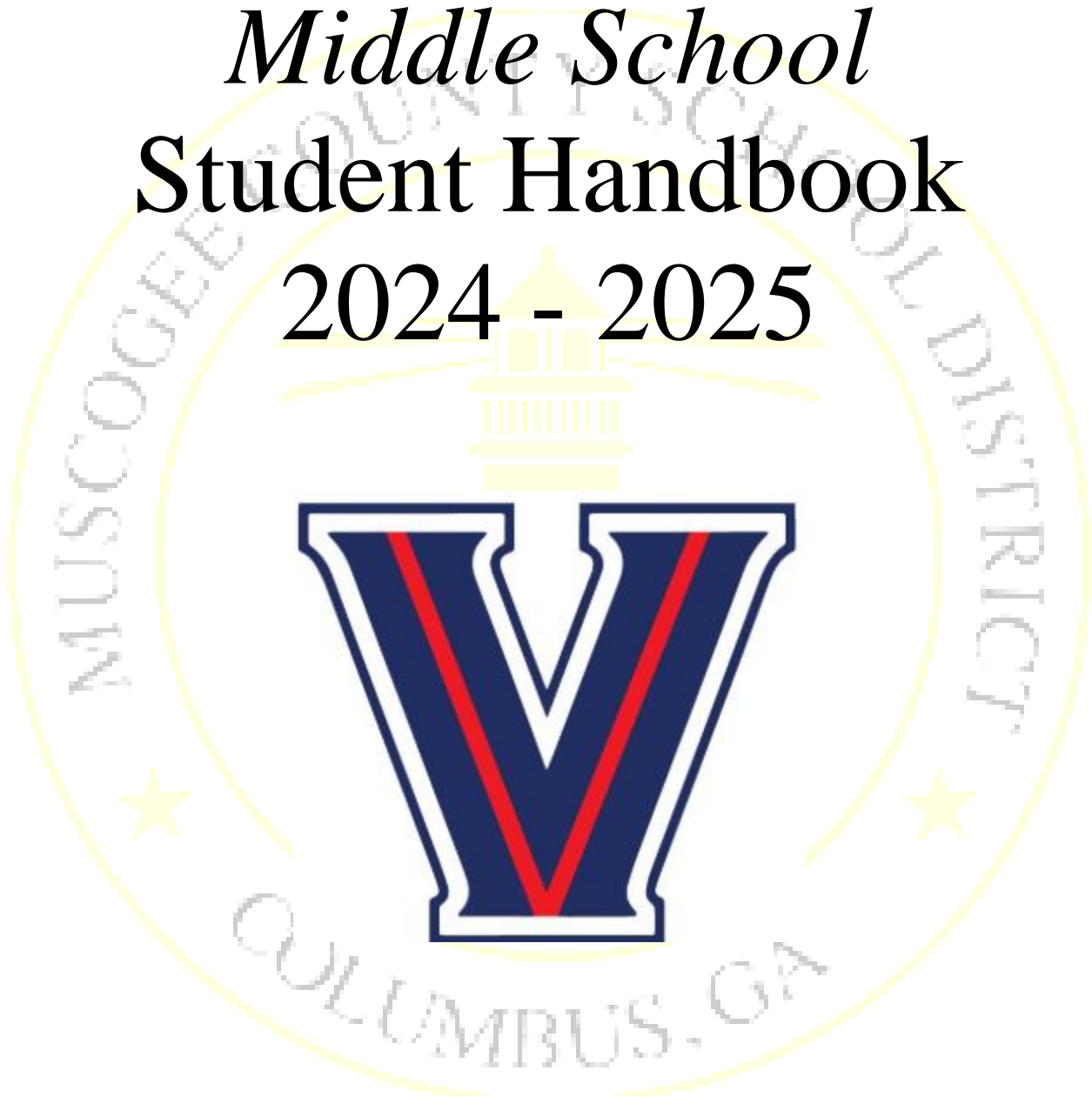


*Veterans Memorial
Middle School*
Student Handbook
2024 - 2025



Rangers Lead the Way

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“Our Core Business is Student Achievement”



Principal's Message

Dear Rangers:

I am honored and thrilled to be the principal at VMMS! I am excited to welcome each of you back to a new school year! Our goal at VMMS is to create a culture where students achieve at high levels, are proud of being part of the Veterans' Family, and enjoy coming to school. My vision, as the principal, is always to put students first and make decisions in the best interest of all students. My personal belief is that every student is one caring adult away from being a success story. As educators, we need to build appropriate relationships with our students and families in order to work collaboratively to ensure every child reaches their full potential. Veterans Memorial Middle School is a special place. We are all a part of **Team Veterans**. Our team has one purpose and it is to be the best in every aspect. **Rangers lead the way!**

Student success is attributed to the partnership and the relationships we build within our community. It truly does take a village! As a parent or guardian you are a part of **Team Veterans**. In this handbook you will find vital information that will be important throughout the school year. The policies and procedures found in this handbook have been developed with staff, student, and community input. The purpose of the policies and procedures are to create a learning environment where instruction is prioritized and student safety is the top priority. I encourage you to review this handbook with your child to start the year. Education is a joint venture, and we greatly appreciate the support you provide for your children at home and at school.

If there is anything that I can be of assistance with, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to working with you and your child to have the best school year possible!

Sincerely,
Mr. Robert R. Ogburn
Principal

COLUMBUS, GA

Mission

Our mission is to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.

Vision

The MCSD and Veterans Memorial Middle School is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued, and inspired.

Values

MCSD and Veterans Memorial Middle School foster a healthy organization where...

- **WE embrace equity and diversity**
- **WE hold ourselves and others to the same high standards**
- **WE commit to continuous learning and improvement**
- **WE treat everyone with dignity and respect**

...as WE serve the needs of others

Strategic Anchors

WE will make decisions

- **That benefit student achievement**
- **That are fiscally responsible with an eye on return on investment**
- **That invest in stakeholders**
- **That promote equity and access**

GENERAL INFORMATION

People You Will Want to Get to Know

Principal	<u>Mr. Ogburn</u>
Assistant Principal	<u>Mrs. Ellis</u>
School Secretary	<u>Ms. Gardner</u>
Discipline Dean	<u>Mr. Dean</u>
Counselor	<u>Mrs. Bender</u>
Media Center Specialist	<u>Mrs. DuBose</u>

Guide for Students

IF YOU NEED...

