

Earl L. Vandermeulen High School

# Student-Parent Handbook



2025-2026

**EARL L. VANDERMEULEN HIGH SCHOOL**

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**E.L. VANDERMEULEN HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

**John Ruggero, Principal Grades 9-12**

**PTSA - PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF E.L. VANDERMEULEN HIGH SCHOOL**

The E.L. Vandermeulen High School PTSA is an active association of parents, teachers and students who work together for the common cause of enriching the High School experience for all students. Students, parents/guardians and teachers are encouraged to join and become active participants in this worthwhile association.

**President: Carissa Donarummo**

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**Vice President: Alison LaPointe**

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

The mission of Earl L. Vandermeulen High School is to provide students with a quality educational program that includes opportunities for educational growth, self-awareness, development of personal values and skills necessary to pursue a meaningful and rewarding future. Administrators, teachers and support staff are dedicated professionals who consistently provide students with the assistance and encouragement needed for success.

To accomplish our mission, Earl L. Vandermeulen High School offers a wide range of instructional programs and co-curricular activities. Please review the high school's course offering guide, The Chart, to become familiar with the many and varied offerings available to our students. Students are encouraged to maximize their high school experience by attending all of their classes every day and availing themselves of the many opportunities available to them. By devoting the required time and energy, a great deal can be accomplished.

This handbook outlines our school's policies, regulations and procedures. Students have specific rights and responsibilities which are defined in detail. In order that our school can fulfill its responsibility to provide a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning, the various rules and regulations, as indicated in this handbook, are expected to be adhered to at all times.

Port Jefferson schools have established a reputation for academic excellence and for providing a superior learning environment. I look forward to working with students and parents to bring further enhancements and pride to our district. The administrators, teachers, counselors and staff of Earl L. Vandermeulen High School are here to lend support and assistance at any time.

Respectfully,

John Ruggero

| <b>Port Jefferson School District</b><br><b>Port Jefferson Middle School and Earl L. Vandermeulen High School</b><br><b>Bell Schedules</b> |                           |                        |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------|
|  | <b>Regular School Day</b> | <b>Delayed Opening</b> |
| <b>Period One</b>  | 7:30 – 8:13               | 9:30 – 10:00           |
| <b>Period Two</b>  | 8:16 – 8:59               | 10:03 – 10:33          |
| <b>Homeroom</b>  | 9:02 – 9:06               | 10:36– 10:39           |
| <b>Period Three</b>  | 9:06 – 9:49               | 10:39 – 11:09          |
| <b>Period Four</b><br><i>High School Lunch</i>   | 9:52 – 10:35              | 11:12 – 11:42          |
| <b>Period Five</b><br><i>High School/Middle School Lunch</i>   | 10:38 – 11:21             | 11:45 – 12:15          |
| <b>Period Six</b><br><i>High School/Middle School Lunch</i>  | 11:24 – 12:07             | 12:18 – 12:48          |
| <b>Period Seven</b><br><i>High School Lunch</i>  | 12:10 – 12:53             | 12:51 – 1:21           |
| <b>Period Eight</b>  | 12:56 – 1:39              | 1:24 – 1:54            |
| <b>Period Nine</b>   | 1:42 – 2:25               | 1:57 – 2:25            |
| <b>Extracurricular Activities Schedule</b>   |                           |                        |
| <b>Extra Help &amp; Co-curricular Clubs</b>  | 2:30-3:05                 | 2:30-3:05              |
| <b>Athletics</b>   | 3:10                      | 3:10                   |
| <b>Late Bus Schedule</b>   |                           |                        |
| <b>First late Bus</b>  | 3:10                      | 3:10                   |
| <b>Second Late Bus</b>   | 4:30                      | 4:30                   |
| <b>Last Late Bus</b>   | 5:30                      | 5:30                   |

## **STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

We believe that every student has the right to become a productive and responsible citizen. We realize that the education of our young people is a vital component in maintaining a successful way of life, as is their social and emotional development.

We further recognize that a fair and just student code of conduct is essential for the wellbeing of all students enrolled in our school. The faculty, staff, and administration have the responsibility for maintaining an environment that is conducive to intellectual, emotional, and social growth of our students.

Students must be safe and secure with the knowledge that the school will, at all times, provide for their wellbeing. Student safety is the underlying principle of all school practices and district policies. While the maintenance of an orderly environment is necessary, it cannot be obtained at the expense of students' rights. We also recognize that with students' rights there are associated student responsibilities. These responsibilities include obeying the rules and regulations of the school community. Students must share in creating a healthy and safe school environment.

### ***EDUCATION***

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to an orderly school and classroom environment that will ensure optimal learning for all students.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not disrupt the school and classroom environment and their participation in school activities will be conducted in a manner compatible with school rules and regulations.

### ***EXPRESSION***

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to express themselves in speech, writing, or symbolism. Students also have the right to refrain from expressing themselves.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that such expression does not disrupt the educational process, present health or safety hazards, or damage public property. Students also have the responsibility to ensure that such expression will not defame character nor be slanderous in nature.

## ***RELIGION***

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to their own religious beliefs.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that in exercising their religious freedom they do not violate the right of religious freedom of others and they do not disrupt the educational process. In our pluralistic society, we expect students to understand and respect the religious beliefs of others.

## ***POSSESSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE***

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to possess and distribute literature including, but not limited to, newspapers, magazines, leaflets, and pamphlets.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to submit a copy of such literature to the principal or designee in sufficient time for the principal to review and evaluate the material. Furthermore, it is the students' responsibility to ensure that such material is neither seditious, libelous, nor salacious. The principal or designee, if permitted, shall determine the time, place, and manner of distribution.

## ***TRANSPORTATION***

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to safe and orderly transportation to and from school when such transportation is provided by the school district.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that their conduct contributes to a safe and orderly environment while being transported; to refrain from conduct which is harmful to themselves, their fellow students, or the general public; and to refrain from violating federal, state, or local law. Students should be aware that when traveling away from school, their behavior reflects upon themselves, their families, their school, and their community.

## ***DINING AREA (CAFETERIA)***

**RIGHT:** Students have a right to dine in clean, healthful, and safe surroundings.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to dispose of trash in the proper receptacles. In the tradition of school pride, students will assume a collective responsibility for the cleaning of the table at which they are dining.

## ***DRESS CODE***

**RIGHT:** Students have a right to dress in style, fashion, or taste that supports the health, safety and educational philosophy of the school district.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to dress in ways that supports the educational philosophy of the school district. School officials will prohibit dress that is distracting and interferes with the learning process.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS**

**PROGRESS REPORTS** - are generated on the first five weeks of every quarter and are available on the parent portal or mailed home upon parent request. Parents are encouraged to call individual teachers and meet with them to monitor student progress on an ongoing basis.

### **PROGRESS REPORT DATES**

October 10, December 19, March 6, May 15

**REPORT CARDS** – are generated every ten weeks and are available on the parent portal or mailed home upon parent request. Grades, attendance information, and personal comments are all part of the report card.

