

RIVER VALLEY ELEMENTARY K - 5TH GRADE HANDBOOK 2018-2019

**RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
15480 Three Oaks Road
Three Oaks, MI 49128
269-756-9541 or 269-426-4415
Fax: 269-756-6631**

**CHIKAMING CAMPUS
PreSchool– 2nd grade
13742 Three Oaks Road
Sawyer, MI 49125
426-4204
Fax: 269-426-8491**

**THREE OAKS CAMPUS
3rd – 5th grades
100 Oak Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128
756-9050
Fax: 269-756-1420**

Website: www.rivervalleyschools.org

**DO YOUR BEST
CARE FOR OTHERS
LOVE YOUR SCHOOL!**

NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The River Valley School District Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity or access to the District's programs, activities, or services may contact the District's "Compliance Officers": Mrs. Heidi Clark, Elementary Principal (extensions 1601/1701) or Mr. Patrick Breen, Middle/High School Principal (extension 1032), 15480 Three Oaks Road, Three Oaks, MI 49128, [269-756-9541](tel:269-756-9541).

FOREWORD

River Valley Elementary Schools at Chikaming and Three Oaks exist for the purpose of educating your children. We are proud of our educational programs and the excellent teaching staff that guide your children in the teaching/learning process. Believing that all children can learn, the elementary staff is dedicated to meeting the educational needs of each and every one of our students.

To a large degree, educational excellence depends upon the habits; attitudes and behaviors children have developed at home. We sincerely appreciate your efforts in providing us with the best students possible.

This handbook is designed to provide you with some basic information about the laws, rules, policies and procedures under which the River Valley Elementary Schools operate. We hope it answers some of the basic questions you may have. If you have additional concerns or questions the handbook doesn't answer or if an interpretation is needed, please do not hesitate to contact your school.

RV Elementary also publishes a weekly newsletter called "Hoofbeats" that is available electronically. To sign up to receive the newsletter, either visit our website to find the link or contact one of the school offices. The newsletter also can be found on our website. They often contain more timely and specific information about school activities, policies and operations. You can also find great information and helpful resources on our website, www.rivervalleyschools.org.

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RIVER VALLEY TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND EXTENSIONS

Central Office/Main Switchboard

269-426-4415 or 269-756-9541

Fax number 269-756-6631

www.rivervalleyschools.org

Three Oaks Campus
Chikaming Campus

Phone: 756-9050
Phone: 426-4204

Fax: 756-1420
Fax: 426-8491

NOTE: When in doubt about a particular starting point for a question or concern, contact the building principal for direction. For most inquiries, begin contact at the level or person where the question or concern was initiated.

First Stage - Teacher - Questions or concerns regarding instructional practices in your child's classroom should first be directed to your child's teacher.

Second Stage - Building Principal - If more information is needed or you still have questions and/or concerns, a discussion should be scheduled with your child's principal. Note: At the secondary level, you may also want to contact your child's counselor.

Third Stage – Superintendent or Designee - A conference with the Superintendent of Schools is most appropriately scheduled if questions or concerns have not been adequately addressed at earlier levels.

Fourth Stage – Board of Education - The last level of contact with the district about a question or concern is the Board of Education.

The mission of River Valley School District is quality education.

River Valley Vision

The River Valley School District will:

- *become an exemplary learning community that supports innovation and is committed to continuous improvement*
- *be a place where a collaborative community develops curriculum, instructional strategies and assessment to ensure all students learn*
- *address the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of its learners*
- *prepare all students for college and career achievement through a high-quality career/technical education and college-preparatory academic core*

To reach our goal, we will increase the percentages of elementary, middle and high school students who perform at the proficient levels in core academic subjects, as measured by the MEAP, ACT and/or SAT. Administrators and staff will impact student achievement by implementing eight Key Practices that provide direction and meaning to comprehensive school improvement.

The Key Practices are:

1. ***High Expectations:*** Set higher expectations and help all students meet them.
2. ***Middle Grades Academics:*** Guide middle grades students in completing an academic core that accelerates their learning, challenges them to achieve at higher levels and appeals to their interests.
3. ***Career/Technical Studies.*** Provide opportunities for middle grades and high school students to engage in career/technical studies and to use technology in academic courses.
4. ***Students Actively Engaged:*** Provide varied learning activities to help middle grades and high school students link challenging academic content to real-world applications.
5. ***Teachers Working Together:*** Provide all teachers time to work together to plan, develop and conduct high-quality learning experiences and to share student work that meets standards.
6. ***Guidance:*** Base guidance activities on the belief that all students matter and that they need long-term, personal relationships with adults at the school who will work with them and their parents to set learning goals and to make plans for further education and careers.
7. ***Extra Help:*** Provide a structured system of extra help and quality time that will enable middle grades and high school students to complete an accelerated program of study and to meet rigorous and consistent standards.
8. ***Data:*** Use data on student achievement and school and classroom practices to revise curriculum and instructional strategies.

DESIRED STUDENT OUTCOMES

The goal of education is to provide all learners with a solid foundation of skills, knowledge, and understandings that are necessary for their continual growth and success as students within the school setting, and as adults in society. As a result of a sound K-12 education, based on well-defined educational outcomes, River Valley Graduates will be:

Responsible Citizens who:

- Contribute to improve the welfare of the community and the environment.
- Demonstrate responsibility for self.
- Respect others and their property.

Productive Team Members who:

- Share ideas.
- Solve problems.
- Work cooperatively together.

Critical Thinkers who:

- Demonstrate skills learned from the River Valley core curriculum.
- Use a variety of methods in the decision making process.
- Develop and complete a plan of action.

Self-Directed Learners who:

- Read for personal gain or enjoyment.
- Extend learning beyond the required.
- Have a vision for their future.

Effective Communicators who:

- Listen objectively.
- Express thoughts, ideas, and feelings appropriately to all audiences in written, oral, and nonverbal forms.

REGISTRATION

Michigan law states that a student must be five years of age on or before September 1st to begin school. Our preschool program welcomes applications from children who are four years of age on or before September 1st.

All students must be registered each year. New students must register and complete all enrollment and transfer of record forms in the building in their attendance area before they can begin school. Returning students will receive the enrollment forms on Back to School Night or on the first day of school. Please return your enrollment forms to ensure current information is in student records.

RESIDENCY POLICY

Parents are required to provide accurate and current information regarding residency and to notify the school district promptly upon any change of residency. River Valley welcomes applicants from non-resident students to participate in its educational program. School of Choice applications for grades K-12 may be obtained by contacting any school office.

IMMUNIZATION LAW & RECORDS

It is required by law that all students be immunized before entering school. You are required to provide the school with a record of your child's immunizations. If your child is not properly immunized, by state law, he/she could be excluded from school. This protects your child as well as other children.

The school is charged with keeping an up-to-date health record for all students.

Parents of first time students are to make certain that the needed immunization records are completed and returned to the school. Michigan Law requires that all Michigan students at the time of enrolling in any public school in Michigan for the first time shall submit an immunization record signed that shows the child has been properly immunized. All students must have up-to-date immunizations or they may be excluded from school.