GO TO...

Tardy Pass	Front Office Personnel
Announcements	Front Office Personnel
Bus Pass or Information	Front Office Personnel
Attendance Information	Front Office/Counselor
Personal Guidance	Counselor & Academic Dean
To Be Listened To	Teachers, Counselor, & Admin
To Report Theft or Vandalism	Teachers, Counselor, & Admin
Lost and Found	Custodian/Front Office

Positive Behavior Intervention School (PBIS)

PBIS is an evidence based, data driven framework that seeks to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase a school's sense of safety, improve school climate, and support improved academic outcomes.

Veterans Memorial's PBIS acronym is GRIT. GRIT stands for Growth Mindset, Respectful, Integrity, and Teachable. Social emotional lessons are used to incorporate GRIT. Student behavior is rewarded weekly at the school level for students who display GRIT.

Attendance

As educators, we believe that daily classroom attendance is an important component of student achievement. The state of Georgia recognizes certain reasons for student absences that are excused. Moreover, it is our position that neither the student nor the teacher should be penalized for absences over which they have no control. **The school will only excuse up to eight handwritten notes from parents for the year. After the eighth handwritten excuse, the school will request official documentation which includes medical or legal documentation for the absence to be excused.**

The only excused absences are for (1) personal illness, (2) serious illness of an immediate family member, (3) death in the immediate family, and (4) observance of a religious holiday.

The faculty of Veterans Memorial Middle School acknowledges that often, excursions in the form of family vacations are of educational value. However, **family trips are deemed unexcused and must be recorded as such.** For the teachers to be of assistance to the student, the school must be notified in advance of the dates of the trip so that assignments can be made available to the student. Parents should realize that these assignments are tentative since situations arise daily which may require teachers to alter their lesson plans. **A letter from the parent should be presented to the school principal before the planned absence.**

Students have 3 days to make up work if the absence is excused. If the absence is unexcused the student will not be allowed to make up graded work. When the number of absences reaches 16 days, the student may be considered for retention.

VMMS Unexcused Absence Policy:

For work missed during absences due to prearranged unexcused trips, the student is responsible for the following:

- Staying current with his/her classes and completing assignments
- Taking tests over material covered during his/her absence if the teacher so desires
- If an assignment sheet is given before the absence, it is expected to be turned in the day the student returns.

VMMS Unexcused Tardy Policy:

- Any tardy after 8:10 AM that is not accompanied by a doctor's excuse or a written excuse from parent/guardian is considered to be unexcused.
- After three unexcused tardies: Parents will receive an automated call
- After five unexcused tardies: Student will be referred to the school counselor and parents will be notified via a letter of the situation.
- After ten unexcused tardies: Student and parents will be referred to the social worker and support agencies outside of MCSD as the principal deems necessary.

Bringing Money or Valuables to School

Students are not to bring valuables or large sums of money to school. For students who bring valuables and money to the school, the student and his/her parents assume the risk. This is to include cell phones, air pods, and other electronic devices. **If these items are misplaced, lost, or stolen, the school will not be held liable for the loss. School personnel will not be responsible for searching for lost items.**

Bus Riders

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE!

- Improper conduct on the bus will result in that privilege being denied.
- Students riding a bus will be expected to ride to their designated location.
- Each bus driver has complete charge of students riding the school bus.
- The Student Conduct Behavior Code rules apply.
- Students who refuse to obey the bus rules and comply with the bus driver will be disciplined and may forfeit their right to ride the bus.
- Student behavior on school buses is considered an extension of school behavior.
- Students who fail to respond to the directions of the bus driver shall be reported to the school principal, or another school designee, who may deny the student bus transportation.
- **Fighting on the bus may result in permanent suspension from the bus regardless of the number of offenses.**

If problems arise, parents are not to confront the bus driver at the bus stop. They should make an appointment with the Transportation Department (706-748-2000) to discuss the matter.

A REQUEST MAY BE MADE TO RIDE ANOTHER BUS*:

- Must be a signed handwritten request by the parent or guardian of the student
- **Must be turned in to the front office by the end of the first period**

- If a student plans to ride the bus home with a student, spend the night, then ride the bus with the student to school the next morning **please reflect those dates and times in the request.**
- This privilege will only be extended if there is space on the desired bus.

***Bus drivers are not allowed to transport students without an approved note signed by a school administrator.**

Bus changes are approved for one day – **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

The Muscogee County School District Transportation Office **ONLY** may approve long-term bus change requests.

Car Rider Policies & Procedures

NO PARKING IN THE CAR LOOP (7:30 am - 8:10 am & 2:50 pm - 3:40pm)

- Please be patient and courteous of all school personnel and volunteers. They are given instructions for car rider procedures and are trying to expedite traffic and ensure the safety of your child. You should follow any directions given by staff regarding pick up.
- At Veterans Memorial, students are either car riders or bus riders. Students who are a car rider must be picked up in the car rider line.
- The car loop is for student pick-up only. If you need to come into the building, please park in the parking lot.
- At no time are parents allowed to park or ride on the grass. This damages our sprinkler system and costs the school money.
- You are prohibited from dropping off or picking up your child in the bus loop area.
- Please do not smoke or play loud music during pick up. Remember, all schools are Tobacco Free Zones.
- Car Tags are issued during registration. Parents or guardians without a car tag will be asked to come into the office to provide identification prior to picking the student up.
- Please display car tags on the driver side.
- Cars displaying stickers with any inappropriate content are asked to have the stickers covered or removed before entering school grounds.

AM Drop off

- Students may enter the building at 7:40 am
- Students are required to remain in their vehicle until 7:40 am.
- Students are not allowed to be outside the school unsupervised prior to 7:40 am.
- As students enter the building at 7:40 am they should report to the gym/cafeteria (if eating breakfast) and wait to be released to their 1st-period class. Students must be in their 1st-period class by 8:10 am, when the tardy bell rings.