### **REPORT CARD DATES**

November 14, January 30, April 17, June 29

### **SPECIAL MARKS**

- **I - Incomplete.** Student must contact teacher to make up work within a two-week period of time. After the work is made up, the Incomplete will be changed to the numerical mark earned. An Incomplete that is not made up will reflect a grade of 55%.
- **NE** - New entrant in class; too soon to calculate a grade
- **M** - Medical Excuse

### **GRADING COURSE WORK FOR GRADES 9-12**

90-100 Represents superior achievement

80-89 Represents high quality work

70-79 Represents satisfactory work

65-69 Represents a passing grade

45-64 Represents a failing grade

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES**

The general philosophy of Guidance and Counseling at Earl L. Vandermeulen High School is to help each student discover and develop his/her full potential. Each student should feel free to seek advice and counseling from his/her counselor concerning any area in which he/she needs assistance. The counselor provides help with scheduling, selection of a vocation, selection of a college, study habits and many other areas. The counselor's primary purpose is to help you. Our dedicated counselors strive to:

- Assist each student to discover and cope with his/her own uniqueness, needs, abilities and aspirations.
- Assist each student to implement his/her decisions by facilitating enrollment in appropriate programs, courses and services.
- Encourage each student to develop a positive self-image and appropriate relations with others.
- Assist each student to maximize his/her potential, identify his/her interests and develop his/her talents.
- Assist students to overcome those obstacles that make it difficult to take advantage of available opportunities. The student may need information which will enable him/her to cope with concerns regarding himself, herself, peers, family members, and or school personnel.
- Assist each student to make responsible decisions which will meet his/her needs, develop his/her abilities and fulfill his/her aspirations.
- Identify the need for change in existing courses, programs and services.
- Act as a consultant, when appropriate, to classroom teachers, administrators and parents.
- Assist students to plan and implement career education activities.

Guidance services are available for every student in the school. Counselors, psychologist, social worker and staff members are available to support you with a wide range of services.

### ***GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES STAFF***

Ms. Kathi Galvin – Guidance Counselor  
Ms. Jennifer Poma - Guidance Counselor  
Dr. McElheron – Psychologist  
Ms. Kristin Britt – Social Worker

### ***GUIDANCE OFFICE CLERICAL SUPPORT***

Ms. Deborah Abbatiello (631) 791-4458  
Ms. Rose Darling (631) 791-4457

## ATTENDANCE

To be successful, students must actively participate in learning activities. To maintain academic standards, encourage progress and ensure student participation in the school experience, the Administration with the support of the Board of Education of the Port Jefferson Union Free School District adheres to the district attendance policy. The policy ensures that students who receive credit for a course have attended 85% of the classes and have participated in the classroom. The policy affirms that classroom activities cannot be duplicated in an extra help session or by independent remediation. Even when specific work is made up, the valuable "time-on-task" is missed. Attendance is a critically important factor contributing to success in school.

The attendance requirement for course credit shall apply to all students enrolled in Earl L. Vandermeulen High School in grades nine through twelve and middle school students in accelerated classes, except those students whose IEP (individualized educational plan) states otherwise. All other students or K-8 will follow the attendance procedures set forth by NYSED Commissioner Regulations.

All students at Vandermeulen High School are expected to be present in their classes every school day unless legally absent for the following valid reasons in accordance with New York State Education Law:

- Death in the immediate family approved by school
- Illness of the student
- Critical family illness
- Quarantine
- Court summons
- Work/Study or school activity
- Observance of a religious holiday
- State emergency
- Suspension

**PLEASE NOTE: The policy for the purpose of receiving course credit does not distinguish between an excused and unexcused absence.**

All students are expected to complete the assigned class work and homework as directed. No distinction may be made between excused and unexcused absences for makeup work purposes. With the possible exception of absences intended by the student as a means of gaining unfair academic advantage ( e.g., to secure more time to study for a test), a reasonable effort will be made to provide students with the opportunity and assistance to make up all work missed as a result of unexcused absence from class. If work is missed due to absence, it is the student's responsibility to request all makeup assignments from subject teachers following absence from

class. Students who are absent shall be given reasonable time to make up the assignments during their absence. This opportunity does not replace the original presentation/participation opportunities.

### **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**Full-year course** – the minimum attendance shall be 85% or 153 days per year ( $.85 \times 180 = 153$ ); therefore, a student may be absent not more than 27 times per year per class. A student will be in violation on the 28th absence.

**Half-year course** – The minimum attendance shall be 85% or 77 days ( $.85 \times 90 = 76.5$  days); thus, a student may be absent no more than 13 times per semester per class. A student will be in violation on the 14th absence.

**Lab science course** – The minimum attendance shall be 85% or 229 periods per year ( $.85 \times 270 = 229.5$  periods): thus, a student may be absent no more than 40 times per year per lab science class. A student will be in violation on the 41st absence.

**BOCES** – The district reserves the right to withdraw students from vocational courses at BOCES at any time that they fail to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 85%.

**All other classes** (i.e. Physical Education) will follow the minimum attendance of 85%.

**Please note:** Three (3) latenesses to a class results in one (1) absence. Students shall be considered absent from a class if they are absent from a class for more than one-half of the class period.

Once a student is denied credit, he/she must attend class regularly and maintain appropriate behavior. Failure to continue to attend classes on a regular basis and maintain appropriate behavior will result in disciplinary action and may result in the student being permanently removed from the class.

### **NOTIFICATION SEQUENCE**

Students, parents and teachers shall be notified annually, in writing, of the attendance policy and administrative regulations.

**The following refers to absences in a single course; therefore, a student may very well be notified by several different teachers for different courses.** The teacher and/or Assistant Principal will send written notification of student absences to the student's parents at the following intervals:

**Full Year Classes**

First notice at 7 absences

Second notice at 14 absences\*

Third notice at 20 absences

LOSS OF CREDIT at 28 absences

DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SUMMER SCHOOL AT 35 ABSENCES

**Semester Classes and Physical Education Classes**

First notice at 7 absences

Second notice at 10 absences\*

Third notice at 12 absences

LOSS OF CREDIT at 14 absences

DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SUMMER SCHOOL AT 18 ABSENCES

**Lab Science Classes**

First notice at 15 absences

Second notice at 25 absences\*

Third notice at 35 absences

LOSS OF CREDIT at 41 absences

DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SUMMER SCHOOL AT 52 ABSENCES

\*Guidance counselors will meet with students and contact parents to discuss strategies to improve attendance.

**Please Note:** Beginning of the 3rd marking period, notification for absences will begin only when a student reaches his/her 14th absence for a full-year course (Lab Science classes on the 25th absence). The prime responsibility for the student's attendance in class rests squarely with the student.

***ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL***

Student absence from school, which is caused by family vacation or child care for siblings, is reportable to Child Protective Services and may constitute educational neglect. Please do not ask the school administration to excuse such absences.

Students who are absent from school should have their parent/guardian notify the school on the morning of their absence by calling the **Attendance Office at (631) 791-4426**. In addition, such students are to provide a suitable note explaining their absence within 48 hours of their return to school. Such notes must include the signature of the parent/guardian and a telephone number at which the parent or

guardian may be reached. When a student is absent from school for reasons of illness or medical necessity, a note of explanation (including health care provider documentation as appropriate) should be submitted to the Attendance Office within a short period of time, but in no instance more than three (3) weeks from the point of return to school. Late arrival or early dismissal to/from class(s) will be judged based on the same criteria. **No student may participate or attend any school or after-school activity on a day he/she is absent from school.**

### ***CONSEQUENCES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, LATENESS OR UNEXCUSED EARLY DISMISSAL***

Students who cut class or have unexcused absences will receive one (1) warning and then be assigned to detention and parents notified for repeat offenses. Students with three (3) or more unexcused absences, four (4) or more cuts in any quarter or two (2) or more un-served detentions may forfeit their right to participate in athletics, co-curricular and or extracurricular activities for the remainder of that quarter or for thirty (30) days, whichever is greater. This rule applies to senior parking privileges as well. Special events such as Proms and school sponsored trips may also be forfeited by excessive cutting.

