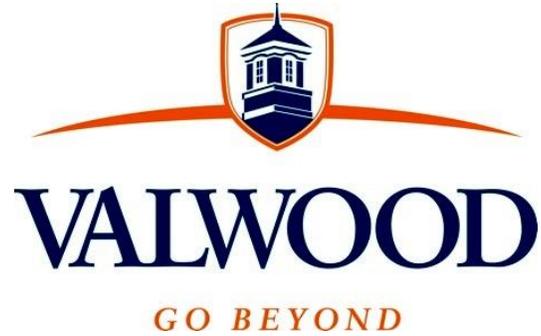


VALWOOD SCHOOL

**STUDENT & FAMILY  
HANDBOOK**



4380 US HWY 41 N

HAHIRA, GA 31632

229-242-8491

[WWW.VALWOOD.ORG](http://WWW.VALWOOD.ORG)

Disclaimer: This handbook represents the most current policies at Valwood School; however, the administration and staff of Valwood School reserve the right to make any necessary changes to any policy should the need arise.

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## CONTACT LIST

Main Line and Administrative Building.....	229-242-8491
Lower School.....	229-585-9231
Middle School.....	229-585-9232
Upper School.....	229-585-9233

Head of School	John Davis	<a href="mailto:jdavis@valwood.org">jdavis@valwood.org</a>
• Executive Assistant	Emily Ryan	<a href="mailto:eryan@valwood.org">eryan@valwood.org</a>
Admissions	Vallye Blanton	<a href="mailto:vblanton@valwood.org">vblanton@valwood.org</a>
Lower School Dean	Gary Glover	<a href="mailto:gglover@valwood.org">gglover@valwood.org</a>
• Lower School Assistant	Susan Elliott	<a href="mailto:selliott@valwood.org">selliott@valwood.org</a>
Middle School Dean	Chad Gallahan	<a href="mailto:cgallahan@valwood.org">cgallahan@valwood.org</a>
• Middle School Assistant	Mitzi Parrish	<a href="mailto:mparrish@valwood.org">mparrish@valwood.org</a>
Upper School Dean	Dr. Steve Hankla	<a href="mailto:shankla@valwood.org">shankla@valwood.org</a>
• Upper School Assistant	Katie Houseman	<a href="mailto:khouseman@valwood.org">khouseman@valwood.org</a>
College Guidance	Kelly Yates	<a href="mailto:kyates@valwood.org">kyates@valwood.org</a>
Registrar	Val Gallahan	<a href="mailto:vgallahan@valwood.org">vgallahan@valwood.org</a>
Marketing & Communication	Courtney Matthews	<a href="mailto:cmatthews@valwood.org">cmatthews@valwood.org</a>
Athletic Director	Brett Martin	<a href="mailto:bmartin@valwood.org">bmartin@valwood.org</a>
Dining Hall	Don Stanley	<a href="mailto:dostanley@valwood.org">dostanley@valwood.org</a>
Alumni Relations/Development	Susanna Harris	<a href="mailto:sdover@valwood.org">sdover@valwood.org</a>
Valwood Parent Association	Catherine Daugharty	<a href="mailto:vpa@valwood.org">vpa@valwood.org</a>
Security	Les Bunte	<a href="mailto:lbunte@valwood.org">lbunte@valwood.org</a>
Business Office	Becky Wetherington	<a href="mailto:bwetherington@valwood.org">bwetherington@valwood.org</a>
Annual Fund/Development	Jane Peoples	<a href="mailto:jpeeples@valwood.org">jpeeples@valwood.org</a>

## MISSION STATEMENT

Valwood is an independent, college preparatory school whose mission is to instill in its students an enthusiasm for academic excellence, the foundations of strong character, and a commitment to serve others.

Valwood's academic program offers students a challenging curriculum based on high expectations and a close interaction between teacher and student. Valwood seeks to develop in its students' intellectual curiosity and the ability to read with understanding, think critically, speak fluently, and write effectively.

Valwood strives to build strong character in its students by requiring them to follow a code of honor based on fundamental values of integrity, honesty, and responsibility. The school also encourages participation in programs outside the classroom designed to build strong character by teaching teamwork and developing confidence, independence, and leadership.

Valwood works to instill in its students an abiding commitment to service by fostering in them respect for others, compassion for those in need, an understanding of civic duty, and a responsibility to serve the communities in which they live.

## **SCHOOL MOTTO**

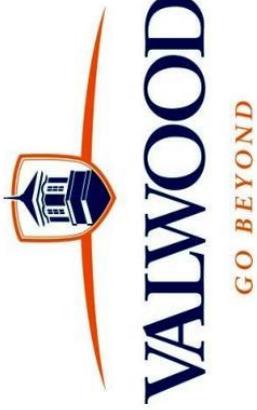
Academics, Character, and Service

## **DEVELOPMENT**

The support Valwood receives from its friends and family has long been the cornerstone of the school. Through their volunteering of time, sharing of expertise and financial gifts, Valwood has grown to its current level of educational excellence. We are proud of this commitment to excellence and we depend on the generosity of our constituency to enable us to give our students the opportunities to achieve our mission.

Each year families are asked to contribute to our Annual Fund. This fund bridges the gap between tuition and the actual cost of a Valwood education. Families are encouraged to identify Valwood School as their primary philanthropic recipient. In addition, we will work with families and local businesses to participate in GOAL, which provides funding from the State of Georgia for scholarships.

We invite you to visit the school's website to explore the many other ways you can be a contributor to Valwood's lasting success or speak with Jane Peebles in Crane Hall to learn more.



# 2019-2020 Valwood School Calendar

- JULY 1-5: Fourth of July Holiday
- AUG 7-8: Pre-Planning
- AUG 12: First Day of School/Convocation
- SEPT 2: Labor Day Holiday
- OCT 14: Columbus Day Holiday
- NOV 11: Teacher In-Service Day
- NOV 25-29: Thanksgiving Holiday Break
- DEC 16- JAN 3: Christmas Holiday Break
- JAN 6: Teacher In-Service Day
- JAN 7: First Day of Second Semester
- JAN 20-21: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- FEB 14 & 17: Presidents' Day Holiday
- MAR 30-APR 3: Spring Break
- APR 24: Grandparents Day
- APR 27: Holiday
- MAY 13: LS and MS Conference Day
- MAY 22: Last Day of School & Graduation
- MAY 25: Memorial Day Holiday
- MAY 26-28: Post-Planning

July 2019						
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May 2020						
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June 2020						
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26	27	28	29	30		

HOLIDAY	Early Dismissal
First & Last Day of Semester	Teacher In-Service

## **BUSINESS and ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS**

**Re-Enrollment Policy.** Re-enrollment begins during spring semester prior to the applicable school year. Students must re-apply each year. New student enrollment positions will be offered the week following the existing student re-enrollment deadline. Each contract is secured by a nonrefundable re-enrollment processing fee of \$65.00 and a tuition deposit of \$350.00. The tuition deposit will be automatically drafted by the FACTS billing system 15 days after the enrollment packet is submitted. The deposit is credited to tuition, fees and charges due under this contract, as applicable. Enrollment is contingent upon payment of the deposit. Tuition deposits are non-refundable. The enrollment contract must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian at the time the contract is returned. Each Parent in a two-parent household is jointly and severally responsible for all tuition, fees and other charges due Valwood under this Contract and for compliance with the rules, regulations, and policies and procedures of Valwood. Each Parent signing this Contract certifies that he or she is a financially responsible parent or legal guardian of Student. If only one Parent in a two-parent household is signing this Contract, that Parent represents and warrants to Valwood that he or she is acting as the other Parent's agent with full authority to bind the other Parent to all terms and conditions of this Contract.

**Contract Obligation.** By signing the enrollment contract, parents or guardians agree to pay one (1) full year's tuition, notwithstanding subsequent absence, withdrawal, or dismissal of the student from Valwood School. It is further understood that parents/guardians may be released from said agreement only due to a move out of the area that Valwood serves or by a mutual agreement with Valwood administration that the student will be better served at another school.

If parent provides Valwood written notice of withdrawal of student on or before June 1, parent shall be released from the obligation to pay tuition, fees and charges, under the re-enrollment contract with exception of the non-refundable deposit. If parent does not so withdraw student on or before June 1, parent agrees the obligation to pay tuitions, fees and charges, for student under the re-enrollment contract, for the full academic year shall be binding and unconditional and Valwood will not be required to refund or cancel any portion of tuition, fees or charges paid or due under the re-enrollment contract even if student is subsequently absent, withdrawn or dismissed.

**Re-Enrollment Contract Holds.** The school reserves the right to "hold" the re-enrollment contract of any student who is not meeting the school's expectations for academic and/or disciplinary progress at the time of re-enrollment, or whose account is in arrears. The enrollment status of such students will be reviewed at the conclusion of the school year.

**Tuition.** The tuition table will be provided to returning families within several weeks of the start of re-enrollment. **The tuition table is also available on the Valwood website or upon request from the Business Office at 229-242-8491.** Valwood School offers three payment options; annual, biannual and monthly payments. A 2% tuition discount is provided for annual payments. A 1% discount is provided for bi-annual payments. Annual payments are due by one of three date options selected in FACTS. Bi-annual payments are due by one of three date options in July and December. Failure to pay by these dates results in loss of the discount. All families are billed from July to May over 11 months. When paid monthly, tuition payments are due one of three date options selected in FACTS. **A finance charge of \$25 will be applied after three failed auto-draft attempts. Students enrolling prior to the first day of school are billed for a full year's tuition.** Students enrolling during the school year after school begins, will be billed on the prorated days left in the school year. Tuition must be paid in full before a contract will be issued for the following school year. A 25% discount is given to the youngest child/children of families who enroll a third child in grades K-12. No discount is given if the child is in Pre-Kindergarten.

**Financial Obligations.** School policy requires that full financial obligations for the previous semester be met before a student will be permitted to return for the following semester and before records (grades, transcripts, etc.) will be released to receiving schools, to scholarship programs, and the like.

Senior accounts must be paid in full no later than the seven days prior to the graduation ceremony in order for the student to participate in the Senior Banquet, walk at graduation, and obtain a diploma.

**Returned Checks.** There will be a \$35.00 charge on all returned checks or returned drafts.

**Attendance.** Students whose parents or other account obligors are in arrears for the account of any student from the prior school year shall not be permitted to attend classes beginning the first day of school.

Students whose parents or other account obligors are in arrears for the account of any student may not be permitted to attend classes the first day of the second semester, unless payment in full for the first semester, has been received by the school.

**Arrears.** Re-enrollment contracts shall not be offered to or accepted for, nor will any transcripts, report cards, or school records be released or mailed, nor will access to ParentsWeb be granted to any student whose parents or other account obligors are in arrears for the account of any student over 60 days or more. Re-enrolled students who subsequent to re-enrollment are in arrears by 60 days or more will have their re-enrollment status put on hold until the account is current.

**Reports to Finance Committee.** The Finance Committee will be advised monthly of accounts in arrears for 60 days or over and any collection issues to be turned over to the school's attorney.

**Correspondence with Parents.** Families that are in arrears more than 30 days will receive notifications of their status and should respond within 15 days as to an appropriate resolution. Failure to meet resolution commitments can result in the dismissal of a student at any time during the school year.

**Collection Procedures.** Valwood School will turn over accounts to the school's attorney when there is no response to communication concerning the amounts in arrears. The alternative is to complete a promissory note prepared by the school for a fixed monthly payment with bank or credit card draft information. Promissory notes are only offered for one school year and families with a promissory note have to be able to demonstrate that they can financially make payments on the promissory note and tuition before they will be re-enrolled.

