the same opportunities to master such standards as other students (G.L. c. 71A § 7; Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 20 USC § 1703(f); Title III of NCLB § 3102). The law also requires that instruction provided to ELLs is meaningful and appropriate for their individual English language proficiency level.

The following steps are recommended for evaluating the educational needs of ELLs and making placement and reclassification decisions to ensure they are provided with equal educational opportunities. Below are the steps to ensure these opportunities are realized:

**Step 1: Establish a school-based ELL placement and reclassification team**

In order to make effective instructional and assessment decisions for ELLs, Mystic Valley will establish a school-based team charged with reviewing relevant ELL data and making instructional decisions for each student. School-based teams will be comprised of the ELL Director and ELL teacher of record, the SEI teacher of record, the Professional Development Coordinator of Record, the Assistant Director of record and, if applicable, the Special Education Director.

**Step 2: Review relevant data to determine the student's language classification**

Students will only be classified as ELLs when the results of language screening assessments or annual language proficiency assessments indicate that they are not fully proficient in English. Their level of English Proficiency will be based on the data collected.

State law requires districts to annually assess ELLs' language proficiency and academic achievement to determine whether such students are able to do regular school work in English, and to remove the English learner classification once ELLs demonstrate the ability to do regular school work in English (G.L. c.71A § 4, 7). The process of removing a students' ELL classification is also known as "reclassification". Because ACCESS for ELLs is the state's mandated language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs results must be considered when making language classification decisions.

### Step 3: Plan an instructional program for the student

Mystic Valley utilizes Sheltered English Immersion (SEI). SEI includes approaches, strategies and methodology to make the content of lessons more comprehensible and to promote the development of academic language needed to successfully master content standards. Sheltered content instruction will be taught by SEI endorsed teachers, as well as English Language Development (ELD) instruction taught by ESL licensed teachers. It will be based on content area curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and that integrates components of the WIDA ELD standards frameworks. Students will receive leveled instruction in both English Language Development and SEI.

The number of hours an ELL student will receive in ELD instruction will be based on the student's ACCESS for ELLs results.

### ***Monitoring and Assessing ELLs***

All ELL students are assessed in content areas and in ELD throughout the school year using a variety of formative and summative assessments. Students are also administered ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners). This is an English language proficiency assessment given to students who have been identified as English Language learners (ELLs). It is given annually to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English.

ELL students also participate in the state mandated Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Exams (MCAS). However, if it is child's first school year in the United States, the student does not have to participate in the English Language Arts exam.

These assessments help inform instruction and ensure the ELLs are making progress. This information will also be used to inform the program plan for each ELL. Accordingly, the number of ELD hours a student receives may be increased or decreased. Formal and informal state and school assessments also serve to identify students have achieved a level of language proficiency that will allow the student to meet grade level standards without additional support. SEI teachers work closely with the ELL teachers to ensure the ELLs are receiving an education "equitable" to their native-English speaking peers.

Parents/guardians of English Language Learners will receive progress reports throughout the year written in a language they can understand informing them of their child's progress and performance in the English language program. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet with their child's SEI classroom teacher or ESL teacher at both of the parent/teacher conferences, or as requested. Translators will be provided when requested.

### ***Reclassification-Exiting Students from ELL program***

English language learners will be reclassified as Formerly Limited English Proficient (FLEP) once they have reached a proficiency level that will allow them to access academic content in English without any additional support. The decision to transition a student to a mainstream program is based on scoring at a proficient level on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Once a student has been reclassified as FLEP, the student's coding as LEP in the school's SIS will be updated. In addition, the student's parents will be notified.

### ***Monitoring***

Students reclassified will no longer receive ELD instruction from an ELL teacher. However, they will continue to be placed in an SEI classroom, at least initially, so that they may be supported appropriately in the classroom. An ELL staff member will monitor the student's progress for a period of two years after the student has been exited from the ELL program. Parents will be notified when the student's monitoring process begins as well as when it ends after two years. If a FLEP student is not making adequate progress, the student can be rescreened and reclassified as ELL. In the event that a FLEP student is reclassified as ELL, the student will begin receiving ELD again.

The monitoring process will include the following:

- Two observations a year from an ELL teacher
- Weekly meetings between SEI and ELL teachers, where supporting FLEP students will be discussed as needed.
- SEI teachers will complete a Monitoring Form after each benchmark period.
- ELL teachers will keep an assessment tracker to monitor progress of student data and academic performance.
- Parent Communication as needed.



