

# **Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights Handbook 2008 - 2009**

## **Table of Contents**

Vestavia Hills Board of Education Directory	2
Vestavia Hills City Schools Strategic Plan	3
Instructional Program Standards	5
Programs	6
Procedures	9
General Information	17
Carpool Procedures	17
Student Behavior	19
Health	21
Child Nutrition Program	22
Student Code of Conduct	24

***The information contained in this handbook is subject to change during the school year.  
You will be notified of any changes when they occur.***

# **DIRECTORY**

## ***Vestavia Hills City Board of Education***

Mr. John Cooper, President  
Mrs. Kim Benos, Vice-President  
Mr. Jim Pounds  
Mr. David Walker  
Mrs. Carla Craft

Phone (205) 402-5100 Fax (205) 402-5134  
Web Address: <http://www.vestavia.k12.al.us>  
1204 Montgomery Hwy, Birmingham, AL 35216-2886  
PO Box 660826, Birmingham, AL 35226-0826

### CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Dr. Jamie Blair	Superintendent	402-5116
Ms. Pat Boggs	Secretary to the Superintendent	402-5116
Dr. Karen DeLano	Assistant Superintendent	402-5114
Ms. Gina West	Secretary, Educational Services	402-5114
Ms. Carolyn Baumgartner	Director of Student Support Services	402-5124
Mrs. Bebe Galloway	Student Support Services/Secretary	402-5124
Ms. Linda Brady	Exceptional Children's Program Director	402-5316
Ms. Lori Vining	Exceptional Education/Secretary	402-5316
Dr. Connie Bain	Technology Coordinator	402-5128
Mr. Jack Pennington	Director of Administrative Services	402-5129
Mrs. Linda Bennett	Secretary/Administrative Services/CNP	402-5129
Mr. Greg Maner	Director of Finance/Custodian of Funds	402-5122
Mrs. Mary Alexiou	Director of Child Nutrition Program	402-5125
Ms. Cindy Adams	Curriculum & Instruction Specialist	402-5110
Mrs. Deb Hargrave	Assessment and Accountability Specialist	402-5132
Mrs. Laura Johnston	Accounts Payable	402-5120
Mrs. Betty Lynch	Business Office Manager	402-5121
Ms. Laura Nichols	Receptionist/Registrar	402-5100
Mrs. Brenda Henderson	Payroll/Benefits	402-5112
Mrs. Carol Harrelson	System-Wide School Nurse	402-5217

It is the official policy of the Vestavia Hills Board of Education that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any program, activity or employment.

The Vestavia Hills Board of Education contact person for Title IX/Section 504 is Debbie Hargrave.

She can be contacted at:  
1204 Montgomery Highway  
Vestavia Hills, Alabama 35216  
Telephone: 205-402-5132 or 205-402-5124  
Email address: [hargraveda@vestavia.k12.al.us](mailto:hargraveda@vestavia.k12.al.us)

*The official policy of the Vestavia Hills Board of Education states that this facility will be alcohol, drug, tobacco and gun free.*

# VESTAVIA HILLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

## **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Vestavia Hills City School System, a community renowned for celebrating life-long learning, is to ensure that each student has the knowledge, character, and self-worth to fulfill his or her unique gifts and achieve personal aspirations while contributing in society, through a system distinguished by:

- Nurturing faculty and staff
- Respect for our traditions and values
- Rich and varied learning experiences
- Physically safe and emotionally secure learning environments
- Exceptional community partnerships

## **Objectives:**

- 100% of the Vestavia Hills City School students score in the top 5% in national assessments, graduate, and pursue post secondary education of their choice.
- 100% of students value participation in community service.
- 100% of students identify and cultivate their unique individual gifts.

## **Strategic Plan Belief Statements:**

We believe that.....

- All people have the right to be safe.
- God gives meaning and purpose to life.
- Honest, respectful communication is the essence of community.
- Every person has equal intrinsic value.
- Every person can learn.
- Each individual's unique gifts strengthen the community.
- Education is vital to a successful life.
- Excellence demands sacrifice.
- Every person bears responsibility for the well being of the community.
- Each person is entitled to respect and dignity.

## **Strategic Plan Parameters:**

- We will base all of our decisions and actions on the best interest of the students.
- We will not compromise excellence.
- We will make optimal use of technology throughout this system.
- We will not engage in anything that does not directly support our primary-secondary education programs.

## **Strategies:**

1. We will redefine learning by developing and implementing challenging curricula that transcend state and national standards.
2. We will give each student progressive, individualized direction and support to attain personal goals and aspirations.
3. We will provide an array of learning experiences that are responsive to the goals, aspirations and gifts of all students.
4. We will create an environment in which all faculty, staff and students honor, perpetuate and build upon our traditions of excellence and community.
5. We will ensure a superior, highly motivated, compassionate faculty and staff.
6. We will provide learning environments that are physically safe and emotionally secure for all students, faculty, and staff.
7. We will ensure each student engages in beneficial community service throughout their education.
8. We will acquire and ensure best use of all resources to accomplish our mission and objectives.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM STANDARDS**

It is the desire and intent of the Vestavia Hills Board of Education that the school program provides students with a sense of what society expects in the way of performance. The policy of the Vestavia Hills Board of Education shall be to develop and implement those instructional programs and support mechanisms that create an environment that encourages effort, motivation and vigorous performance. Each local school staff shall be expected to implement STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS as a means of ensuring a measure of quality control and for providing accountability to our clientele.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Vestavia Hills Board of Education recognizes that no one philosophy of education can express the sentiments or beliefs of all teaching personnel. Generally, however, education is perceived as a process of growth and includes the mental, moral, emotional, physical and spiritual aspects of the individual. As each student is different, it is the purpose of education to provide him/her with different experiences in school, which will enable him/her to achieve his/her maximum potential so that he/she may be a useful and productive member of society.

It is understood that though all children will not learn all things equally well, all should have an equal opportunity in their pursuit of an education; thus, the Board of Education will attempt to balance its program to provide for the varied interests and needs of the students of the schools.

The Board of Education strives to establish those programs of instruction designed to provide the individual student with experiences necessary to develop skills of learning, to instill values, to stimulate, nourish and direct natural curiosity, and to provide opportunities for improving manipulative skills. Intellectual, personal, social and physical growth will result from the learning process in forming the basis for eventual economic and intellectual independence.

It is the belief of this Board that students should be encouraged to appreciate the American heritage, to be prepared to be effective, responsible participants in a democratic society and to promote the principles of democracy in the total world.

The Board of Education accepts the conclusion that education is a comprehensive program, which must be undertaken in cooperation with other institutions of society and will seek to establish and maintain strong ties with parents and community programs.

**Child Find** - Vestavia Hills City Board of Education is committed through IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) to identify, locate and evaluate children ages birth through age 21, who regardless of the severity of their disability, need special education and related services. These services also apply to private school students located within our city zone as well as migrant and homeless who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education even though they are advancing from grade to grade. For more information contact the Special Education Director at 402-5316.

**Building Based School Support Team (BBSST)** – The BBSST is a school-based problem solving organization whose members may be composed of general educators, counselors, administrators and other individuals as needed. This team meets to discuss issues related to specific needs of teachers and students. **The major functions of the Building Based Student Support Team are to:**

- Meet the needs of general education students who are at risk of academic failure and/or chronic behavior challenges.
- Provide a professional forum for identification of social, academic and emotional needs of students.
- Help the general education teacher document and develop an action plan designed to remediate the referring concern(s) and
- If appropriate, recommend special education referral following six weeks of implementing appropriate interventions and accommodations in the regular classroom setting.