- **Please pull forward as far as possible in the car loop and have your child exit the car as quickly as possible from the passenger side.**
- **Students must dispose of all outside food and drinks prior to entering the school.**

PM PICK UP

- If you arrive before 3:00 pm for pick up, please do not park in the driveway. Please stop at the beginning of the driveway, on Old Guard Road in the right-hand lane. The turning lane must be open for emergency vehicles, parents coming for meetings or early pick-up. Cars will be released at 3:00 pm to come down the driveway and car loop. This is a safety issue; therefore no cars can park in the driveway or loop, blocking normal traffic.
- All vehicles should have their car rider tag displayed on the driver's side dashboard area for pickup.
- Vehicles without a car tag will be asked to enter the school and show identification prior to picking up students.
- Pull as far forward in the loop as possible, and your child will be sent around to you.
- You will be asked to park in the parking lot and wait on your child if your child is not present at the car rider area when you arrive.
- Students will not be allowed to check out after 2:40 pm so that the school can prepare for dismissal.
- Please be watchful of students crossing the road. Drive slowly.
- Remind your child to pay attention, be orderly, and look out for your arrival.
- Students will not be allowed to be picked up on Old Guard Road. This is a safety concern for many reasons. All parents are required to come through the car loop to pick up students.
- Students are NOT allowed to walk to the Recreation Center after school.
- Thank you for helping ensure that traffic runs smoothly and safely. Expect traffic to be heavy and delayed the first week of school.
- **Students should be picked up NO LATER than 3:30 pm.** Parents who neglect securing transportation for their child may be referred to Social Services.

CHANGES IN STUDENT PICK UP

- **Changes in a student's mode of transportation need to be made to the front office staff by 2:30 pm. Please contact the front office at (706) 748-3203.**
- Students will not be allowed to change their way home without a parent contact to the front office.

Rituals and Routines

Morning Routine

- Upon arriving at school, students are to enter the building (once the building opens at 7:40 am) and report to their 1st period or the cafeteria for breakfast.
- At 8:00 am students from the cafeteria will be released to their 1st period class.
- **Veterans Memorial does not use hallway lockers.**
- **Students are allowed to carry one backpack with them throughout the day.**
- At 8:10 am all students must be in their 1st period class.
- If students are in the hallway at 8:10 am they are considered tardy and should report to the front office for a pass.

Hallway Etiquette

- Students must walk on the right side of the hallway when transitioning to class.
- Students need to move quickly and quietly in the halls.
- Cell phones, headphones/earbuds, and other electronic devices are NOT allowed in the hallways or classrooms. If a staff member sees a student with an electronic device, the electronic device policy WILL BE enforced.

Classroom Rituals and Routines

- Enter the classroom quickly and quietly.
- Go directly to your seat and begin working under the teacher's instructions.
- Answer clearly when the teacher calls the roll.
- Wait to be dismissed by the teacher at the end of the class period
- Cell phones, electronic devices, and headphones should not be visible. If visible, it will be confiscated and subject to the VMMS Cell Phone and Electronic Policy.

Clinic

Veterans Memorial has a **part-time** clinic worker who supervises the clinic. Students who are ill will report to the clinic. The school does not supply any medication. If a student is on daily medication, this medication must be supplied in the original container (no loose pills in a baggie). This prescription medication (including inhalers) must have a copy of the pharmacy label attached. This serves as the doctor's signature. These medications are to be delivered to the front office where the student will be responsible for returning during the day to take his/her medication. The parent must complete a special form/document before medication can be administered at school including over-the-counter medication. Medication brought in by students must be taken to the front office immediately upon arrival at school. Only parents may pick up medications from the clinic. Students in possession of medication of any kind will be referred to the Discipline Tribunal.

***All students will participate in Scoliosis screening unless parents notify the school before the screening.**

***Immunization Requirements**

*See MCSD website for the latest information

Georgia's immunization requirements for children attending childcare and school facilities have been amended to include new immunizations for specific age groups of already enrolled students and for students entering Georgia schools for the first time. A new Certificate of Immunization (form 3231 revised) will be required for registration if the student requires any of the new immunizations.

Students will not be allowed to register without proper immunization records.

SUMMARY OF RULE CHANGES

New Vaccines Required:

- As of the 2014-15 school year, ALL incoming 7th-grade students will need to have PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough) booster shot, and a Meningococcal shot.
- Hepatitis A Vaccine or proof of serologic immunity is required for all children born after January 1, 2006, and who are attending childcare facilities, programs, or schools.
- Addition of doses of existing vaccine requirements for children entering kindergarten or sixth grade or any new student entering any grade (K-12)
 - Mumps second dose required or proof of serologic immunity by laboratory
- (the Second dose of measles vaccine and one dose of rubella is already required.)
 - Varicella (chickenpox) the second dose required or healthcare provider documentation of disease history or proof of serologic immunity by a laboratory
- Also, all new students must provide a completed Vision, Hearing, and Dental Certificate (DHR Form 3300) from the health department or healthcare provider to register for school.
- See the MCSD website for more detailed information.

Conferences

In middle school, conferences with teachers are held upon request from parents or teachers. The conferences should be scheduled via a note or email to the teacher. Because a middle school student has several teachers, **it is necessary that the request for a conference date be made several days in advance to allow the various teachers to adjust their schedules and clear their calendars for a meeting date and time.**

Counseling

VMMS School Counseling Program

Mission: To effectively provide a comprehensive program that fosters development in academic, career, and personal/social domains. Cohesively provide students the opportunity to gain skills and develop their unique potential to become successful in all aspects of life.

Professional school counselors are:

- Advocates for all students, their families, and their education
- Ethical and professional
- Connections with resources
- Dedicated to creating a safe learning environment
- Knowledgeable in areas of prevention and intervention
- Promoters of equity and open-mindedness
- Capable of balancing their unique role in the lives of our youth
- Collaborators
- Caring, empathetic listeners
- Believers in self- change
- A supporter of strength-based program
- Fun and innovative with techniques to help meet the needs of all students and learning
- HERE TO HELP!

Roles of a middle school counselor:

- Bi-annual classroom guidance sessions to educate students on life skills
- Consult and Collaborate with teachers and parents to support the whole child.
- Meet the immediate needs and concerns of students through short, individual solution-focused counseling sessions
- Support in crisis situations
- Referrals to resources
- Small group education and support

Contact Information & Referral Process:

Kayla Bender
Phone: 706-748-3203

Ways to make a referral:

- Email or call Mrs. Bender directly to set up an appointment
- Students will complete an online referral form to request a conference with the counselor.
- A counselor will call up the student at her earliest convenience.
- Contact the classroom teacher.