**Textbooks.** Your student will receive copies of the textbooks being used in their classes at the beginning of the class. Students must return the books in the same condition that they were issued to them. Remind your students not to leave their textbooks in classrooms. If another student uses their book and it becomes damaged or lost, your student is still responsible. Students are responsible for the proper use and care the books. The parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the student to whom the instructional materials are issued shall be liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from normal use of the materials. The student will be charged full replacement cost if the book is rendered unusable or lost. This includes missing covers, water damage, or intentional misuse will result in a fine based on the list below. If a book is lost or rendered unusable or damaged the Business Office will bill the student's account for the replacement cost of the book, and the parents will be notified by the Division Dean of said charges. No report cards, schedules, transcripts or diplomas will be issued until all textbooks are accounted for or replaced.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

**Email.** Faculty and staff may be contacted by school e-mail in lieu of notes from home or phone messages. Each address is published on the school's website. Most addresses are the first initial and last name; example vblanton@valwood.org

**Documentation Requests.** If a parent, guardian or student wishes to have a teacher/administrator write a recommendation, checklist/evaluation for a student, the parent should submit a written request to the teacher/administrator preferably three weeks before the information is needed. The parent/guardian should supply the school with the name and address of the person to whom the form will be mailed as well as the reason for the reference/evaluation. The school will mail reports directly to the person or agency to which it is written.

Requests for transcripts, student records, certificate of attendance, verification of enrollment and/or academic performance for insurance or other legal purposes should be submitted to the Registrar. Please allow a minimum of three business days for processing of requested paperwork.

**Permanent Student Records.** All student records at Valwood are confidential. They are open only to faculty who are directly concerned with the student. Information from student records or transcripts will not be shared without a records release form signed by the parent or student age 18 or over. Student accounts must be up-to-date with a zero balance before records are released.

Personal records are accessible to a student's parents or to the student when 18 years of age. For the convenience of all concerned, we ask that parents make an appointment for viewing or discussing student records.

**Immunization Records.** A Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231, must be on file for every student enrolled. It is the responsibility of the parent to obtain this record from the local health department or a private physician. Parents are responsible for keeping this record up-to-date. By Georgia law, students may be prohibited from attending classes if a Form 3231 is expired or missing from their record. The Department of Defense Vaccine Administration Record DD Form 2766c does not meet state requirements for immunization records.

**Social Security Number and Birth Certificate.** Each student is asked to furnish a copy of his/her Social Security card and a copy of his/her birth certificate for the permanent record.

**Sports Physicals.** All student athletes must have a current physical examination on file with the athletic director by August 20th.

**Illness and Medicine.** Children must be "fever free" for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has vomited, do not let your child return to school for 24 hours after being ill. If your child takes any medicine before coming to school (other than regular or prescription medications), please let us know what, how much and when it was given.

**Cell Phone/Wireless Device Policy.** Students may bring cell phones and other wireless devices to campus, but they must not be used throughout the school day without permission from the teacher or dean. Unless otherwise requested students should place cell phones in classroom caddies located in "safe corner." Only at the request of the teacher, can a cell phone be used for academics i.e. calculator, internet research, etc. A substitute teacher will not give work that requires cell phone usage. If a student is found possessing a cell phone without teacher permission, the teacher will collect the device and turn the device into the appropriate dean. The dean will notify parents of the violation. The phone may then be collected by the parent at the end of the school day, or the dean will hold the phone until the end of the following day when it will be returned to the student. If a student's cell phone continues to be confiscated, a meeting will be held between the dean and parent(s) to determine the appropriate action for the student. In the event of an emergency, cell phones will easily and quickly be distributed to students for communicating with parents.

**Internet Watches.** Students in lower school are not permitted to wear internet capable watches to school. Upper school students will not be allowed the use of internet watches during assessments.

**Parties.** There will be no parties during school hours or on the Valwood campus unless approval has been given by the division dean in advance. For Lower School and Middle School students, individual birthday treats may be brought to school and distributed by the child and the teacher at an appropriate time. Invitations distributed at school must include the entire class.

**Lower School Class Parties.** Parents of each room sponsor a Holiday Party for their children's classes, as well as an end-of-year party. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children also have special celebrations for Halloween and Easter. Parties are special times for the students so *please make other arrangements for siblings.*

A certified lifeguard must be on duty for any class party involving swimming. This lifeguard shall have no other responsibility other than watching the children in the water. Parties held at a lake should not include boating, motoring, or swimming in the lake. *For safety concerns, siblings are **not** allowed to attend end of the year class pool parties. Please make other arrangements for them.*

**Food.** Water in a screw-top bottle and food are permitted in classrooms at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

**Fundraising.** *All fundraisers* must be approved by the Head of School or Director of Special Projects. Valwood sponsors fundraising activities for the benefit of the school or in support of service projects. Students who wish to participate are encouraged to ask for support from family or friends. Lower school students are prohibited from any door-to-door solicitation.

**Senior Privileges.** Senior privileges are determined at the discretion of the upper school dean.

**Lockers.** Lockers are provided to store books, lunch, coats, and other personal belongings. The assignment of lockers is the responsibility of deans in the middle and upper schools.

A student's locker is a private place; no other student will go into a locker without the owner's permission. We are grateful that lockers do not need to be locked at Valwood, but we strongly advise against the storage of valuables in lockers. Lockers may be decorated on the inside as long as such decorations are easily removable at the end of the year. The school retains the right to conduct a search of a locker at any time for any reason. Book bag hooks are for book bags that do not fit into our lockers. For safety reasons, no book bags should be left on the floor.

**Lost and Found.** Many coats, umbrellas, calculators, and other personal items are left at school throughout the year. Found items without clear identification are given to the appropriate school office. Please check with the appropriate administrative assistant in the instance of a missing item. Generally, unclaimed items are donated to a charitable organization. A lost and found bin is located in the gym lobby and lower school lobby for items left behind.

**Meal Plan.** Racing Pig Catering Service offers a freshly prepared, nutritionally balanced lunch to all Valwood students. Families may elect to enroll students in the meal plan each semester or annually; the deadline for enrollment in a given semester typically falls two weeks after classes resume. Annual enrollment offers families the most economical option for participation in the lunch program. Enrollment forms are available in ParentsWeb and on the school website.

Meal plans do not cover any items purchased at break or athletic concessions. Middle and Upper School students may choose to purchase a meal plan and pre-loaded account to cover expenses for break. Pre-loaded Debit Accounts have to be secured with a credit card to ensure funds available. If a child's account reaches a zero balance, parents will be notified as early as possible. Funds have to be deposited in the account within two days. Students will be permitted a two lunch grace period to allow time for payment to be made. If we have not received payment within those two days, then we will charge against the credit card to keep the

account current. No snacks at break will be permitted if account funds cannot cover charge. Salad Bar and individual items may also be purchased “a la carte” on a cash or debit basis.

**Short-Term Counseling.** Short-term counseling services addressing personal issues such as stress, interpersonal and family relationships, depression, aptitude testing, and substance abuse can be coordinated via a counselor who provides pro bono assistance to the school. All counseling services remain strictly confidential between the student and the counselor.

If a student desires counseling outside of Valwood, or if the counselor and student determine that more extensive outside help is needed, the counseling staff can assist in arranging a referral. Parents are responsible for payment for such outside help. Although Valwood provides a variety of supportive services, it does not address the therapeutic needs of students with significant emotional problems or problems that need intensive or long term therapy.

**Allergies.** In our school, the significant allergies are to peanut, nuts, shellfish, and insect/wasp stings. In the classrooms of anaphylactic children, special care is taken to avoid allergens. Parents must consult with the teacher before supplying food or craft materials to these classrooms. There is also a list of packaged “safe food”, which has been distributed to the teachers. Please note that we are not “free” of these products, rather, we are “aware.” Therefore, the risk of accidental exposure to a food allergen has been significantly diminished although it can never be completely removed.

It is the responsibility of the anaphylactic/potentially anaphylactic child’s parents to inform the school of their child’s allergy. Anaphylactic or potentially anaphylactic children who are old enough should carry at least one EpiPen with them at all times and, if possible, have backups available in the school.

## **SAFETY and SECURITY**

**Name Tags.** Valwood faculty and staff, who have direct contact with students, are required to wear name tags at all times.

**Student IDs.** Valwood middle and upper school students will be identified by school issued identification cards. They are required to have their Valwood Student ID with them at all times while on the Valwood Campus. IDs will be replaced at the cost of \$25 and cannot be charged to a student's account.

**Visitors and Entry.** Visitors must check in at Crane Hall and receive a visitor badge to wear while on campus. Security Cameras provide the school the ability to monitor strategic places around campus.

**Parking and Drop off.** Curbside parking is prohibited throughout campus because this is a fire lane. Each division has specific school curbside drop off locations. If a parent chooses to walk his/her child into the school, he/she must park in a visitor parking spot and then use the crosswalk to escort his/her child into the building.

**Pick Up.** Parents picking their children up will do so at the designated school curbside pick-up location. Parents should park in the visitor parking locations while they are waiting for their children to arrive curbside. Please keep in mind that the curbside pick-up, is a continual moving lane. If you wish to park in the visitor parking and wait for your children to exit the school, we ask that you wait near the pick-up location and escort your children across the parking area to your vehicle.

**Student Vehicles.** Students with valid driver's licenses may drive to school. They must park in their assigned parking space only and display their designated parking tag on the front windshield. Students who possess a valid license at the beginning of school will be issued their tags (at no cost) in the first weeks of school. Students who receive a license after the school year has started, must register their vehicle with the officer on campus and receive a tag. The speed limit on campus is 15 mph. Students must remember that driving to school is a privilege, not a right. Driving privileges may be revoked if the student speeds or drives in a manner that endangers other people.

Student will not be permitted access to their vehicle during school hours without permission. Students who need entry into their vehicle during school hours, must contact the upper school office and will be given permission with appropriate documentation.

**Search.** Valwood School is committed to ensuring that its campus and school-sponsored off campus activities are safe for all students and are free from alcohol, illegal drugs, juuls, e-cigarettes, vaping supplies, and weapons. To accomplish that goal, the school maintains the right at any time for any reason to search students and their lockers, vehicles, and personal belongings.

## **Emergency Procedures**

**Severe Weather Alerts.** Valwood staff monitors appropriate radio broadcasts for the latest weather reports. In the case that the school comes under a severe weather warning, parents will be notified with a parent alert by electronic communication.

A tornado/severe thunderstorm watch means that conditions are favorable for the development of a tornado or severe thunderstorm.

If a tornado/severe thunderstorm warning is issued, it means that a tornado/severe thunderstorm has actually been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If such a warning occurs, we will immediately go to designated safety zones at school, taking the necessary precautions.

For the safety of all involved, if a tornado/severe thunderstorm warning is issued, please do not pick up your child(ren) until the warning has been canceled.

In the event the school must be shut down due to severe weather, Valwood School follows Lowndes County Schools. A text alert will be sent out to notify everyone.

**Campus Evacuation.** In the event of a recommended campus evacuation by civil authorities (localized chemical spill, gas leak, etc.), Valwood students and staff will be evacuated from campus in accordance with directions from the Coordinator of Campus Safety. We request that parents cooperate with any campus evacuation by not attempting to pick-up children at Valwood during an evacuation event.