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TO AND FROM SCHOOL

RV Elementary start times will be staggered. The Chikaming campus will begin their day at 7:45 am and the Three Oaks campus will begin their day at 7:55 am. Please plan with your children, if they walk to school, or if they are dropped off by car, so that they will not arrive more than fifteen minutes before the start of the school day. In extremely inclement weather, children will be permitted to wait in the building until school begins.

School end times will also be staggered. The Chikaming campus will be dismissed at 2:45 pm and the Three Oaks campus will be dismissed at 2:55pm.

All students should be out of the building and on their way home no later than ten minutes after school is out. Parents should encourage their children to leave the school grounds promptly at the end of the school day and to go directly home.

****Any changes in how students are returning home should be shared with the school office as soon as possible to ensure teachers and bus drivers receive the information in a timely manner.**

ATTENDANCE

State law requires attendance in school. Section 731 of the Michigan General School Law reads, "Every parent, guardian or other person in the State of Michigan, having control and charge of any child between the ages of six and sixteen years of age shall be required to send such a child to the public schools during the entire school year, and such attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the district in which such a child is enrolled."

Apart from matters of law, regular attendance is necessary for normal progress in learning. Much of today's schoolwork requires being present for presentations, discussions, and cooperative groupings; the use of hands-on materials in labs etc.; and the use of resources including computers and other technology. Most of the teaching/learning that takes place in schools today cannot be "made-up" as homework.

RV Elementary Attendance Procedures

1. Families are expected to call the school to notify office staff of the absence and the reason for absence.
2. Students are to arrive by 7:45 am at the Chikaming campus (7:55-8:19 arrivals are considered TARDY) and 7:55 am at the Three Oaks campus (8:05-8:29 arrivals are considered TARDY). Every five tardies is equivalent to one absence. If students arrive more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early, it is considered ½ day absence.

3. When a child has accumulated 5 absences (or the equivalent in tardies) a letter of warning will be sent in the mail to the family, notifying them that attendance is a concern.
4. At the mark of a 10th absence families will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal and teacher to discuss absences and develop a plan to ensure improvement in attendance. Notes from the doctor don't excuse the absence, but they should be turned in to the school office.
5. At the mark of the 15th absence the Principal will report the child to the truancy officer for an attendance problem.

Exempt Absences:

- Long-term medical leave or chronic medical condition with documentation
- Religious observance
- Direct family funeral leave (contact building administrator)
- Court appearances

MAKING UP WORK AFTER AN ABSENCE

When a student is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange make-up work with the teacher. Make-up work may need to be scheduled outside the student's regular class hours. Classroom teachers will provide the students with make-up procedures at the beginning of the school year.

A student has two (2) days to make up work for each day of absence. A teacher may extend the make-up period depending upon the difficulty of the assignment.

We support Healthy Choices and work to build awareness and appreciation for healthy living, in part, because we believe school attendance is critical to every child's success. Good hygiene and hand washing habits, getting plenty of rest and physical activity, drinking lots of water, and making healthy food choices leads to better overall health – and better school attendance.

DEFINITION OF TRUANCY

A pattern of absences, as defined above, that is established by a student during the school year or a continuation of an attendance problem from past years will result in a referral to the Berrien County Truancy Officer and legal action may be taken.

DETENTION

If it is necessary to keep a student after school for disciplinary action, the parents will be notified by a telephone call and/or a note from the teacher to determine whether the child is to be detained that day or the following day. Detentions may also be given in the morning before school starts. Whenever possible, a detention will be served the same day as the disciplinary infraction.

RECESS

Each school has regularly scheduled recesses with appropriate playground behavior rules and consequences. Rough play, fighting, profane language, disrespect toward adult supervisors and potentially dangerous articles are prohibited. A teacher or playground supervisor is present on the playground at all times to supervise the activities of the children.

STUDENT RELEASE (DURING SCHOOL HOURS)

Any student leaving during school hours for doctor or dentist appointments, or because of illness, will be required to be signed out by a parent or designee through the principal's office only. Please do not go directly to your child's classroom. Your child will either be in the office waiting for you or you will be given a pass to get your child. This procedure will guarantee the accountability of all children during the regular school day. Students returning to school must sign-in at the office and receive a pass to return to class.

POWER ANNOUNCEMENT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS OR DELAYS)

River Valley School district is equipped with SchoolMessenger, a notification system that allows us to send out mass messages to your home phone, cell phone, and email address. We also have the capability of including your emergency contacts, including your child's daycare provider. To create or update your profile, please find information in your registration packet, call the school office, or go to www.rivervalleyschools.org.

In addition to the alert notification, school closings or delays are called to the area radio and television stations. Please tune in WHFB, WSBT, WNIL, WNDU, or WIMS for any announcements. At times, when a decision is made to close the schools the night before, the stations are called. Please do not call the schools. Our telephones are used for emergency information only. Thank you.

WHFB - Benton Harbor AM 1060, FM 99.9; begins at 5:00 a.m.

WSBT - South Bend AM 96.0, FM 100; begins at 5:00 a.m.

WIMS - Michigan City AM 1420; begins at 5:45 a.m.

WNIL - Niles AM 1290, FM 95.3; begins at 5:30 a.m.

WNDU - South Bend FM 93; begins at 5:30 a.m.

TV - Channel 16 & 22

Internet: www.cancellations.com

TELEPHONES

Students are allowed to use school phone in cases of emergency only. Parents should call their child at school only in cases of emergency.

RIGHTS TO ACCESS AND PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("adult students" or "eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. On December 15, 2014, the Board of Education adopted a policy regarding the disclosure of education records and the rights of parents and students to access education records. Copies of this policy and related guidelines are located in all school buildings and individual copies are available from the District's Records Officer ("DRO"). The DRO is responsible for the supervision of student records in the school and her office is located at Chikaming or Three Oaks Elementary or she can be reached by calling Chikaming at 426-4204 or Three Oaks at 756-9050.

Each student's records will be kept in a confidential file located at the student's school office. The information in a student's record file will be available for review only by the parents or legal guardian of a student, an adult student and those authorized by State and Federal law and Board policy/guidelines. State and Federal law permits access by school officials who have a legitimate educational purpose. School officials for purpose of the Board's policy include a person employed by the Board as an administrator, supervisor, teacher/instructor (including substitutes), or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the Board has contracted to

perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, insurance carrier or medical consultant); a contractor, consultant, volunteer or other party to whom the Board had outsourced a service otherwise performed by Board employees (e.g. a therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks (including volunteers). An individual will have a "legitimate educational purpose" if the record is necessary in order for the school official/employee to perform an administrative, supervisory, or instructional task, or to perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family.

In addition to school officials with a legitimate educational purpose, the Board may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- A. to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.34.
- B. to authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the Michigan Department of Education. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of personally identifiable information to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.
- C. in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- D. to organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (1) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (2) administer student aid programs; or (3) improve instruction.
- E. to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- F. to parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- G. to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- H. to State and local officials or authorities in the juvenile justice system as it pertains to the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, upon certification that the information will not be unlawfully released to third parties.
- I. to appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- J. information the school has designated as "directory information," as defined below, and subject to the restrictions explained below.