## **Parents**

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

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

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

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

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## **ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:**

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

### **STUDENT OF THE DAY/ MYSTIC MERIT AWARDS**

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

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

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

### **CLASSROOM POSITIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

At the beginning of each day, K-6 teachers will issue all students green cards, indicating a clean slate for student conduct. These cards will be placed in a pocket wall chart in the front of the classroom. Teachers will maintain a wall chart with every student's name on it and a record of who maintains their green cards throughout the day. These students will be recognized as members of the Green Team and will be able to receive certain classroom rewards. After five green days the class may have a special celebration.

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: CARD CHANGES**

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

### **Green Card**

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

### **Yellow Card**

A student has a card change to yellow after receiving a warning from the teacher. This warning is for each separate behavior during the day. Behavior is always discussed with students before cards are changed. When students have a change to yellow an immediate “skill builder” and discussion or writing assignment should follow for grades 3-6. These skill builders should take less than 3 minutes to complete.

### **Blue Card**

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

### **Red Card**

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

1. immediate “skill builder” and/or writing assignment
2. email or telephone communication home
3. loss of 30 minutes of free time/recess.

### **No Color**

A student who does not change his/her behavior after the red card should then move to no color. This is when the student receives an office referral to a member of the Leadership Team. No color will result in being sent to the office for a time out and could lead to an in-school or out of school suspension. Out of school suspension should only happen for the most serious cases of misbehavior or when the misbehavior is re-occurring.

## **THE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN: 7<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

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

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

- At the discretion of the teacher depending on the degree and severity of any A Plan Warning – possible consequence will be given and the parent may be contacted. Examples of this would be, but not limited to, disrespectful behavior, physical or dangerous behavior.
- If a student receives 3 A Plan Warnings in a five day period or five A-Plan warning in a month, they will receive a one hour detention.
- Once the student is given the consequence, an administrator will draw a line and initialize it. This will allow the student to start a new sequence of warnings and not penalize them for previous warnings.
- Parents are responsible to view the planners nightly to be aware of the detention. If there is a need to reschedule a detention, parents should call the school to reschedule. For grades K-8, they should call extension 3017. For the high school, parents should call extension 4110.

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

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

### **CLASS-WIDE GOAL OF THE MONTH**

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

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

### **RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMON AREAS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CORRECTING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

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### CONSEQUENCES FOR MINOR MISBEHAVIOR

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

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

### CONSEQUENCES FOR SEVERE MISBEHAVIOR

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

- Insubordinate behavior
- Physically dangerous behavior
- Illegal behavior

Insubordinate behavior is the direct refusal to comply with a reasonable staff instruction within a specified period of time. In such cases, the staff member involved will first explain to the student why his or her actions are inappropriate and could issue a mild consequence or a more severe consequence for the offense. If the student continues to disregard the staff member's instruction, he or she will be sent to the office and be spoken to by a member of the leadership team.

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

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

If a staff member is aware that a student has been or is engaged in illegal activity, the staff member will refer the

case to the School Director's office. The Director will notify the student's parent or guardian and make all decisions regarding whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **EXCLUSIONARY TIMEOUT**

At the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, exclusionary timeouts will be used for students who need a neutral environment to help manage their own behavior, or to cool down to reflect on inappropriate behavior. Such timeouts involve removing the student from the instructional setting to a supervised area, such as the back of a classroom or the office. An exclusionary timeout may also be imposed as a consequence of misbehavior. No student shall ever be unsupervised during a timeout situation.

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

### **DETENTION**

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

### **SUSPENSION**

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

Suspension could be an automatic consequence for:

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

### **RE-ADMITTANCE MEETINGS FOLLOWING A SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

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

- Recess
- All extra-curricular sports

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

## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend the School under the conditions set by the School's Board. The School Director will have final authority in recommending the expulsion of a student to the Board in accordance with State statute. An expelled student will not be permitted on school grounds or at any school-related functions for the duration of his or her expulsion. If the expulsion is for a limited time, the expelled student may choose to attend another school during this period.

Under MGL, Chapter 71, Sections 37H & 37H ½, the Director may recommend expulsion for a period of time determined appropriate by the Director if the Director determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school and if ...

- Such student is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin.
- Such student assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
- Such student is issued a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student.
- Such student is convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency.