**Drills.** Valwood School performs announced and unannounced fire drills, severe weather drills, and other safety drills procedures throughout the year.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

"Student" means any person who is enrolled at the school, any person who has been promoted or accepted for enrollment at the school or any person who intends to enroll at or be promoted to the school within the next twelve calendar months. A person who meets the definition of a student for purposes of this paragraph shall continue to be defined as a student for purposes of this section until the person graduates, transfers, is promoted, or withdraws from the school.

**General Behavior.** Students are expected to conduct themselves as young ladies and gentlemen. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to address any behavior that interferes with the curricular and co-curricular programs, even though such behavior may not be specifically included in the rules and regulations as noted in this handbook. Students are expected to take responsibility for their belongings; students should be aware that their belongings (e.g. lockers, backpacks, cars, etc.) can be searched by a member of the administration at any time for any reason.

Full cooperation is expected from the parents in any disciplinary action.

### Managing Behavior in the upper and middle school.

All infractions will be reported and documented by a teacher or the dean in FACTS. The deans have full discretion in all disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal Warning
- Verbal Warning with email to parents and to the dean
- Loss of Senior Privileges
- Loss of Exam Exemptions
- Lunch room detention
- Detention (Morning and Afternoon)
- Break Detention
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension
- Dismissal (Expulsion)

Middle School Levels of Consequences explained.

1. Lunch Room Detention
  - a. Silent lunch at a specified table followed by lunch room table cleaning
2. Detention
  - a. Held from 2:35 – 3:25 pm
  - b. Students will complete a detention form that will be submitted at 3:25pm
  - c. If a student misses a detention, the student will make up the initial detention and have another detention added on the subsequent school day.
  - d. If a student receives more than three detentions in a semester, that student and his/her parents will meet with the dean and/or Head of School to review his/her enrollment status at Valwood.

**Parent Conduct.** Parents are expected to be supportive of the school, personnel and programs through their words, actions and social media venues. Their conduct at school events - on and off campus - should reflect positively on Valwood School and serve as a model for others. Rude, inconsiderate, offensive, or aggressive behavior toward another person or the school is never appropriate or acceptable.

**Social Networking Policy.** In the rapidly changing world of technology and online communication, there is incredible potential for positive interactions and contributions to a broader range of people; in addition, there are increasing opportunities for all people, but particularly adolescents, to do tremendous harm to themselves and others with these new channels. Due to the nature of technology, this policy will have to be an always-evolving one. Definition: Social network in terms of this policy refers to any number of means of sharing information over the web with a wide array of people including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Vine, wikis, blogs, Snap-Chat, or any of the many peer-to-peer interacting sites available. In addition, material shared via a cell phone is subject to this policy.

**Basic Guidelines:**

- While students have some ability to limit exposure to the full range of internet users, social networking sites must be considered public, not private space.
- Students are responsible for the content of any material that they post to a “public” (social media / networking) site or pass on to others.
- Valwood students are expected to adhere to the guidelines for acceptable behavior on campus and the guidelines that relate to acceptable behavior off campus as articulated in the current handbook.
- Parents should be aware of the information posted to their students’ personal sites. (In addition it is important that parents understand that colleges and universities will access students social media sites, and questionable content could negatively impact a student’s acceptance.)
- The school does not actively seek out information on student social media sites (see “Valwood School Acceptable Technology Use Agreement”). If the school becomes aware, however, of illegal, obscene, hateful, or dangerous material, it reserves the right to discipline students for the material posted.
- Posting such material originally or passing it on to others is an offense in and of itself separate from the types of behavior described above.

**Transportation.** Students are typically not permitted to drive to any school-sponsored activity. Parents and/or teachers will be solicited to drive when necessary. Student drivers age 17 and older will be used only as a last resort and only with the written approval of the Dean and/or athletic director and their parents.

Sponsors and coaches are responsible for organizing adult drivers and for assigning students to the care of designated adult drivers.

Educational field trips are often planned to enrich classroom instruction. For such trips, including travel to sporting events, seat belts must be worn at all times in accordance with state law when such seat belts are available.

Any adult who wishes to be approved for the driver's list for the school’s mini-bus must submit a copy of his/her driver's license to the Business Office and complete a permission form at least five business days prior to departure. Permission forms are available in the Business Office. Only drivers carrying a current Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) may drive the school’s bus. Our insurance company requires that each driver be cleared by the proper authorities before being placed on the list of approved drivers for the school vehicles.

**Technology.** Students who access the internet via any school-supported network, or through a private network while on campus, are automatically agreeing to follow *The Valwood School Acceptable Technology Use Agreement*. In doing so, the student is agreeing to follow reasonable standards and to accept reasonable responsibilities associated with internet use.

### **Valwood School Acceptable Technology Use Agreement**

Valwood School provides technology for the entire school community recognizing its value as an educational resource. Therefore, technology should be used primarily to further the school's educational goals. For Valwood, "technology" includes computers (CPU's), thin clients, printers, scanners, hardware, and related materials that provide students access to software applications, the school's network, and the Internet. At all times, technology is to be used in a manner that is responsible, ethical, and legal. Student technology use must be in accordance with school rules, as stated in this handbook.

Uses of technology that support teaching and learning are acceptable. Teacher-directed classroom activities, student research, and communication of an educational nature are encouraged.

Unacceptable uses include:

- Any illegal, unethical or irresponsible act or communication;
- Accessing inappropriate Internet sites, including but not limited to accessing, downloading, uploading or distribution of any material that is sexually explicit, obscene, and/or pornographic;
- Circumventing, tampering and attempting access of the Valwood firewall;
- Participating in Internet chat rooms, playing interactive games, or other interactive recreational activities while on the school network without supervision or permission from your teacher, dean or advisor;
- Allowing another user to use your network account or using someone else's name or account, or in any way impersonating another person or account and invading the privacy of individuals;
- Re-posting personal communications without permission of the author;
- Loading or downloading software, written works, information, files, in violation of copyright or patent protection as stated by law;
- Plagiarizing (see definition under Honor Code);
- Intentionally transmitting material or messages that contain viruses, spamming, or chain letters;
- Creating, using, or transmitting obscene, threatening, abusive, hateful, libelous, or harassing language or messages;
- Posting personal contact information about you or someone else without prior parental approval;
- Accessing or attempting to access, for any reason, any server files of any system without specific prior permission from the proper controlling entity, accessing another individual's materials, files or information without permission;
- Creating fraudulent documents using school resources;
- Tampering, destroying, altering the setup of or instituting any form of surveillance of Valwood's networking systems including physical cabling, virtual infrastructure, physical PC and related peripherals, user accounts, mail systems, network hardware, and anything else related to the operation of the computer system network;
- Violation of any federal, state, or local laws governing internet use;
- Installing or using software that has not been approved for use on the network.

Unacceptable use of technology by a student can result in disciplinary action ranging from revocation of privileges to dismissal.

**Tobacco.** Valwood School is a tobacco-free campus. The use of any tobacco product is prohibited on campus or any school-sponsored field trip; this includes electronic cigarettes (“vaping”) and JUULs. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in disciplinary action.

**Weapons.** On campus or at school related functions, students are prohibited from possessing firearms, knives, bows, or other items determined by the Head of School to be a potential weapon.

**Alcohol and Illegal Drugs.** Valwood School – by direction of its Board of Trustees – strictly prohibits the use, possession, distribution, and/or being under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs (including without limitation prescription drugs without the consent of the student’s parent, guardian or physician) by its students on campus or during any school-sponsored off-campus activity. The Head of School shall have direct responsibility for administration and enforcement of the policy.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or at any school-sponsored activity, as a condition of attendance at the school, the student may be required to submit to a chemical test of his or her blood, breath, urine, hair, or saliva. Such chemical testing may be conducted either on-campus or at an appropriate medical facility, and at the student’s parent or guardian’s expense. Any failure of a student or his parent/guardian to abide by and cooperate with such searches and testing shall result in the student’s dismissal from the school.

There is help available for students who struggle with substance abuse. (See counseling on page 9.)

Valwood School recognizes the importance of clearly apprising its students and their families of the consequences of violating the school’s policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs. The Board of Trustees has determined that certain minimum sanctions shall accompany every violation of the policy. For purposes of these sanctions, the “school year” starts at the beginning of the fall term and ends at the beginning of the next fall term. Valwood School retains the right to dismiss a student for any violation of the school’s policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs. The outcome of any related criminal investigations or proceedings in any court of competent jurisdiction shall have no binding effect on any sanctions which may be imposed by the school administration.

Any student that Valwood School reasonably believes to have engaged in any conduct, behavior, incident or event which violates the school’s policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs is subject to the following sanctions:

An initial violation of Valwood School’s policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs at any time during a student’s tenure at the school will result in the following procedures and sanctions as applicable:

- A ten-school day suspension from school (five days out of school; five days in-school), with the student to be isolated from the rest of the school’s students as much as practical throughout the school day during the in-school suspension
- Assessment by a qualified professional approved by the school and treatment if necessary; a letter from such professional verifying and describing the assessment and any recommended treatment must be received by the school within thirty (30) days of the discipline ruling; permission from the offender and parent/guardian for the assessing professional to report to and discuss from time to time with the school administration the assessment, treatment recommendations, and progress of the treatment regimen
- Completion of any treatment regimen as recommended by the assessing professional
- Random drug and alcohol testing for a minimum of a twelve (12) month period.
- Relinquishment of all leadership positions including, but not limited to, elected offices or positions, team captain, co-captain or similar positions, for remainder of school year.
- Completion of a school-approved, drug and alcohol awareness program.
- Loss of driving privileges to and from or on the school campus for 20-school days (10 of which are during the in-school suspension).
- Completion of a special project(s) to be determined by school administration, such as research paper, community service work, visit to emergency room, or AA meetings.

- If student is a senior, loss of senior privileges for remainder of the school year.

Recognizing that particular offenses of the policy may require enhanced sanctions, the Head of School may apply other and additional sanctions. This may include dismissal in egregious, first offense cases including, but not limited to, cases involving illegal drugs; risk of death or serious bodily injury; operation of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs; criminal charges or other discredit to school; prior disciplinary infractions of any kind; supply, distribution or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs; threats or abusive or other inappropriate behavior directed against faculty, staff, other student(s), and/or other persons

The failure of a student or his family to abide by and cooperate with the school regarding implementation and completion of any disciplinary procedures and sanctions will generally result in the student's dismissal from the school.

All costs associated with testing, assessment, treatment, and counseling will be the sole responsibility of the student's parent/guardian, with no school funds to be utilized for such purpose.

Per school policy regarding any major discipline incident, a disciplinary record regarding the violation of the school's policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs is permanently placed in the student's record(s) with the school.

Violation of the school's policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs is considered a Major Offense, and thus the Head of School will consider this violation of the school's policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs in determining the appropriate sanction for any subsequent Major Offense or honor code violation.

A second violation of Valwood School's policy concerning alcohol and illegal drugs at any time during a student's tenure at the school may result in the student's automatic and permanent dismissal from the school.

**Major Disciplinary Offenses.** The following list is not intended to be exclusive. Students guilty of any of the following offenses will be subject to serious disciplinary action (including dismissal if the situation so dictates, at the sole discretion of the Head of School):

- Disrespect, insubordination, or profanity
- Hazing, bullying or harassing others
- Dishonest acts of any kind
- Possession or use of alcohol or tobacco on school property or during a school function
- Leaving campus without permission
- Chronic unacceptable behavior
- Taunting, name calling, or hitting
- Willful destruction or defacement of school property or the property of others.
- The possession of knives, firearms, ammunition, or explosive devices of any kind. (State law requires that school officials inform law enforcement authorities in the instance of discovery of a weapon; failure to do so is a breach of the law by that school official).