A parent or adult student has the right to:

- A. inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days after the School receives a request for access or within such shorter period as may be applicable to students with disabilities. The School has a form that can be used to submit such a request. The Custodian of Records ("COR") (building principal) will notify the parent or adult student of the time and place where the records can be inspected. Parents and adult students are not permitted to inspect and review the education records of other students. If there is a valid reason why a parent or adult student cannot personally inspect and review a student's education records, or if the parent or adult student specifically requests copies of education records, the COR may arrange for copies of the requested records to be delivered to the parent or adult student directly. The Board may charge a reasonable fee for the copying of records, which may be waived under circumstances of unusual hardship.
- B. request the amendment of the student's education records if the parent or adult student believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents or adult students who believe that a change is necessary should ask the COR to correct the record. Such a request should be made in writing and should identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the record is not changed to the parent's or adult student's satisfaction or if the COR informs the parent or adult student that the record does not appear to be misleading, inaccurate, or in violation of any privacy right, the parent or adult student will be informed of his/her right to request a hearing. The parent or adult student may submit a written request for a hearing. The hearing will be conducted by a hearing officer who will submit his/her findings to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will make the final decision concerning whether to change the record. A parent or student who remains dissatisfied with the final decision of the Superintendent may request that an explanatory statement be placed in the student's file explaining the basis for the disagreement. The school has a form that may be used to identify which information in the record the parent or adult student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of the student's privacy rights, and to specify why it is inappropriate.
- C. consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that Federal and/or State law authorizes disclosure without consent (e.g. disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests). The school's AG 8330 describes those exceptions and is available upon request. () Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)
- D. challenge the Board's noncompliance with a parent's request to amend the records through a hearing. If the Custodian of Records decides not to amend the record, the parent or adult student will be so notified and provided the opportunity for a hearing. Additional information concerning the hearing will be provided when the individual is notified of the opportunity for a hearing. (See Paragraph B above).
- E. obtain a copy of the District's policy and administrative guideline on student records (Policy 8330 and AG 8330).

Both FERPA and M.C.L. 380.1135 require *that the Board, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent or adult student's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information about a student. However, the Board may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or adult student advises the Board to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Board to include this type of information in certain school publications. Examples include: a playbill, showing a student's role in a drama/musical production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs and sports activity sheets (e.g. showing weight and height of team members). Directory information, which is information that is generally not*

considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or adult student's prior written consent. In addition, two (2) Federal laws require the District to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three (3) directory information categories, names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents or adult students have advised the District that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

The District has designated the following information about each student as "directory information":

(REFER TO POLICY 8330 FOR THE INFORMATION THE DISTRICT HAS DEFINED AS DIRECTORY INFORMATION.)

Each year the District will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information". The Board designates as student "directory information" a student's name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially-recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; honor rolls; scholarships; telephone numbers only for inclusion in school or PTO directories.

The Board will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student notifies the School in writing within 10 days (**refer to Policy 8330**) from the date of this notification that s/he will not permit distribution of any or all such information. Directory information will not be provided to any organization for any profit-making purpose.

Parents or eligible students who choose to prohibit the Board from disclosing any or all such directory information may not prevent the Board from requiring a student to wear, publicly display, or disclose a student ID card or badge that exhibits directory information. Students enrolled in online courses or programs sponsored or conducted by the Board must disclose or permit the disclosure of the student's name, identifier, or school email address in a class in which the student is enrolled.

SPECIFIC EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment ("PPRA") requires the Board to notify parents and eligible students and obtain consent to allow parents or eligible students to opt the student out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one (1) or more of the following eight (8) area ("protected information surveys"):

- (1) political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- (2) mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- (3) sex behavior or attitudes;
- (4) illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- (5) critical appraisals of other with whom respondents have close family relationship;
- (6) legally recognized privileged relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- (7) religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent; and/or;
- (8) income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical exams and screenings.

Following is a schedule of activities requiring parental notice and consent or opt-out for the upcoming school year. This list is not exhaustive and, for surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, the Board will provide parents, within a reasonable period prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an

opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to adult students or an emancipated minor under State law.)

Surveys, including third party surveys, that include one or more of the above delineated items are scheduled or are expected to be scheduled on:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Participating Grades</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Summary/Description</u>	<u>Consent or Opt-Out</u>

Parents have the right to inspect upon request a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by the school to its students. See Board Policy 2416 concerning the procedures for making such a request.

Parents have the right to inspect upon request any instrument used in the collection of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose) before the instrument is administered or distributed to the students. See Board Policy 2416 concerning the procedures for making such a request. The following such activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

<u>Name of Activities</u>	<u>Specific or Approximate Date</u>

Non-emergency, invasive physical examination(s) or screening(s) are scheduled or expected to be scheduled on the following dates (refer to Policy 5310):*

<u>Name of Examination/Screening</u>	<u>Specific or Approximate Date</u>

Parents may opt their child out of participation in any activity described above.

Parents have the right to inspect upon request any instructional material used as a part of the educational curriculum for their student. See Board Policy 2416 for the procedures for making such a request.

Any parent or student who believes that the School District has failed to comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") or the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment ("PPRA"), may file a complaint directly with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.

This Notice will be transmitted to disabled parents and students or to non-English speaking parents and students in a format designed to accommodate their disability or in their native language. Call the Office of the Superintendent at 269-756-9541 for assistance and information.

- * These examinations/screenings are: (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or other students. The term "invasive physical examination" means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.

TEXTBOOKS - SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The Board of Education will furnish the following; textbooks, electronic devices, paper for daily assignments, pencils, crayons, and other classroom supplies. You may provide additional supplies if you desire. Students misusing school supplies may be requested to furnish their own. Fines will be charged for textbook loss or damage.

ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS

School personnel are CPR and first aid certified and will care for students involved in minor accidents such as bruises, scratches, or small cuts. Parents will be called if the accident is serious. (Board Policy #8450).

If it is necessary for a child to be sent home because of illness, head lice, or serious accident the office will contact the parent to come and get the child. Please report to the office to pick up your child.

If the parents cannot be reached, (at home or at work) the person designated on the emergency card will be contacted. If neither parent nor the emergency person designated can be reached, the principal will decide what to do. If, in his/her judgment, the child needs medical attention and the emergency section of the enrollment form has been signed, the child will be taken to a local doctor, clinic, hospital emergency room or an ambulance will be called.

In all cases, every effort will be made to reach and notify the parent of the child first. Please let the office know of any home, work, or emergency phone number change.

MEDICATION POLICY AND MEDICINES

This summary is taken from Board Policy #5330 regarding the administration of student medications. For purposes of this policy:

“Medications” shall include all medicines prescribed by a physician, and any over-the-counter drugs, preparations, and/or remedies.