## **POLICIES AND STATE LAW RELATING TO ILLEGAL DRUGS, WEAPONS, ASSAULT, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS M.G.L. c.71 §37H**

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2**

**Chapter 71, Section 37½: Suspension/Expulsion for a Felony Charge or Conviction**

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

**Section 37H3/4. (a) Suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.**

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or

expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is illegal and never tolerated at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Students who organize or participate in hazing will be suspended out of school for up to ten (10) days with notification of the police.

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 17 Hazing defined**

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.



**M.G.L Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing**

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

## TIERED CONSEQUENCES

The tables outline the specific procedures that will be applied in response to severe misbehavior.

Problem	1st Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense
<b>Insubordinate Behavior</b> e.g., disrespect toward staff members and peers, bullying behavior, refusal to follow direction, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to the Office</li> <li>. Parent notified</li> <li>. 1-3 day suspension possible depending on the severity of the offense, plus mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Administration prior to student re-entering school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to the Office</li> <li>. Parent notified to pick up student immediately</li> <li>. 1-3 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Administration prior to student re-entering school.</li> <li>. Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan.</li> <li>. Parent may be asked to accompany child to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior</li> <li>. Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline action plan may result in expulsion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to the Office</li> <li>. Parent notified to pick up student immediately</li> <li>. Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff and Director prior to student re-entering school</li> <li>. Board of Trustees are notified regarding possible expulsion</li> <li>. Parent must attend school with child to assist with teaching appropriate behavior in the classroom</li> </ul>

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

Problem	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense
<p><b>Illegal Acts</b> e.g., theft, vandalism, use of illegal substances, violation of a student's or staff member's civil rights, harassment and physical abuse against another student based on their race, disability, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.</p> <p>The School Director may contact the appropriate authorities depending on the nature of the offense and the age of the student involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to School Office</li> <li>. Parent notified to pick up student immediately</li> <li>. 3-5 day minimum suspension or even expulsion depending on the severity of the offense and mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re- entering school</li> <li>. Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan</li> <li>. Board of Trustees are notified regarding possible expulsion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to School Office</li> <li>. Parent notified to pick up student immediately</li> <li>. 4-7 day minimum suspension or even expulsion depending on the severity of the offense and mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re- entering school</li> <li>. Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan.</li> <li>. Parent may be asked to accompany student to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior</li> <li>. Board of Trustees are notified regarding possible expulsion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Student sent to School Office</li> <li>. Parent notified to pick up student immediately</li> <li>. Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff member, and Director prior student re- entering school</li> <li>. Parent must attend school with child to assist with appropriate behavior in the classroom.</li> <li>. Board of Trustees are notified regarding possible expulsion</li> </ul>

## DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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All students are expected to meet the requirements for conduct and behavior as set forth in this student handbook. In addition to those due processes protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible students or those that MVRCS knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline.

In order to ensure that the discipline of special education students meets the requirements of federal and state law, the Assistant Director or Dean of Students will provide written notice to the Special Education Director any time that a student commits an offense that has resulted in the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) day of a suspension (e.g. in school suspension, out of school suspension) that is either consecutive or cumulative .

### **Suspension up to 10 days and after 10 days**

Any eligible student may be suspended up to ten (10) school days in any school year without implementation of procedures described below (see Suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive days or a pattern has developed for suspension exceeding ten (10) cumulative days).

After a student with special needs has been suspended for ten (10) days in any school year, during any subsequent removal the school will provide sufficient services for the student to continue to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

MVRCS will provide additional procedural safeguards for student with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond ten (10) consecutive days or more than ten (10) cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

Suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed ten (10) consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding ten (10) cumulative days- responsibilities of the Team and responsibilities of the district:

A suspension of longer than ten (10) consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than ten (10) consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.

When a suspension constitutes change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within ten (10) days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP- "a manifestation determination."

If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with the policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer: a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

### **Interim alternative educational setting (IAES)**

Regardless of the manifestation determination, MVRCS may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as directed by the Team) for up to forty five (45) school days: a. on its own authority if

the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after MVRCS provides evidence that the student is “substantially likely” to injure him/herself or others.

**Characteristics:** In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.

If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews and modifies it, as necessary to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) in accordance with IAES policy above, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.

Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, MVRCS notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or MVRCS requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student’s current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and MVRCS agree otherwise.

**Requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education**

If prior to the disciplinary action, MVRCS had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then MVRCS makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is substantially determined not to be eligible. MVRCS may be considered to have prior knowledge if: a. The parent had expressed concerns in writing; or b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or c. MVRCS staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

MVRCS may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determined of ineligibility.