**Anti-Bullying Policy.** Valwood does not tolerate bullying and considers it a major disciplinary offense; violators will be sanctioned accordingly. Bullying is a form of persistently deliberate aggressive behavior that is hurtful, intimidating, disrespectful, insensitive, threatening, or insulting. Conduct, comments, or gestures that constitute bullying create an environment that is intimidating, hostile, offensive, or uncomfortable. Bullying is when a person with more power (physical strength, social skill, verbal ability) unfairly intimidates someone with seemingly less power.

Victims of bullying are denied the opportunity to learn. To create a respectful and safe school community and to promote optimal achievement for all students, it is the responsibility of every community member to stand up and speak out on behalf of classmates and peers. It is critical that all members of the school

community report incidents of bullying or harassment promptly to a member of the faculty. The school strives to provide a safe and supportive environment for everyone, but we cannot accomplish this goal if these issues are not brought to our attention. Teachers and the administration can help and take appropriate action only when they know a problem exists.

**Anti-Hazing Policy.** Valwood School seeks to promote a safe environment where students may participate in activities and organizations without compromising their health, safety or welfare. It is, therefore, the school's policy that hazing is prohibited. "Hazing" means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with other persons, against another student, and in which both of the following apply:

- The act was committed in connection with an initiation into, an affiliation with or the maintenance of membership in any organization that is affiliated with the school; and
- The act contributes to a substantial risk of potential physical injury, mental harm or degradation, or causes physical injury, mental harm or personal degradation.

While hazing itself is prohibited, any solicitation to engage in hazing is also prohibited, as is aiding and abetting another person who is engaged in hazing. Furthermore, it is not a defense to a violation of this policy that the hazing victim consented or acquiesced to the hazing activity.

Violations of this policy or interference in an investigation under this policy by students or student organizations are subject to sanctions. Any school employee who knowingly permitted, authorized or condoned hazing activity is subject to disciplinary action by the school.

Violations of this policy by students or student organizations can be reported by filing a written or verbal report to the Head of School or athletic director

Any violation involving a crime, emergency or an imminent threat to the health or safety of any person should be reported immediately by dialing 911 to reach local law enforcement officials. The school will report to law enforcement any complaint of hazing involving criminal conduct that creates a substantial risk to the health or safety of any person in the school community. Such reporting shall include, but not be limited to, criminal homicide, sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, liquor law violations, drug law violations, and illegal weapons possession.

This policy is not intended to prohibit or sanction customary public athletic events, contests or competitions that are sponsored by the school; or any activity or conduct that furthers the goals of a legitimate educational curriculum, a legitimate extracurricular program or a legitimate military training program.

**Sexual Harassment Policy.** Every student and staff member has the right to be treated with respect and to come to school each day without fear of sexual harassment or humiliation. Sexual harassment refers to actions of a sexual nature, either physical or verbal, which are unwelcome and inappropriate, which have the effect of demeaning and degrading the person to whom the actions are directed, and which create for that person an atmosphere of anxiety and fear.

Sexual harassment is not about intimacy or even ultimately about sex; rather sexual harassment is about power: using sexual intimidation, whether verbal or physical, to exert power over someone else, and it can have the effect of degrading and/or humiliating its victims.

The victim of sexual harassment has several options available to her or him:

- The victim may go to any Valwood faculty member to report the harassment. In such instances the faculty member must report the matter to an appropriate administrator.
- The victim may go directly to a school administrator.
- The victim may go directly to the Head of School at any time.

Students or faculty found guilty of sexual harassment will face a disciplinary consequence to be determined at the sole discretion of the Head of School. Such consequences may range from counseling to dismissal.

**Dance Guidelines.** To ensure the positive nature of activities such as the Homecoming Dance and the Prom, the following guidelines have been established:

1. It is expected that only a student's feet shall touch the floor.
2. Inappropriate touching, public displays of affection, and other inappropriate contact are not permitted.
3. No undergarments should be visible.
4. It is expected that dancing should involve couples except in instances where the dance is specifically intended to be a group dance.
5. Any dancing that simulates sexual activity is not acceptable.

Students will be issued a warning for the first offense, shall be removed from the dance floor for the second offense, and shall be directed to leave the dance upon the third offense. Students who are directed to leave the dance will not be given a refund for any expenses incurred, including tickets, clothing, etc. Once a student leaves the dance, he or she will not be permitted to re-enter.

For students who are asked to leave, their parents shall be notified immediately by text or phone call.

## **DRESS CODE**

**Philosophy.** The reputation of a school is based to a great extent upon the behavior and appearance of its student body. The dress code also prepares the students for a working environment where they will be expected to dress appropriately and maintain proper grooming. This code is meant to provide a general description of the parameters of school dress. The dress code applies to semester exams as well. Students who arrive for semester exams out of dress code will call for the appropriate attire and must be able to start the exam prior to the initial exams end time.

### **General Expectations for All Valwood Students**

- Clothing should be neat and attractive in appearance.
- Torn or ripped clothing is generally not acceptable.
- Jeans and/or other pants should not be frayed or cut at the bottom and should not drag the floor.
- Fatigues, paramilitary clothing or hunting camouflage are not acceptable. Camouflage print apparel that is designed for everyday wear are allowed.
- Clothing should fit and not be overly tight or baggy.
- Pants should be worn at the natural waist.
- Shoes must be worn at all times, and hats nor hoods may not be worn in buildings for boys or girls.
- Middle and upper school students are not to wear t-shirts or tank tops.
- Sweatshirts in good condition with no inappropriate phrases or pictures are permitted as long as the student wears a dress-code compliant shirt underneath. When wearing a hooded sweatshirt, hoods must NOT be worn.
- It is understood that ripped jeans are currently in style. Students are permitted to wear these jeans provided they are in good condition and taste as determined by the division Dean or designee. This is a privilege that can be lost as soon as it becomes problematic. The ripped section of the jeans must be equivalent to or longer than the length of a dollar bill from the center of the kneecap to the tear.

### **Specific Expectations for All Lower School Students**

- Tennis shoes should be worn every day all day long by all Lower School students.
- Athletic pants and shorts are not permitted.

### **Specific Expectations for Students in Grades PK-3**

- Younger students do not have a defined dress code but should begin to work toward the school dress code.
- Collared shirts are preferred, yet not required until fourth grade for boys.
- All students must keep shirts tucked in unless the shirt is specifically designed to be worn on the outside.
- Valwood shirts or grade-level required attire need to be worn for all field trips and other special occasions.
- Every Friday is Valwood Spirit Day. *See Friday Spirit Dress.*

### **Specific Expectations for Students in Grades 4-12**

*For boys:*

- Acceptable clothing includes collared shirt, pants or jeans in good repair, or non-athletic shorts.
- All students must keep shirts tucked in and may have a Valwood logo, college/university logo, or manufacturer's logo in the pocket area and/or sleeve. Upper school student shirttails (tucking in/out policy) is at Upper School Dean's discretion.
- Boys may not wear earrings or any other pierced jewelry.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Hair for boys must be clean and neat at all times, out of the eyes, and be no longer than collar length. Judgments as to cleanliness, neatness and appropriateness of length, when required, are at the sole discretion of the division dean.

- Junior and Senior boys may wear facial hair if kept clean and neat at the sole discretion of the upper school dean. All other upper school boys should be clean shaven.

*For girls:*

- Acceptable clothing includes jewel-neck shirt, turtleneck, mock turtleneck, or collared shirts or blouses, sweaters, dresses, skirts, slacks or jeans in good repair.
- Workout clothing, pajamas, tube tops, halter tops, crop tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, backless or off-the-shoulder attire are not acceptable.
- Straps must be at least one inch wide
- Clothing should have no inappropriate writing on it. However, shirts may have a Valwood logo, college or university logo, or manufacturer's logo in the pocket area and/or sleeve.
- Clothing should cover the midriff at all times and may not reveal undergarments.
- Attire should fit correctly.
- Girls may wear pierced earrings, but may not wear any other pierced jewelry.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- The length of shorts, skirts and dresses should be of a length equivalent to or longer than the length of a dollar bill from the center of the kneecap to the piece of clothing. Appropriateness will be determined by the administration, and the presence of leggings does not alter the school's rule concerning appropriate skirt length.

Students are expected to adhere to the dress code at all times. Students in violation will be sent to their dean for disciplinary action. Students will be required to call home for appropriate attire (provided more appropriate attire is not available). (All 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students must wear appropriate attire during athletic and fitness classes.)

All violations will be entered into FACTS. After three (3) entries, the student will serve detention and parents will be contacted. After five (5) entries, the student will be placed in ISS and parents will be contacted. After the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) violation and beyond, the students' parents will be contacted, the student will lose all privileges, and will serve ISS.

**Special Dress Days.** Certain days are designated as special dress days such that the details of the usual Dress Code may not apply. These include:

**Monday Dress**

Students in grades 6-12 will be required to “dress up” for school every Monday. Through this process we teach students the value of dressing for employment. Dress clothes must be clean, pressed, and in good condition. Shoes must be clean, neat and in good condition also.

- For boys, this includes a collared dress shirt, tie, dress pants/khakis.
- For girls, this includes a skirt and blouse, dress or dress slacks.
- ***Denim nor shorts are permitted.***
- Sweatshirts/hoodies are not permitted on Monday dress.

**Friday Spirit Dress**

A Valwood School collared shirt, Valwood t-shirt or sweatshirt or Monday dress will be required of all students on FRIDAY and certain other special days designated by the Head of School. Valwood shirts are available in the Valwood Spirit Store. The Head of School may call a school-wide “spirit day” to celebrate an achievement or build school spirit prior to an academic or athletic competition. On these days, students may wear “Friday Spirit Dress.”

**Athletic and Co-Curricular Event Days**

Athletic and co-curricular organizations may, with the permission of the athletic director or dean, wear team jerseys, uniforms, or other clothing representing their organization on game days.

## **SCHOOL SERVICES AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

### **Mandatory Tutorial.**

Valwood offers mandatory tutorial for students at a 70 or below. Tutorial is designed to give our students additional support from their instructor outside of class time.

Tutorials are on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday in the teacher's classroom. Students are to tell their teacher each day if they will be attending tutorial. Tutorial lasts until 4 pm each day. All after-school programs begin at 4 pm.

All students have access to tutorial regardless of their current class grade. As above, students should notify the teacher if they will be attending. If a student has a grade of 70 or below, in more than one class, they should notify all of their teachers which day they will be attending and/or which day they will make up the tutorial time due to another tutorial at the same time.

Parents will be emailed every Friday if their child has been assigned to tutorial. Tutorial is mandatory at Valwood for all students with a grade of 70 or below.

### **Psycho-Educational Testing**

It is important parents provide reports to Valwood School with any psycho-educational testing for their students. Valwood School does not provide any psycho-educational testing. Recommendations can be given to parents who are in search for guidance on having a psycho-educational evaluation completed for their student.

Clinician forms associated with data gathering about specific students related to any type of testing should be given to the division dean for distribution to faculty and staff.

### **Accommodations**

Current (no older than five years), complete psycho-educational testing by a licensed psychologist must be on file with the school before classroom and/or test accommodations can be considered or implemented.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance at school is the first critical component to academic success. We remind parents and students that the school's yearly calendar provides sufficient vacation periods. Family vacations, skiing trips, etc. should be scheduled during planned vacation days.