School personnel will administer only medications meeting ALL the following criteria.

Medications:

- *Must be brought into the school office by the parent/guardian or another adult (designated by the parent/guardian)*
- *Must be in the original pharmaceutical container*
- *Must be accompanied by a permission slip signed by a parent/guardian (Form 5330)*
- *Must be accompanied by a physician’s note explaining what the medication is, when it should be administered, exact amount of prescribed dosage, as well as any further directions deemed necessary, and signed by the physician (Form 5330)*

Changes of medication dosage or administration must be written or signed by a physician, on a new Medication

Request and Authorization Form 5330.

Medication will be administered by one staff member, witnessed by a second, and documented in a daily log kept on file in the school office.

EMERGENCY medications, i.e. for diabetes, asthma, severe allergies, etc... may be self-possessed and self-administered by a student, provided there is a proper authorization form (Form 5330) signed and on file in the office, and the child is both capable and responsible for self-administration.

Medication and the documentation of medications given will be kept confidential.

Medication requiring dividing/splitting of pills will be brought to school already divided.

A student who is in possession of emergency medications must have authorization on file in the school office, and shall have each of his/her teachers notified of this by the building administrator.

Upon receipt, school personnel will count controlled substances. Medication left over at the end of the school year shall be picked up by the parent/guardian. If this is not done, the individual who administers the medication will dispose of the medication, witnessed by a second adult, and record the disposal on the medication log.

The River Valley Board of Education, including all River Valley staff will not be responsible for the diagnosis or treatment of student illness.

HEAD LICE POLICY

The River Valley School District, as recommended by the Michigan Department of Health, has developed a **no nit** policy regarding head lice. This means if nits are found in a child's hair the child's parents will be called to arrange for the child to be removed from school. Children with head lice cannot return to school until they are nit free. Parents are asked to accompany their child back to school and report to the office so school personnel can check to see if any nits are present.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR MOVING OUT OF DISTRICT

Please notify the school office, either by phone or a note, of any change in residence. If moving out of the River Valley School District, please provide your new address and request a school of choice application if you would like your child to continue to attend River Valley Schools. If you are enrolling your child in another district, please provide the name and address of the new school your child will be attending. We also need to know the last day your child will be in attendance before moving.

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

The transfer of school records can only be done from one school to another. Parents are not allowed to hand deliver records. Parents will be asked to sign a request for records when they enroll their child in their new school.

MONEY & OTHER VALUABLES TAKEN TO SCHOOL

Parents and students should realize the responsibility of bringing money to school and in returning change home. It is often necessary to bring money for lunch, book fairs and clubs, field trips, and fundraisers. Please discuss with your child the importance of handling money properly. Some guidelines to discuss with your child:

1. Place the money in an envelope.
2. Include a note inside, stating the amount of the money enclosed and the reason for the money being sent.
3. Place the teacher's name and child's name on the outside of the envelope.
4. Be sure your child knows they shouldn't remove money from the envelope or show others that they have cash with them.

Students are not allowed to use electronic devices (headsets, iPods, video games, cell phones, etc) at school (in the hallway, classroom, lunchroom or during recess). Some bus drivers do allow these items for use on the bus rides to/from school or when classrooms go on field trips. Students must remember it is their responsibility to put any electronic device in their backpack/locker once they leave the bus and not take them out until school is dismissed.

Any student using these types of devices during the school day without permission will have them taken away. They will be returned upon parent request.

If your child has a cell phone that they carry please remind them that the cell phone should be turned off during the school day and stored in their backpack.

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal property a child brings to school.

SEARCH OF LOCKERS
Refer to Board Policy #5771

All lockers assigned to students are the property of the school district. The lockers shall be under supervision of the building principal, or designated representative, and assigned to students for their convenience and use. Students are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and clothing necessary for school attendance.

(Whenever the principal is mentioned in this rule, it shall be construed so as to include “or designated representative.”) The lockers shall not be used for any other purpose unless specially authorized by school policy or the building principal. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their assigned lockers.

The building principal shall have sole custody of the combination or key to all locker locks in a storage place designed to guard against unauthorized access or use. Upon reasonable belief, the building principal may search and seize any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of board policy or rules, or any other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of others. Such items include, but are not limited to the following: firearms, explosives, flammable material, dangerous weapons, illegal controlled substances or controlled substance analogues or other intoxicants, contraband, poisons, and stolen property.

Such a locker search may be made at any time, and without parental/guardianship or student consent. Students are prohibited from placing locks, other than the regularly issued school lock on their lockers unless permission is given by the building principal.

A building principal shall not be obligated, but may request the assistance from a law enforcement officer in conducting a locker search. The building principal shall supervise the search and shall respect the privacy rights of the student regarding any items found that are not illegal or against school policy and rules.

If a law enforcement officer requests to search a student’s locker and has a warrant for such search, the building principal shall immediately take such person to the student’s locker and permit him to search the locker. Whenever possible, such search shall be made in the presence of the building principal.

In the event that a law enforcement officer requests to search a student’s locker without a warrant, the building principal shall ask what facts lead the officer to believe that evidence of a crime will be lost, destroyed or moved if the search and seizure did not take place immediately, before a warrant is obtained.

Any items seized by the building principal shall be removed from the locker and held by school officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over the law enforcement officials. If turned over to law enforcement officials, the building principal shall receive a receipt for such items. The parent/guardian of a minor student, or a student eighteen (18) years or older, shall be notified by the building principal of items removed from the locker.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE AND ELECTRONIC MONITORING
Board Policy #7440.01

The Board of Education authorizes the use of video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment at various school sites throughout the District and on school buses. The video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment shall be used to protect Board property and assets from theft and vandalism, through deterrence and video documentation. The system is not designed nor intended to protect individuals from being victims of violent or property crimes, nor to detect other potentially illegal and undesirable activities that may occur, although information may be used as evidence in such cases.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is available and application forms are sent home to all parents at the beginning of each school year. If you want to enroll your child, it is necessary for you to complete the application and return it to school along with the fee.

Any full-time day student is eligible to enroll in either the school time accident plan or the 24hour accident plan. Please read the application form for the exact details.

RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The River Valley School District recognizes that the use of alcohol and other drugs, and the problems associated with it, are becoming increasingly commonplace in our society and among youth. Because our school system is committed to helping all students fully realize their potential, it is necessary that the educational process allow students to make informed decisions about these significant life issues.

We recognize that the abuse of alcohol and other drugs often precedes the development of problems. Where the capacity to make reasonable decisions regarding alcohol and other drug use has been reduced or compromised, prompt and appropriate attention can help the vast majority of students involved.

The primary responsibility for helping students who are seriously involved with chemicals lies with the parents. River Valley recognizes that students often need education, assistance, and support because of their own drug use or because of drug related problems in those they care about. We regard alcoholism, drug addiction, and dependency as any other illness or chronic behavior/medical problem.