Statement of Confidentiality: To respect the rights and relationships of students, information shared with the counselor will remain confidential with the exception of student safety.

Detention

Discipline and Academic Detentions will be assigned by the teacher or staff member. Students will be given **written notice** from the assigning teacher/administrator of the assigned detention at least one day in advance. If you have any questions about detention, please email the teacher that scheduled your child's detention. Students missing the assigned detention will be assigned additional make-up detention in addition to the missed detention. **Students who do not stay for both detentions will be assigned In School Suspension (ISS) which will be recorded on the student's behavior record.** It is the student's responsibility to inform the parent about the detention and make arrangements with the parent for afternoon transportation. Students who stay for detention should be picked up by 3:45 pm. Failure to pick up students on time may result in a referral to the school social worker.

Public Displays of Affection (PDA)

Public displays of affection (PDA) are defined as kissing, touching inappropriately, groping, licking, nuzzling, or cuddling. PDA is NOT permitted at VMMS. Students will refrain from PDA while on school premises. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Dress Code

It is not the intent of MCS D to dictate the quality or style of clothing worn, but rather an effort to encourage good habits and acceptable group behavior. Student dress and personal appearance should reflect dignity and pride in oneself and the school. Therefore, a student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use emblems, insignias, badges or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.

- Halter-tops, bare midriff, see-through apparel are not to be worn. Dresses and tops must have sleeves and backs.
- Cleavage must be covered.
- Dresses, skirts or shorts may be no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee.
- Chests, backs, and midriffs must be completely covered. Transparent items do not constitute as covered.
- Pajamas may not be worn to school.
- Undergarments are not to be visible at any time. Outer garments are to be worn in a manner which will cover up all undergarments. See-through materials do not constitute "cover."
- All pants and slacks must be worn at the waist. **No pants, shorts, or skirts may have holes above the knee showing skin. Holes above the knee must be covered with fabric.**
- Blankets are not permitted in school.

- Leggings are allowed to be worn. If leggings are worn, shirts must be worn that are long enough to cover the entire bottom area.
- Biker shorts, spandex shorts, or tight fitting shorts are not allowed.
- Swimming trunks and swimsuits may not be worn at school.
- Hats, caps, crowns, sunglasses, rollers, picks, bandanas, do-rags and any other head coverings are not to be worn in the building during the school day. However, students may be required to wear a hairnet and other hair restraints in technology classes, laboratory, swimming, and related instructional activities or advised by the teacher. Authentic religious attire is permitted.
- Hoodies are allowed to be worn but all hoods must be removed while within the school building. If a student wears a hood while in the building the hoodie will be confiscated. Students who wear a hoodie in the building will have it collected and kept for a parent to pick up. Students of multiple offenses are subject to disciplinary action.
- Shoes must be secured to the foot in the front or the back. Discretion should be used as to the appropriateness and safety of certain types of shoes. No house slippers, shoes with cleats, or slides may be worn. Shoes must have a back covering.
- Attire that may damage school property or cause personal injury to others (such as chains or studded items) is not to be worn.
- It is prohibited for any student to wear clothing items which advertise alcoholic beverages, sex, tobacco, obscene, crude suggestive messages, or use profanity or slurs about race, gender, ethnicity, religion or national origins are prohibited.
- Designs or insignias that are part of a haircut, satanic symbols, gang-related badges, insignias, and colors, or logos or symbols with which denigrate social or ethnic groups are also prohibited.
- "Fake" alcohol or drug advertisement is not allowed.
- Costumes or accessories, including but not limited to animal ears, tails, gloves, mittens, collars, or any other items are not permitted.

***VMMS Administration will use their discretion when addressing dress code violations
If a child is not in proper dress code the parent will be called to bring a change of clothing.
If the parent is unavailable to bring appropriate clothing the student will be placed in ISS.**

Electronic Devices

It shall be the policy of the Muscogee County School District-Board of Education that possession of an electronic device by a student in school shall be permitted as specifically prescribed by this policy.

The rules below apply whether a personal electronic communication device is owned by a student or parent/guardian.

Personal use of electronic devices by students during classroom instructional time is **not** permitted.

Veterans Memorial is an electronic device free zone. All electronic devices should be kept out of sight and turned off during the school day. Electronic devices include cell phones, tablets, personal computers, air pods, headphones, speakers, or any other device that is distracting from the educational environment.

First and Second Offense- The device will be turned in to the administration until a parent or guardian comes to the school to pick up the device. The parent will be contacted regarding the offense by phone, email, or a written note from the staff member who collected the device. Devices must be picked up prior to 3:30 pm on school days.

Third Offense and all following offenses: The device will be turned in to the administration and students will be required to attend Saturday School. The parent or guardian will be required to pick up the device. The parent will be contacted regarding the offense by phone, email, or a written note. Failure to attend the scheduled Saturday School session will result in ISS. Devices must be picked up prior to 3:30 pm on school days.

Continuing offenses will result in disciplinary action deemed necessary by the administration.

Students who do not comply with their electronic device being confiscated will have further disciplinary actions taken to include ISS or OSS.

MCS D may confiscate a cell phone or other technology device in accordance with its policies and procedures. MSC D personnel will act reasonably to maintain the security of a phone or device once confiscated; however, MCS D will not be responsible for the value of the electronic device in the event of unintentional damage, loss, or theft of the phone or device. Parents should consider this carefully when sending electronic devices to school with their student.

District Issued Devices for School Use: use of school computers or tablets is a privilege that is earned by abiding by the rules described in MCS D Student Behavior Code of Conduct.

Expectations and Procedures. Failure to use the computer or tablet properly and respectfully can result in the privilege being revoked and possible disciplinary action. The parent will be notified.

The Muscogee County School District will provide parents, guardians, and children access to a telephone line for communication in the front office. It is the sense of the Board of Education that every effort is made to support and facilitate such parent/child communication.