If MVRCS had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, MVRCS must conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

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## BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

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### **PRIORITY STATEMENT**

It is the goal of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School (“the school”) to provide a learning environment free from any form of bullying by either students or school staff. Such an environment of civility and good manners is most conducive to learning and high academic achievement. The school will support this goal in a variety of aspects, including the establishment of clear procedures for reporting and response, age- appropriate student instruction, staff development and parent or guardian involvement. The school’s code of values, character education program, behavior management

procedures and the present plan constitute a comprehensive approach to the establishment and maintenance of such an environment.

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying, as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of the school's staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

**Definition of Cyber-Bullying** Cyber-bullying, as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

### **Scope**

The bullying intervention and prevention policies apply to all sites and activities under the supervision of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. Nothing contained herein shall require the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

All staff members who become aware of bullying are required to report it to the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or to the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or to the Board of Trustees or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. These individuals will conduct a prompt and reasonable investigation. The requirement to report the incident as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. When appropriate, referral will be made to a law enforcement agency. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The school expects students, parents or guardians who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation to report it to the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or to the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or to the Board of Trustees or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. Students, parents or guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or with the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or with the Board of Trustees or

designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged student aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports, either regarding bullying or retaliation, may be made by mail to: Superintendent's Office, Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, 4 Laurel St. Malden, MA, 02148 or by e-mail to [anonreporting@mvrcs.org](mailto:anonreporting@mvrcs.org).

### **ANNUAL STAFF TRAINING**

Annual training for all school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, Instructional Assistants and paraprofessionals as well as annual written notice of the Plan is incorporated into an extensive training period prior to the start of the school year. This training includes a focus on staff duties under the Plan and bullying of students by school staff, an overview of steps that the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of how bullying prevention curricula and character education will be integrated for students throughout the school.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development will build the skills of all school staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. Such development will build on the school's character education program and include age-appropriate strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying incidents, cyber-bullying incidence and nature, internet safety, research on students at risk for bullying, and information on power differentials and interactions among witnesses, student aggressors and targets of bullying. Additional areas for professional development include the use of positive behavioral interventions, applying constructive disciplinary strategies and maintaining a safe and caring community, and engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation of this plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors and bullying behaviors.

### **ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

The school will develop a plan on a case-by-case basis to support students vulnerable to, or who experience, bullying or harassment by reference to appropriate resources available within and outside the school. For example, students who are targets or aggressors in a bullying situation and require counseling resources may be referred to the school's on-site contracted counseling professionals for appropriate services as well as external counseling/medical professionals. Targets, vulnerable students, student aggressors and appropriate family members of involved students will have access to counseling as needed. Counseling will be arranged in consultation with school authorities and parents. Evaluation and services will be coordinated through the Director and Assistant Directors in consultation with parents, school nurses and others, including IEP teams and Special Education professionals as necessary. Parents and guardians of targets of bullying will be advised of the availability of the DESE's problem resolution system.

### **ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

Daily character education classes incorporate age-appropriate strategies and lessons on the necessary skills and habits required for the maintenance of respectful communication and a caring community. Friendship and healthy relationships are promoted through examples, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior and empowering students to take action when witnessing acts of bullying or retaliation.

A school-wide accountability plan and card system promote the ongoing development of good habits along with appropriate consequences for disrespectful or negative behavior. This system is an integral part of every school day and uniformly implemented across all grades. Students are consistently presented with clear expectations and established school and classroom routines. Such routines and expectations maintain a safe environment and provide essential boundaries and encouragement of appropriately respectful behavior.

### **RESPONDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Reports of bullying or retaliation by either a student or staff aggressor may be made orally or in writing. Oral reports will be recorded in writing. The school has established a Bullying Incident Reporting Form



for the recording of details regarding specific incidents. The form is available on the school website and at the main office of all school campuses. The Assistant Director, the Dean of Students or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying while maintaining a written record of the investigation except when a reported bullying incident involves the Assistant Director or the Dean of Students as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Director or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Director is the alleged aggressor, the Board of Trustees or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

Upon the reporting of an incident, steps will be taken immediately to ensure the target's safety and assess the target's need for assurance. If after investigation, the allegations are substantiated, the investigator will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and determine what disciplinary action is necessary. A range of disciplinary actions may be taken, including but not limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, meeting with parents and other authorities and expulsion. The target's safety needs will be addressed through meetings with parents, teachers, students, relevant authorities and counselors, as appropriate. These meetings will address such issues as creating a personal plan, seating, scheduling, and additional steps as needed to promote the target's safety. The Director or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying a student who a) reports bullying, b) provides information during an investigation of bullying, c) witnesses or provides reliable information about an act of bullying by a student or a staff member. Parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor, if a student, will be notified about the results and actions taken to address the current issue as well as to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Discipline will be consistent with the school's established code of conduct and behavioral expectations/procedures, or the School's employee handbook.