The River Valley School District believes that it is in the best interests of the community for it to take steps to promote, enhance, and maintain a drug-free school system and student body, and that along with parents and other segments of the community it has a role to play in helping students to remain drug-free. Whenever factors arise which interfere with a student's school performance, the River Valley School District will mobilize its resources to convert the situation. The District wishes to cooperate with all segments of the community in making resources of assistance available to students and families facing problems today.

USE, POSSESSION, SALE, OR DISTRIBUTION OF DRUGS PROHIBITED

Each elementary school is designated by State law as a Drug Free School Zone. State law also prohibits the use of tobacco products while on school property. The use, possession, sale or distribution of drugs, including tobacco products, alcohol and look-alike drugs (look-alike drugs means a substance that is not a controlled substance or is not a drug for which a prescription is required under law, which by dosage unit appearance including color, shape, size, or markings and/or by representation made, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled one.), on school property or at school sponsored events away from school property is strictly prohibited and is a serious misconduct which justifies the most severe disciplinary action called for under School Board policy. Any evidence of behavior or conduct on school property or school sponsored events consistent with previous consumption shall be considered a violation of this policy.

When it has been determined by the Principal and/or Superintendent that a violation has occurred, the student who has committed the violation will be subject to a suspension from school per board policy and will be required to abide by all suspension rules and regulations as per that policy.

The student may be required to complete an assessment for drug dependency at a certified clinic. Verification that the student has completed such an assessment must be presented to the Superintendent of Schools before the student can return from the suspension.

The student may also be required to attend a specified number of counseling sessions with a River Valley School counselor or a substance abuse counselor from the Berrien County Department Alcohol/Drug Abuse Program. Attendance at these sessions must be verified to the Superintendent of Schools before the student is allowed to return from the suspension.

If a student commits a second or repeated offense the matter will be turned over to the Board of Education.

HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

"Intimidation/Menacing" includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:

Harassment, see Policy 5517;

Hazing, see Policy 5516.

MCL 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011)

Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education

Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

Replaced 5/21/12

~River Valley Board of Education Policy #5517

WEAPON FREE SCHOOL ZONE POLICY

The Board of Education of River Valley School District, as both an employer and a Public School District, is concerned with and interested in protecting the health, safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors. The Board recognizes that school buildings, facilities, vehicles, grounds and other school property are best utilized in the educational process in the absence of threats of physical well-being and safety, by individuals possessing weapons and/or dangerous weapons.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of River Valley School District shall permanently expel a pupil from attending school in the School District, if the pupil possesses a weapon in a weapon free school zone. Such expulsion is mandatory, unless the pupil establishes, in a clear and convincing manner criteria as outlined in the complete policy.

Expulsions mandated under this policy shall be imposed in accordance with the procedures for student discipline as established by the School District and as set forth in the Student Handbook or other appropriate documents.

The School District shall, within three days of expulsion, refer the expelled student to the appropriate County Department of Social Services or County Community Mental Health agency and shall also notify the individual's parent or legal guardian or (if the individual is at least 18 years old or otherwise legally emancipated) notify the expelled student of the referral. The School district shall also refer for prosecution conduct by any individual which is believed to violate state or federal laws establishing weapon-free or gun-free school zones.

Reinstatement criteria and procedure are explained in the complete Board policy.

Definitions:

"Weapon" or "dangerous weapon" includes: a firearm; gun; an explosive, including firecrackers; revolver; pistol; dagger; dirk; stiletto; knife with a blade over 3 inches in length; pocket knife opened by a mechanical device; iron bar; or brass knuckles.

"Weapon Free School Zone" means school property and/or a vehicle used by the school to transport students to or from school property.

"School property" means a building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by a school, except a building used primarily for adult education or college extension courses.

"Firearm" means (a) a weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by an explosive, or by gas or air; (6) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device, including explosives, incendiaries, poison gas, or any weapon which will (or may readily be converted to) expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant. For purposes of application and enforcement of this policy, a B-B gun is considered to be a "firearm".

Legal References: *MCL 28.421, 380.1311, 380.1313, 750.82, 750.237a, 20USC 3351 and 18 U.S.C. 921.*

VISITORS

Parents are always welcome to visit our schools. When you visit, please report to the office upon arrival. Visitors will be required to wear a name tag.

From time to time, we receive requests to allow visitors who may be pre-school age children, cousins, friends from out of town, friends from other school districts, etc. As much as we would like them to visit, we must turn the request down. This creates a number of problems for which children cannot be given the responsibility, nor can any of the staff take the responsibility for such visitors.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to come to school dressed appropriately for learning.

Coats, jackets, hats, sunglasses, wallet chains, bandannas, and other distracting clothing will not be worn in the school building during the course of the day.

Shoes are required at all times. Boots are required in winter months to enter the playground area and dry shoes are required for the classroom after recess. Tennis shoes are required for gym class. Students that don't have boots may be required to stay inside in the recess room.

Clothing displaying obscenities, symbols that are derogatory or violent in nature, clothing items connected to alcohol, tobacco use, illegal substances, or with inappropriate media messages (statements, symbols, or pictures) are not acceptable. (Students will be asked to wear something over such clothing, or turn it inside-out for the remainder of the day).

Revealing clothing, such as bare-midriff, net shirts, shirts with oversize arm openings, spaghetti-strap tank tops or dresses, short-shorts, pants with tears or holes, or tight clothing is not permissible. Low riding pants are not permissible.

Students are expected to go outside for recess daily unless temperatures are below zero with wind chill or it is raining. It is important that parents/guardians make sure students wear clothing appropriate for outdoor play to school each day.

HOMEWORK and AT-HOME PRACTICE

Throughout the year, students may have special projects that require planned at-home time. Any work that comes home on a regular basis is work not completed during the school day. It is important that students complete their daily work in order to be prepared for each new day. Families should check students (grades 3-5) planners daily to be sure that all work is completed on time. Students may experience consequences for classwork and/or projects that are not completed on time.

Research shows that the number one strategy to improve reading skills is to read - every day. In order to build strong reading skills, students must read at home daily. Pre-K students will be assigned At-Home reading folders that provide families with reading materials chosen specifically to meet the reading level of each child. 3-5th-grade students will set an Accelerated Reading goal each quarter - meeting this goal requires daily at-home reading.

REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

The school year is divided into four nine-week marking periods. Report cards are issued to all students at the end of each period. The final report card of the year will be mailed home. Many teachers also send home weekly Friday folders and/or mid-term progress reports. Parent-teacher conferences are mandatory and scheduled twice yearly for all students, once within the first nine-week marking period and again in the third marking period.

ADDITIONAL CONFERENCES

Parents are urged to contact their child's teacher(s) if they have any questions or concerns about their child's academic progress. Please feel free to email or send a note to your child's teacher(s) or to call the office to set up an appointment. Teachers may contact parents for additional conferences times, also. The school staff welcomes all conferences. Our goal is to keep you fully informed of your child's progress in school.

CANCELLATION OF NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Should it be necessary to cancel a non-school event such as Brownies, Girl Scouts, 4-H, etc. please notify the school office by noon. We cannot assume the responsibility for students left at the school because a meeting was cancelled at the last minute.