Students who are absent twenty (20) or more consecutive school days, and who are over compulsory education age, will be dropped from the school's enrollment list.

### ***MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS***

Whenever possible, medical and dental appointments should be made after regular school hours. A written note from the parent/guardian, including the date and time of appointment, is required before such absence can be determined to be legal. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent/guardian to request the makeup work and to turn in completed assignments within a reasonable time frame from the date of return to class.

### ***LEAVING SCHOOL DUE TO ILLNESS***

Any student who wishes to leave school due to illness during the school day must report to the Nurse's Office. Only a nurse may approve students to leave school due to illness.

### ***SENIOR SCHEDULED LATE ARRIVAL PROCEDURE***

Seniors that are scheduled for a study hall period 1 may request approval for late arrival. Such students must complete an application which is available in the main office. In addition, he/she must have approval of their parent/guardian. Students who are not passing all of their subjects will not be approved for late arrival. Schedule changes will not be considered for a student who has a period 1 class in their schedule so that they may request late arrival. Students approved for late arrival will need to show their personalized pass.

### ***SENIOR SCHEDULED EARLY DISMISSAL***

Seniors who have a study hall scheduled for period 9 may request approval for early dismissal. Such students must complete an application which is available in the Main Office. In addition, he/she must have approval of their parent/guardian and have the means to return home at the end of period eight. Students who are not passing all their subjects will not be approved for early

dismissal. Schedule changes will not be considered for a student who has a period 9 class in their schedule so that they may request early dismissal. Students approved for early dismissal will need to show their personalized pass.

### ***EARLY DISMISSAL***

All early dismissals must be approved by the Assistant Principal or his/her designee. In all cases, students leaving school early must have their parent/guardian sign them out in the Attendance Office. No student will be discharged without proper authorization of a parent/guardian. To ensure student safety, the building principal maintains a list of individuals who are authorized to obtain the release of students in attendance at the school. No student may be released to the custody of any individual who is not the parent/ guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list. Parents/guardians may submit a list of individuals authorized to obtain the release of their children from school at any time.

Certified copies of any court orders or divorce decrees provided by the custodial parent/guardian, which restrict a parent's/guardian's ability to seek the release of his or her child, shall be maintained in District offices in addition to the High School. If anyone seeks the release from school of a student, he or she must report to the High School Attendance Office and present satisfactory identification to an administrator.

### ***MEDICAL RELEASES***

Medical releases are handled through the Nurse's Office. All other reasons for release must be submitted to the Attendance Office, and students must be picked up from the Attendance Office. The person seeking the student's release must present photo identification and sign the register in the office.

Medical release from participation in physical education is also handled through the Nurse's Office. Students who are medically unfit to participate in physical education class will be sent to the library with an assignment from the teacher. Doctor's notes will be accepted for a maximum of six (6) weeks from the date of the note. Updated notes are required for a return to activity or for an extension of release from activity. Please note that New York State Education law does not permit students who are excused from participating in Physical Education classes to participate in athletic practices, competitions or other related activities.

### ***ABSENCE DUE TO PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES***

Students who participate in school sponsored activities will be recorded as present in school and as an excused absence from class. Students will be allowed to make up all work. Discretion should be exercised in the number of activities in which students participate.

## **STUDENT SAFETY**

Students must remain inside the building during normal school hours 7:30 a.m. – 2:25 p.m. unless involved in a supervised activity. Students are only allowed to remain after school and board the late activity bus if they are involved in a supervised activity. Students are not free to “hang out” in the school building after dismissal. Students found roaming the building after school will receive a detention and parents will be notified.

Athletes found in an unsupervised part of the building will receive a detention. Subsequent violations may result in prohibition from participation in the athletic program.

**VIDEO SURVEILLANCE** -The district utilizes video surveillance equipment to monitor buildings and grounds.

### ***HALL PASSES***

Students leaving a class or an office must have a pass. In order to receive a pass from a classroom teacher, the pass must include the following information in INK:

- Name of student (only ONE student per pass)
- Destination of student
- Time and Date
- Signature of person giving the pass

No student is to be in the halls during any class period or lunch period without a properly filled out pass. Bathroom passes may not be issued to students during the first and last five (5) minutes of any period.

### ***MOTOR VEHICLE REGULATIONS***

Parking is available for those students who satisfy the criteria below:

- Must provide a Class 5 or D license (senior license)
- Must provide valid registration for each vehicle that will be used during the school year
- Must submit a notarized form indicating parent approval to drive to and from school
- Must provide a current insurance card for each vehicle

Student parking is restricted to those spaces marked below faculty parking areas adjacent to the bowl. Students who park in the Faculty or Visitor parking will lose their parking privileges and may also face other disciplinary actions.

Please be advised that last year’s passes are obsolete. New parking passes may be obtained in the Main Office. Students will not be allowed to park on school property if they do not have a pass after Friday, October 6th. Illegally parked vehicles may be towed at the owner’s expense.

Students who drive to school and park on school property do so at their own risk. We strongly advise that you do not leave expensive personal property in your car. You may not go to your car at any time during the school day, regardless of the reason, without prior permission from a school administrator.

**In the event of weather-related early dismissals, only the Student Driver, and his/her siblings will be dismissed from classes and permitted to leave in the student vehicle. All other students are expected to take bus transportation unless they usually walk to school.**

Please be advised that in the event that your student driver must leave school due to illness, he/she must report to the Nurse's Office. Student drivers will not be dismissed from the Nurse's Office without verbal approval from a parent/guardian.

The speed limit on school grounds is 10 miles per hour. Students, who drive above this limit, or in a reckless manner or cause a disturbance, will not only lose their driving privileges, but may also face other disciplinary actions.

Please note that Parking Permits will only be issued to Juniors after all qualified Seniors have been issued permits and space is still available. E.L. Vandermeulen parking permits are not accepted at BOCES facilities. Students who wish to park at BOCES facilities must apply for parking authorization from BOCES.

### ***RESTRICTIONS ON JUNIOR LICENSE (CLASS 6) SUFFOLK COUNTY***

You may drive between 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.:

- When accompanied by a licensed parent/guardian, driver education teacher or driving school instructor.
- To and from work. Not to school, then work. Work means employment on a regularly scheduled basis, at least once a week for at least four (4) consecutive weeks. You must have Form MV-58 or a letter from your employer listing the employer's name, address and phone number, your name, job description, hours and location of employment and the motorist identification number from your license. You may not drive during work (deliveries, etc.).
- To and from a college or university course that is not part of your regular school day. You must carry Form MV-286.1.
- To and from a state approved work-study program. This means BOCES work-study programs only. You must carry Form MV-286 as proof of enrollment in a work study program.
- To and from a state approved evening high school. You must carry Form MV-286.1.
- To and from a driver education course that is not part of your regular school day. You must carry form MV-286.1 7. While engaged in farm employment. You must carry Form MV-286.1

**REMEMBER - YOU MAY DRIVE TO WORK - BUT YOU MAY NOT DRIVE TO SCHOOL AND THEN TO WORK.**

## **USE OF RECORDING DEVICES**

**The making of audio and or video recordings, including still pictures or digital images, on school property or during school sponsored events is prohibited by Board of Education policy 4510.4** which states in part that "No employee or student of the Port Jefferson School District shall surreptitiously record another employee or student of the District, by electronic or other means, without prior approval from the teacher or building principal and/or without full knowledge of the individual being recorded." Students who violate this policy will be subject to the districts disciplinary policies and procedures as provided for in the Code of Conduct.