Staff members and parents may make a referral to the BBSST any time throughout the school year. Contact the BBSST facilitator at the school.

## PROGRAMS

All instructional programs support *Alabama Course of Study* standards and align with the Vestavia Hills City Schools Strategic Plan 2007-2012.

### FINE ARTS

**Art** - The art curriculum develops an artistic foundation using the Elements of Art and Principles of Design with an emphasis placed on producing, responding to, and understanding art. A wide variety of developmentally appropriate artistic experiences are based on Art Production, Aesthetics and Art History. The visual arts classroom provides a safe and appropriate learning environment focusing on individual learning styles and opportunities for discovery and exploration. The environment promotes motor skill, cognitive, affective, and sensory development.

**Music** – The music curriculum includes general music. Emphasis is on active involvement in music using various mediums. Musical terms and note reading skill instruction is presented sequentially from Kindergarten through fifth grade.

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE

**Spanish** – Research has shown that young children easily acquire the knowledge and skills needed to enjoy language experiences, which in turn promotes a positive attitude toward the acquisition of a second language. Immediate and long-range benefits such as developing a positive self-image, promoting the understanding and appreciation of other cultures, attaining greater overall academic achievement, and increasing cognitive skills are realized through early language study. The instructional environment for the early childhood foreign languages program is a balanced one that includes opportunities for listening to and speaking languages and for learning about cultures.

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

**English as a Second Language Learners-** Resource assistance is available to students with little or no proficiency in the English language. VHECH has academic resource services for qualifying ESL students and these students are taught by an English as a Second Language Teacher. The classroom teacher and the ESL resource teacher refer students needing this program. When registering your child, be sure to complete a Home Language Survey and return it to the school. Any student who speaks another language at home is automatically screened for ESL service needs. If the student qualifies for services, a service program is set up with the consultation of the parents, ESL teacher and the general education teacher.

**Gifted** – Vestavia Hills City Schools offers a gifted education program for students in grades K-7 and advanced placement courses for grades 8-12, who perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience or environment. Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or any other individuals with knowledge of a student's abilities may refer a student for consideration for gifted services. Referrals should be made to the Gifted Education Teacher at the school. A gifted referral screening committee reviews each referral, determines whether or not to accept the referral and arranges further assessments, if needed. The school follows the eligibility criteria set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education. Students who qualify for gifted education services according to state guidelines, will receive specialized services as written in their gifted Educational Plan (GEP). If you have questions, please contact Linda Brady at 402-5316.

**Programs for Exceptional Children** – The Vestavia Hills City Board of Education is committed through IDEA 2004 to identify, locate, and evaluate children, from birth through age 21, who, regardless of the severity of their disability, need special education and related services. Child Find applies to children who attend public and private schools, including children attending religious schools, elementary and secondary schools located in the Vestavia Hills City School District, and children who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education even though they are advancing from grade to grade. Early Intervention agencies and Public School Special Education Services work closely with community service agencies and parents to locate children with disabilities from birth through age 21. Child Find is a statewide effort by the Alabama Department of Education and the Department of Rehabilitation Services to locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities from birth to age 21. For further information, contact the Director of Exceptional Education at Vestavia Hills Board of Education, 402-5316. You may also contact the State Child Find Agency at 1-800-543-3098 for children ages birth through two years of age.

**Section 504-** is a general education statute that protects students with disabilities from discrimination. These disabilities are physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities. The impairment(s) must adversely affect educational performance and cause the child to be unable to function as an average child in the general population. The school 504 Committee determines eligibility and whether or not accommodations are needed to prevent or eliminate disability-related discrimination. Parent input and physician recommendations are always considered in decision-making.

## **DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION**

**D.A.R.E.** - The Vestavia City Schools are involved in a cooperative effort with the Vestavia Hills Police Department to help reduce substance abuse problems in our community. A trained police officer teaches the "DARE" curriculum to all fifth graders.

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

**The Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program** promotes the success of all students in academics, career exploration and planning and personal/social needs through the school guidance curriculum, individual counseling, responsive services and system support. Collaboration with parents, the community, teachers and administrators promotes success. The school counselor is available to students for confidential individual counseling and small group counseling. Students can be referred by their parents, teachers, administrators or through self-referral. The goal of all counseling and guidance is to help students make healthy choices within the limits of the school community and their family values. If a parent does not wish to consent to their child seeing the school counselor for individual counseling, he or she must present a letter stating this. All counseling is considered confidential, except in cases where there is risk of harm to a child. Parent consultation and referral services are also available. This program was commended by the State Department of Education for successful implementation of the state and national models. For further information, please see the department website or contact the guidance secretary or school counselor directly. (Guidance Counselor telephone number: 402-5485.)

## **MEDIA**

**Library** - The hub of the school is the media center. Students are encouraged to pursue individual interests, discover new ideas through books and use reference sources in print and electronic format. The Media Specialist plans cooperatively with faculty members to implement a viable enrichment program for research and literature appreciation. Information literacy skills and the research process are emphasized including locating, evaluating and using information. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade check out books from the media center for a two-week period. They may return books to the library and check out additional books on a daily basis if necessary. The media center is open from 7:30 AM until 3:15 PM. Parents are also invited to visit the media center and use its resources during the school day. Parent volunteers are always welcome and needed.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**The physical education curriculum** is composed of psychomotor movement and specific skill instruction at all grade levels. Students participate in sports, games, dances, calisthenics and drills. Large group instruction and small group or individualized instruction is utilized daily for each grade level. Much emphasis is placed on helping the children to become physically fit to live a healthy lifestyle. Students in grades 1-5 are given tests to measure fitness. Accountability for student fitness is measured with developmentally appropriate assessments. Physical Education is offered to students daily in compliance with Alabama Code 16-40-1.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

The goal is to seamlessly integrate technology across all content areas to enhance learning. Each classroom is equipped with a ceiling mounted LCD projector, a document camera, a sound enhancement system and 2 desktop computers. Mobile computer labs are available to all classes. The classroom teachers provide computer instruction for the students. The Instructional Technology Specialist (ITS) provides instructional support to both teachers and students.

# PROCEDURES

## APPOINTMENTS

Arrangements for appointments with teachers may be made by leaving a message with school office personnel, sending a note through your child, or emailing your child's teacher. The teacher or staff member with whom you wish to meet will arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Every parent will be offered at least one conference per semester.

## ATTENDANCE:

### \* ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

If a student is absent, the student must bring a written note from the parent or guardian upon returning (if the note is not received within three days of the child's return, the absence is considered unexcused). A child must be in school for at least half of the school day (7:50 – 11:15 am) to be considered present.

The following reasons are considered acceptable explanations for student absences, as recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education and Vestavia Hills City Schools:

1. Illness
2. Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life or health of the student if he/she attended school.
3. Legal quarantine.
4. Death in the immediate family.
5. Emergency conditions as determined by the Superintendent or Principal.
6. Absence with the permission of the principal and consent of the parent, provided however, that such **request shall be required prior to the date of the absence.**

### \* UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absence for any reasons other than those defined above shall be considered unexcused.