BICYCLES

Students, with parental permission, may ride their bicycles to school. Parents should discuss with their children the need for safety when riding bicycles.

1. Bicyclists are to follow all rules and regulations of highway safety and travel on the side of the road with traffic.
2. Bicycles/Scooters are to be walked and skateboards carried, while on school property.
3. Bicycles should be parked in the proper area during school hours.
4. For security reasons, we recommend that bicycles be locked. We cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage.
5. Bicycles/Scooters may not be ridden during the school day.
6. Kindergartners and first graders are not encouraged to ride bikes to school.

LIBRARY

Each River Valley School has its own library. K-5 students have scheduled library time each week. They also may, with the consent of the library aide and teacher, use the library when a library class is not scheduled. Fines will be charged for library book loss or damage. Consequences may be issued for chronic books turned in tardy.

LOST AND FOUND

Each school has a lost and found department which collects quite an assortment of clothing, boots, sweaters, etc. Parents should label their children's clothing, particularly cold weather garments and gym shoes, so that it is possible to return them to their rightful owner. If something comes up missing, please check the lost and found.

Items left in the lost and found at year's end will be donated to organizations that will benefit from the receipt of these items.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Parties at Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day are allowed up to 5th grade. These parties are generally planned by the students, room-parents, and the teacher. Birthday treats are welcome in the classroom to share with classmates however birthday parties are not permitted in school. We ask that parents remember the school wellness policy when planning classroom parties or planning a birthday treat (see page 25). The distribution of private party invitations during school hours is discouraged.

ANIMALS AND PETS

In all cases, parents must contact and consult the teacher and/or the principal first before bringing any animals to school. All animals must be properly immunized and kept under control at all times. Animals may not be transported on the school bus.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

The River Valley School District offers a hot lunch program and a free breakfast program district wide. School lunches and beverages for sack lunches can be purchased before the start of school each day by giving a marked envelope to their child's classroom teacher or teacher assistant. Meals may be purchased in advance. Checks should be written to the *River Valley School District* or the school your child attends.

River Valley Schools also have an online service called Meal Magic. This service can be used for purchasing meals and monitoring your child's lunch account. You can check your child's account by going to <https://www.sendmoneytoschool.com>, and logging in. If you are not a registered user, please call the school office for your child's student number. You will then simply go to the site, click on "sign up" and follow the directions. You will then receive a password for your account via email. (this link is also available on the school website)

Elementary students are expected to have enough money in their account to pay for meals. Parents will receive a weekly notice whenever their student has a negative balance. After a student has a negative balance of \$12.50 or greater, the student will receive an alternative meal. This alternative meal complies with the nutritional requirements and guidelines of the Michigan Department of Education school lunch program. The cost for this alternative meal will be added to the student's lunch account. This practice will continue until all past due balances are paid and money is deposited into the student's lunch account. When a student has a negative balance of \$25.00 or greater, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, building principal and food service supervisor to discuss the best way to resolve the situation.

Breakfast is not served after 10 minutes from start of school.

A free and reduced lunch program is available for families who qualify. Application forms are passed out to all students on the first day of school and are also available in all school offices. All applications are kept confidential. **Note:** If a free or reduced lunch student brings a sack lunch, their milk or juice will require payment.

To discourage students from eating lunch too fast, a specific amount of time (15 minutes) is required for students to remain in the lunchroom before being dismissed to return to their classroom.

RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Be on time at your designated bus stop. Drivers have a schedule to meet and cannot wait for tardy pupils. If the bus cancels its lights or pulls away, **DO NOT CHASE THE BUS**. This is how accidents happen.
- Cheerfully obey the bus driver's instructions. Friendly, respectful people get along better.
- Students are expected to display good behavior while on the bus. Quiet conversation is fine. When approaching a railroad crossing, students are to be silent until the bus is safely across the tracks.
- Always remain seated while a bus is moving. It may be necessary to sit three to a seat. The bus driver will assign seats at the start of the school year and those assignments may change on occasion, due to behaviors.
- Seats are assigned to students. Remain in your assigned seat consistently.
- Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus.
- Eating or drinking is not permitted on the buses except for special occasions approved by the driver.
- Musical instruments, books, projects or other personal items must be held by the owner. We encourage parents to transport on days large items must be taken to school.
- Stay off the roadways at all times while waiting for a bus. Form a single line and board the bus one at a time. Remember to respect the property of others while waiting for the bus.
- Hands and heads are to be kept inside the bus at all times. There will be no unnecessary disturbing noises or vulgar/profane language.
- Students are expected to get on and off the bus at their designated stops **ONLY**. A bus pass for the driver or a call to transportation is expected if it is necessary to get on and/or off at another location, even if it is on the same bus you normally ride. This practice is not encouraged due to the bus loads.
- When crossing, students must be 10 ft. in front of the bus. You must wait for the driver to signal. Students may then cross only in front of the bus. **NEVER** should a student cross the road behind the bus.
- Animals, glass containers and helium balloons, are not allowed on the buses.
- Students are expected to help keep the buses clean. Dispose of paper and other unwanted items properly.
- Students are asked to report any damage they see to the driver. Vandalism is a serious issue and will be addressed as soon as possible.
- Riders are expected to be considerate to all other passengers and to the driver at all times.
- Misconduct on the bus will not be tolerated. Drivers are in charge at all times and are required to report this behavior to building principals. Riding privileges may be suspended.
- Remember...school bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct may result in the loss of this privilege. Our buses have camera systems and are viewed by the supervisor and principal if necessary.

CONSEQUENCES

1. Verbal warning.
2. First Written Warning - Copy goes home for parent signature. Transportation Supervisor may call home.
3. Second Written Warning - Possible student suspension from bus. A conference may be called with the parent(s). This conference involves the Transportation Supervisor, Driver and Parent(s).
4. Third Written Warning - Suspension from riding the bus for 1-10 days depending on the incident. A mandatory conference will be called with Principal, Transportation Supervisor, Driver and Parent(s).
5. Fourth Written Warning - Recommendation to Superintendent to suspend student from riding the bus for a period longer than 10 days, a semester, or the remainder of the year.

ALL suspensions from the busses include route, extra-curricular, field trip and athletic busses.

Note: In the event of a serious violation, a student may be removed from the bus and suspended at any time.

Serious offenses, but **not** limited to:

1. Vulgar language
2. Use or possession of tobacco or other unauthorized substances.
3. Interfering with the safety of others
4. Vandalism

5. Fighting
6. Defiance, Disrespect of Driver
7. Distracting and disruptive behavior
8. Bullying and harassment

BUS PASSES

It occasionally becomes necessary for a student to get off at a different stop or to ride a bus other than the one they normally ride. For your child's safety, bus drivers will **not** allow students to get off at a different stop or ride a different bus without a **bus pass**. Students may obtain a **bus pass** from the office with a written note or called notification from the parent.

Students who wish to ride a different take-home bus may do so if they have taken written permission from their parent or guardian to the principal (or designee), and can present a signed "bus pass" from the principal's office to the bus driver.