### FACTS Codes:

**Present at school (P)** - A student is counted present for being at school for a minimum of four hours.

**Present in class (P)** – A student is present for class when the student is in the pre-assigned area with a teacher or supervisor at the scheduled class time.

**In School Suspension (ISS)** – In School Suspension involves prohibiting of a student from attending academic, social or athletic functions for a period of time while remaining in a supervised setting on campus. Time missed due to disciplinary suspension will be recorded as an unexcused absence.

**Out of School Suspension (OSS)** – Out of School Suspension involves prohibiting a student from attending academic, social or athletic functions for a period of time off of the campus. Time missed due to disciplinary suspension will be recorded as an absence.

**Present at check in with No Student ID card (PNC)** – A student's signature is used to represent the student is present. The student did not use the Student ID card issued.

**Tardy** - a student not being in the classroom or Morning Assembly when the class period or assembly begins.

- a. **Excused (TE)** – A student is marked tardy excused for coming to school after, but not limited to, one of these examples: Illness, Medical/Dental appointments, Religious reason, and serious family emergency. An official note will need to be brought in for medical/dental tardies.
- b. **Tardy** – A student is marked tardy unexcused for coming to school after class or morning assembly has begun.
- c. **Tardy to Morning Assembly (TMA)** – A student is marked TMA for arriving to Morning assembly late, but on time for class.
- d. **Tardy NO ID Card (TNC)** – A student is marked TNC for arriving to Morning Assembly late with no Student ID Card, but on time for class.

**Late to Class.** Teachers in the Middle and Upper Schools will take attendance at the beginning of each class. Should a student be late to the beginning of any class, that student will be counted as tardy.

Should a teacher be responsible for the tardiness of a student to his/her next class, it is the student's responsibility to get a note from that particular teacher for the tardy to be excused.

**After every fourth tardy (including all academic classes, study hall, and morning assembly) the student will earn detention.**

**Lower School Tardies.** In Lower School 10 tardies constitutes 1 absence. Should a student have perfect attendance for the year but has amassed 10+ tardies he/she will not receive a Perfect Attendance award on Honors Day.

**Absent** – Absent is defined as a student not being present for more than four hours of a school day or an entire class period.

## FACTS Codes:

- a. **Absent Excused (AE)** - Excused absences include, Illness, Medical/Dental appointments, Religious reason, or serious family emergency. An official note will need to be brought in for medical/dental tardies. College visits are encouraged for parents and students. Visits will be excused once proper documentation of the visit from said college is provided.
- b. **Absent (AU)** – Unexcused Absences include absences not listed in the absent excused explanation, which may include family vacations, non-medical appointments, etc.
- c. **Valwood Event (AV)** – Absent Valwood event is for a student not present at school for any Valwood school sponsored event.
- d. **Absent Morning Assembly (AMA)** – A student is not present at Morning Assembly
- e. **Absent Tutorial (ATU)** – A student is absent from tutorial.
- f. **Absent AM Present PM (A/P)** - A student is absent during the first half of the school day, but present the second half of the school day.
- g. **Present AM Absent PM (P/A)** – A student is present the first half of the day and absent the second half.
- h. **Parent Check Out (PCO)** – A parent called to let us know their student could check out for the day or signed out a student with no explanation of why. This is considered an unexcused absence unless we receive documentation stating otherwise (as listed above (AE)).

**Planned Absences in the Middle School.** In the event of a planned absence (family trip, religious holiday, sporting event, or extracurricular activity) please notify the school as soon as possible. The student will be responsible for obtaining an assignment form to be apprised of upcoming academic work. Students must have the assignment form signed by teachers and initialed by the dean prior to leaving for the event. The assignment sheet will specify when work is due, and planned absences do not change that expectation.

**Absences.** Students will be responsible for all assigned work during the absence and should check with individual teachers prior to the absence and check FACTS while absent. Missed tests/quizzes will be made up upon return at the discretion of individual teachers.

If a student will be out of school because of an orthodontist or doctor's appointment, please send a note ahead of time. We ask that you attempt to schedule appointments after school whenever possible.

**Unplanned Absences.** In the event of an unplanned absence (illness, injury, family emergency) we ask that parents notify the appropriate administrative assistant as soon as possible through email or phone call by 8:30 am. Academic work will be made up in a reasonable amount of time as determined by the individual teacher.

**Middle School/Upper School ID Cards.** When a student is Present but does not have his/her ID card, he/she will be marked "PNC". After the fifth "PNC", a student will be assigned to detention. He/She will receive a detention for each subsequent "PNC" within the quarter. A new ID card will cost \$15.

**Early Dismissal.** Requests for early dismissal and predetermined planned absences must be approved by the appropriate division dean. No student may leave campus without first obtaining permission from the appropriate administrative staff, who will confirm parental permission.

A student who wishes to leave school early for a medical or dental appointment, or for another worthwhile reason, must do all of the following:

- Before the beginning of the school day, bring an excuse signed by a parent to the appropriate administrative assistant. Information in the note should include reasons for the early dismissal, the time of the dismissal, and the time of expected return.
- Students/parents must sign-out through the appropriate school assistant.
- Students/parents must sign-in upon return to school (if on the same day).
- If someone other than parent/guardian is picking up student, the school must be notified.

Arrival for Lower School. Please consider the following guidelines regarding arrival for Lower School students:

- School begins at 8:00 AM for all Lower School students. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:00 AM. 10 tardies equals an absence. (On Wednesdays, school begins at 8:30 am)
- Please never drop your child off before 7:30 AM.
- Make sure the doors to the school are unlocked before leaving your child.
- Safety Patrol is present to assist your child out of the car. Please do not let your child get out by himself.
- If you choose to walk your child into the building please make sure you park in a parking space – not along the curb.
- Please drive slowly through the parking lot, watch for pedestrians, and do not use your cell phone.
- If you arrive while our Safety Patrol is still unloading you may let your child out as normal. If Safety Patrol is not present then we ask you to park and escort your child in and sign him or her in as tardy in the office.

Dismissal for Lower School. Lower School dismissal times are staggered as follows:

- Pre-Kindergarten – 2:20 PM
- Kindergarten – 2:35 PM
- 1st - 2:40 PM
- 2nd - 2:45 PM
- 3rd - 2:50 PM
- 4th - 2:55 PM
- 5th - 3:00 PM

In addition, please consider the following guidelines regarding Lower School dismissal:

- Please do not “cut around” a car or park at the ends of the islands.
- Always check for pedestrians around your car before pulling away.
- This is not the time for parent/teacher conferences. If you need to speak with the teacher please email them to set up a conference time.
- Please place the Grade Number(s) in the front window of the passenger side and in the left rear window of your car. Let us know if you need additional numbers.
- Lower School students are not permitted to walk alone to the other buildings to be picked up. Please call the Lower School Office to discuss this should the need arise.
- Please call us if you are going to be late picking up your child.

**Pick-Up Changes for Lower School.** If during the day it becomes necessary for someone other than yourself or previously designated driver to pick your child up please call the Lower School Office and let us know. Please inform the new driver he or she needs to be prepared to show a picture ID.

**Late Pick-Up for Lower School.** Lower School students who are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. will be taken to Extended Day, and the school will bill their account at the drop-in rate.

**Early Check-Out for Lower School.** Should you need to check your child out early due to a doctor's appointment, etc., please go to the Lower School Office to sign your child out and to obtain an Early Dismissal Slip. An email to the teacher advising them of an early dismissal will aid in having your child ready to go.

**Arrival for Middle School.** The Middle School opens at 7:30 am. Parents should drop their child off with the passenger door opening to the Middle School for safety.

**Pick-Up for Middle School.** The Middle School day ends at 3:25 pm. Parents can pick their children up along the sidewalk facing the South parking lot. Students will stay in their designated areas until given permission to leave by their coach or supervisor.

**Pick-Up Changes for Middle School.** If during the day it becomes necessary for someone other than a previously designated driver to pick your child up, please call the Middle School Office. We will inform the teacher and student of the change. Please inform the new driver he or she needs to be prepared to show a picture ID.

**Late Pick-Up for Middle School.** Middle School students who are not picked up by 4:00 p.m. or after their sports practice will be taken to Extended Day, and the school will bill the account at the drop-in rate.

**Early Check-Out for Middle School.** Should you need to check your child out early due to a doctor's appointment, etc., please stop at the Middle School Office first to sign him/her out of class. Please notify the Middle School Office at least the day before a scheduled appointment.

**After School Hours.** The school buildings are open until 4:00 PM. Students should plan to collect their books and to leave school by that time. Students should not come to school in the evening or on the weekend with the hope that someone might be there to let them inside. Students should not be at school (except for specific events) after dark. Students must never be in school buildings, including the gymnasium, unless they have adult supervision.

### School Day.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Period</b>
7:55 – 8:10 am	Morning Assembly
8:15 – 9:00 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Period
9:05 – 9:50 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period
9:50 – 10:05 am	Break
10:05 – 10:50 am	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period
10:55 – 11:40 am	4 <sup>th</sup> Period
11:45 am – 12:30 pm	5 <sup>th</sup> Period
12:30 – 1:00 pm	MS Lunch
12:35 – 1:20 pm	US 6 <sup>th</sup> Period
1:00 – 1:45 pm	MS 6 <sup>th</sup> Period
1:20 – 1:50 pm	US Lunch
1:50 – 2:35 pm	7 <sup>th</sup> Period
2:40 – 3:25 pm	8 <sup>th</sup> Period

## ACADEMICS AND PROGRAM

**FACTS.** FACTS is a way for parents and students to have access to information online. Every Valwood student and parent receives a unique user account. Once the account has been activated, throughout the academic year, FACTS can be used to check your child's grades, attendance, behavior reports, receive e-mail alerts, receive e-mails with school or class information, receive updated billing and statement information, view class pages with homework, assignments, test dates, and updated messages from your child's teacher, view athletic schedules and club activities, view general school information such as, news and the school calendar, and access updated information on weather related school closings.

**Academic Year.** The academic year is composed of approximately thirty-six weeks divided into four nine-week quarters. In the Middle School and Upper Schools, the first and second quarters make up the first semester and the third and fourth quarters make up the second semester.

Lower School: Progress Reports are available in ParentsWeb for first through fifth grade students at mid-quarter (4 1/2 weeks); report cards are available in ParentsWeb at the end of the quarter for Kindergarten-fifth grade. Students in Pre-K receive a written report at the end of the year. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring for all Lower School parents (Pre-K through 5th). The Lower School is closed for students during conference days.

Middle School and Upper School: In the middle of each nine-week grading period, a Progress Report is made available to parents via ParentsWeb for all courses.

At the end of each nine-week grading period, a Quarterly Report is available on ParentsWeb to parents, with comments for courses in which the grade is 72 or below. Parents should call the office if they do not receive one.

**Summer Reading.** All students in grades 3 through 12 have required summer reading. It is the student's responsibility to read the books prior to the beginning of the school year. Testing on content/comprehension of the summer reading begins during the first week of school. Extensions are given only to students who enroll after August 1. Returning Valwood students who enroll after August 1 will not be given an extension. Summer Reading lists and associated activities are available on the school website.

**Homework.** Homework varies with each teacher and with the age and maturity of the pupils. Homework is the student's responsibility. Parents should not attempt to do homework for the student nor give him/her a great deal of assistance.

Generally, students can expect to spend an average of ten minutes per grade level per night on homework (for example, 30 minutes for third grade students). If specific work is not assigned, students should utilize homework time to review the day's work, practice skills, or to read. If the student is absent, then it is the responsibility of the student to find out his/her assignments. Homework and missed work can be picked up after 3:15 p.m.