## **CELL PHONE ISSUES**

Cell phones severely compromise the number one priority of the school, to create a safe, orderly learning environment.

Listed below are cell-phone issues that administration and faculty frequently confront:

- **Cyber Bullying** - Creates an uncomfortable, unsafe climate. In the hands of many students, cell phones become instruments of torment, and bullying. This can lead to violent incidents.
- **Stolen/Lost Cell Phones** - This occurs daily and puts administration/students/parents in a difficult, time-consuming, and confrontational position. Additionally, stolen phones may lead to violence when students confront possible suspects.
- **Negative Social Interactions** - Texting and access to social networking sites, via cell phones, act as a catalyst for minor conflicts and disagreements, often spiraling quickly into more serious conflicts. This often leads to social, emotional, or physical harm. Easy access to cell phones and social networking sites fosters impulsive decision making, often leading to serious negative consequences. Instantaneous cell phone communication does not allow for the necessary space and time young adults need to make rational, mature decisions about personal conflicts and social interactions.
- **Drug/Alcohol Procurement** - A text or call to one student starts a chain reaction that always seems to find the student in possession of contraband. These banned, illegal substances compromise the health and safety of our students.
- **Cheating** - Cell phones are essentially mini-computers with internet access. They have been used to obtain and distribute test questions/answers, as well as to surreptitiously "Google" answers. Students who are found with cell phones or electronic devices will have their test invalidated.
- **Sending/Receiving Texts** - Although many texts are trivial, they distract students from focusing on instruction. The frequency of these transmissions is alarming. The average student sends/receives 8-15 texts every hour of every school day.

## ***PROCEDURES FOR CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES***

Cell phones and all electronic devices should not be visible in classrooms or hallways during school hours (7:30 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.). They are a major disruption to the educational process and severely hamper the school's ability to create a safe, orderly and educationally conducive environment. Students are permitted to use their cell phones in the cafeteria during a study hall or lunch period. Cell phones must be silenced during instruction. If they disrupt instruction, they will be confiscated and dropped off at the Assistant Principal's office. Cell phones will not be returned directly to the student after the second offense; parents/guardians will be required to come to school to pick them up.

## **STUDY HALLS**

In keeping with our philosophy that instructional time should be maximized for all students, every effort will be made to avoid assigning students to study halls. Colleges/employers are not impressed by study halls. Enhance your transcript by taking interesting, challenging electives. Only in cases where no elective class is available do we recommend that students be assigned a study hall.

## ***STUDY HALL PROCEDURES***

Study hall is a time for academics. The following policies are not intended to stifle you but rather to insure that you have a quiet atmosphere in which to study. If you have nothing else to do, read a magazine or book. While in study hall, the following rules must be followed:

- ALL STUDENTS MUST REPORT TO STUDY HALL AS ASSIGNED where attendance will be taken.
- Students have the right to use this time for quiet study, reading or the completion of assignments.
- This period is to be used for schoolwork. This may include the reading of books, magazines, or newspapers. Students are to bring their work with them. They will not be excused to their locker to get forgotten work.
- Students, with library passes, will be dismissed to the Library Media Center from study hall at the discretion of the study hall teacher.
- Often teachers will meet with students in study halls to give them extra help.

## **COURSE OFFERINGS**

Earl L. Vandermeulen High School offers a variety of required and elective courses. They are listed in *The Chart*, which is updated annually and available on the school website. Information regarding specific courses offered and levels of difficulty can be found in this Guide. Students are encouraged to select the most challenging course of study and specific courses appropriate for their future plans and aspirations. Final course selections should be made after consultation with teachers, parents/guardians and the school counselor.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING HONORS/ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES**

- Students must meet established requirements
- Students must be able to allocate time appropriately
- Students must be able to set priorities
- Students must work independently and collaboratively

Taking three (3) or more Honors/Advanced Placement courses concurrently is a great commitment and challenge which we encourage when appropriate. It appears prestigious to see Honors/Advanced Placement courses noted on a transcript. However, we would prefer to have students excel in a few Honors/Advanced Placement courses, rather than see them perform marginally because they are taking too many Honors/Advanced Placement classes.

It is our goal to have students enjoy their high school experience while building a record of consistent academic achievement. Students in Honors/Advanced Placement courses who fail to maintain an average of at least 85% for two (2) consecutive quarters will have their placement reviewed and may be down-tracked to the Regents level. Students are scheduled for Honors/Advanced Placement courses based on previous performance, not solely as a result of student or parent/guardian request. Students seeking placement in Honors/Advanced Placement courses should be aware of the following information.

### **ENROLLMENT CRITERIA FOR ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES**

- A final grade of 88 or better on any Regents exam, or final exam (if no Regents are given) in the pre-requisite courses in that academic discipline, during the previous year. Please see individual AP course descriptions in *The Chart* to determine pre-requisite courses
- Recommendation of the subject-area teacher and satisfaction of specific requirements as indicated in *The Chart*.
- All AP students must complete the required AP COURSE SUMMER ASSIGNMENT, at the mastery level. Any student who does not complete the summer assignment satisfactorily will not be permitted to remain enrolled in the AP course(s).
- ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN AP COURSES MUST TAKE THE AP EXAM IN MAY. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- AP Exam fees must be submitted via MySchoolBucks by the stated deadline.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

Students not meeting the above criteria, and who wish to appeal, must submit a letter providing a rationale as to why they believe they can be successful in a rigorous college-level course. This letter must be written by the student, and endorsed by an additional letter from the parent. Both letters should be submitted to the appropriate counselor by the first week in July. Appeals will be considered based upon mastery-

level completion of the AP Summer Assignment, and the student earning a grade of 85-or-better on the August Regents exam.

| Title                         | Typically enrolled in Grade(s) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| AP World History              | 10                             |
| AP US History                 | 11                             |
| AP Macro Economics            | 12                             |
| AP Psychology                 | 10-12                          |
| AP Literature and Composition | 11                             |
| AP Language and Composition   | 12                             |
| AP Calculus AB                | 12                             |
| AP Calculus BC                | 12                             |
| AP Statistics                 | 11 - 12                        |
| AP Computer Science           | 10 - 12                        |
| AP Biology                    | 11 - 12                        |
| AP Physics                    | 12                             |
| AP Chemistry                  | 11 - 12                        |
| AP Environmental Science      | 12                             |
| AP French Language            | 12                             |
| AP Spanish Language & Culture | 12                             |
| AP Spanish Literature         | 12                             |
| AP Italian                    | 12                             |
| AP Latin Caesar/Virgil        | 12                             |
| AP Studio Art                 | 11 - 12                        |
| AP Music Theory               | 11 - 12                        |