Grading

Veterans Memorial operates on a nine weeks academic grading period system. At the midterm of a nine weeks period, each student will receive a midterm progress report. Report cards are issued to students at the end of each nine weeks period. ***Students and parents have 24/7 access to the child's grades via INFINITE CAMPUS.*** The grading scale approved by the Muscogee County School District is as follows:

A = 100-90	(excellent progress)	C = 79-70	(average progress)
B = 89-80	(above average progress)	F = 69-0	(unsatisfactory progress/failure)

Saturday School

Veterans Memorial will offer Saturday School throughout the school year. Saturday School is offered to students to provide them with an opportunity to earn grade recovery for failing courses. Communication for Saturday School sessions will be communicated to families via email and letters. Saturday School sessions are not mandatory but are highly encouraged for students who are recommended by their teachers to attend. Grades will be finalized for each nine weeks period at the conclusion of the nine weeks. For more information regarding Saturday School please contact Mr. Ogburn at Ogburn.robert.r@muscogee.k12.ga.us

Homework Policy

Smart Study Strategies:

- Set aside a quiet area for homework
- Designate hours for study and monitor Time Management Assignments (TMAs)
- Establish study routine and keep notebooks organized
- Learn to use your personal device calendar and to-do list for critical assignments
- Access Office 365 and Canvas for teacher websites, study guides, blogs, and technology tools.
- Email teachers for further clarification or ask the following day in class.
- Access KHAN Academy and YouTube for tutorials of hard to understand assignments
- See VMMS website for additional homework supports

Make-Up Work (for an Excused Absence):

When absent, it is **the student's responsibility** to ask for assignments missed. The student must also return the work to each teacher **within three school days of the absence**. Any pre-assigned work/assignment should be turned in on the day the student returns from the absence. If there is an extenuating circumstance, contact the teacher to discuss your concerns. Late work will be accepted for partial or full credit at the teacher's discretion.

In-School Suspension

Students are placed in ISS by the Principal, Assistant Principal, or designee. Students are to report directly to ISS with paper, pencil, and books on the morning of the ISS assignment. If a student has to be absent while serving ISS, the time will be made up when the student returns to school. Students are asked to read and sign an ISS behavior policy while serving ISS. Cell phones will be taken up while serving ISS. During the ISS assignment, students are not allowed to talk or leave the room without being given explicit permission. The student will maintain appropriate, non-disruptive behavior and complete all assignments before being released from ISS. ISS is recorded on a student's permanent behavior record. Once the decision has been made to assign a student to ISS, this assignment is NON-NEGOTIABLE. If the student does not report to ISS or does not exhibit appropriate behavior during the ISS assignment, the student will be sent home from school and given OSS (out of school suspension).

Selling, Purchasing, Trading, or Giving Away Items at School

Students are not allowed to sell, purchase, trade or give away items of value at school. Violation of this policy may result in detention, ISS, or OSS. School approved fundraisers are exempt from this policy.

Items strictly prohibited at school include, but not limited to: weapons, tobacco/nicotine products or dispensers, over-the-counter or personal medications, illegal substances/related items, alcohol, beverages which include HIGH levels of caffeine, etc. will be subject to STRICT CONSEQUENCES to include ISS, OSS, and/or referral to ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL. Students having knowledge of the violation of this policy and DO NOT REPORT the violation to the school administration may be subject to consequences.

Any involvement of a student where a LAW is broken will be referred to the School Resource Officer through the Columbus Police Department and Social Services (DFACS).

Lunchroom

Middle school students are expected to act properly in the lunchroom. Students are escorted to and from the cafeteria by their assigned lunch period teacher.

- Students are to walk to and from lunch without talking.
- Students will be directed to a specific serving line and assigned class table.
- There is NO going back to the line to purchase anything additional.
- There is NO cutting in line or saving places.
- Students are expected to keep their voices and behavior at a level which will not disrupt others during lunch
- Students are required to clean up their lunch area prior to leaving the lunchroom.
- **No outside food is allowed unless it is in a plain bag and plain cup or a lunch box (example: No McDonald's or Burger King Bags allowed). All lunches must be dropped off by 8:30 am. Items after 8:30 am with the exception of medicine will not be delivered to students in an effort to protect instructional time from disruptions.**
- **No carbonated beverages are allowed.**
- **No energy drinks which contain high levels of caffeine are allowed.**
- **In the event a student forgets their lunch at home, lunches must be brought to the office by 8:30 am. Any lunches brought in after this point in time will not be accepted. This is an effort to maximize instructional time and limit disruptions to the classroom environment.**
- **Food items should be kept in a student's book bag or lunch box until their lunch period. Students are not allowed to eat items in the hallways, classrooms, bus, restrooms, or outside unless there is a documented medical condition. Students who are found eating or drinking during non lunch periods will have the item confiscated.**

Water Bottles

- **All water bottles must be 100% clear and contain only water.**
- Water bottles should not have the function of squirting. This includes Gatorade and Powerade bottles for sports. If these are used for athletic teams, they will need to be stored by the athletic coach throughout the instructional day and given to the student for practice or games only.
- In the event that a student does have a water bottle that is not 100% clear or a fluid besides water is in the water bottle, it will be confiscated. Students will be given the

bottle back at the end of the school day for the first offense. All following offenses will require a parent or guardian to collect the bottle from the front office.

Lost and Found

We have a lost and found box in the custodial office and in the teacher's workroom. To claim lost articles, students notify front office personnel who will allow them access to the lost and found items.

Media Center

Sign In: All students must have a pass to enter the Media Center.

Checking Out a Book:

Each student is responsible for any books checked out from the media center. Any lost or damaged books will result in the student having to pay for the book before being able to check out another book.

Student Issued Chromebooks:

Students are expected to bring their chromebook fully charged to school each day. Students should bring their chromebook and charger daily. Veterans Memorial will issue and check out loaner computers in the event that a device is not working properly. Students will not be issued loaner computers for uncharged or missing chromebooks. Please contact the administration for any questions or concerns.

All students have been issued a Chromebook (to include Case and Charger) to use during the school day. Students must be responsible for their Chromebook/Case/Charger at all times. In an effort to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, students must be responsible for the care of their Chromebook and not damage it in any way. Chromebooks are to be carried in a case at all times when not in use. Students who damage Chromebooks and/or accessories can be assessed a replacement fee as per Board (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

Care and Use of School Property - Chromebooks, Textbooks, and Media Center Checkouts: Students will be held responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, Chromebooks, and accessories or equipment furnished to them by the school. A student who defaces, damages, or loses school property shall be required to pay for the damage or loss (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

A Parent/Student must pay all fees and fines owed to the school in a timely fashion. Parent/Student must clear all fines or fees during the year the fines are assessed. Fines

must be paid/cleared where they were assessed and before moving to the next level in school.