Bus students are expected to return home by bus unless the office is notified otherwise by parents. Please attempt to notify the school by 2:00 pm.

FIRE DRILL / TORNADO DRILL / LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Each school conducts fire, tornado, and lockdown drills during the school year. Every attempt will be made to hold drills during appropriate weather conditions.

TORNADO WATCH - TORNADO WARNING

A Tornado WATCH means possible severe weather or tornadoes may occur over a large geographic area in Southwestern Michigan. This does not mean that a tornado is expected to strike in our immediate area. Therefore, children are kept in school if this occurs during the normal school day.

A Tornado WARNING means that a tornado may strike in the immediate River Valley area. Points to remember:

1. If a Tornado WARNING is in effect, the children are not released from the building unless to a parent.
2. During a Tornado WARNING teachers and students have been instructed as to proper procedure.
3. When severe weather conditions occur, we receive literally dozens of phone calls from parents asking us to give messages to their children. This is impossible for us to do.
4. If you request, children may be released to you during a severe storm, but parents are expected to act in an orderly manner, not entering the classroom and creating excitement.

All decisions rest directly with the principal of the building and every effort to do what is best for the safety and welfare of your child will be made.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS and DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it comes to student behavior, River Valley Elementary implements Positive Behavior Support practices. Our disciplinary steps include the following:

Step One – teaching of expectations - all students

- Expectations are taught regularly throughout the school year by varied school personnel, in all areas of the school.
- CHAMPS is implemented in all classrooms as a systematic way of reviewing and displaying expectations.
- We seek to celebrate positive behavior by using "Lasso tickets", classroom and building rewards and celebrations, and most importantly - our commitment to building strong relationships.

Step Two – Parent contact & data collection

When students have been clearly taught expectations and classroom systems are being implemented, occasionally students need further reminders. At this time, the following takes place:

- At that time, a student will receive a "Blue Note" which is a means of communicating with home about a difficult day, as well as collecting data. Data collection helps us determine trends in student behaviors, making solutions more readily found.
- Parents sign Blue Note and communicate with teacher regarding questions. This important tool helps remind students that parents and the school are working as a team.
- When a student earns a third Blue Note, they are assigned to after school detention.
- Any further Blue Notes begin the Intervention Team Process. The Intervention Team is a team of school staff, as well as families, working together to help support and instruct students toward good choices.

Severe behaviors will be dealt with according to River Valley School District K-5 Student and Staff Safety Procedures. These behaviors may also lead to suspension (principal or superintendent action) or expulsion (Board of Education action).

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Parent-teacher organizations exist in each of our buildings. All parents are welcome and encouraged to participate.

PICTURE DAY

Individual pictures of each student are taken each fall. Picture packages are available for purchase, but there is no obligation to do so.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important extension of learning and are planned by your child's grade level team whenever it is appropriate.

All out of district field trips are approved through the principal's office and require a permission slip for parental approval. All pertinent information about the field trip including any fees when necessary is included in the permission slip. Any parent/guardian chaperoning will be required to complete a district background check form prior to the field trip.

A blanket permission slip will be issued in our Back-to-School packet for trips within the school district, including trips from campus to campus or within walking distance of one of our campuses, including the New Troy Community Center. Trips in this category will be advertised by teachers in their individual newsletters, and also in our weekly newsletter "Hoofbeats", our website www.rivervalleyschools.org, and on our weekly radio show, "It's Elementary".

Students will not be allowed to participate in any trip if the parental consent form is not received prior to the trip. It is important to remember that parents must apply to be a chaperone at least 2 weeks prior to the event.

FUNDRAISERS

From time to time the parent-teacher organizations, other school groups, or individual classrooms will have fundraisers, bake sales, popcorn sales etc. to raise money for various purposes. Fundraisers have included raising money for playground equipment, computers and other technology equipment, field trips etc. These are generally items not included in the regular school budget.

Every attempt is made to keep fundraisers at a minimum and from overlapping. No student or family is obligated to participate in any fundraiser. Door to door selling is discouraged.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The River Valley School District Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes"), in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity or access to the District's programs, activities, or services may contact the District's "Compliance Officers": Mrs. Heidi Clark, Elementary Principal (extensions 1601/1701) or Mr. Patrick Breen, Middle/High School Principal (extension 1032), 15480 Three Oaks Road, Three Oaks, MI 49128, 269-756-9541.

POLICY ON STUDENT GROUPS & GANGS

It is the policy of the Board of Education that student groups be recognized as authorized school organizations only if they are approved by the administration, sponsored by school-approved personnel, composed of members of the current student body, hold the majority of their meetings at school, and have established goals which are educational in nature.

Membership in the organization or operation of any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as described by law is prohibited throughout the School District. In particular, the Board shall not tolerate any type of gang or gang-related activity to occur on District property or while students are under the auspices of the Board.

PUBLICATION RELEASE

As students participate in school activities, we may have opportunities to put his/her picture and/or name or work in district publications, such as our district website, district/school newsletters, local newspapers, our local radio show, and distance learning activities. Our registration materials will include a form regarding publication release and will allow parents to limit or deny release of their child's name, picture, or work.

INTERNET USAGE

Our elementary campuses have Internet availability. All use of the network must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes of the River Valley School District. As technology and its uses come more and more into our classrooms, our students will have the opportunity for more exposure and access to electronic mail and the Internet. The classroom teacher will supervise classroom Internet and e-mail use. Student account agreements will be issued as is necessary by building or by classroom.

The following is the board adopted *Acceptable Use Policy #7540.03F1* for the district's computer network:

STUDENT EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY AGREEMENT

To access and use the District's Education Technology, including a school-assigned e-mail account and/or the Internet at school, students under the age of eighteen (18) must obtain parent permission and sign and return this form. Students eighteen (18) and over may sign their own forms.

Use of the Education Technology is a privilege, not a right. The District's Education Technology, including its Internet connection and online educational services, is provided for educational purposes only. Unauthorized and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of this privilege and possibly further disciplinary action.

The Board has implemented technology protection measures which protect against (e.g. block/filter) Internet access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or are harmful to minors. The Board also monitors online activity of students in an effort to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. Nevertheless, parents/guardians are advised that determined users may be able to gain access to information, communication, and/or services on the Internet that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes and/or that they and/or their parents/guardians may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Students accessing the Internet through the school's computers assume personal responsibility and liability, both civil and criminal, for unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Internet.

The Board has the right, at any time, to access, monitor, review and inspect any directories, files and/or messages residing on or sent using the Board's Education Technology. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Individual users have no expectation of privacy related to their use of the District's Education Technology.

The District reserves the right to inspect and control the use of all information in and out of our site. You will not open a second e-mail account or bring an account already established from home to use on the District network.

Parents will be notified of any violations to this agreement. Violations may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action as outlined in the District handbooks. Violations could mean suspension or expulsion from school and prosecution by local law enforcement agencies.