Students who elect Honors or Advanced Placement courses can expect a more rigorous homework load. Homework assignments may be viewed in ParentsWeb.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences.** Opportunities for formal conferences to discuss student progress are available throughout the year. Your child's academic and social progress will be discussed at these conferences. During the rest of the year, conferences may be scheduled as needed. Appointments should be scheduled with the individual teacher in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

To prepare for a parent-teacher conference, consider the following:

- Make a list of things you want to tell the teacher about your child so that the teacher can understand the child better -- his health, attitudes toward school, family relationships, hobbies and interests, etc.
- Decide what you want to ask the teacher in advance of the conference.

- Discuss the conference with your child to see if there is anything he/she would like you to talk about with the teacher.
- Check with your spouse and decide which aspects of your child's schoolwork are puzzling or worrying you.
- Ideally, both parents and student should attend the conference.
- A conference is the time to get all the facts about a school situation you may only know about second-hand. Problems not communicated remain problems not solved.

During a parent-teacher conference, consider the following:

- Be at ease. The teacher is just as interested in the well-being of your child as you are. You are partners working toward the same goal.
- Determine how you can work together to resolve problem areas.
- Toward the end of the conference, review with the teacher some of the ideas you have discussed that might help your child.

**Scheduling Parent-Teacher Conferences.** Fall Semester: Parent-Teacher Conferences for Lower, Middle and Upper Schools may be scheduled on any Wednesday morning during the month of October (10/2, 10/9, 10/23, and 10/30) between 7:30 and 8:15 am. Please make appointments with your child's teacher(s). Spring Semester: Lower and Middle School will have Conference Day on May 13<sup>th</sup> and this will be a holiday for students. Please make appointments with your child's teachers during this time. Upper School Parent-Teacher Conferences may be scheduled on any Wednesday morning during the month of March (3/4, 3/11, 3/18, and 3/25) between 7:30 and 8:15 am. Please make appointments with your child's teachers during this time. Parents interested in discussing Upper School student schedules may call to make an appointment on Wednesday, March 18 or Thursday, March 19 with Mrs. Gallahan and Ms. Blanton.

**Libraries.** There are two libraries on Valwood's Campus:

Turner Library: Lower School students visit the library weekly. They check out books, have story time and receive library skills instruction appropriate for the grade level.

Corker Giles Library: The Corker Giles library is for Middle and Upper School student use between 8 AM and 4 PM. Corker Giles Library offers over 16,000 volumes, plus a large variety of audio/visual materials. Computers are available for student, faculty, and staff use, permitting access to the Internet, email, personal network files, and network software programs. In addition, resource CD-ROMS that include a dictionary, thesaurus, atlas, and an encyclopedia are available as well as access to GALILEO, the University System of Georgia's premier academic search engine.

**Standardized Testing.** Valwood's standardized testing program involves students in grades 3-11.

Grades 3-8 will take the ITBS

Grades 8-11 will take the PSAT

Students are encouraged to take the SAT or ACT at least twice each prior to applying to colleges.

**Participation/Exclusion from P.E. Classes.** If the exclusion due to injury/illness is for more than one week, a note from the doctor, which indicates the date the student may resume physical activity, is required.

**Missing/Late Assignment.** Is it each student's responsibility to ask for any missing assignments or makeup work due to absences from the class. Students will receive an "M" for each missing assignment until the assignment is turned into the teacher. The grade "M" equates to a zero in the grade book. Students will not be allowed to turn in work from a previous quarter once the quarter grades have been released. In special cases the division Dean may allow students to turn in missing assignments.

**Transcripts.** Official transcripts are submitted electronically to colleges, universities and scholarship programs and via USPS when the receiving institution does not accept electronic transmission.

Unofficial transcripts to athletic scouting services, coaches, or other entities are sent via email or fax at the request of the student or the prospective program. Unofficial transcripts for seniors are available for personal review in the student's Documents area in Naviance.

Transcript requests must be made in Naviance to allow for appropriate processing and tracking. While every effort is made to fulfill transcript requests within 3-5 days, please allow additional time during peak college application season.

**Requirements for Diploma.** The Diploma is awarded at Commencement to qualified students upon approval of the Head of School. To qualify for the Valwood diploma, a student must satisfy a minimum of twenty-two (22) units earned in Upper School for graduation as listed below:

- English (4 credits)
- Mathematics (4 credits including Geometry and Algebra II)
- Science (4 credits) - Biology, Chemistry and two electives
- History (3 credits) – World History, U.S. History, Government (1/2), and Economics (1/2)
- Foreign Language (2 credits), same language
- Advanced Composition (1/2 credit)
- Speech (1/2 credit)
- Fine Arts (1 credit)
- Personal Fitness (1/2 credit) (NOTE: Credit may be earned by playing 2 seasons of varsity athletics or a semester of conditioning.
- 2 1/2 additional electives

Additionally, students must complete a minimum of 20 hours pre-approved community service each school year. Students that desire to organize a service project at school must have it approved by the community service coordinator.

Each junior is required to complete an Internship, which lasts a minimum of 40 hours. The purpose of this program is help students identify passions area that they would like to pursue in high education. (2019-2020 school year – seniors must also meet this requirement)

Students are responsible for selecting a business in which they will intern and their selection is approved by Upper School Dean.

In certain cases, subject to the approval of the Head of School, credit for equivalent course work completed elsewhere may be counted toward completion of graduation requirements.

**Academic Course Load.** All Upper School students must enroll in 7 courses or the equivalent, unless they are carrying three Advanced Placement courses.

**Academic Probation.** Students with an unweighted numeric average less than 70 at any quarter in core courses will be placed on academic probation. This will require attendance at daily tutorials (Monday through Thursday).

**Advanced Placement Courses.** Students in grades 9-11 who enroll in AP classes are required to take the AP exam at the end of the year. AP test fees and AP science lab fees will be billed to the student's account.

**Core Academic Courses.** The academic core consists of all English, mathematics, science, social science, and foreign language courses.

**College Guidance Program.** In keeping with the school's mission, the Director of College Guidance will work with all students, school staff, and families as an integral part of the education program. Valwood's college guidance program empowers students to make reasoned and informed decisions, to advocate effectively for

themselves, to follow a schedule and meet deadlines, and to employ strong organizational skills throughout the process. We are committed to providing timely information, counseling, and support to help each student develop the necessary skills to complete each phase of the college process successfully.

**Course Registration.** Course registration occurs each spring. Each parent and student should review the selected program of study carefully before confirming such with the Registrar.

College courses taken as dual enrollment through the Georgia Department of Education's program will be entered on a Valwood transcript but will not count toward a Valwood GPA. College courses that are not taken through the program will neither be included on a Valwood transcript nor count toward a Valwood GPA. Students may be required to request transcripts be sent directly from the dual enrollment college to the admission office of the college(s) to which they are applying.

**Drop-Add.** Upper School students have through the first four and a half weeks (4½) of school to drop or add a course with the permission of his/her parents, and the Registrar.

**Online Courses.** Students may take courses online through the Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) or other approved, accredited programs. Generally, online courses should supplement the Valwood program, and not replace courses offered at Valwood. Online courses do not count toward the Valwood GPA, but are included in the HOPE GPA calculation (core courses only). Students who opt to take a GAVS course in place of a course that is offered by Valwood must pay for the course.

**Directed Study.** Under the direction of a faculty member, and with the approval of the upper school dean, students may take a course as a directed study. Such courses meet at least three times per week with tests, homework, exams, etc. and carry the expectation of substantial individual scholarship and motivation. Directed Study courses count towards a student's GPA.

**Independent Study.** With the support of a faculty member, and with the approval of the Upper School Dean, students may take a course as an independent study. Such courses meet less than once a week, do not have tests, exams, etc. and carry an expectation of remarkable individual scholarship and motivation. Independent Study courses do not count towards a student's GPA and are listed on the transcript as pass/fail.

**Credit Recovery.** Valwood will only accept credit recovery when the student successfully completes and passes an online course through an accredited institution pre-approved by Valwood School. Failure to complete the prescribed Summer School may result in the student retaking the failed course, or in dismissal. Credit recovery will be capped at two for the student's Upper School career and any exceptions to this must be approved by the Head of School. Courses taken for credit recovery are at the student's expense.

**Transfer Students.** Students who transfer into the Upper School at Valwood may be asked to retake courses they have already taken and for which they have received credit at a previous school. This most often occurs in math and foreign language courses where the preparation for the rigor of succeeding courses is in question. These repeated courses will be transcribed with grades and the corresponding credit, and the grade from a repeated course will be counted in GPA calculations.

**Grade Point Averages.** The following GPAs are calculated for students in the Upper School. Courses taken in Middle School for Upper School credit are not included in any GPA calculations. Only courses taken at Valwood School count toward the Valwood School GPA.

**Weighted Term Average.** Overall numeric average of all courses, core and non-core, calculated each term (quarter and semester) exclusively for the purpose of determining Merit Roll and Head of School's List honors. Advanced courses have quality points (Honors +1 and AP +3) added to the numeric grade earned for the term for the calculation. The unweighted earned grade appears on the Report Card and transcript (semester) and this GPA is not reported on the transcript.

**Numeric GPA.** Overall average of all courses, core and non-core, taken in grades 9–12, on a 0–100 scale. This GPA is included on the transcript for the student, and is provided to colleges and scholarship programs if requested. No weighting is applied to courses for the purpose of calculating this GPA.

**Weighted Cumulative GPA.** Below is the weighting scale for core courses taken in grades 9–12. Honors courses are weighted, plus 0.5, while a weight of 1.0 is added to each Advanced Placement course, per the scale below.

**PRIOR TO 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR**

GRADE	COLLEGE-PREP & HONORS	COLLEGE-PREP & HONORS HOPE	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	ADVANCED PLACEMENT/DUAL ENROLLMENT HOPE
90-100	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.0
85-89	3.5	3.0	4.0	3.5
80-84	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5
75-79	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.5
70-74	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.5
65-69	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5
Less than 65	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**BEGINNING WITH THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR**

GRADE	COLLEGE-PREP	HONORS	COLLEGE-PREP & HONORS HOPE	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	ADVANCED PLACEMENT/DUAL ENROLLMENT HOPE
90-100	4.0	4.5	4.0	5.0	4.0
85-89	3.5	4.0	3.0	4.5	3.5
80-84	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	3.5
75-79	2.5	3.0	2.0	3.5	2.5
70-74	2.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.5
65-69	1.0	1.5	1.0	2.0	1.5
Less than 65	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**Grading Scales.** Middle School and Upper School grades are assigned as follows:

- 100 - 90      A
- 80 - 89      B
- 70 - 79      C
- 65 - 69      D
- Below 65    F
- Incomplete   I
- Missing      M

**Valedictorian and Salutatorian/Class Rankings.** The weighted cumulative GPA is used to determine the number one (valedictorian) and number two (salutatorian) students of a graduating class. No other rankings are calculated or reported to colleges or other programs.

Students must have attended Valwood for their entire junior and senior years to be eligible to be the Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

**Examinations.** Exams are administered at the end of each semester to Middle and Upper School students.

Middle School: Exams count one-seventh of the semester grade. There are no exemptions from exams. Students in the middle school will take exams in History, Math, English, Science, Spanish, and Composition.

Upper School: Two-hour semester exams are administered at the end of each semester. In the Upper School, exams count one-fifth of the semester grade. Upper School students will take exams in English, Social Studies, Math, Science, Spanish, and any academic elective in which they are enrolled.