Overdue Books:

A book is due two weeks from the day it is checked out, excluding holidays. Students may have up to two books checked out at a time. No fines are charged for overdue books. Students may not check out another book until the overdue book is returned or paid for.

Reference Materials and Periodicals:

Students may check out reference materials and periodicals overnight. Items may be checked out after 3:30 P.M. and returned before second period of the following day. You must get assistance from the media specialist when checking out these materials.

Go Guardian

GoGuardian Parent is an application available on devices running iOS and Android designed to enable the school district to share user history collected via GoGuardian Teacher with verified parents and guardians.

The GoGuardian Parent app provides parents and guardians with the ability to pause their student's internet access, block specific websites, and schedule internet availability on school issued devices. During the school year, internet usage can be managed using the GoGuardian Parent application on school issued devices between 4pm and 7am, Monday through Friday. Additionally, GoGuardian Parent is accessible on weekends, Saturday and Sunday, with no specified time limitations.

As stated in the district student handbook: "The student will not alter or remove any MCSD software, programs or applications from the device, and will not load any software, programs or applications on the device". Students should not disable or circumvent the GoGuardian application while using an MCSD device. The school will follow their designated disciplinary policies for any infractions.

Parent Phone Calls to Students

For safety, parents need to create one **MAIN** plan before the school year starts for a child to get home from school and stick to that plan. Changing this plan can cause problems for everyone involved and will require a written note from the parent, signed by the administration. If the **MAIN** plan has to change, the parent or guardian needs to call the school by 2:30 pm to notify the front office. If the front office is not notified by 2:30 pm changes in how a student goes home can not be guaranteed. A note signed and dated by the parent or guardian is another option to use.

If a student is caught using their electronic device to contact parents, they will be subject to the consequences related to the electronic device policy. All communication needs to be directed through the front office staff.

ConnectED:

It is critical that your email and phone number are updated in the front office. We use ConnectED to send out important messages and reminders and to connect with parents. ConnectED is the school's main communication with parents for all information.

Parent Portal: Infinite Campus

Sign up for access to student academic records using Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Contact the front office to get information on how to receive your activation code. You can access Infinite Campus through the school's website, or there is an 'App' for that (instructions below).



One Touch.
Tons of Info.

Go Mobile.

Anytime, anywhere access. Get your Campus Portal information when you want it from your mobile device.

Step 1 Download the App

- 1 Download the **Infinite Campus Mobile Portal** application from any of the following app stores:



Step 2 Launch the App and Enter in the District ID

- Select Settings.
- Enter your District ID: **FDTVLB**
- Select Go.

Supervision of Students

The building opens, and student supervision begins at 7:40 am. Students are supervised during the school day.. After students report to homeroom, **they should not be in the halls without a hall pass**. Students should not be on school property at times other than supervised times.

Students are supervised after school hours only for school-sponsored meetings and activities. Parents should be prompt in picking up their children from activities. Parents assume full responsibility for the supervision of their children beyond fifteen minutes after the closing of any school event. **Parents and students should not depend upon a telephone being available so that a student may call when the school event is over.** All students should be picked up by 3:35 pm unless staying for an extracurricular activity that they are a part of.

*Note: The parents of habitual offenders not following the above school policy for after school event pick-up will be reported to the Department of Family and Children Services for neglect, and may be banned from participating in any afterschool activities.

Textbooks, Equipment, and Instruments

All materials, textbooks, equipment, and instruments are purchased by the taxpayers of Muscogee County through Muscogee County Board of Education. Veterans Memorial Middle School is authorized by the School Board to issue and loan materials, textbooks, equipment, and instruments to students for their use during the school year.

The student and his/her parents or guardians are responsible for returning the materials at the end of each school year when an inventory is taken. Students will be charged for items lost, misplaced or damaged. If the item is later found, a refund will be given. Muscogee County School District's policy requires that restitution is made for all such loss or damage after the issue of grades, records, or certificates of progress.

The students and his/her parents or guardians are also responsible for losses, damages or vandalism, whether accidental or purposeful, that occur to any material, textbook, equipment or instrument that has been issued or loaned to a student.

Videotaping/ Audiotaping Pictures and Posting on the Internet

Students are NOT allowed to videotape, audiotape or take pictures of VMMS students or staff. Such an act will result in a suspension and possible referral to the Discipline Tribunal.

Physical Education Classes

- Students who are in physical education classes are required to wear the uniform consisting of shorts and a t-shirt provided by the physical education department. Students are not allowed to wear dress out clothes that are not the uniform provided by the physical education department. The physical education department will sell the uniform and a locker to be used during PE classes for a total of \$35. The uniform will belong to the student and does not need to be returned at the end of the year.

Extracurricular Activities/Sports

See the Veterans Memorial Website for a comprehensive list of activities and events

Pick-up Time for Extracurricular Events/Sports

After any extracurricular activity held after school, it is the responsibility of the parents to make sure their child is picked up after the event in a reasonable amount of time (**15 minutes**). If the child has not been picked up after **15 minutes**, school security/ law enforcement will be called.

*Note: The parents of habitual offenders not following the above school policy for pick-up following extracurricular activities will be reported to the Department of Family and Children Services for neglect and may be banned from participating in any afterschool activities.

Teachers will inform students of the ending times for all extracurricular activities.

In the event of a major disturbance at an extra-curricular event anywhere in Muscogee County School District the student(s) involved could/will face a suspension and revocation of extra-curricular privileges by their home school administration. This suspension/revocation will encompass ALL MCSD campuses and extracurricular events. Any suspension or revocation of extra-curricular privileges will be for NO LESS than 1 academic semester but could be as long as the entire school year.

It will be up to the discretion of the school administration if the offending student will be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities, as an active member of a team, for the remainder of the year. If the student in question is a current member of a team and participates in the major disturbance, they will be suspended from participation for the remainder of that season and not be allowed to represent the school as a student-athlete for the remainder of the school year.

SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADE ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY TRY OUT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS

TRY OUTS: Each team will schedule tryouts as directed by the Director of System-Wide Athletics. The Director of System-Wide Athletics, within the parameters of Georgia State Standards, Georgia Department of Education Rules, local school board policy, and the GHSA, will oversee the generating and approving of schedules.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY -- A student is eligible to represent his/her school in the interscholastic competition which meets the requirements listed below unless otherwise noted.

1. A student has three (3) years of eligibility beginning when they enter the sixth grade.
2. The student has not attained his/her 15th birthday before Aug 1st of the current school year.
3. A student passing 70% at the end of each semester will be eligible.
4. Must have a current "**Up-to-date**" physical (physicals good for one calendar year) signed by the doctor, parent/guardian, and student.
5. Must have **PROOF OF INSURANCE FORM** signed by parent/guardian and student. A photocopy of insurance provider must be on file. If a participant cannot prove private insurance coverage, the offer of school insurance must be documented.
6. Must have a **PERMISSION TO PLAY / PERMISSION TO TREAT FORM** for each participant, signed by a parent or legal guardian.
7. Meet all **Athletic, Academic, and Behavior** Guidelines set forth by MCSD and VMMS.

YOU WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATION IF:

1. Have been in middle school **more than three consecutive years** after entry into the sixth grade.
2. Have **attained** your **15th** birthday before **August 1st** preceding the year of participation.
3. Do **not** have a standard GHSA physical exam during the past 12 months.
4. Have **not** completed a **Parent Permission** form, **Waiver** form, and turned in a **photocopy** of the **insurance provider** to the **Athletic Office**.
5. If you are **currently** on **Out-of-School Suspension, In-School Suspension, or in** Alternative School for disciplinary reasons, or have been **expelled** by your previous school.
6. If the student fails 2 or more classes in a semester, he/she loses eligibility for the next semester.

Note: Good conduct and grades are mandatory requirements for team membership. Poor academic standing or poor conduct could result in a player not being allowed to play or being removed from the team. If a student plans to tryout, then he/she must have a physical and all eligibility forms turned in before the tryout date, which will be announced well in advance. High standards for grades and conduct must be maintained to participate in all extracurricular activities and sports.

***TO BE ELIGIBLE TO TRYOUT, PARTICIPATE, PRACTICE, AND COMPETE YOU MUST MEET THE ABOVE MCSD ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE VMMS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT.**

- Veterans Memorial Middle School is proud to welcome VMMS students to the exciting athletic events that VMMS offers.
 - The games are enjoyable for students, players, coaches, parents, and the community.
- VMMS students (band, cheerleaders, and athletes) practice numerous hours so they are prepared for our extracurricular events.
- In an effort to make Veterans Memorial Middle School games safe and enjoyable for all spectators, the following guidelines for students in attendance are used at all home games:

ATHLETIC EVENT GUIDELINES

1	VMMS Students are to have parental permission to attend events
2	NO LOITERING around certain areas such as restrooms, gym hallway, or outside the gym.
3	NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED. Concessions are available inside the school.
4	Parents will PREARRANGE TRANSPORTATION and communication related to any event
5	SCHOOL RULES APPLY and cooperation is expected with all game workers and school personnel. Failure to follow rules or lack of cooperation will result in removal from the event and/or further disciplinary actions determined by the administration.

6	STUDENTS ARE TO REMAIN AT THE EVENT FROM THE BEGINNING UNTIL THE PARENT ARRIVES OR THE EVENT IS OVER. <u>(STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GO OUTSIDE AT ANYTIME, UNLESS BEING PICKED UP).</u>
7	PARENTS ARE ASKED TO PICK UP THEIR CHILD PROMPTLY AFTER THE EVENT.
8	If parents choose to attend the events with their child, they will be expected to model behavior that supports a positive, safe experience.
9	If concerns arise during any event, parents are expected to appropriately address those concerns only with supervising adults or building administration.
10	At NO TIME are parents to confront other students before, during or after an event about issues or concerns at Veterans Memorial Middle School or any other school site where our events occur. IF THIS BEHAVIOR IS SEEN, THE PARENT, AND THEIR STUDENT(S) WILL BE BANNED FROM FUTURE EVENTS OF THIS NATURE.
SPECTATOR RULES OF CONDUCT	
1	No insults or personal comments of any kind are to be directed towards event officials, referees, or workers;
2	Inappropriate language or profanity will not be tolerated and will result in immediate ejection from the event;
3	Taunting or ridiculing of either team or team members is not allowed;

4	Chants that taunt, ridicule, or insult either team or team members are not allowed;
5	SPECTATORS MAY NOT ENTER THE COURT/FIELD OF PLAY DURING A GAME.
<p>During school events, supervision of the event is provided by the school, and students or their parents may communicate with staff members positive aspects of the event or share concerns. At the same time, supervisory staff is expected to address any inappropriate behavior for which they are aware, and can ask, if necessary, those involved in such behavior to leave the activity.</p> <p>Spectators further understand that failure to comply with the above rules will result in the offending spectator being ejected from the game. Game officials and school personnel are authorized to eject spectators from the event. Spectators who violate the outlined policy are subject to being ejected from the game or banned from future events.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!! GO RANGERS!!!!</p>	

VMMS “Teach-To’s” Behavior Expectations

Entering the Classroom:

- Stay in single file line to enter classroom
- Walk directly to your seat or designated area
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Begin work right away and complete task

Prepared for Class:

- Arrive to class on time
- Bring necessary materials to class
- Bring appropriate writing utensil
- Walk directly to seat
- Remain quiet until instructed by teacher

Addressing Teacher:

- Use Mr., Ms., or Mrs. with name
- Wait quietly for acknowledgment
- Use “Excuse me” or “May I?”
- Say “Thank you” before leaving conversation

Announcements:

- Voice off
- Stop working
- Hands and feet still
- Wait until announcement is over
- Raise hand to ask questions when announcement is over

Bathroom Usage:

- Walk
- Move directly to and from area of usage
- Throw trash in trash can
- Wash hands with soap and water
- Leave immediately when finished

Getting in Groups:

- Whisper
- Walk
- Move seat/desk to face group
- Move to group right away
- Bring all needed materials

Hallway:

- Walk on right side of hallway
- Hands and feet to self
- Hold on to objects
- Walk facing forward
- Use low voice

Independent Work:

- Sit upright in chair
- Voice off; whisper
- Stay on task
- Raise hand for assistance
- Place completed work in designated area

Leaving Classroom:

- Pack up material at signal from teacher
- Voice off; whisper
- Leave area clean/empty
- Wait in seat for bell to leave classroom

Raising Hand:

- Voice off
- Look at speaker
- Hand up straight and still
- Sit up straight
- Hands and feet still

Respect Property:

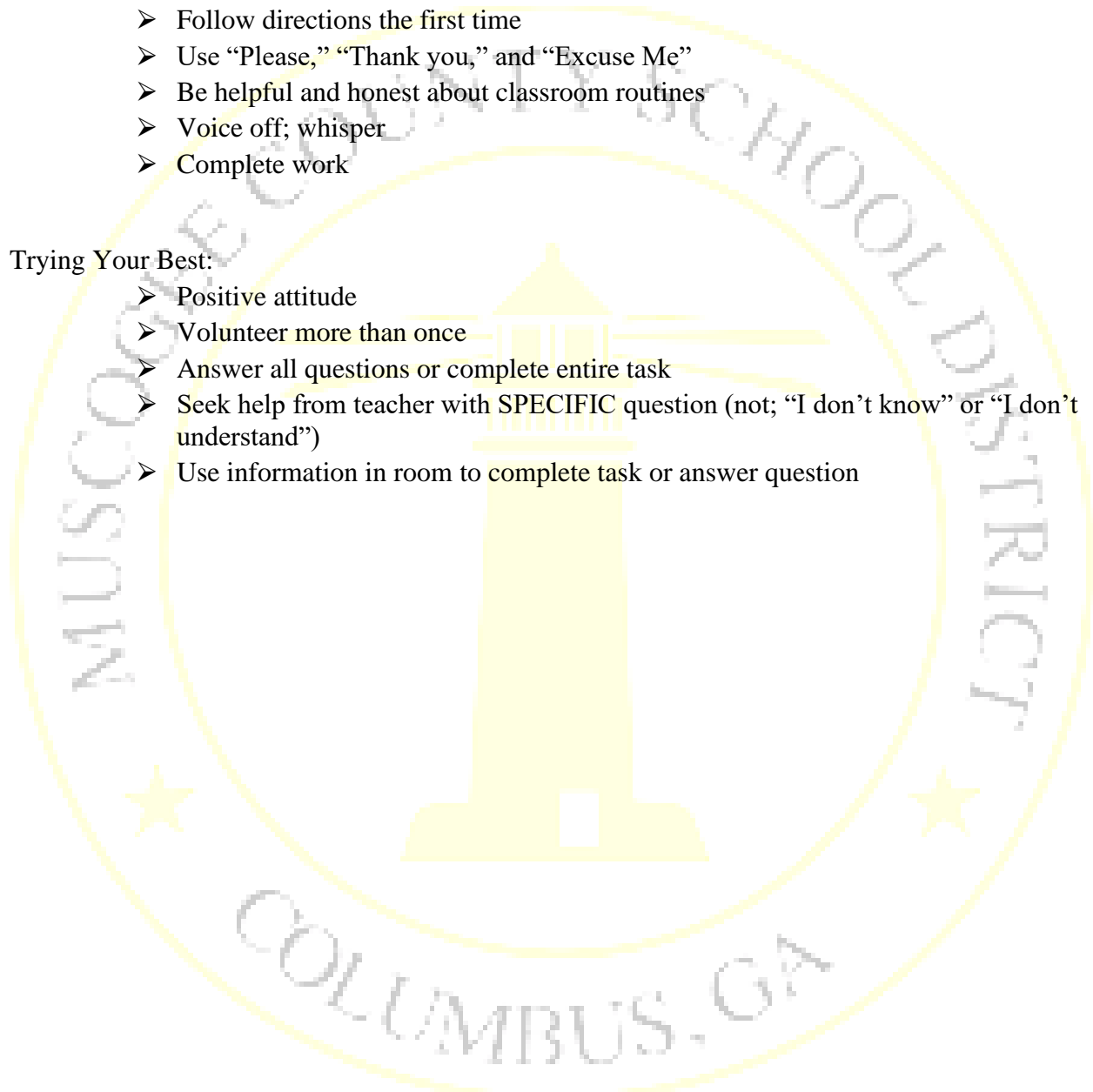
- Low voice
- Ask to borrow before use
- Use polite words: “Please,” “Thank you,” and “May I?”
- Return item to owner
- Replace item if damaged

Substitute Teacher:

- Follow directions the first time
- Use “Please,” “Thank you,” and “Excuse Me”
- Be helpful and honest about classroom routines
- Voice off; whisper
- Complete work

Trying Your Best:

- Positive attitude
- Volunteer more than once
- Answer all questions or complete entire task
- Seek help from teacher with SPECIFIC question (not; “I don’t know” or “I don’t understand”)
- Use information in room to complete task or answer question



Veterans Memorial Middle School Contact Information

School Phone: (706) 748-3203
(706) 748-3211 FAX

School Address: 2008 Old Guard Rd.
Columbus, GA 31909
*Off of Veterans Parkway near Northside High School and on the left past entrance to North Columbus Elementary School

School Website:
<http://schools.muscogee.k12.ga.us/sites/vmms/>
*Sign up for Parent Portal (Infinite Campus)

District Website: <http://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/>

1st Period Starts: 8:10 AM

Tardy 8:10 AM

Items must be dropped off to the front office by 8:30 AM. After 8:30 AM items will not be delivered to students in an effort to maximize instructional time and limit classroom disruptions.

The only exception is medicine.

School Dismisses: 3:10 PM (Pick up before 3:30 PM)

No student check outs after 2:40 PM

DISCLAIMER

The administration reserves the right to change/ alter policies and consequences as deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the learning environment.

School District Policies

OUR VETERANS MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK IS A SUMMARY OF THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES & PROCEDURES. THE MCS D HANDBOOK AND CODE OF CONDUCT TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THIS STUDENT HANDBOOK.

The Veterans Memorial Middle School Student Handbook and Muscogee County School District Student Handbook can be found online at <https://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/vmms/>

Parents should study that book with their children and understand that violations of School District policies will result in a hearing before the Superintendent's Disciplinary Tribunal Panel