**\* MAKE-UP WORK**

Make-up work may be required of students who have excused absences. Arrangements can be made **only** if your child has been absent for 2 days or more and the request must be received by 10 AM. on the date you want to pick-up assignments. Make-up work may be picked up from the office after 2 PM, or taken home by another student designated by the person requesting assignments.

**The following is directly from the Alabama State Board of Education's Administrative Code:**

**290-2-1-.02 Regulations Governing Public Schools**

- (c) **Truancy Definition.** A parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) shall explain in writing the cause of any and every absence of the child not later than three (3) school days following return to school. A failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day he is absent. The child shall also be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based upon the State Department of Education's current School Attendance Manual. Seven unexcused absences within a school year constitute a student being truant for the purpose of filing a petition with the Court. The Interagency Committee on Youth Truancy Task Force recommendations known as the Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program timeline for reporting truancy shall define the truancy status of any student as follows:
- 1. First truancy/unexcused absence (warning)**
    - (i) Parent/guardian shall be notified by the school principal or his/her designee that the student was truant and the date of the truancy.
    - (ii) Parent/guardian shall also be provided with a copy of Alabama's compulsory school attendance laws and advised of the penalties that can be applied and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.
  - 2. No earlier than the fifth unexcused absence (conference).**
    - (i) The parent, guardian, or person having control of the child shall (1) attend a conference with the attendance officer and principal or his/her designee and/or (2) participate in the early warning program provided by the juvenile court.
    - (ii) Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists.
    - (iii) Failure to appear at the school conference and/or to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under Code of Ala. 1975, § 16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.
  - 3. No earlier than the seventh unexcused absence, but within ten (10) school days (court)**
    - (i) File complaint/petition against the child and/or parent/guardian, if appropriate.

**4. Child under probation**

- (i) The school attendance officer should be notified by the juvenile probation officer of all children in the school system under probation supervision by the juvenile court as consistent with state statute, Code of Ala. 1975, § 12-15-100 and 105.
- (ii) Where a child under probation is truant, the school attendance officer should immediately notify the juvenile probation officer.

**5. Any local education agency may adopt a policy more rigorous than the State policy.**

**TARDY**

School attendance is extremely important for academic success and for the development of quality work habits. Getting to school at the proper time is also important. The hours for instruction at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights School are 7:45 AM - 2:35 PM. The front door is open at 7:25 AM. for those students who need to be dropped off early. Students arriving at school **after 7:50 AM** are considered tardy. All students arriving after 7:50 AM must be signed in by their parent or legal guardian. Please do not send your child into the building alone when arriving after 7:50 AM. Parents must go to the office and sign the correct form to check in their child when he/she is late. The student will take the sign-in slip to their teacher after parent/guardian has signed them in. Parents will not go with their child to the classroom, as this disrupts the classroom instruction.

The chart on the following page reflects school procedures for students with excessive tardies and absences in grades K-6.

**CURRENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES  
2008-2009**

<b><u>OFFENSE</u></b> <b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</b>	ALL GRADES PER SCHOOL YEAR
1	The Principal or his/her designee will notify the parent/guardian by telephone or mail that the student was truant and the date of the truancy. Parent/guardian shall also be provided with a copy of Alabama's compulsory school attendance laws and advised of the penalties that can be applied and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.
5	The parent, guardian, or other person having control of the child shall attend a conference with the attendance officer and principal or his/her designee and/or participate in the early warning program provided by juvenile court. Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except, where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists. Failure to appear at the school conference and/or to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under <i>Code of Alabama</i> (1975), 16-28-12(c) (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.
7	The Attendance Officer will file a complaint/petition against the child and/or guardian, if appropriate.

<b><u>OFFENSE</u></b> <b>EXCUSED ABSENCES</b>	GRADES K-8 PER SCHOOL YEAR	HIGH SCHOOL A student will have a total of days they will be permitted to miss during each course before losing credit. This is to include unexcused and excused absences of any type.	
		SEMESTER	YEAR
Parent conference with the Principal requesting a valid doctor's excuse for future absence	10	9	18
The Attendance Officer will verify doctor's excuse with the doctor. Parents will be notified if further action is granted.	15		

<b><u>OFFENSE</u></b> <b>TARDY</b>	GRADES K-12 PER SEMESTER
Principal will contact the parent.	5
Attendance Officer notified for further action, which may include referral to Family Court Early Warning Program.	10

## CHECK OUT

Parents must go to the office and sign the correct form to check out their child. Inform office personnel the student is being checked out. **Office personnel will request a picture identification of the parent/guardian prior to checking out the child.** Office personnel will use the intercom to call the classroom teacher and request the student come to the office. The parent should meet the student in the office.

### Identification

Any time you visit the school for any reason, stop by the office and sign in. Always be prepared to show a picture identification. Our goal is to maintain as safe an environment as possible.

## CANCELLATION/EARLY DISMISSALS/LATE OPENINGS

School may be cancelled or dismissed early due to weather or other emergency conditions. Students and parents are expected to plan in advance for this possibility and discuss what to do and where to go in this type of situation. The decision to cancel school, open late or dismiss early will be determined by the school system's superintendent. Parents should listen to television and radio stations for such announcements. **Remember: please add your carpool driver(s) to your child's check-out list.**

If dangerous weather conditions (snow, icing) or other serious situations develop during school hours and the superintendent has closed school, the automated Rapid Response System will be activated to notify parents. When parents arrive **after the superintendent has closed school**, normal dismissal/carpool rules apply. As always, if the superintendent has not dismissed school, regular checkout procedures apply. *\*See checkout policy.*

- **It is imperative that you keep contact information/numbers updated in the Rapid Response System.**

## CHANGE OF AFTERNOON PLANS

Afternoon plans need to be in place before your child leaves home. If regular afternoon pick-up changes, notify your child's teacher by note or e-mail prior to the day of the change. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE OFFICE WITH CHANGE OF AFTERNOON PLANS, UNLESS IT IS A TRUE EMERGENCY! These messages are difficult to get to teachers and students. Teachers cannot take the "word" of a student that plans have changed. Unless teachers are officially notified, students will be directed to follow regular procedure.

## DRESS CODE

We rely on parents to help their child choose appropriate dress for the school day. Clothing, hairstyles or jewelry that interferes with/or distracts from learning is not permitted. Clothes that are too short, too tight, too revealing or have questionable language cannot be worn. Students may not wear clothing with holes, in a state of disrepair, or cut off without a hem. Students may not wear any footwear that could be a safety concern. Wearing hats inside is not allowed (exceptions will be announced in advance). The administrators will determine the appropriateness of any unique fashion statements, hairstyles, etc. should they arise, and notify the parent/guardian. **Students are more productive when they are modestly and comfortably dressed.**

## ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to attend Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights, a student must reside on a full time basis with a parent or legal guardian in the boundaries of Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights School zone. If at any time during the school year the parent or legal guardian moves outside the limits of the City of Vestavia Hills, the school **MUST** be informed. Arrangements may be made and tuition paid to the school system to allow a student who has moved out of the district to complete the semester at Cahaba Heights.

## ADDRESS & TELEPHONE CHANGES

Changes in your home address or phone number should be reported to the school office immediately. Any cell phone number change or change in your place of employment or employment phone number should also be reported to the school office. We need to be able to reach you in the event of an emergency.

## FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Occasionally when homework, books, lunches or other items are left at home, a parent can bring the item(s) to the office to be delivered to the student by school personnel. The instructional process in the classroom may not be interrupted by parents for the delivery of forgotten items.