Attendance during scheduled exam periods is mandatory. We will only excuse absences in cases of an illness or family emergency. Exam retakes for pre-approved absences will be determined as needed. Students out of dress code will not be allowed entry into Rodgers Performance Hall for exams. The dress code applies to semester exams as well. Students who arrive for semester exams out of dress code will call for the appropriate attire and must be able to start the exam prior to the original exams end time.

A junior may be exempt from a second semester exam(s) if he/she has a ninety-five (95) average for the second semester and has accumulated fewer than ten (10) tardies (including morning assembly) for the year and less than four (4) unexcused absences (including morning assembly). First and second semester seniors may exempt exams with a 95 average and no more than five (5) absences and/or tardies including morning assembly for the semester and accumulated less than 10 tardies to assembly and class per semester.

**Valwood Upper School Exemption Policy** for the 2019-2020 School Year. Exempting a final exam indicates a student, through classroom assessments, assignments, and unit/chapter exams has attained mastery knowledge in a particular class. Exemption waiver opportunities provide students an incentive to consistently exhibit their knowledge of the course content as they demonstrate what they know, understand, and are able to do the academic goals/standards for the course. Exam exemption waiver(s) provide students an opportunity to demonstrate work ethic qualities, such as exemplary attendance, timeliness to class, quality daily preparation, as well as quality products and presentations. When students exhibit these traits, teachers can move faster and delve deeper into subject matter. Absences, tardies, and less than quality assignments require teachers to repeat previous information, concepts, equations, formulas, etc. necessary for understanding by the entire class to move forward.

Eligible students/parents have three options:

1. If you meet or exceed the grade minimum in your class, meet the required attendance, service learning hours, discipline record and your year in school prior to the semester exam you can exempt the exam. (see chart below)
2. a. You can take the final exam and if it raises your grade your score will be figured in to your final grade.  
b. You can take the final exam and if it lowers your grade your exam score will not be figured in to your final grade.
3. **Parents must sign the parental agreement form. Parents who want their child to take all semester exams indicate this on the form and you will take the final exam, and regardless of the score the exam grade will be figured in to your final grade.**

Grade Level	Min. GPA	Semester 1 Waivers	Semester 2 Waivers	Semester Absences (not AV)	Semester Tardies	Honor Code Violations	Major Discipline Offenses	Participate in Extra-Curricular	Service Hours per Semester
Grade 9	90	1	1	<6	<6	None	None	1	10
Grade 10	90	2	2	<6	<6	None	None	1	10
Grade 11	85	2	3	<6	<6	None	None	1	10
Grade 12	80	3	All	<6	<6	None	None	1	10

\*\*\*\*Remember, students who graduate from an eligible high school with a **HOPE GPA** of 3.0 or higher and have earned a minimum of four full credits from an academic rigor course are considered

**HOPE Scholars** and qualifying for this award as entering freshmen.

The **Zell Miller Scholarship** provides **FULL TUITION** funding to undergraduate Georgia residents who graduate from high school with a 3.7 or greater **GPA** and a score of at least 1200 for reading and math on the SAT or an ACT composite score of 26. Please consider the possible benefits and consequences of the exam exemption policy as it relates to these two state scholarships.\*\*\*\*

\*\*Exam subjects exempted in the fall cannot be exempted in the spring, with the exception of seniors. Incomplete Service Hours must be up-to-date in addition to the semester requirement.\*\*

### **AP Exceptions**

1. Freshmen AP Human Geo students cannot exempt the fall semester exam. It is important, in preparation for the AP exam, that you take a similar exam to be comfortable with the format and demand of the FRQs and higher level multiple choice questions.
2. All AP level freshmen (AP Human Geography) & all AP level sophomores (AP World & AP Bio) must take the AP Exams & will not take a final/semester 2 exam for those specific classes. All AP level juniors and seniors have 3 options for second semester/final exams:
  - a. take the AP Exam
  - b. exempt from the final/semester 2 exam
  - c. take a final/semester 2 exam

### **Special Circumstances**

#### Exemption Bonus

Any student may earn ONE “bonus exemption” for a second semester class with perfect attendance, no discipline reports, no tardies, no outstanding fees or fines, and no Honor Code violations in that class first semester. (AV allowed) Remember, freshmen – juniors cannot exempt the same class two semesters in a row.

#### Transfer Students

Transfer students have the responsibility to provide attendance and disciplinary information from their previous school for exemption consideration.

#### Exempt Students

Students exempt from exams and not seeking help from their teacher should not be on campus.

#### Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement Students

Dual enrollment students fall under the rules and regulations of the institution from which they are receiving DE credit. Valwood exemption policies do not apply to dual enrollment, virtual school, Coastal Plains Charter School or any other credit granting institutions.

#### College Visits

Parents are encouraged to visit colleges of interest to their child. College visits, not sponsored by Valwood, require documentation of visitation to be excused absences.

#### Dress Code

Students out of dress code will not be allowed to take exam at the scheduled time. These students will be able to call home for the appropriate clothing and will test before the end of the original exam time ends.

#### Appeals

Appeals, for unusual or extenuating circumstances, of the exemption rules above are to be turned in to the Dean’s office no later than two weeks before the semester exam for exemption consideration.

**Summer Middle School Make-Up Work.** Any Middle School student who fails one (1) of six (6) core academic courses for the year (Composition, Literature, Science, History, Math, Spanish) or fails math or composition (any sequential course) course for the second semester may be required to complete Summer Make-Up Work at the discretion of the dean.

Students will be required to retake and pass the second semester examination before being promoted to the next grade. Should a student not pass the final examination, that student with his/her parents meet with the Middle School dean and Head of School prior to the beginning of the school year to determine strategies to ensure future success.

Students who fail history, science, or literature for the year will be required to take a study skills course over the summer before being promoted to the next grade, and/or will be required to coordinate with their teacher and the dean to come up with a plan of independent study in that particular course/courses with a test to be taken before the start of the next school year to assess progress over the summer.

Students who fail two (2) academic courses will be retained.

**After School Programs.** Valwood offers Extended Day and Home Hour programs. Fees and information are provided at the time of registration.

### **Middle School and Upper School Co-Curricular Activities.**

**Literary.** Literary is a GISA event that involves individual and small group competitions in a wide range of events. Literary events include singing, acting, writing, spelling, extemporaneous speaking, and piano. Students work individually with coaches to prepare for their event, learning how to fine tune their performances. Music auditions are held in November, and auditions for all other events are held in January

**MathCounts.** MathCounts is an organization that strives to engage middle school students of all ability and interest levels in fun, challenging math programs, in order to expand their academic and professional opportunities. Valwood students participate in the Mathcounts competition series which occurs in the spring.

**Middle School Student Council.** Middle School Student Council is composed of 8th grade officers and two representatives elected by each class in grades 6 and 7. These leaders plan activities and promote projects for the Middle School. They sponsor social activities for students.

**Mock Trial.** Mock Trial gives Valwood students the unique opportunity to learn about the law profession by walking through a full trial. Students take the parts of the lawyers for both sides, as well as acting out the roles of the suspects and witnesses in the case. Lawyers from the community work alongside Valwood's coaches to help prepare the students for the competition. Mock Trial is open to any student in the Upper School.

**Model UN.** Students learn about the world and about the issues facing different countries in the Model United Nations program. Each spring, Valwood students are given the chance to represent different nations of the world in a competitive forum that mimics the UN. Students are tasked with researching their countries and figuring out how these diverse nations would respond to a wide range of issues. Model UN is open to any student in the Upper School *when interest is shown*.

**National Junior Honor Society.** NJHS is one of the nation's premier organizations established to recognize outstanding middle school students. More than just an honor roll, NJHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since its beginning in 1921. It includes students in grades 7 and 8 who meet the following criteria.

- A student must be at Valwood one semester before he/she is eligible.

- Academic average is 88 or higher
- Complete the student activity form by the set due date

**National Honor Society.** Students are selected to the National Honor Society (NHS) on the basis of scholarship, leadership, service, and character, all of which must be significantly in evidence.

Membership is open to qualified juniors and seniors, who may be identified in either the fall or spring semester of the school year. Qualified candidates:

- Must have a cumulative numeric average of 88. Grades will not be rounded up, e.g. an 87.6 will not qualify for selection. Only grades earned at Valwood will be used in grade average computation for the purpose of determining NHS eligibility.
- Must attend Valwood for at least one semester before being considered.
- Must complete the “Student Activity Information Form” by the date indicated on the form.

An induction ceremony will be held in the spring semester for selected candidates.

Selection to these honor societies is a privilege, not a right. Selection to NHS is determined by the Faculty Council. Students who have excessive tardies or who have been otherwise disciplined by a teacher or administrator at Valwood may not be selected for inclusion. A student who is not selected in one year due to one of the above problems may be considered in future years if the student is in good academic and social standing.

A National Honor Society member whose cumulative numeric average drops below an 88, has a major disciplinary infraction, or who has a finding of guilt by the Honor Council may be placed on probation for one semester. At the end of that semester, the member’s status will be reevaluated. If the problem(s) persists, the student may be placed on inactive status.

Appeals of any of the above procedures should be addressed to the NHS faculty advisor.

**Odyssey of the Mind.** Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem-solving program for students ranging in age from kindergarten through college. Students work on teams to solve problems creatively! Modeled on interscholastic sports, Odyssey of the Mind’s creative competitions combine the excitement of athletic competition with fun-filled often zany mental gymnastics.

**One Act Play.** Valwood’s One-Act Play team performs a complete play in less than 55 minutes competitively against other GISA schools. Student actors learn about stage presence, blocking, character, vocal techniques, and focus. Students can also be involved by being a part of the technical crew, or as a student designer. The play is announced near the beginning of school and all 8th – 12th grade students are welcome to audition. Auditions are held in early September.

**PAGE Academic Quiz Bowl.** PAGE Quiz Bowl is a competition that is open to both public and private middle school students in grades 6-8. Students compete in a region and state competitions in January and February. Students are asked questions from all subject matters taught in the middle school.

**Science Olympiad.** Science Olympiad is an international nonprofit organization devoted to improving the quality of science education, increasing student interest in science and providing recognition for outstanding achievement in science education by both students and teachers.

**Upper School Student Council.** The Student Council is composed of officers and representatives elected by each class in grades 9-12. These leaders discuss student policies, plan activities, assemblies, and sponsor programs for the student body. Annual events are Homecoming and the Fall Festival.

**Yearbook.** The Yearbook staff is composed of Upper School students who are enrolled in the single-semester Advanced Digital and Media Design course, which meets the Fine Arts credit requirement and calculates into Valwood GPA. Students in the course meet daily to plan, design, and create the annual Valwood Yearbook. Students are encouraged but not required to enroll in this course for both semesters.

Other extra-curricular clubs are created when students show interest and when there is enough participation. Clubs in recent years have included: Art Club, Debate, Interact, Chess, Thespian, FCA, Dance Marathon, Key Club, Creative Writing, and Characters with Character.

## **ATHLETICS**

Valwood provides a well-rounded program of interscholastic athletics for all of its students. Opportunities for participation vary according to sport and level of competition. The program is designed to provide positive learning opportunities for each student who participates. At the lower levels, emphasis is on skills development and participation. At the varsity level, performance and team success become primary objectives.

The school, however, does not adhere to an “all players get equal playing time” policy even at the lower levels. Valwood believes that, while meaningful participation on a competitive team might not mean equal playing time, it does mean providing students with the opportunity to further their learning and development in a game situation. Participation in a fifth quarter of play in football and basketball and extra innings in baseball or softball, for example, does constitute meaningful competitive participation.