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

Students are selected for membership in the Earl L. Vandermeulen Chapter of the National Honor Society based on their outstanding qualities of scholarship, character, leadership, and service to the school and community. To be considered for admittance into the National Honor Society, Juniors and Seniors must have a weighted GPA of 92.0 or higher, including all high school level courses listed on the student's high school transcript. The Honor Society Selection Committee will select members of the National Honor Society from the eligible candidates after a review of their application packet. The final selection of members is based on the student's application, advisor recommendations, teacher input, and the disciplinary record of all candidates. Each application requires a faculty sponsor recommendation and two recommendations from extra-curricular activity advisors. Additionally, each candidate must complete an activity sheet and a student information sheet. Once selected, all members must maintain a weighted grade point average of 92.0 or higher as well as the character and service standards in order to continue membership in the National Honor Society.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are the property of the Port Jefferson Union Free School District and are assigned to each student for storage of their outer clothing and textbooks. Students must be aware that administration reserves the right to inspect lockers without student notification. Although these lockers are well designed and secure, it is advisable that no personal valuables be kept in an individual's locker. The administration advises that students DO NOT give their combination to other students. Students should not share lockers unless assigned. Students should make sure gym lockers are locked at all times. Do not leave valuables in hall lockers or gym lockers, as the school is not responsible for theft. Students may go to their lockers before school, during the change of regular classes, before and after lunch periods, and after school. They must have books and other needed materials with them for classes. Students are not to go to their lockers during instructional time, since the opening and closing of locker doors creates a disruption to the instruction that is taking place in adjoining classrooms. Please plan accordingly. Students must only use the school-issued padlocks on their lockers. Unauthorized padlocks will be cut off and removed.

### ***PHYSICAL EDUCATION LOCKERS***

Physical Education lockers will be cleaned out at the end of the school year in June. Students will be notified in the physical education classes one week prior to the end

of physical education classes, that all lockers must be emptied by a certain date. If lockers are not emptied by this date, the custodial staff will clean them out. Two custodians will empty lockers and place all items from lockers in individual bags that will be numbered with the locker number. These bags will be secured for two weeks and then thrown out.

### ***SPORTS TEAM LOCKERS***

Members of sports teams will be notified by their coaches one week prior to the end of their season that all lockers must be emptied by a certain date (two (2) days after the end of the season). If the lockers are not emptied by this date, the custodial staff will empty them. Two custodians will empty the lockers and place the contents in individual bags that will be numbered with the locker number. These bags will be secured and held for two weeks and then thrown out.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and Found articles should be taken to the cafeteria. Very often, articles are turned in but never returned to the owner because marks of identification are not visible on the items. Therefore, please put your name on all your books, hats, jackets, etc. At the end of the school year, all unclaimed lost and found items are donated to a charitable organization.

### **THE CAFETERIA**

The school cafeteria serves lunch each school day. A limited breakfast program is conducted in the high school cafeteria before the lunch periods begin each day. No food or drinks are to be taken out of the cafeteria. The elimination of food in the building, except in the cafeteria area, is critical to our efforts to control and eliminate insects and rodents.

### ***CAFETERIA REGULATIONS***

- No student will be permitted into the cafeteria unless it is their assigned lunch period or study hall period.
- Any student throwing food/drink in the cafeteria will be assigned an after school detention.
- Students must line up in an orderly fashion to buy food, drinks, or snacks.
- Students must clean up after themselves and dispose of all garbage in the proper receptacle as soon as they have finished their lunch.
- Students are not permitted to carry food, drinks, or snacks out of the cafeteria.
- Students may not sit on window sills or radiator covers.
- Students are not permitted to stand by the doors; it creates a health and safety issue. Students must remain at their tables until the bell rings.
- The federally-subsided school-lunch program prohibits outside vendors from delivering food to students during times in which the school cafeteria is in

operation. This does not prohibit students from bringing their own lunch from home.

- When weather permits and lunchtime supervisors deem it appropriate, students may be permitted to eat their lunch on the outside patio. The same rules of behavior and requirements for maintaining cleanliness apply. Students are reminded that this is a supervised dining area and not a recreational space.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SCHOOL ISSUED MATERIALS**

Students are responsible for safeguarding chromebooks, textbooks, calculators, and other instructional materials that are issued to them by the school. All materials must be returned in good condition to the teacher who issued them. Students who lose materials are responsible for paying a reasonable replacement cost or for providing the school with an approved replacement item.

It is the responsibility of each student to respect the property of the school district and protect the investment of Port Jefferson School District taxpayers. Your cooperation in this regard is anticipated and appreciated.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

By law, lock down and fire drills are conducted periodically at unannounced times throughout the year. Your teacher will provide you with specific directions, and your cooperation is expected. Students are to remain quiet and remain with their teacher during an emergency.

Any time the fire alarm sounds all students and staff must leave the building.  
**Tampering with the fire alarm is a violation of state and local law.**

### **PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES AND/OR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Participants are expected to sustain the highest academic standards of which they are capable. In addition, they are expected to conduct themselves properly both with respect to general citizenship and relations with students and adults.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION**

When a student receives detention, it must be served on the day assigned. Rescheduling a detention assigned for an attendance related circumstance may be considered when extra-ordinary circumstances exist, such as a medical appointment or work schedule. Students, who receive a disciplinary DETENTION, ISS, or OSS, are not permitted to participate in after-school activities on the day of the DETENTION, ISS, or OSS.

Students must be present in school for at least five class periods where attendance is taken to participate in after-school activities and athletics.

### **ILLNESS AND FIRST AID**

When you become ill in class or are in need of first aid, you are to ask for permission to go to the Nurse's Office. A student, who misses a class because of illness and does not report to the nurse, will be considered cutting that class. Parents should make certain that emergency contact information is kept up to date. In an extreme emergency, students may go directly to the nurse and the nurse will inform the Attendance Office. Both the teacher and the office will have a record of students who go to the Health Office during the school day. (State Law requires that students meet all immunization requirements.)

### **MEDICATION POLICY**

It is the policy and practice of the District that no student shall be permitted to bring, onto the grounds of the school or carry on his/her person, any prescription or non-prescription medication, unless brought to the Nurse's Office accompanied by a signed doctor's note and prescription bottle for administration and safekeeping. The administering of medication during school hours may be done by the school nurse or by the parent.

### **WORKING PAPERS**

Working papers are necessary for all students under the age of 18 years of age to work after-school hours and during the summer months. Please see the secretaries in the Main Office for the necessary forms.

### **VISITORS TO SCHOOL**

Parents/guardians, student teachers and representatives from organizations are welcome to visit the school. To ensure the safety of our students and staff, all visitors must have an appointment and obtain a visitor's pass, at the Front Desk in the lobby of the main entrance, and proceed directly to their authorized destination. A visitor must present photo identification and will be asked to wear a "visitor's pass" while in the building. Visitors will be escorted to their destination by school staff.

Graduates are welcome to visit the high school, but should plan their visits after the school day ends. After-school visits do not require an appointment; however students are encouraged to contact, beforehand, the teacher(s) they wish to visit in order to ensure that they are available. Because of teachers' schedules and building security concerns, alumni are prohibited from visiting during the school day, unless they have previously made a specific appointment with a former teacher/counselor. Graduates who have made such an appointment must be met at the front desk by the faculty member, remain with that teacher throughout the visit, and be walked back to the security desk by the teacher when the visit is over. E.L. Vandermeulen High School

is equipped to provide only for its own students, not those from other schools or communities. Friends on vacation, cousins not in school, and other non-students will not be allowed to visit during school hours.

### **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE**

Drugs, drug paraphernalia, and alcoholic substances have no place in the school. A person found with these in school will face strong disciplinary action.

In addition to students being given out-of-school suspension, all instances involving the use and possession and/or sale of drugs/alcohol on campus will be reported to the police. The District Comprehensive Substance Use/Abuse Policy [5312.4] will be enforced and may result in exclusion from school.

### **SMOKING/VAPING POLICY**

The Port Jefferson School District Code of Conduct prohibits the use of any tobacco/vaporizer products on school grounds or property. In addition, New York State Public Health Law Article 13E, Section 225, prohibits the use of tobacco/vaporizer products on school grounds or any vehicle used in transporting students to and from school.

Due to the health hazards associated with smoking/vaping and in accordance with policy, smoking or carrying a lit cigarette or the use of any tobacco substance, including an electronic cigarette/vaporizer, by a student while in school, on school grounds, in a school bus or at any school sponsored function or activity is not permitted.

Students using such items will be disciplined according to the code of conduct. Furthermore, students caught smoking/vaping may also be referred to the Suffolk County Health Department, which will issue a notice of Preliminary Hearing or impose a fine not to exceed \$500.

### **FIGHTING**

Ordinarily when a fight occurs, it has roots in some problem before the outbreak of the fight. Therefore, students should seek the help of their parent(s), administration, guidance counselor, teacher, or any staff member for advice as soon as possible to avoid a physical conflict.

Since it is often impossible to determine who started a fight, both students will be suspended out of school for one to five days for a "cooling off" period as determined by the Principal.

Parents will be called and letters of suspension will be hand delivered.

A second offense of fighting may result in further penalties from school after a Superintendent's Hearing. An unprovoked assault may be followed by legal charges and may result in further penalties from school after a Superintendent's Hearing.

### **PLAGIARISM**

All high school students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity at all times. If a high school student is found to have cheated, he/she will be subject to the penalties established by the Code of Conduct. Cheating/plagiarism is defined as, but not limited to, the following:

- Identical papers (assignments) submitted by students.
- Submitting another student's work as your own (homework, papers, take-home tests, projects).
- Downloading any portion of, or an entire work, from the Internet without proper attribution.
- Copying from another student's paper, quiz or test in class.

### **STUDENT SALES**

Under no circumstances are students to engage in the sale of any item on school grounds for private profit. Sales of items for fundraising purposes must be approved by the administration.

### **VANDALISM**

Damage to school property will be treated severely. The costs of repair will be charged to students involved. Suspension and police contact may result.

### **BEHAVIOR ON THE SCHOOL BUS**

Pupils being transported to-and-from school are under the authority of the driver of the school bus. Refusal to obey bus rules will be reported to school officials and students may be refused transportation privileges. All students must use the following precautions when being transported by the district:

- Upon leaving the bus, pupils should walk around in front of it and cross immediately upon receiving the driver's signal.
- Always remain seated until the bus stops.
- Do not extend head or arms out of window.
- Do not run alongside the bus when it is in operation.
- Help keep the bus clean. Do not damage bus equipment.

- At all times within the bus itself, such order must be maintained which will not, in any way, interfere with the proper control of the bus by the driver.
- Smoking/vaping is not permitted on the school bus.

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### ***CAFETERIA***

Each student is expected to practice the general rules of good manners, which one should find in the home. All foods are to be kept in the cafeteria and patio area.

### ***LIBRARY***

Students are encouraged to make use of the many opportunities to expand their knowledge through the use of the library whenever possible. Students may use the library after school or during their study hall periods by showing the librarian a pass signed by one of their teachers. Since it is the right of everyone to be able to study or work in the library in a quiet atmosphere, students who are noisy or disruptive will be asked to leave the library and may be denied future access.

### ***GYMNASIUM***

No one may use the gymnasium without permission and supervision.

## **OFF-LIMITS**

Students may use no other area of the campus during school hours. Students are not allowed to use the lower field in front of the building unless they have the permission of the administration, nor are students allowed to congregate in the gymnasium lobby. Students found in an unauthorized area on school grounds or found in areas without adult supervision may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## **DETENTION**

Detention is part of the high school's student-management system. Detentions are assigned to students as a result of any number of infractions or violation of school rules. All detentions are after school unless other arrangements have been made.

The rules for detention are as follows:

### ***TIME AND DATE***

If the detention is not served on the date indicated, the detention time will be doubled. A student should see the assistant principal prior to his/her detention date if there are any problems.

Failure to serve detentions will result in probable suspension for insubordination and or loss of eligibility for extra-curricular activities and athletics.

Detention is to begin at the end of the school day (2:30 p.m.) Students will be dismissed from detention at 3:55 p.m.

### ***BEHAVIOR WHILE IN DETENTION***

Students are expected to bring meaningful work to the detention room. Students, with no work, may be asked to leave and return another day. Disruptive students will receive an additional detention and a phone call home will be made by the detention supervisor. If a student causes a problem, the detention supervisor will do the following:

- A warning will be given to the student.
- If a student continues to be disruptive, a referral will be written and further disciplinary action will be taken.
- If the behavior necessitates the student's leaving the detention room, the student will serve in-school suspension on another day or two additional detentions.

In all cases, failure to follow the directions of the detention supervisor may result in immediate suspension out of school.

### **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

All students are bound by the Port Jefferson Code of Conduct. The following are general consequences for inappropriate behavior. In addition, any student participating in an extracurricular activity including athletics are expected to abide by the *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* handbook. Disciplinary procedures include but are not limited to:

#### ***PROBATION***

A student may be placed on a daily or weekly probation system. The student must be evaluated by his/her teachers in all of his/her classes and show this evaluation to his/her parents, an administrator and guidance counselor.

#### ***SUSPENSION FROM CLASS***

An administrator may request that a student not be allowed to return to regular classes. The student's class work will be sent to the student in the detention area. He/she will not be allowed to leave this area without permission.

#### ***OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION***

Students may be suspended from regular classes and required to stay home in the custody of their parents for a serious violation of the school's regulations or any series of behavioral violations that show a pattern or serious misconduct. During any period of out-of-school suspension, the student is also prohibited from coming onto school property, except for the purpose of keeping prearranged appointments, excluding extracurricular activities.

The Port Jefferson Code of Conduct is included below for your review.

## **PORT JEFFERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Message from the Superintendent**

The Port Jefferson School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive, and district personnel may deliver, quality educational services without disruption or inference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers and other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

Port Jefferson has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

The school district recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline when necessary is administered promptly and fairly. To this end, the Port Jefferson School District adopts this code of conduct. Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents, and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

The following is a summary of the Port Jefferson School District's Code of Conduct. The Elementary, Middle, and High Schools each have a complete version available for your review. Please call the appropriate school principal's office if you would like to obtain one.