## HOMEWORK

Educational research suggests that homework improves the learning process for students. The assigned work guides students to process information using strategies presented in the classroom.

### **We agree with the following guidelines:**

- Time required completing homework assignments should not exceed one hour.
- Class work not completed during the school day will be assigned in addition to homework.
- Homework assignments will be accommodated to meet individual student needs.
- Homework will be evaluated.
- A scheduled time for students to record assignments in their assignment books will occur on a daily basis.
- Every assigned project will be recorded with its due date in the assignment book.

**Parents, check your child's assignment book daily.**

## LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES

Many pieces of clothing are left unclaimed. Items not claimed before the Winter Holidays, or at the end of the school year, will be donated to charity. Check the lost and found for lost belongings. It is a good idea to **label all clothing**. Articles turned in to Lost and Found are placed in a closet in the school office.

## PARTIES

Student birthdays will be celebrated at one time each month. Each classroom will have a room parent who will work with the classroom teacher to be responsible for coordinating the monthly celebrations. Please refer to the Wellness Policy (page 15) for the description of healthy food choices.

**Out of school parties:** Passing out invitations to after school functions, such as birthday parties, is permitted only if every child (boys & girls) in the classroom is invited. We do not encourage early checkout for parties or extravagant means of transporting students to the party site. *Please be sensitive to the feelings of all the students at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights School as you plan celebrations for your child.*

Please do not send gifts such as balloons, flower arrangements, etc. to the school for delivery. This creates a disturbance and distraction, which interferes with the learning environment.

## SNACKS

Children may bring a nutritious snack including water/non-carbonated healthy beverage to school each day.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

On July 12, 2005, the Alabama State Board of Education passed changes directed at improving the health and wellness of the students in all Alabama Schools.

The following will be in effect this school year:

1. No carbonated soft drinks shall be available for sale or free of charge to students at any time during the school day, including drinks for celebrations or parties.
2. All vending machine fronts must display water and/or 100% fruit juice. No sales of any items may occur during meal service times other than the commercially prepared or purchased meals of the Lunchroom.
3. Foods of minimal nutritional value may not be sold or provided free to students during meal service times.
4. Snack items should follow USDA Dietary Guidelines-less than 30 grams of carbohydrates and less than 10% fat grams per serving.
5. Some limited CLASSROOM Birthday Celebrations and Parties shall follow these guidelines (parties should be during snack time and not exceed 30 minutes):
  - \*Student birthdays will be celebrated at one time each month. Each classroom will have a Room Parent who will work with the classroom teacher to be responsible for coordinating the monthly celebrations. Sweet treats for birthday celebrations will be limited to one treat per child (1 cupcake or 1 cookie or consider pudding or jello/fruit.
  - \*Classroom Parties should limit food selections to 1 sweet, 1 salty, fruits/vegetables, and beverage (water, 100% juice, milk). Party favors will be non-edible. Games and activities will be emphasized.
  - \*Other recommendations are:
    - a) Any snacks provided by the school should be within the guidelines of the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Alabama State Department of Education Wellness Policy.
    - b) Food used for instructional purposes such as graphing or sorting should be limited to foods that comply with the current USDA Dietary guidelines for Americans and the Alabama State Department of Education Wellness Policy.
    - c) Pizza, Soda, and other snacks are allowed at after school events (example: Athletic Activities).

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students are expected to participate in the physical education instructional program. If a student is unable to participate, a note from the parent or doctor is needed. Appropriate assignments will be given in place of physical activity. Be sure to speak to the School Nurse if a serious medical problem exists.

## **RADIOS, TAPE PLAYERS, VIDEO GAMES, ELECTRONICS**

Items such as these should not be brought to school. We will not assume responsibility for their loss or damage.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are sent home every nine weeks. The report card is designed to present, as nearly as possible, an accurate picture of how your child is progressing. Interim reports are sent for all students during the middle of each nine-week grading period.

## **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All parents and visitors must report to the office when they arrive at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights School, show picture identification, sign-in, and receive a Visitor's Badge. Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch whenever possible! Please meet your child in the lunchroom after signing in at the school office. Prior arrangements must be made with the teacher if you would like to visit your child's classroom.

## **STUDENT TELEPHONE USE**

Students may use the telephone for emergencies only and they must have the permission of their teacher, the school secretary, or the principal. It should not be used for forgotten homework, lunch money, etc. **Afternoon transportation plans or social plans should be made prior to the child coming to school.** Teachers will not be asked to interrupt instruction to come to the telephone.

## **CELL PHONES**

Students who bring cell phones to school must leave them in their book bags and turned off during school hours.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire, tornado, etc. drills are practiced regularly. Personnel from Vestavia Hills Police Department and Vestavia Hills Fire Department advise the school personnel with drill procedures and regularly inspect the building.

The school has a Safety and Security Plan for emergencies such as fire, bus emergencies, floods, tornadoes, bombs, structure failures, etc. A crisis team is in place to ensure that a safe course of action is taken during any emergency.

## TORNADO PROCEDURES

A Civil Defense Monitoring System provides us with the prevailing weather conditions. Teachers are alerted when we receive a tornado watch signal. The emergency drill is called as soon as the tornado-warning signal is received. Students are directed to the safest areas in the building when a warning is given. When we are alerted to a warning near the end of the school day, it is recommended that parents come into the building for their safety. Students will be dismissed when notification of an all-clear signal is received.

## SCHOOL SAFETY

Safety Patrols assist children when arriving at school and dismissal. Parents and other students are expected to follow their requests regarding safety.

Playground safety is the responsibility of all students. Equipment must be used properly. Safe shoes for running and play should be worn to school. Generally, loose fitting and open sandals are not safe.

Students may not remain on campus after regular school hours unless they are involved in teacher-supervised activities.

## TESTING

The State Writing Assessment is administered to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students in grades 3 through 6 take state-mandated tests, which compares the achievement of Vestavia Hills City Schools against a norm group in the nation.

## TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are the property of the State of Alabama; therefore, the student or parent has the responsibility of paying for lost or damaged books.

## Carpool, Traffic Pattern and Procedures

### Morning

Enter the drive in two (2) lanes, alternate cars to merge into one lane at the playground and follow the drive as far as possible to the upper parking lot. (*Note:* The short driveway to the left will be closed to all traffic.) Loop around and come back down the hill. Students are to be **dropped off in front of the office building only.** For their safety, please do not unload the children on the upper sidewalk, curve, or lower parking lot.

### Afternoon

Enter the drive in the same traffic pattern as morning carpool. Be sure that your carpool number card is hanging from your rearview mirror. Follow the traffic down as far as you can go. Please do not leave gaps between cars. Stay to the right, since pick-up of children will be on the right curb only. The children will come to the cars as the traffic stops in front of the office building. This procedure will allow us to load several cars at the same time. Please leave your number on your mirror until all passengers are safely in your vehicle.