Approved by the River Valley Board of Education

SCHOOL WELLNESS

River Valley School District has a Wellness Policy, which was required nationwide by federal law and adopted in 2006. Increasing concern over kids' poor dietary habits and lack of physical activity drives the push for improvement in school wellness.

We believe that the total development of each student: intellectual, social, emotional and physical is enhanced by good nutrition and physical activity. River Valley Elementary School is committed to providing an environment that teaches and models the skills, knowledge, and values that will enable our students to pursue a healthy lifestyle. We can make a significant difference by teaching Michigan Model for Health, increasing the occurrence of clear, consistent messages about nutrition and physical activity, and offering plenty of opportunities to make good choices throughout the school, and at school events.

Following are practices, which are strongly encouraged:

Serve Healthy Food and Drinks at School Functions- School events provide a great opportunity to support lessons learned in the classrooms, and send consistent messages about food choices. Send healthy choices for seasonal parties, as well as birthday treats.

Examples of healthy snack choices:

Fresh fruits and vegetables (buy local!)
Mini bagels with low fat cream cheese or peanut butter
Nuts and seeds
Air-popped or low fat popcorn
Baked chips
Low fat string cheese
100% fruit juice-six ounce limit - Not fruit drink with high fructose corn syrup
Bottled water

Smart Fundraisers for Healthy School - physical activity-related fundraisers such as the Mustang Walkathon and Jump Rope for Heart are ideal ways to raise money and awareness. More than just raising money to pay for valuable programs and materials, a well-run fundraiser can also be an experience that educates, builds self-esteem, provides community service, and promotes school and community spirit.

Incorporating Physical Activity into the Day- In addition to Physical Education and recess, physical activity opportunities are incorporated during the school day. A mid-morning fitness break can include a game in the gym on non-P.E. days, or a walk outside. In-classroom activities include Brain Breaks, small space calisthenics like toe touches, windmills and jumping jacks, or small movement dances like the Macarena, Hand Jive, and Hokey Pokey.

Role Models-Parents/guardians, teachers, classroom assistants, school administrators, food service professionals, and community members are encouraged to serve as positive healthy lifestyle role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in school and at home.

River Valley Elementary School, where we Do Our Best, Care for Others, and Love our School!

Elementary Behavior Expectations					
	Classroom	Cafeteria	Hallway / Common Areas	Playground	Special Events
Do Our Best	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Complete assignments on time * Stay on task * Always give your best effort the 1st time * Return folders & materials on time * Unload backpack when you arrive/load backpack when you leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Use a level 2 voice * Walk * Be sure you have everything you need before sitting down 	<p>Lines in Hall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Use a level 0 voice * Use quiet feet * Stay in line <p>Hallway (individual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Walk * Go directly to / from classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Use appropriate language * Line up when you hear the whistle * Walk to/from stones * Keep hands & feet to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enter & Exit orderly * Sit quietly * Follow directions of speaker * Stay with your class
Care for Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Respect other's: space, property & feelings * Listen when others are speaking * Use appropriate voice level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sit & stay at your place 	<p>Lines in Hall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Respect personal space * ABC order * Hands & feet to yourself <p>Hallway (individual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Be friendly & courteous * Use a level 1 voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Include everyone in your activity * Be a good sport * Wait your turn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Keep hands & feet * Stay in your group * Voice level 0 unless the speaker asks you to speak
Love Our School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Keep your work area neat * Use classroom materials with care * Keep locker area clean * Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Clean up your space * Empty & stack your trays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Keep hallway clean * Line up your boots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Report problems to recess teacher * Keep playground free of trash * Use equipment the right way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Represent our school with pride

WHAT IS A BLUE SHEET? The form below is an office referral form, commonly known as a blue sheet. It is used to record and track student behavior that needs improvement, and to let you know of the incident. If your child brings one of these home, please see it as a great opportunity to have a discussion with them about how they earned the blue sheet. These sheets have their most value when those discussions are held. Please sign the sheet and have your child return it to their classroom teacher. Students will be in for afternoon recess until the blue sheet is signed and returned.

MiBLSi Behavior Referral Form

Student: _____	Grade: K 1 2 3 4 5
Date: _____	Time: _____
Referring Staff: _____	
Offense: __ 1 st __ 2 nd __ 3 rd __ 4+	

Location
Classroom Playground Cafeteria Bus Bathroom Special Event Library Gym Hallway Other

Minor Problem Behavior (To be handled by teacher & sent to recess room with blue sheet)	Major Problem Behavior (To be sent to office)	Possible Motivation	Factors To Be Considered Before Suspending or Expelling a Student:
<input type="checkbox"/> Repeated classroom disruptions <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Lying, cheating <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Code Violation <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption <input type="checkbox"/> Name calling/unkind conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliance <input type="checkbox"/> Safety violation <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespect to Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing/inappropriate conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Homework/Unfinished class work <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology violation <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/Threatening <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate touch <input type="checkbox"/> Weapons <input type="checkbox"/> Drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Self Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespect to Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain peer attention <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain adult attention <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain items/activities <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid Peer(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid task or activity <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ Prior Interventions <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated redirection in non-classroom setting <input type="checkbox"/> Re-taught expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student <input type="checkbox"/> Moved seat <input type="checkbox"/> Home/School communication <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of privilege (besides recess) <input type="checkbox"/> Followed individualized behavior plan	Prior to suspending or expelling a student for any of the statutorily mandated reasons, except as noted below, the Board shall consider the following factors: A. the student's age B. the student's disciplinary history C. whether the student has a disability D. the seriousness of the violation or behavior E. whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member F. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior G. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

Administrative Decision

<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of privilege _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Time in office <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contact	<input type="checkbox"/> In-school suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Out of school suspension <input type="checkbox"/> After School Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
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Others Involved
None Peers Staff Teacher Substitute Unknown Other

Teacher Comments (please don't use other children's names in this section): <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
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Parent Comments (please don't use other children's names in this section):

___ I would like to talk to the student's teacher ___ I would like to talk to the administrator

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Contact:

Was parent contacted? Yes _____ No _____

By whom? Administrator _____ Teacher _____ Teacher Aide _____

How? Sent referral home _____ Phone call _____ Contacted in person _____ Email _____



Volunteering at River Valley Elementary

Please note: Preschool Parents/Volunteers are all required to be Level 2 volunteers.

Level 1 Volunteer

Requirements:

- 1) Fill out background check [on our district website http://rivervalleyschools.org/](http://rivervalleyschools.org/).
- 2) Once you receive your approved volunteer card in the mail, please show it in the office.
- 3) You will be able to:
 - Attend Field Trips (but not supervise children)
 - Attend Class Parties

Level 2 Volunteer

Requirements:

- 4) Fill out background check [on our district website http://rivervalleyschools.org/](http://rivervalleyschools.org/).
- 5) Attend a Volunteer Training
- 6) Show approved volunteer card to the office.
- 7) Complete Safe Schools Training and turn in copies of all Certificates to your building secretary.
You will be able to:
 - Work in classroom
 - Can pull students and work 1 on 1 with them
 - Can be left alone with students
 - Can supervise groups on field trips