### ***STUDENT RIGHTS***

The Port Jefferson School District is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition to promoting a safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment, all students have the right to:

- Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty as in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
- Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

### ***STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES***

All students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is

- conductive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, all policies, rules, and regulations dealing with student conduct.
  - Attend school every day, unless legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
  - Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
  - React to directions given by teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
  - Work to develop mechanisms to control their anger.
  - Ask questions when meaning is not understood.
  - Seek help in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary measures.
  - Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
  - Accept responsibility for their actions.
  - Conduct themselves as representatives of their school when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

## ***ESSENTIAL PARTNERS***

### **A. PARENTS**

All parents are expected to:

- Recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the community.
- Send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
- Ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Ensured absences are excused.
- Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
- Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
- Know school rules and help their children understand them.
- Convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
- Build good relationships with teachers, other parents, and their children's friends.
- Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
- Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
- Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.

### **B. TEACHERS**

All teachers are expected to:

- Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity, which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn.
- Be prepared to teach.
- Demonstrate interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
- Know policies and rules, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Communicate to students and parents:
  - Course objectives and requirements
  - Marking/grading procedures
  - Assignment deadlines
  - Expectations for students
  - Classroom discipline plan
  - Communicate regularly with students, parents, and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.

#### C. **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

All guidance counselors are expected to:

- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- Initiate teacher/student/counselor conference and parent/teacher/student/counselor conference as necessary as a way to resolve problems.
- Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plans.
- Provide information to assist students with career planning.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.

#### D. **PRINCIPALS**

- Promote a safe, orderly, and stimulating school-environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Ensure that school students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the principal and approach the principal for redress of grievances.
- Evaluate, on a regular basis, all school instructional programs.
- Support the development of, and student participation in, appropriate extracurricular activities.
- Be responsible for enforcing the school code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

#### E. **SUPERINTENDENT**

- Promote a safe, orderly, and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Review with district administrators the policies of the Board of Education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.

- Inform the Board of Education about educational trends relating to student discipline.
- Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- Work with district administrators in enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to give attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable dress and appearance. Teachers and all other personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up, and nails shall:

- Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Recognize that extremely brief garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and see through garments are not appropriate, as well as a tee shirt with an inappropriate message.
- Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
- Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
- Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities, including clothing depicting specific colors which may mean a membership or association with a specific gang.
- Wearing of hats indoors at the high school will be at the discretion of the teacher. Wearing of hats at the middle school is prohibited.

The principal shall be responsible for informing all students and their parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revision to the dress code made during the school year.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending items, and if necessary or practical replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject for further discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES/CLUBS/SPORTS**

The student activities program at Earl L. Vandermeulen High School is varied and extensive. There is ample opportunity to get involved in activities that are of interest to members of our student body. Time spent in school can be much more rewarding and fun for the student who becomes involved in some of the many activities offered in our school.

The student activities program is constantly growing and changing. Every year some activities are dropped and new ones added to keep pace with changing student interests and needs. A list of the current clubs and organizations is listed below:

|                             |                          |                              |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Academic Team               | Latin Club               | Rotary-Interact Club         |
| Art Club Mathletes          | Leo Club                 | SCIMATECH (Science Olympiad) |
| Chamber Choir               | LISEC                    | STEM at SB                   |
| Drama Club                  | MAST (literary magazine) | Tri-M Honor Society          |
| Gay-Straight Alliance       | Musical Productions      | Varsity Club                 |
| International Language Club | National Honor Society   | Yearbook                     |
| Investment Club             | Peer Leadership          | Yoga Club                    |
| Jazz Club                   | Robotics Club            |                              |

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

The students of the Earl L. Vandermeulen High School have established a student government in order to provide students and faculty with a better means of working together.

The membership of this Student Organization shall consist of all bona fide members of the student body. Faculty advisors will be appointed.

### **Student Organization Offices**

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Historian  
Representative to the  
Board of Education  
Representative to the  
Shared Decision Team  
Representative to the PTSA

### **Class Offices**

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Historian

All candidates for Student Organization offices must be members of the Earl L. Vandermeulen High School student body; no person shall be a candidate who does not intend to remain in attendance at Earl L. Vandermeulen High School throughout the term of the office for which he/she is a candidate.

All those students running for other offices of the student organization shall be members of the Earl L. Vandermeulen High School at the time of the elections, which shall be in May.

### **INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Earl L. Vandermeulen High School is fortunate to be able to provide a wide range of interscholastic athletic opportunities for all students.

#### **Fall Sports include:**

Boys: Football, Soccer, Cross Country and Golf

Girls: Field Hockey, Tennis, Cross Country, Soccer and Volleyball, Cheerleading

#### **Winter Sports include:**

Boys: Basketball, Wrestling and Track

Girls: Basketball, Cheerleading and Track

#### **Spring Sports include:**

Boys: Baseball, Track & Field, Lacrosse, and Tennis

Girls: Track & Field, Lacrosse, and Softball

Note: All students, who wish to participate in any level of interscholastic sports, must have a physical examination by the school district's doctor prior to the sports' season. In addition, all students must qualify under the eligibility standard of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.

Students, who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress, will be placed on academic probation for a period of two weeks. At the end of this period, the principal will re-evaluate the student's academic progress and attendance. Unless adequate progress is demonstrated, the student will be declared to be ineligible for athletic participation. Each student-athlete and parent/guardian is required to attend one (1) Code of Conduct meeting per year.

## **STUDENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

The Board of Education and school administration is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equality. We recognize that discrimination, such as harassment, hazing, and bullying, are detrimental to student learning and achievement. These behaviors interfere with the mission of the district to educate its students and disrupt the operation of the schools. Such behavior affects not only the student who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

To this end, we condemn and strictly prohibit all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing, and bullying on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs, and events.

Discrimination, harassment, hazing, or bullying that takes place at locations outside of school grounds which can be reasonably expected to materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school or impinge on the rights of other students are prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

### ***DEFINITIONS***

**Bullying** is understood to be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. In order to facilitate implementation of this policy, provide meaningful guidance, and prevent behaviors from rising to a violation of law, this policy will use the term bullying (which is usually subsumed under the term "harassment") to describe a range of misbehaviors such as harassment, hazing, intimidation, or discrimination. The accompanying regulation provides more guidance regarding the definition and characteristics of bullying.

**Discrimination** is the act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment, or access to facilities available to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class, or category to which that person belongs (as enumerated in the Definitions section, under Harassment, below).

**Hazing** is an induction, initiation, or membership process involving harassment which produces public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule, or creates a situation where public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury, or public ridicule is likely to occur.

**Harassment** has been defined in various ways in federal and state law and regulation. The Board recognizes that these definitions are important standards, but the Board's goal is to prevent misbehavior from escalating in order to promote a positive school environment and to limit liability. The Dignity for All Students Act (§§10-18 of Education Law) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical

safety. The harassing behavior may be based on any characteristic, including but not limited to a person's actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National origin
- Ethnic group
- Religion
- Religious practice
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender (including gender identity and expression)

In some instances, bullying or harassment may constitute a violation of an individual's civil rights. The district is mindful of its responsibilities under the law and in accordance with district policy regarding civil rights protections.

### ***PREVENTION***

The school setting provides an opportunity to teach children and emphasize among staff, that cooperation with and respect for others is a key district value. Our school's program is geared to prevention and designed to not only decrease incidents of bullying but to help students build more supportive relationships with one another by integrating the bullying prevention program into classroom instruction. Staff members and students are sensitized, through district-wide professional development and instruction, to the warning signs of bullying, as well as to their responsibility to become actively involved in the prevention of bullying before overt acts occur.