**Please follow carpool procedures during the afternoon pick up process. Everyone is to go through the carpool line. In this way, we can verify that the correct person or persons are picking up your child. (Reminder – dismissal is at 2:35 p.m., and not before)**

## **CARPOOL PROCEDURES AND TRAFFIC PLAN**

For the safety of our students we ask the cooperation of all parents and drivers. The following rules will help to safely expedite traffic:

1. **ALWAYS** display your carpool number, including rainy day carpool.  
(*This number was given out at registration.*)
2. When loading or unloading during carpool, please pull your vehicle down as far as possible so other vehicles may load and unload at the same time.
3. Do not leave your vehicle unattended.
4. Do not block the exit of another parked vehicle.
5. Unload students from the right side of the vehicle so students may walk to the sidewalk without crossing traffic patterns.
6. If students cross traffic, they **must** use the crosswalks. Remind your child/children to look to the right and left before crossing the street. Parents, please set a good example by crossing only at crosswalks.
7. Students must always walk...never run when crossing traffic.
8. Students will not be allowed to walk to their carpool vehicle before it arrives at the designated pick-up point.
9. Please do not arrange off campus carpool pick up. This is dangerous and causes pick up problems.
10. Carpool is a no passing time!
11. All students need to be picked up through the carpool line.

### **Walkers**

Guardians of students who walk home from school must provide written instructions to the classroom teacher. Instructions must include alternate plans in case of inclement weather. These notes will be filed in the school office and with the classroom teacher.

### **Parking on Campus**

While you are visiting us here at Vestavia Hills Elementary Cahaba Heights, we ask that you park only in designated parking spaces. If you are at school between the hours of 8:00 AM. and 1:30 PM, and will be staying for a very short period of time, you may park on the curb in front of the office building. Just remember though, no cars may be parked on any curb area before 8:00 AM or after 1:30 PM.

# STUDENT BEHAVIOR

## **School wide/Classroom**

- All students are responsible for their own behavior.
- All students will respect the rights and property of others.
- Student's inappropriate behavior will not be allowed to interfere with the teaching/learning process.

## **Hall**

- Walk quietly down the right side of the hall.

## **Lunchroom**

- Walk and talk quietly at all times.
- Use good table manners.
- Respect lunchroom personnel.
- Clean up after yourself.

## **Arrival/Dismissal**

- Go directly to assigned area at arrival/dismissal. Students must have a book to read every morning.
- Sit down in designated number area, listen and watch for carpool. Keep all items in book bag.

## **Other School Policies**

- Wearing hats inside is not allowed. (Exceptions will be announced in advance).
- Chewing gum is not allowed.

The desire of this faculty is to work closely with parents to ensure fairness, understanding and consistency. Each student must accept responsibility for his or her own behavior with the full awareness of the consequences.

The Code of Conduct for the Vestavia Hills City Schools is included in this handbook.

**Detention:** Teachers or the principal may keep students before or after school for disciplinary reasons. Parents will be notified by note or telephone on the day prior to the student's detention. The parent is responsible for transportation.

JCAB

## **STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The primary purpose of this procedure is to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of students/parents complaints and grievances.

The resolution of a complaint through free and informal communications as close as possible to the point of origin is encouraged. A student/parent with a complaint shall first take it to the immediate teacher or principal depending on the point of origin.

In the event the complaint cannot be resolved through free and informal communication, a Formal Grievance may be filed by the student/parent. The following steps shall be followed when filing a Formal Grievance.

**LEVEL ONE:** The student/parent filing the grievance shall complete the Vestavia Hills City Schools Grievance Report. The report shall be submitted to the principal. The principal shall conduct an investigation in a timely manner. The principal's decision shall be reduced to writing and presented to the student/parent. In no event, shall an appeal to Level Two be allowed without the involvement of the principal. The principal shall document his/her involvement with the problem.

**LEVEL TWO:** In the event the problem is not resolved at Level One, the student/parent may file an appeal in writing with the Superintendent by completing the Vestavia Hills City Schools Grievance Report. Such appeal shall be presented within ten (10) days of the Level One decision. The Superintendent shall request a conference with the aggrieved or render a written decision within ten (10) days from the receipt of the grievance.

**LEVEL THREE:** In the event the problem is not resolved at Level Two, the student/parent may request the Superintendent to schedule a hearing before the Board. The Board shall issue a decision within thirty (30) days after the hearing.

The aggrieved person may select a representative to accompany him/her, may state the facts in written form and may request a written decision.

For the discussion and consideration of a grievance, time and place will be selected which will not interfere with regular scheduled classes or school related activities. The faculty and administration shall make an honest effort to resolve student/parent grievances as quickly as possible at the most immediate level of supervision.

## Health

### Health Room (Telephone: 402-5484)

The health room is located within the front office. The School Nurse will provide treatment of minor injuries. If your child has or develops a fever or temperature of 100° F or higher, or complains of vomiting and/or diarrhea, you will be contacted to pick up your child from school.

### Illness

Please evaluate your child's complaints before sending him/her to school. Children need to stay at home when they are sick or have a temperature of 100° F or higher. If medication is required at school, please see the School Nurse to facilitate proper authorization for medicine administration.

### Head Lice

When Head Lice are found on a student, the parents are notified and asked to take their child home. The student and the parents are responsible for proper treatment of the lice, which includes using a pediculocide (lice-killing) shampoo or rinse, then careful examination and removal of remaining nits from each hair shaft. The Vestavia City Schools have a nit-free policy. The student may return to class only when school personnel determine that the student is nit-free.

### Medication

There are times when students need medication at school. The School Nurse will gladly assist your child with medication needs, but the following state regulations must be followed:

1. All medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, **MUST** have a signed permission form, entitled **"School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization"**.
2. For prescription medications, a physician signature is also required. **NO PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES MAY BE GIVEN WITHOUT THIS FORM SIGNED BY BOTH PARENT AND PHYSICIAN.** Please take care of this during the summer so that we will be able to give your child's medication on the first day of school. If medication is newly prescribed, please have the form completely filled out and submit with medication to the Nurse.
3. For over-the-counter medications, including cough drops and ointments, a "School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization" form is also needed. However, only the parent's signature is necessary. You must also provide the medication that your child needs to take. **Schools are not allowed to keep stock medicines like Tylenol or Advil. No exceptions can be made. We will NOT administer any medication this year until BOTH signed permission and the accompanying medication are obtained.** Please also indicate the exact conditions under which the medication should be administered to your child, such as for a headache.
4. All medication must be brought in the original container. Prescription medication must be brought in the labeled pharmacy bottle. No medication will be accepted loose in a plastic bag or otherwise unidentifiable.
5. All medication is to be delivered by the parent to the nurse or an adult in the office. **Please do not send medication to the school by your student in a book bag.** We do not want to place your child in the position of being responsible for medication until the appropriate school personnel can take possession of the medication.
6. Controlled medications like Ritalin must be counted when brought to school. Please wait while the nurse or school employee counts the medication.
7. No medication is to be kept by the student. Medication is to be stored in the health room. If your child uses an inhaler for asthma and needs to keep it on his/her person, an additional permission for self-administration is also required. This form also requires a parent and physician signature. This form is available in the health room or the office at each school.
8. Students who require the availability of an Epi-pen for allergic reactions may also keep their medication on person. Both parent and physician must sign the authorization form and give written permission for the Epi-pen to be kept with the student.

This Medication policy has been implemented in order to protect both your children and school staff administering the medication. The goal of the school system regarding the administration of medication during school hours is to assist students in maintaining an optimal state of wellness, thus enhancing the educational experience.

## CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

USDA approved meals are served daily in the school cafeteria. Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their children, **but please do not bring candy, carbonated beverages or any fast food (McDonald's, Taco Bell, pizza, etc.) into the school.**

Meal money will be collected daily by the teacher and sent to the cafeteria where it will be entered into an individual meal account for each student. Any amount can be deposited into your child's account. Any money sent to the cafeteria after 8:30 AM. may not be posted to the student's account until the following day. *Please write the student's meal account I.D. number and name on all payments.*

**Please maintain an adequate amount of money in your child's meal account.** Maintaining money in the meal account helps us to better utilize our time and talent resources to prepare nutritious meals for students rather than concentrating on bookkeeping and accounting details dealing with money collection. **Notices are printed on Monday and are sent home by the teacher on Monday (please check your child's backpack).** Note: PayPams may take 1-2 days to post payment/replenish the student's account balance.

### **On line meal payments**

Parents now have the option of using PayPams, an on-line meal payment and meal account monitoring program. Flyers with instructions for the use of PayPams are available at the school. The web site address is [www.PayPAMS.com](http://www.PayPAMS.com). In order to set up an account, the student's meal account keypad number will be needed.

### **Charged Meal Policy**

Vestavia Hills City Schools Child Nutrition Program expects school meals to be paid for in an efficient manner by pre-payment or by paying during the meal service. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to pay for the meals a child purchases. However, in emergency situations, elementary students will be allowed to charge a maximum of three reimbursable meals. Students will not be allowed to charge any a la carte or extra items at any time.

**Post-dated checks can not be accepted. All checks received will be deposited on the day received.**

### **Returned Check Policy**

Non-sufficient fund checks or account closed checks used for meal payments will automatically be sent to a collection agency by the bank used by the Vestavia Hills Board of Education. Vestavia Hills City Schools may apply fees for uncollected checks. The fees collected for return checks may be used for related expenses and recovery of uncollected checks by Vestavia Hills City Schools or by a contracted agreement with a check collection agency. If two or more non-sufficient fund checks are received from one household, only cash or a money order will be accepted for meal payments.

**Extra Items** are sold to students who wish to purchase them. Fourth and fifth graders have the option of purchasing extras daily. First, second and third graders may purchase extras on Fridays. Parents are encouraged to discuss lunch options with their child as this does affect the lunch account balance.

All **unused balances** will roll over to the next school year. Account balances of fifth graders will be transferred to Liberty Park Middle School.

### **Student Withdrawals:**

Parents will need to send a written request to the cafeteria in order to receive a refund for meal account balances for any student withdrawing from the Vestavia Hills school system. This request should include the parent's name and address for check writing and mailing purposes. This request along with a computerized printout of the student's account is sent to the Central Office for processing and mailing. All balances above \$5.00 will be refunded upon request. If a refund request is not received, monies remaining will be considered as a donation to the Child Nutrition Program.

Students may purchase or bring any part or all of their lunch. The following price list will help parents monitor what their child is eating and spending. **We encourage students to purchase a Vestavia Meal Deal which includes an entrée, two vegetables, bread, 8oz. milk, fruit/dessert for \$2.00 (K-3) \$2.50 (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>).**

## CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM PRICE LIST

Meal Prices:	<u>Lunch</u>	<u>Reduced Lunch</u>	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Reduced Breakfast</u>
Student K-3	\$2.00	\$0.40	\$1.50	\$0.30
Student 4-12	\$2.50	\$0.40	\$1.50	\$0.30
Fac/Staff	\$3.00		\$2.00	
Visitor	\$4.00		\$3.00	

**Vestavia Meal Deal includes:** One Entrée, two veggies, one fruit/dessert, one bread, and 8 oz milk  
**(\*\*One extra entrée purchased with Meal Deal: \$1.75)**

<b>**Entrée</b>	\$2.50		
Meat	\$2.50	Crackers Saltine (pk)	\$0.10
Pizza (slice)	\$2.50	Crackers Specialty (pk)	\$0.10
Corndog/Hotdog	\$2.50	Ketchup (pack)	\$0.10
Hot Pocket	\$2.50	Mustard (pack)	\$0.10
Sandwich	\$2.50	Mayonnaise (pack)	\$0.10
Chicken Fingers (2)	\$2.50	Honey Mustard (pack)	\$0.25
Chicken Fingers (Each)	\$1.25	Cookie, each small	\$0.75
		Chips, baked small	\$0.75
Vegetable	\$0.75		
Fruit	\$0.75	Extra Cheese	\$0.25
Bread	\$0.50	Cup of Ice	\$0.25
Dessert	\$1.25	Carry Out Container	\$0.25
Potato, Baked w/topping	\$2.50		
Fries, 3 oz	\$1.50		
Soup	\$2.50		
Milk (8 oz)	\$0.50		
Bottled Beverage	\$1.25		
Slush 12 oz	\$1.50		
Slush 8 oz	\$1.00		

\* Items and prices are subject to change.

Please contact the Child Nutrition Program manager (402-5487) if you have any questions concerning the cafeteria or your child's account.

### *How To Meet The Nutrition Needs Of The Student With A chronic Medical Condition*

\* A written order (diet prescription) is required from a recognized medical authority for any student who has special dietary needs such as those who are lactose (milk) intolerant, those who have cystic fibrosis or diabetes, those who need their meals mechanically altered (pureed or chopped), those with specific allergies, etc. Please advise CNP Manager.

## **Policies from Vestavia Hills City Schools Board Policy Manual**

(A copy is available in the office.)

JDEA

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **CLASSIFICATION OF VIOLATIONS**

The School's primary goal is to educate. Not discipline. However, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions are necessary for the benefit of the individual and of the school.

#### **PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS:**

Instruction should occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Effective instruction requires good order and discipline, which may be described as the absence of distraction, friction and disturbances which interfere with the effective functioning of the student, class, and school.

We believe that every student is entitled to an education, which shall be offered in an orderly, healthy atmosphere, and to firm, fair treatment in all matters pertaining to school life.

We further believe that every student shall comply with all rules and regulations having to do with behavior established by the State and the Vestavia Hills Board of Education. In a democracy there exists many privileges and freedoms, all of which are dependent upon adherence to certain rules and regulations. It should be made very clear that any student, by his own failure to comply with school regulations, may lose his right to a public education.

As students progress in our public schools, it is reasonable to assume that an increase in age and maturity will result in the student assuming greater responsibility for their actions. It is recognized that differences in age and maturity require different types of disciplinary implementation; however, these general rules and regulations shall apply to all students in grades K-12.

Violations of the **Code of Student Conduct** are grouped into three (3) classes – minor, intermediate and major and are applicable to all elementary (K-5) and secondary (6-12) students of the School System. Before determining the classification of violation, the principal or his/her designee will consult with the involved student(s) and school personnel. Once the classification of the violation is determined, the principal or his/her designee will implement the disciplinary procedure.

Each classroom teacher will deal with General classroom disruption by taking in-class disciplinary action, by telephoning the parent(s) or guardian(s) when feasible, and/or by scheduling conferences with the parent(s) or guardian(s) and other school staff. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective, or the disruption is severe, should the student be referred to the principal or his/her designee. Failure to bring notebook, pencil, homework; or failure to do work in class are not cause for disciplinary referrals, however, defiance of a teacher in regard to these areas is cause for discipline referral. Parents or guardians should be notified by the teacher of students who consistently exhibit poor work habits, and/or these students should be referred to a guidance counselor. The following provides a description of disciplinary problems which may occur and administrative options which may be taken by school officials:

#### ***MINOR OFFENSES - CLASS I***

- 1.01 Excessive distraction of other students.** Any conduct and/or behavior which is disruptive to the orderly education process in the classroom or any other students. Examples: talking excessively, interrupting class functions, chewing gum, provoking other students.

- 1.02 **Minor intimidation/harassment of a student.**
- 1.03 **Participation in games of chance for minor sums of money and/or other things of little value.**
- 1.04 **Excessive tardiness.** Repeatedly reporting late to school or class.
- 1.05 **Unintentional and/or non-directed use of profane or obscene language.**
- 1.06 **Non-conformity to dress code.** (See File JCDB)
- 1.07 **Minor disruption on a school bus.**
- 1.08 **Inappropriate public display of affection.** Including, but not limited to embracing and kissing.
- 1.09 **Unauthorized absence from class or classes.**
- 1.10 **Continued refusal to complete class assignments.**
- 1.11 **Failure to follow instructions. Examples:** Failure to carry correspondence home, failure to obey directions in the hallways, assemblies, etc.
- 1.12 **Unauthorized use of school or personal property.**
- 1.13 **Littering or defacing school property.**
- 1.14 **Drop out policy.** A state drop out policy with regard to unexcused absences went into effect in the 1993-94 school year.
- 1.15 **Violation of local school rules and regulations regarding the use of electronic communication devices as defined in BOE Policy JCDBA.**
- 1.16 **Any other violation which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances.**

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS – CLASS I  
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS (Grades K-5)**

***ADMINISTRATIVE OPTIONS***

1. In school conference and parental contact when granted in the opinion of the principal.
2. Parental contact and disciplinary action.
3. In-school disciplinary action such as probation, detention.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS – CLASS I**

**SECONDARY STUDENTS (Grade 6-12)**

***ADMINISTRATIVE OPTIONS***

1. In-school conference and parental or guardian contacts when warranted in the opinion of the principal. Special circumstances may warrant disciplinary action as outlined under subsequent offenses.
2. In-school disciplinary action such as probation, detention, completion of extra academic assignments, non-academic work assignments (either before or after school with parental consent), Saturday School, in-school suspension, or suspension at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee.
3. Detention time for each school year is at the discretion of the principal.

\*Class I Violations may warrant police contact.

## INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES – CLASS II

- 2.01 Use of obscene manifestation (verbal, written, gesture) directed towards another person.**
- 2.02 Leaving class or campus without permission.**
- 2.03 Unsolicited written or verbal proposition to engage in sexual acts.**
- 2.04 Gambling.** The intentional, unlawful participation in gambling activities involving amount of more than \$100.00.
- 2.05 Open defiance of a teacher or School Board employee.** Any verbal or non-verbal refusal to comply with a lawful direction or order of a School Board employee.
- 2.06 Unauthorized access to a computer system or knowledge of restricted computer passwords.**
- 2.07 Indirect Threats.** The indirect intentional, threat by word or act to do violence to another student, coupled with an apparent ability to do so, or the doing of some act which creates a well-founded fear in the person that such harm is likely.
- 2.08 Verbal Abuse.** Speech or other expression intended to insult or stigmatize others on the basis of their sex, race, color, handicap, religion, sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin.
- 2.09 Possession of a Pocketknife (small or key chain variety), or similar instruments that would not normally be considered a weapon (see Class III Offense).**
- 2.10 Possession of firearm facsimiles.** Discharge, possession, transfer, or sale of any facsimile or toy-type replica of a firearm or any other item resembling a firearm.
- 2.11 Disrespect to a School Board employee.** Any verbal or nonverbal conduct and/or behavior directed toward a School Board employee that is rude or discourteous.
- 2.12 Possession of fireworks, firecrackers, or stink bombs.**
- 2.13 Possession of obscene, pornographic, or sexually explicit material.**
- 2.14 Illegal Organization.** Any on campus fraternities, sororities, secret sororities or non-school affiliated school clubs.
- 2.15 Intentionally providing false information to a School Board employee.** Intentionally providing false information to a School Board employee including giving false student information, data, and concealment of information directly relating to school business. This includes but is not limited to forgery of any school document, parent or guardian notes, or other related material.
- 2.16 Possession and/or use of tobacco products including lighters and matches.** This is applicable to grades K-12. See Policy JCDA.
- 2.17 Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system or fire extinguisher.** Unjustified activation of a fire extinguisher.
- 2.18 Fighting-any physical conflict between two or more individuals.**
- 2.19 Assault and battery upon students.** Actually and intentionally touching or striking another student against the will of the other.
- 2.20 Trespassing.** Willfully entering or roaming in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized.
- 2.21 Vandalism.** Intentionally doing some act that results in injury or damaging by means of real, personal, or public property belonging to another.
- 2.22 Stealing-Larceny.** The intentional unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property valued less than \$100.00, or possession of stolen property with the knowledge it is stolen.
- 2.23 Extortion.** Verbally or by a written or printed communication, maliciously threatening to accuse another of any crime or offense.
- 2.24 Inciting student disorder and/or malicious mischief.**
- 2.25 Cheating.** The use or attempted use of any deceptive or dishonest method of improving a grade.
- 2.26 Violations of parking rules.** This is applicable to grades 9-12.
- 2.27 Any other offense which the principal may reasonably deem to fall into this category.**

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION/INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES – \*CLASS II  
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS (K-5)**

***Administration Options***

1. Parental or guardian contact.
2. Any or all disciplinary options so may be applied.
3. Suspension for one to five days.
4. Suspension from six to ten days with the approval of the Superintendent
5. Recommendation for referral to an Alternative School.
6. Recommendation for expulsion.

\* Class II Violations may warrant police contact.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION/INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES - \*CLASS II  
SECONDARY STUDENTS (6-12)**

***Administration Options***

1. Parental or guardian contact and disciplinary action.
2. Suspension for one to five days.
3. Suspension from six to ten days with the approval of the Superintendent.
4. Recommendation for referral to an Alternative School.
5. Recommendation for expulsion.

\* Class II Violations may warrant police contact.

**MAJOR OFFENSES – CLASS III**

- 3.01 Stealing- Larceny – Grand Theft.** – The intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at \$100.00 or more belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.
- 3.02 Drugs.** Unauthorized possession, use, transfer, sale of, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The possession of drug paraphernalia is also included.
- 3.03 Illegal school entry or Burglary of school property.** Entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense therein during the hours the premises are closed to the public.
- 3.04 Criminal mischief.** Willful and malicious injury or damages at or in excess of \$200.00 to public property, or to real or personal property belonging to another.
- 3.05 Sexual acts.** Acts of a sexual nature including, but not limited to battery, intercourse, indecent exposure, attempted rape, or rape.
- 3.06 Aggravated battery.** Intentionally causing bodily harm, disability or permanent disfigurement; use of a deadly weapon.
- 3.07 Inciting, promoting publicizing, or participating in major student disorder.** Leading, encouraging, or assisting in (major) disruptions, which result in destruction or damage of private or public property or personal injury to participants or other.

**3.08 Offensive touching of another person.**

**3.09 Possession by student of deadly weapon or firearm in a school building, on school grounds, on school buses, or at other school sponsored functions.** Any student who is determined by the Board of Education (a) to have brought a deadly weapon or firearm to school; or (b) to have had a deadly weapon or firearm in his/her possession in a school building, on school grounds, on a school bus or on a school sponsored function shall be expelled from school for a period of at least one year.