Whoever investigates a reported bullying incident will remind the alleged student or staff aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation and their obligation to be truthful. False accusations of bullying or retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation will be addressed by the school's disciplinary procedures which include, but are not limited to, meetings with parents, detentions, suspensions, and other disciplinary action as needed. Protection of all students will be provided, regardless of their status under the law.

## **NOTIFICATIONS**

The school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be distributed in summary form to all parents each year and also published in plenary form along with pertinent materials on the school's website. Every other year the Plan will be subject to updating as needed. Parents and guardians will also be notified of opportunities to learn more about the school's Plan as it relates to parental responsibilities, with a particular focus on internet safety and the encouragement of good habits at home. Parent/Guardian information on the dynamics of bullying, as well as ways to reinforce the school's prevention plan at home will also be provided. The Plan will also be included in each year's Parent/Student Handbook as part of the school's annual preparation for signature of the School and Home Compact.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Aggressor** is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

**Target** is student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**Hostile Environment** is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying provides information during the investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**School Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, or paraprofessionals.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life
- Comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons

- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences
- Discussion of one's sexual activities

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

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

### **COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE**

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

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

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

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State and federal laws prohibit discrimination in education (M.G.L. c.76, s.5). Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, gender identity, homelessness, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation with regard to admission, access to programs or activities, or employment opportunities. The school annually evaluates all aspects of our K-12 program to ensure all students have equal access.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

### **STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES**

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

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
10 Congress Street - 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02114 (617) 565-3200 (Employment Cases)

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) Boston Office:  
One Ashburton Place - Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-3990  
(Employment Cases)

Office for Civil Rights (OCR) U.S. Department of Education Regional Office  
John W. McCormick Post Office and Courthouse  
Room 22  
Boston, MA 02109-4557 (617) 223-9662  
(Student Cases)

## HONOR CODE

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# Mystic Valley Regional Charter School

• 4 Laurel St. • Malden, MA 02148 • Phone (781) 388-0222 • Fax (781)388-2947 •

### **Guiding Principles**

In keeping with the principals found in our mission statement including the promotion of the fundamental ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, the students of Mystic Valley Regional Charter School hereby agree to abide by the following statement.

### **Honor Code Pledge**

As a Mystic Valley student, I will be honest and respectful; all of my work will be my own; and I accept the responsibility of maintaining the spirit of honorable behavior.

### **Honor Code Definitions**

I will be honest and respectful.

- I will always tell the truth.
- I will take responsibility for my actions.
- I will treat everyone the way I would like to be treated.
- I will have respect for myself.
- I will respect others' property.
- I will exhibit self-control.

All of my work will be my own.

- I will not practice fraud or deceit.
- I will not give or receive assistance in examinations.
- I will not give or receive inappropriate assistance in class work, homework, or any other graded work.
- I will not take unfair advantage of the work or ideas of others.
- I will not plagiarize.

I accept the responsibility of maintaining the spirit of honorable behavior.

- As a Mystic Valley student, I will promote honorable behavior and the spirit of the Honor Code in and out of school.

### **Honor Code Violations**

Honor Code violations may be reported to school staff verbally or in writing.

## 2016-2017 SCHOOL AND HOME COMPACT

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

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

Sincerely,

*Chris Finn*

Chris Finn  
Assistant Director, K-8

*Alex Dan*

Alex Dan  
Assistant Director, 9-12

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Signature) Date\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Signature) Date\_\_\_\_\_

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

If you need a translated version of this handbook or require oral interpretation, please call 781-388-0222.  
Si necesita una versión traducida de este manual, por favor llame a la escuela de su hijo.  
Si vous avez besoin d'une version traduite de ce manuel, s'il vous plaît appelez l'école de votre enfant.  
Se você precisa de uma versão traduzida deste manual, ligue para a escola do seu filho.  
如果您需要這本手冊的翻譯版本，請致電您的孩子的學校。