Curricular material that raises awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment and civility in the relationships of people of different races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, sexes or gender expression or identities are included in the instructional program.

In order to implement this program the Board designates at its annual organizational meeting a Dignity Act Coordinator. The role of the Dignity Act Coordinator is to coordinate and enforce this policy. In addition, the Superintendent establishes a district-wide DASA Committee, as well as building level DASA designee in each school that is overseen by the Dignity Act Coordinator. Committees will include representation from staff, administration, students, and parents. The district-wide task force and the school-level committee assist the administration in developing and implementing specific prevention initiatives, including early identification of bullying and other strategies. In addition, the program includes reporting, investigating, remedying, and tracking allegations of bullying.

### ***INTERVENTION***

Intervention by adults and bystanders is an important step in preventing escalation and resolving issues at the earliest stages. Intervention will emphasize education and skill-building.

Successful intervention may involve remediation. Remedial responses to bullying and harassment include measures designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and protect the target. Remediation may be

targeted to the individual(s) involved in the bullying behavior or environmental approaches which are targeted to the school or district as a whole.

In addition, intervention focus is on the safety of the target. Staff is expected, when aware of bullying, to either refer the student to designated resources for assistance, or to intervene in accordance with this policy and regulation.

### ***PROVISIONS FOR STUDENTS WHO DO NOT FEEL SAFE AT SCHOOL***

The Board and school administration acknowledge that, notwithstanding actions taken by district staff, intervention may require a specific coordinated approach if the child does not feel safe at school. Students, who do not feel safe at school, are limited in their capacity to learn and reach their academic potential. Staff, when aware of bullying, should determine if accommodations are needed in order to help ensure the safety of the student and bring this to the attention of the building principal. The building principal, other appropriate staff, the student, and the student's parent will work together to define and implement any needed accommodations.

The district recognizes that there is a need to balance accommodations which enhances student safety against the potential to further stigmatize the targeted student. Therefore, each case will be handled individually. The student, parent/guardian, and school administration will collaborate to establish safety provisions that best meet the needs of the targeted student. Follow-up discussion and/or meetings will be scheduled, as needed, to ensure that safety concerns have been adequately addressed and to determine when and if accommodations need to be changed or discontinued.

### ***TRAINING***

The Board and administration recognize that in order to implement an effective bullying prevention and intervention program, professional development is needed. The Superintendent, the DASA Coordinator and the District Professional Development Committee incorporate training to support this program in new teacher orientation and the annual professional development plan, as needed. Training opportunities are provided for all staff, including but not limited to bus drivers, cafeteria, and hall monitors and all staff who have contact with students. The DASA Coordinator is trained in accordance with state requirements and continues their professional development so as to successfully support this policy and program.

### ***REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION***

Although it can be difficult to step forward, the district can't effectively address bullying if incidents are not reported. Students who have been bullied, parents whose children have been bullied or other students or staff who observe bullying behavior are encouraged and expected to make a verbal and/or written complaint to any school personnel in accordance with the training and guidelines provided. At all times, complaints will be documented, tracked and handled in accordance with existing regulations and procedures , or, if applicable, [0100, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination, or 0110, Sexual Harassment] and the district's Code of Conduct.

There is a duty for all school personnel to report any incidents of student-to-student and staff-to-student bullying that they observe to their building principal or other

administrator who supervises their employment. In addition, there is a further duty for all school personnel to report any incidents of student-to-student and staff-to-student bullying of which they are made aware by students to their building principals or other administrator who supervises their employment. Supervisors will refer the information to appropriate district staff for investigation as designated in regulation. A district employee may be deemed to have permitted unlawful discrimination or harassment if he/she fails to report an observed incident, whether or not the target complains.

The results of the investigation shall be reported back to both the target and the accused in accordance with existing regulation. If either of the parties disagrees with the results of the investigation, they can appeal the findings in accordance with the regulations.

### ***DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES/REMEDATION***

While the focus of this policy is on prevention, bullying acts may still occur. In these cases, offenders will be given the clear message that their actions are wrong and the behavior must improve. Student offenders will receive in-school guidance in making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration in accordance with the district's Code of Conduct, as applicable. If the behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors, and will be consistent with the district's Code of Conduct.

### ***NON-RETALIATION***

All complainants and those who participate in the investigation of a complaint in conformity with state law and district policies, who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

### ***DISSEMINATION, MONITORING, REVIEW, AND REPORTING***

The Board policy, or a plain-language summary, is published in student registration materials, student, parent and employee handbooks, and posted on the district's website. A bullying complaint form will be available on the district's website.

The Board receives the annual VADIR report, for each building and for the district as whole, with particular attention to the trends in the incidence of bullying. In addition, the Board receives on an annual basis a more detailed report of the number of bullying incidents that occur, disaggregated by school, student demographic information and type of incident. Based on the review of the data, the Board may consider further action, including, but not limited to, modification of this policy and additional training.

The district ensures that reporting of information to the public will be in a manner that complies with student-privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board of Education and school administration expect all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel, and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel, who interact with students, use disciplinary action only when necessary and place emphasis on educating students so that they may grow in self-discipline.

We recognize the need to make its expectations for student conduct, while on school property or engaged in a school function, specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the consequences for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:
  - Running in hallways.
  - Making unreasonable noise.
  - Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
  - Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  - Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  - Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
  - Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
  
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct, to not limited to:
  - Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  - Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
  - Skipping detention.
  
- C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of disruptive conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators, or other school personnel in charge of students.
  - Inappropriate public sexual contact.
  - Display or use of personal electronic devices, such as, but not limited to, cell phones, I-pods, and digital cameras, in a manner that is in violation of district policy.
- D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of conduct include, but are not limited to:
- Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
  - Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
  - Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
  - Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
  - Threatening to use any weapon.
  - Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
  - Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
- E. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, physical, or mental health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:
- Subjecting other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury.
  - Stealing or attempting to steal the property of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
  - Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
  - Discrimination, which includes using race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender (identity and expression), sexual orientation, weight or disability to deny rights, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to others.
  - Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning. Harassment (or bullying) is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or threats, intimidation or abuse. (See policy, 0115, Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention for a more complete definition.)
  - Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.

- Bullying, this may be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. (See policy 0115 for a more complete definition.)
  - Hazing, this includes an induction, initiation, or membership process involving harassment (see policy 0115 for a more complete definition).
  - Selling, using, distributing, or possessing obscene material.
  - Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing, or swearing.
  - Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe, or using chewing or smokeless tobacco or vaping.
  - Possessing, consuming, selling, offering, manufacturing, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any synthetic version thereof, whether specifically illegal or not, commonly referred to as "designer drugs" which are substances designed and synthesized to mimic the intended effects and usages of, which are chemically substantially similar to, illegal drugs, which may or may not be labeled for human consumption.
  - Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  - Gambling.
  - Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
  - Initiating a report warning of fire, or other catastrophes without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
- F. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses, to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, and fighting will not be tolerated.
- G. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:
- Plagiarism
  - Cheating
  - Copying
  - Altering records
  - Assisting another student in any of the above actions
- H. Engage in off-campus misconduct that interferes with, or can reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process in the school or at a school function. Examples of such misconduct include, but are not limited to threatening or harassing students or school personnel through any means off-campus, including cyberbullying. (For a complete definition of harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying refer to Policy 0115, Student Harassment and Prevention and Intervention)