The term "deadly weapon" as used in this policy means a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made or adapted for the purposes of inflicting death or serious physical injury, and such term includes, but is not limited to, a bazooka, hand grenade, missile or explosive or incendiary device; a pistol, rifle or shotgun; or a switch-blade knife, gravity knife, stiletto, sword or dagger; or any club, baton, billy, block-jack, bludgeon or metal knuckles.

For purposes of this policy, the term "firearm" shall mean:

1. Any weapon (including a starter gun), which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
2. The frame or receiver or any weapon;
3. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
4. Any destructive device, including explosives.

**3.10 Direct threats.** The direct, intentional threat by word or act to do violence to another student, coupled with an apparent ability to do so, or the doing of some act which creates a well-founded fear in the person that such violence is imminent.

**3.11 Weapons.** Possession of a knife, gun of any kind, or other object as defined by state law to be a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument or the possession of a knife or other object which is used in a threatening manner and is perceived by the individual being threatened as capable of inflicting physical harm.

**3.12 Possession of prohibited objects.** Possession of any switchblade, metallic knuckles, tear gas gun, chemical weapon or device, martial arts weapon, or any other similar object.

**3.13 Terrorist threat.** A person commits the crime of making a terrorist threat when he/she threatens by any means to commit any crime of violence or to damage any property by doing any of the following:

1. Intentionally or recklessly:
  - a. Terrorizing another person.
  - b. Causing the disruption of school activities.
  - c. Causing the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or facility of public transportation, or other serious public inconvenience.

An objective standard governs whether a statement is a threat falling outside first amendment protection, that is: "Whether a reasonable person would foresee that the statement would be interpreted by those to whom the maker communicates the statement as a serious expression of intent to harm or assault". Accordingly, alleged threats should be considered in light of their entire factual context, including the surrounding events and the reaction of the listener.

The ordinary, reasonable and prudent person considers a threat to be an expression of an intention to inflict evil or injury, on another. Therefore, under this policy, a statement of threat, even if made in jest, may constitute a violation of this policy. Examples specifically include, but are not limited to, statements such as "I am going to blow up this school", "I will shoot you", "I am going to cut you with a knife", or simply "I am going to beat you up".

**3.14 Bomb threats.** Any such communication(s) which has the effect of interrupting the educational environment.

**3.15 Explosives.** Preparing, possessing or igniting on School Board property, explosives (including live projectiles), which have the potential to cause serious bodily injury or property damage.

**3.16 Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct or communication is made a term or condition (either explicitly or implicitly) of employment, educational opportunity or other benefits provided by the school system;

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the individual's employment, educational opportunities, or other benefits provided by the school system; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, learning or educational environment.

Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment, depending on individual circumstances;

1. Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, including graphic comments, the display of sexually suggestive objects or picture, and sexual propositions;
2. Repeated unwelcome solicitation of sexual activity or sexual contact;
3. Unwelcome, inappropriate sexual touching;
4. Demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats with regard to an individual's employment or educational status.

Any violation of Sexual Harassment Policy JN shall be deemed to be a violation of this Policy JDEA.

**3.17 Sabotage of a computer or computer system which results in, but is not limited to the following:**

- a. Unauthorized access to a computer system resulting in data modification or disclosure of restricted information.
- b. Computer tampering which causes a major disruption in the educational process. The student must also pay restitution for the cost of repairs.
- c. Distribution of restricted computer passwords.
- d. Introduction of unauthorized software into computer system.

**3.18 Unjustified activation of a fire alarm system. (See Terrorists Threats)**

**3.19 Igniting fireworks, firecrackers, or activating stink bombs.**

**3.20 Multiple Class II Offenses.**

**3.21 Imitation of controlled substances.** – Unauthorized possession, transfer, use or sale of a substance other than a drug, which by dosage unit, appearance (including color, size, shape and/or markings) and/or by representations made, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance.

**3.22 Other Class III Violations.** The Legislature of the State of Alabama has found a compelling public interest in ensuring that schools are made safe and drug-free for all students and school employees. The Legislature found the need for a comprehensive safe school and drug-free school policy to be adopted by the State Board of Education and all 128 City and County school boards in Alabama. All of said school systems are required to modify their policies, practices or procedures so as to ensure a safe school environment free of illegal drugs, alcohol or weapons. The Legislature has enacted the following laws relative to school safety and student discipline which are set forth in the Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended:

- Title 16 1-24.1
- Title 16 1-24.3
- Title 16 1 24
- Title 13A-10-15
- Title 13A-8-71

Copies of the five statutes enumerated above are attached hereto, marked as Exhibits A, B, C, D, and E and are incorporated into this Policy JDEA by reference as though set out fully herein.

Anything contained in this Policy JDEA to the contrary notwithstanding, any student found to be in violation of any provision of the laws designated as Exhibits A, B, C, D, and E shall be considered to have committed a Class III offense in violation of this policy and shall be disciplined accordingly.

**3.23 Any other offense which the principal may deem reasonable to fall within this category after consideration of extenuating circumstances.**

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION/MAJOR OFFENSES – \*CLASS III  
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS (K-5) SECONDARY STUDENT (6-12)**

The disciplinary action for such offenses will be suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion by the principal as authorized in the procedures previously stated.

**Administrative Options:**

1. Suspension for up to ten (10) days with the approval of the Superintendent and/or recommendation for expulsion with parent contact and conference.
2. Recommendation for referral to an Alternative School with the approval of the principal or superintendent.
3. Recommendation for expulsion.

\* Class III Violations may warrant police contact.

**General Conduct at School:**

All students within the Vestavia Hills School District are charged with the responsibility of conducting themselves in a manner consistent with good citizenship. Students are expected to respect themselves, to respect others and to respect property.

According to legal rulings, students may be disciplined for offenses such as those listed above in the Policy JDEA not only when they occur during the school day on school premises, but also when they occur off campus during school-sponsored activities or school related functions. Students who threaten school employees or damage employees' property away from the school are also subject to disciplinary action.

**RECEIPT OF COPY OF POLICY JDEA**

The Board shall provide at the commencement of each academic year a copy of this policy to all teachers, staff, parents and students. The signature of the student and parents shall document receipt of this policy on a receipt form to be provided by the Board.

**CONCLUSION**

It is the finding of the Alabama Legislature that the people of Alabama have two basic expectations of their public schools: (1) that students be allowed to learn in a safe classroom setting where order and discipline are maintained; and (2) that students learn at the level of their capabilities and achieve accordingly. The Legislature finds further that every child in Alabama is entitled to have access to a program of instruction which gives him or her the right to learn in a non-disruptive environment. No student has a right to be unruly in his or her classroom to the extent that such disruption denies fellow students of their right to learn. The teacher in each classroom is expected to maintain order and discipline. Teachers are hereby given the authority and responsibility to use appropriate means of discipline as may be prescribed by the local Board of Education. So long as teachers follow approved policy in the exercise of their responsibility to maintain discipline in their classroom, such teacher shall be immune from civil or criminal liability. (Title 16-28A(1), Code of Alabama, 1975)

## **SEVERABILITY**

If any part, section or subdivision of this Policy JDEA shall be held unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such holding shall not be construed to invalidate or impair the remainder of this policy, which shall continue in full force and effect notwithstanding such holding.

**SOURCE:** Vestavia Hills City Board of Education, Vestavia Hills, AL

**REVISED:** Revised June 27, 2007. Revised July, 2003. Adopted May 27, 2002.