**Communication.** Coaches will communicate to student and parents their expectations for all players on their teams, as well as the locations and times of all games, practices, team policies, required equipment, and off-season conditioning expectations. Coaches will also communicate to the student and his or her parents any disciplinary action resulting in the denial of a student-athlete’s participation and the reasons for that action.

**The Parent-Coach Relationship.** Parents are encouraged to discuss with the coach any concerns about their student-athlete’s emotional or physical status. Parents should also request from the coach any information about ways the student might improve his or her performance.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. If a parent has a concern and would like to discuss it, he or she should call to schedule an appointment with the coach.

If a parent has an unresolved concern and would like to discuss it, he or she should call to schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director.

**Georgia Independent School Association (GISA) Governance.** Valwood’s program of interscholastic athletics is governed by the Georgia Independent School Association (GISA). Eighth grade students may participate in all varsity sports except football. The GISA requires that each student in grades 8-12 be covered by catastrophic insurance.

**GISA Code of Good Behavior.** The following code has been adopted by the GISA for application at all GISA-sponsored and sanctioned events:

### **PREAMBLE**

While the preponderant majority of schools, and all associated with each school, clearly and consistently exhibit appropriate sportsmanship year-in and year-out, it is incumbent upon each to continue to insure that all are aware and attempt to stimulate fair play, friendly rivalry, and good sportsmanship among contestants, schools, and communities. Toward that end goal, the Georgia Independent School Association provides the following guidelines to help each school attain these goals, especially with respect to establishing norms of exemplary sportsman like behavior during all association events.

- All school personnel (i.e., coaches, assistants, students, teachers, etc.) are expected to set a positive example of good sportsmanship by both their demeanor, personal example, and leadership at all times.
- Each year (and more often, if necessary) students and all other fans (especially, parents) should be informed what behavior is acceptable and that which is not acceptable during all competitive school events.
- Every student athlete, coach, and official is to be treated with honor, dignity, and respect before, during, and after each athletic or literary event.

- Fans (including students) are encouraged to cheer and applaud the accomplishments of their favorite team. (This can be done in so many wholesome ways without use of profanity or other improper language, harassment, gestures, or other actions which can cause embarrassment to the school.)
- When the contest is over, it is over. Period. Any complaints must be filed according to the association rules and regulations.
- It is the host school's responsibility to provide (and insure) that all participants, fans, officials can attend any event in safety without undue or improper harassment, etc. from opposing school fans, police, etc.
- Persons who do not behave properly (or who have violated this code or broken laws etc.) are to be warned and asked to leave the premises. (In case of law violations, these matters need to be handled by the security personnel taking appropriate action as may be deemed necessary.)
- Ultimately, the school head is at all times (home and away) totally responsible and accountable for all actions of his/her teams, coaches, students, and fans. With proper leadership, all associated with the school are expected to know and exhibit good sportsmanship, proper acceptable behavior, and manners becoming a host or guest at any event.”

**GISA Rule for Ejections for Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** All coaches, athletes, parents, and fans are subject to the following rule:

“If a player or coach is ejected, that player or coach will be automatically suspended from that game and the next game regardless of the sport, whether it is regular, region or state play-off and, further, the school will be issued a mandatory fine of at least \$50 per occurrence. Any fan or other person who is associated with the school and is ejected from a game will also require the school to pay a mandatory \$50 fine and suspend that person from at least one game for each ejection (when a player, fan or coach is ejected, that person must be removed from the playing and seating area {i.e., gym, stadium, or ball field, etc.} and must not be seen or heard during the period of suspension.)”

Per Valwood Board of Trustees policy the person receiving the ejection will pay the fine. Valwood School will not pay the fine.

**Athletic and Extracurricular Eligibility.** Athletic and extracurricular eligibility is evaluated each semester. A student who has passed 5 unit subjects, including 4 core subjects and has an overall average of 70 for a semester’s work will be eligible to compete the following semester. Eligibility for participation in the second semester will be based on the student's first semester grades. A student who has passed 5 unit subjects, including 4 core subjects and has an overall average of 70 for the year is eligible for the first semester of the following year.

Core courses include English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language. Excluded for any credit are the following: teacher aides, office aides, or their equivalent.

Students failing to pass the required 5 unit subjects for the First Semester may be permitted to become eligible at the end of the 3rd Nine Weeks grading period if they were passing the required 5 unit subjects at that time. Students must have passed at least three (3) subjects at the semester to be eligible to gain eligibility in this manner.

The Head of School has the authority to suspend an athlete from athletic participation for academic difficulty, unsportsmanlike conduct, disciplinary problems, or any other behavior unbecoming a student athlete.

A student athlete who has any “D’s” or “F’s” at the end of a grading period may be placed on academic probation. While on academic probation, the student will be required to (1) attend tutorial daily, (2) have all teachers sign a weekly progress report, and (3) abide by participation expectation below.

A student must be counted "present" at school or have an excused absence (funeral, doctor’s appointment, etc...) on the day of an athletic/extracurricular event to be eligible to participate in that event. To be counted “present” at school, a student must be in attendance for a minimum of four hours that day. To be eligible to participate in weekend athletic/extra-curricular events, a student must have been counted as “present” on the

Friday before the event. If a student is absent on Friday, he or she may participate in a Saturday or Sunday event if he/she presents a doctor's statement declaring that he was unable to attend school or play on Friday but is physically able to play during the weekend; or he/she missed Friday because of an excused absence.

**Athletic Equipment and Uniforms.** Uniforms and equipment owned by Valwood will be checked out to students on a per season basis. Students not returning equipment and/or uniforms will be billed for the missing items.

**Physical Exam, Waiver of Liability, and Proof of Insurance.** GISA rules require the following:

All GISA interscholastic schools:

- a) Shall provide strict physical examinations by a competent physician of each and every athletic contestant before competing in each school year.
- b) Shall have on file in the school office for contestants competing in athletics a certificate by a physician on the standard form approved by the GISA school heads that the contestant has been examined and has been physically approved for participation. NOTE: It is strongly recommended that a physician be made available by the home team at all varsity football games and that each school have arrangements made for quick medical service for any accident occurring in practice.

Schools are highly encouraged and requested to carry copies of these forms on trips to out-of-town games to expedite medical attention for injured athletes; and remind the person responsible for these forms the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of the information contained on the forms.

## THE HONOR SYSTEM

The honor system at Valwood is not a compilation of regulations; rather it is a formal statement of expectation that persons attending Valwood will act honorably. The mission of Valwood School emphasizes academic excellence, character, and a commitment to serve others. In support of that mission, members of the Valwood School community agree when they enroll to abide by the standards expressed in the Honor Code. By adopting this code, our students and faculty affirm the value of honesty, respect, self-control, safety, fairness, and character.

**Honor Code.** The Honor Code at Valwood School is as follows:

*“As a member of the student body of Valwood School, I pledge to be honest with myself and with others, to refrain from all acts of cheating, lying and stealing, and to treat others with respect and courtesy.”*

The Honor Code applies on campus and on any off-campus school-sponsored trip or event. The following are some common examples of Honor Code violations:

- Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Turning in another student’s work as one’s own
- Disrupting the classroom environment
- Defiance of a faculty or staff member
- Bullying or Harassment
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Borrowing without permission or going into another student’s locker with or without permission
- Vandalism of school or personal property
- Lying
- Violating the school’s acceptable computer use policy

**Violations of the Honor Code.** The middle and upper school deans will handle their division’s honor code violations.

**Reporting Honor Code Violations.** Any student, faculty, staff member, or administrator should report alleged honor offenses to the appropriate dean.

**Consequences for Honor Code Violations.** The following are possible consequences for Honor Code offenses:

- Meeting between student, parents, and dean
- Written apology to the offended member(s) of the community
- Written assignment dealing with issues of honor
- Suspension from school and/or participation in extracurricular or sports events.
- In the case of academic dishonesty, the student may receive a grade of zero on the work in question unless it is redone honestly, the teacher may request an alternate assignment, after which the student may receive a grade not higher than a 64
- Student’s position on student government and/or NJHS or NHS will be re-evaluated and possibly revoked
- Leadership positions including athletic positions may be suspended or revoked.
- Dismissal from Valwood School may be recommended to the Head of School for repeated or particularly egregious offenses

There are other possible consequences for Honor Code violations which vary based on the particular circumstances.

## **SERVICE HOURS**

**Requirements.** All students in grades 9-12 are required to earn 20 service hours each year.

Students may NOT earn them all one year and carry them forward. No student is allowed extra privileges (this mainly pertains to seniors) if his service hours are not up-to-date. This includes having hours from the previous year(s) met and having 5 at end of first quarter, 10 at the end of the first semester, 15 at the end of third quarter and 20 by May 1.

Hours can be earned in the summer. These can meet the requirement for either the previous year or the next year, depending on what the student needs, but they must be submitted before September 1.

Service hours are hours earned while doing volunteer work to make the community (the school community, the city, state or nation) a better place to live. Students can earn hours for church activities (mission trips, teaching Vacation Bible School, running sound systems, etc.), helping coaches and teachers with summer camps (for which they are not paid), donating time at the soup kitchen or similar establishments, etc.

We also award hours for school wide donations. There is a cap on the hours earned for donations. The hours may not exceed 10 for any donation. Students can do errands for Valwood faculty and staff, but there is also a cap of 10 hours on work done at school that is not in an organized activity (working camps, helping at games, mentoring, serving as a teacher assistant, etc. are exceptions because they are organized activities). Students will not be able to earn hours for any activity for which they are paid.

This includes any activity at school for which they receive money to do. Hours will not be given for students who do things for family members that are ordinary chores (cleaning their rooms, mowing the yard, etc.). They will also not be given hours for working for a family business. They will not be given hours for babysitting and not getting paid for it. This is not community service. The hours must be earned serving the community.

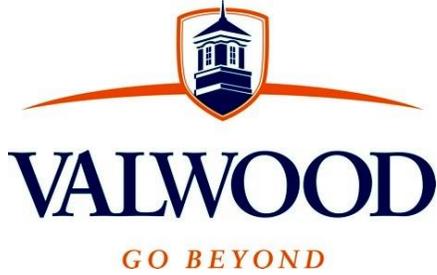
Students who earn hours while missing academic classes must be pre-approved by the service coordinator (Ms. Blanton) to earn service hours. For example, a student cannot volunteer for an activity that takes place during an academic class and automatically receive credit. Hours must be turned in as they are completed. No hours will be accepted over 2 months after their completion. Hours may be turned in on a form, a full sheet of paper, or an email sent to the service coordinator. The form or paper must have the signature of the adult responsible for the activity. The service needs to be explained if it is not obvious.

For example, working at the soup kitchen is obvious and that is all that is needed. Doing various activities for parents will not be accepted.

Students may earn hours for mission trips but not for travel time or sleeping time. A maximum of 8 hours a day will be awarded for every day a student is on a mission trip.

Hours may be turned in to Katie Houseman in the upper school or Vallye Blanton in Crane Hall.

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**HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE**

By signing this page, I acknowledge that I have read in its entirety, the Valwood School Student and Family Handbook. I further acknowledge that I understand and agree to follow the policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook, and that I understand what is expected of me as a parent/guardian and/or student.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Signature (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

*If you have more than one child:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Signature (if applicable)

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (printed)

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Child's Signature (if applicable)

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date:

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Date: