

MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

425 Sycamore Avenue – Mill Valley – CA 94941

2013-2014 HANDBOOK



www.mvschools.org/ms
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425 Sycamore Avenue, Mill Valley, CA 94941

(415) 389-7711

www.ms.mvschools.org

Anna Lazzarini
Principal

Mark Nelson
Assistant Principal

August 2013

Dear Middle School Families:

Welcome to Mill Valley Middle School. We are proud of MVMS and the accomplishments of our students. Together, our parents, teachers and counselors are dedicated to providing a caring and supportive environment where all students can do their best in a well-structured, safe environment.

This handbook is designed to give you the basic information you will need to navigate your middle school experience. Please familiarize yourself with it now and then keep it on hand as a reference to use throughout the year. It includes information about the calendar, bell schedule, school faculty and staff, school policies, and discipline codes. For more specific information on the academic and student support programs, please refer to the Program Overview Brochure.

We hope this handbook answers your questions about MVMS. However, please feel free to call for more information.

Best wishes for a wonderful year of learning and growth.

Welcome!

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MVMS STAFF LIST
2013-2014

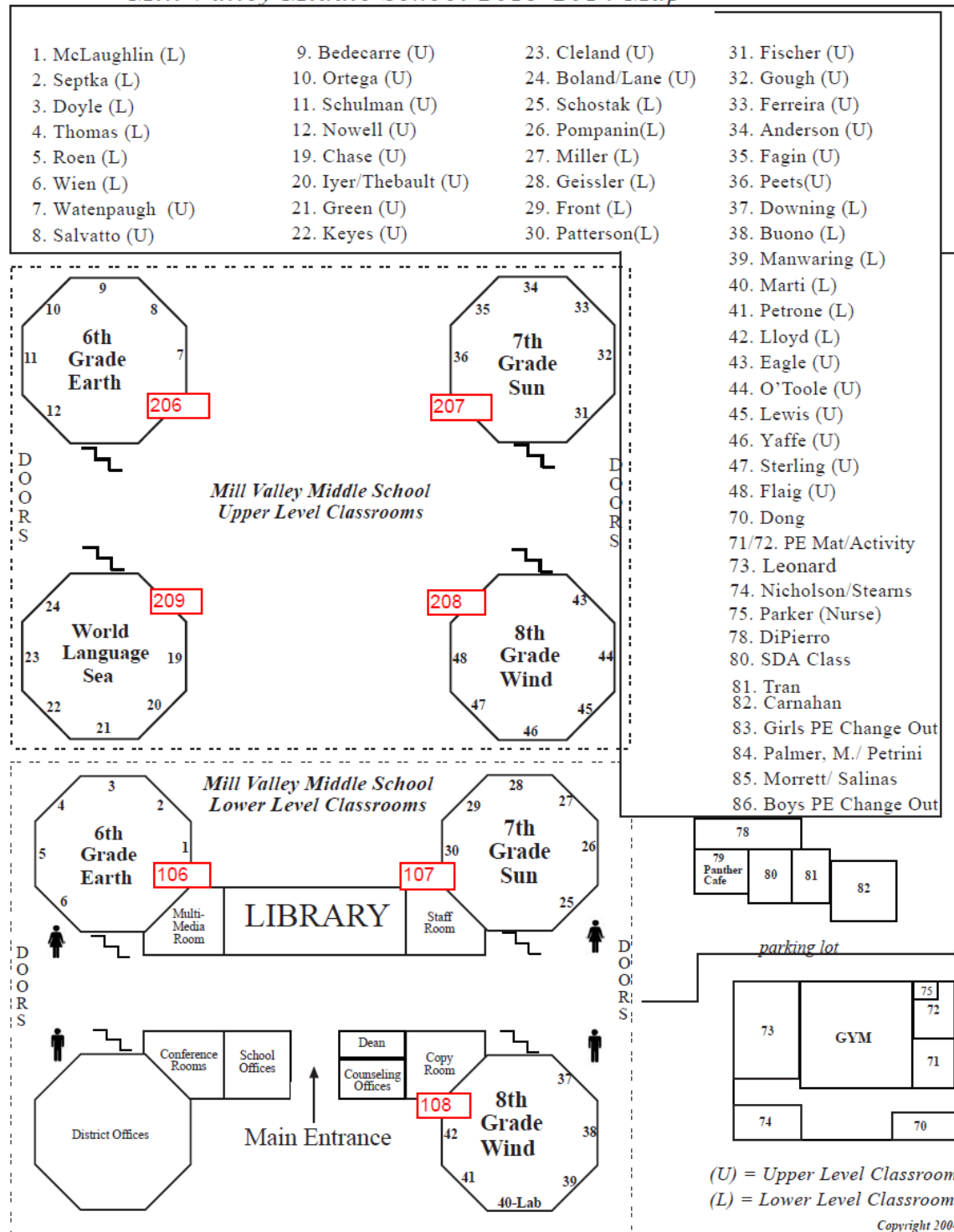
Staff Member	Phone #		Room#	E-Mail	
Agajan	Sandy	2811	Regis/Data Process	101	sagajan@mvschools.org
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DiPierro	Daniel	2778	Art7/Wheel	78	ddipierro@mvschools.org
Dong	Phoebe	2770	Orchestra	70	pdong@mvschools.org
Downing	Alison	2737	Science 8	37	adowning@mvschools.org
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Lloyd	Evan	2742	Alg/Geom	42	elloyd@mvschools.org

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Thomas	Adam	2724	Sp Ed Aide	24	athomas@mvschools.org
Thomas	Jim	2704	Core 6	4	jthomas@mvschools.org
Tran	Kim	2781	Art6/Wheel	81	ktran@mvschools.org
Vathanakamsang	Diana	2724	Instruc. Aide	24	dvathanakamsang@mvschools.org
Vaughan	Carolyn	2897	Sp Ed Therapist	102	cvaughan@mvschools.org
Watenpaugh	Lynne	2707	Tech/ Wheel	7	lwatenpaugh@mvschools.org
Wien	Ben	2706	Sci 6/Tech II	6	bwien@mvschools.org
Winter-Hallingstad	Tammie	2780	OT SDA	80	
Yaffe	Dorit	2746	Math 6/8	46	dyaffe@mvschools.org
Yates	Shannon	2735	Sp Ed Aide	35	syates@mvschools.org

Misc. Phone Extensions

Attendance	2890	PrConfRm Conf Call	7757
Health Room	2880	Staff Room	2885
Panther Cafe	2779		

Mill Valley Middle School 2013-2014 Map



PTSA

The MVMS PTSA is a volunteer organization that promotes the welfare of our children. Its goal is to foster closer relations between the home, school, and community so that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of our youth. Parents, teachers, and staff members are urged to join this organization, and student participation is also encouraged. Committees have been established to address both student and teacher needs in and outside the classroom. Parent volunteers are urged to participate actively on PTSA sponsored programs in the classroom, library, and snack bar, as well as on the playground and at social events. The PTSA also supports: school materials and supply needs, Student Educational programs, Panther Press Newsletter, Parent Education, Site Improvement, School Sports Equipment, Panther Planner and Handbook, Grade-level parties and dances, Teacher Grants, and much more.

All programs and events are supported financially through the Fall Fundraiser which is the Middle School PTSA's only fundraiser. Funds are also raised for specific needs within the classroom and library.

Middle School children require and value parental involvement, which is crucial to the success of the PTSA goals. There are many opportunities to help. Volunteer forms are available in First Day Packets and in the lobby. For further information, please contact Sophia Ferro, President (sophia.ferro@comcast.net) or Stephanie Alamin, Executive Vice President (scalamin@aol.com).

PTSA Executive Board 2013-14

President	Sophia Ferro	sophia.ferro@comcast.net
Exec VP	Stephanie Alamin	scalamin@aol.com
Treasurer	Lyra Kelly	clyrago@gmail.com
Finan Secretary	Monica Tasso	tassobello@yahoo.com
Secretary	Meagan Grant	meagan.rileygrant@gmail.com
Auditor	Sue Weinswig	weinswig@gmail.com
Parliamentarian	Jodi Korb	jodikorb@yahoo.com
VP Parent Svcs	Julie McCrady	jamccrady@mac.com
VP Teacher Svc	Chris Hill	chris@mackiemack.com
VP Student Svc	Tracy Ferron	tracy@theferrons.com
VP Commun	Lisa Polakis	polakis@comcast.net
VP Fundraising	Ethan Moeller	moeller.ethan@gmail.com
VP Membership	Deb Luster	deborah@luster.com
Historian	Deb Goldman	dmfreed@aol.com
Principal	Anna Lazzarini	alazzarini@mvschools.org
Admin Asst	Hilary Hyde	hhyde@mvschools.org

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

For your convenience some of the year's important dates are listed below. For full information, including event dates and forms, log onto the school's web site at www.mvschools.org/ms

August 29	First Day of School
September 18	Back to School Night 6:30-8:30PM
October 18	1 st trimester progress reports mailed
October 21	Staff Development Day – No School
November 11	Veteran's Day – No School
November 22	End of 1 st Trimester
November 27-29	Thanksgiving Recess
December 9	Grades mailed
December 23-Jan 3	Winter Recess
January 20	Martin Luther King Jr Day – No School
January 31	2 nd trimester progress reports mailed
February 17	Presidents Day – No School
February 18-21	Winter Recess Day – No School
March 14	End of 2 nd Trimester
March 21	Staff Development Day-No School
March 21	Grades mailed
April 14-18	Spring Recess – No School
April 28 -June 3	State Testing Window
May 9	3 rd trimester progress reports mailed
May 26	Memorial Day – No School
May 28	Open House (1:54 dismissal) 6:30-8:30PM
June 17	Last day of school (12:50 dismissal)
June 25	Grades mailed

BELL SCHEDULE

MONDAY – FRIDAY

8:15	First Bell
8:20 - 9:22	First Session
9:22 - 9:26	Passing
9:26 - 10:25	Second Session
10:25 - 10:36	Recess
10:36 - 10:40	Passing
10:40 - 11:39	Third Session
11:39 - 12:19	Lunch
12:19 - 12:23	Passing
12:23 - 1:22	Fourth Session
1:22 - 1:26	Passing
1:26 - 2:25	Fifth Session

Building closes @3:30PM Monday & Friday

WEDNESDAY - school ends @ 1:22

Building closes @2:30PM Wednesday

TUESDAY & THURSDAY

8:15	First Bell
8:20 - 9:22	First Session
9:22 - 9:26	Passing
9:26 - 10:25	Second Session
10:25 - 10:36	Recess
10:36 - 10:40	Passing
10:40 - 11:39	Third Session
11:39 - 11:43	Passing
11:43 - 12:14	Panther Time
12:14 - 12:54	Lunch
12:54 - 12:58	Passing
12:58 - 1:57	Fourth Session
1:57 - 2:01	Passing
2:01 - 3:00	Fifth Session

Building closes @4:00PM Tuesday and Thursday

Session Time:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
First Bell 8:15 a.m.				
8:20-9:22	Period 1a	Period 6a	Period 5b	Period 4b
9:26-10:25	Period 2a	Period 1b	Period 6b	Period 5b
10:25-10:36	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
10:40-11:39	Period 3a	Period 2b	Period 1a	Period 6a
Lunch 11:39-12:19	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:23-1:22	Period 4a	Period 3b	Period 2a	Period 1b
1:26-2:25	Period 5a	Period 4b	Early Release	<i>Period 5b</i>
2:29-3:00		Panther Time		<i>Panther Time</i>

SCHOOL STAFF

WHO'S WHO?

PRINCIPAL, Anna Lazzarini, handles instructional issues, including questions about and/or issues with the teachers' program; curriculum, educational philosophy, teaching methodology, classified staff, Student Leadership, and community partnerships.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, Mark Nelson, oversees student discipline and notification of parents, facilities, emergency preparedness, student activities, attendance, SARB and yard supervision.

DEAN OF STUDENTS, Laura Myers, assists with student academic progress, discipline, scheduling, activities and general administrative duties.

TEACHERS are responsible for the classroom curriculum, homework, grades, teacher-parent conferences, and other classroom related issues. Teachers should be called directly with questions before an administrator or a counselor is called as they can best handle classroom issues.

COUNSELORS, Randi Josephson and Alison Goodman, are responsible for class schedule issues, academic concerns, social and developmental issues, family changes, and guidance and resource referral for parents.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, Hilary Hyde, is the Principal's assistant. She schedules appointments for the Principal, and handles scheduling rooms and meetings, in addition to doing administrative management.

ATTENDANCE SECRETARY, Linda Canepa, is the Assistant Principal's assistant and handles attendance records and reporting to the SARB. She is also responsible for first aid, providing information to the public, and handling immediate student needs.

REGISTRAR/DATA PROCESSOR, Sandy Agajan, is responsible for assembling and distributing progress reports and report card information, as well as data entry for student records. She also coordinates cum files and private high school applications.

CAMPUS SUPERVISOR, Marco Ramirez, focuses primarily on school safety and overseeing recess and lunch supervision.

COUNSELORS

Welcome! We want to extend a special welcome to our sixth graders and new students and families to our school and district. Each child has been assigned a counselor for his/her three years at MVMS. Counseling assignments are as follows:

Randi Josephson - students with last names beginning with A- K

Alison Goodman - students with last names beginning with L - Z

Students may access their counselor by either signing up for an appointment in the counseling area or by having their parents call or email for an appointment.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who do I call when I have a concern?

Communication with the school is encouraged and will be a key part of each students' success. As the school year progresses and questions arise, it is helpful to know who to contact regarding which issues. Curriculum, homework, teacher/parent conferences and other classroom related issues are best directed to the teacher. Questions about behavior and discipline should be directed to the Assistant Principal. Questions regarding class schedules and social/developmental/emotional concerns that are affecting your child are important to communicate to the counselors. Everyone at the middle school has voice mail and email (see pages 5-6).

What do I do if my schedule is wrong?

If you think something is wrong with your schedule, if you are in the wrong level of a class, or you didn't register for that class, see your School Counselor. Your Counselor will look over your schedule with you and make sure that the problems get worked out. If you did not receive the teacher of your choice, that is not a reason to ask for a schedule change.

How can I get involved in my school?

Student Council

Student Council elections will be at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the Student Council is to promote school pride, to organize special events for students and to organize community service projects. It strives to provide students with opportunities to take on leadership roles in our school and to make specific contributions to our community.

Clubs and Activities

Being involved in extracurricular activities is a great way to connect with your school community. Every year there are several clubs that meet before school or at lunch. Some of the proposed clubs for this year include: Student Council, Yearbook, Cooking Club, Mathletes, Robotics, Wrestling, Calligraphy and World Affairs. Please listen for more details about these groups in the Daily Bulletin which is read aloud each morning and posted on our website.

Sports

See page 18 for eligibility requirements.

We look forward to working with you and your child throughout these exciting years of Middle School.

Randi Josephson and Alison Goodman, School Counselors

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library is the heart of the school. The MVMS library has a collection of more than 20,000 books, including sets of novels used by language arts and social studies classes. It also features 16 desktop and laptop Mac computers that can be used for research, creating projects and finding books. The library web site includes research information tailored to individual class assignments and also offers three online databases of newspapers, magazine articles and reference materials. Students and teachers from all departments use the library for everything from in-depth research projects to casual reading and homework. New books, magazines, graphic novels (comic books) and audio books are featured in the reading corner where students can relax on couches during breaks, at lunch or after school. Ms. Palmer is the library media teacher and staffs the library every day along with a part-time library assistant, Ms. Savastano. Ms. Palmer manages the library and collaborates with teachers to help students learn effective research skills and promote reading.

The library hours are (subject to change):

Monday	8:20AM – 3:30PM
Tuesday & Thursday	8:20AM – 4:00PM
Wednesday	8:20AM – 2:30PM
Friday	8:20AM – 3:30PM

The library is also open during recess and lunch. Students may not eat or drink in the library because it can damage materials and attract ants. Library books are checked out for three weeks at a time. Students may renew a book as often as they like, unless the book is on hold for another student. Overdue notices are sent to language arts teachers every few weeks. **Students with lost books will be expected to pay for them and will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities or receive their yearbooks until the payment is made.** Report cards and transcripts may be withheld pending payment for lost or damaged books.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The sixth grade program has been designed to help incoming students make the adjustments necessary for middle school. There are four academic classes – English, social studies, science, and math – taught by a team of teachers working together. English and social studies are part of a two period block called Core and are usually taught by one teacher. In addition, students are required to take physical education. Sixth graders also take the Wheel that consists of three, one-trimester courses including Technology, Intro. to World Languages, and Character Education. Finally, 6th graders have the opportunity to select either music, choir, or art as their elective class.

The seventh grade program consists of four academic classes: English, social studies, math, and science. English and social studies are usually a two period block called Core, which is taught by one teacher. Seventh graders can add a World language – Spanish,

French, Mandarin or Technology - as a fifth academic class. Students also choose music, choir or art for their elective and are required to take physical education.

The eighth grade program includes four academic classes daily: English, social studies, science, and math. Eighth graders add a foreign language – Spanish, French, Mandarin or Technology - as a fifth academic class. Students who qualify may take algebra as their math class. Students also have the opportunity to choose music, choir or art for their elective class and are required to take physical education.

PANTHER TIME is a class of 20-23 students that meets twice a week for 30 minutes. Students will be assigned to a teacher they have during the day (in most cases, some students may have a different teacher). The purpose of Panther Time is twofold: 1) To provide space and time for students to work on homework, seek help from a teacher, or quietly read; and 2) To build a community within a school, creating (and sustaining) the small school feel that has made MVMS a great school.

PE

The PE Complex is located on the blacktop outside the school near the Community Center and consists of two large classrooms and two changing rooms. All students take PE twice a week and are required to change out for PE. There will be supervision in the changing rooms. When class is in session, the changing rooms and PE classrooms will remain locked in order to secure students' belongings.

MVMS PE uniforms may be purchased at T & B Sports in San Rafael. T & B Sports will be on campus several times a year to sell PE uniforms. If students choose not to purchase the MVMS PE uniform, they are required to wear a logo-free, solid gray t-shirt and logo-free, navy blue, mesh basketball shorts or MVMS Panther t-shirts or sweatshirts. Students can wear logo-free navy blue or gray sweatshirts and sweatpants.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

MVMS is committed to encouraging students to assume responsibility for their own ethical behavior and to experience the joy of accomplishing their personal best. Academic honesty means not plagiarizing, cheating or using information unethically in any way. Students are expected to do their own work at all times, and understand that plagiarism and cheating will adversely affect grades and how students are perceived by others.

Plagiarism includes:

- Submitting someone else's work as your own, including that of tutors, friends, parents or siblings or paraphrasing *without giving credit to the source*.
- Turning in purchased essays or essays (whole or partial) from the Internet written by someone else.
- Helping others plagiarize by giving them your work, even if you don't think it will be copied.
- Using someone else's idea without giving credit to the original source.

Note: Students can use other people's ideas and even paraphrase or quote their words, but you **MUST** give them credit. Use phrases such as "According to..." and "In the book..." and cite ALL of the sources you got information from in a bibliography.

Cheating includes:

- Copying assignments or receiving answers from a classmate and turning them in as original work.

- Trading assignments with other students, even if you don't think they will be copied or allowing a student to copy from your homework, test or quiz.
- Talking about anything to a classmate or exchanging any information during a quiz or exam once it has begun.
- Providing test questions or answers to test questions to students before, during or after quizzes or tests.
- Using unauthorized notes or technology, such as bringing notes into a test or using a computer program to translate an assignment and turning it in as your own.
- Presenting any material for credit that is not written by you.
- Stealing school/student material (teacher editions) for the purpose of cheating.
- Filling in or changing answers on a test/quiz/assignment (yours or a classmate's) while you are correcting it.
- Turning in identical work as a classmate and claiming it was a group effort when the assignment was clearly assigned to students to do independently.
- Using summaries or commentaries (*Cliff Notes*, etc.) instead of reading the assigned material.

How to avoid plagiarism and cheating:

1. Plan ahead. Rushing to get your work done the night before a big project is due may make it more tempting to plagiarize or cheat.
2. Be sure you understand the assignments. Don't always rely on your friends for information about what is required. Ask your teacher!
3. Don't read someone else's paper or homework before you do your own work. If you get any ideas from them, you would have to cite that person as a source.
4. Make sure to ALWAYS cite your sources. This means saying where you got the information you are using.
5. Keep a list of the sources you use (including the author, title, publisher and copyright date) as you use them and make sure to note which information you got from which source.
6. When in doubt about what you need to do to avoid cheating or plagiarism, just ask your classroom teacher or the library media teacher.

Consequences for plagiarism and/or cheating:

First offense: no credit on the assignment or test, office referral, parent/guardian contact, review of policy with administrator, and student and parent sign Academic Honesty Contract.

Second offense: all of the above, parent/guardian conference with administrator and teacher, and one-day suspension

Third offense: all of the above, meeting with school counselor, student may be at risk of failing the class.

HOMEWORK

The district has guidelines for the assignment of homework:

- 6th grade students – up to 70 minutes
- 7th grade students – up to 90 minutes
- 8th grade students – up to 120 minutes

In addition to the above time, students may be asked to do reading or to practice their musical instrument.

Please remember that assignments are based on the teacher's best understanding of the average time needed to complete the task. Duration of assignments varies among students. If your child is consistently experiencing difficulty with completion of assignments or is not being assigned an adequate amount of homework within these guidelines, please contact the teacher.

Teachers must be sure that homework is:

1. Necessary, useful, and appropriate to the ability and maturity level(s) of their students.
2. Well-explained and posted (on the board, handouts, website, etc.).
3. Of reasonable length, taking into consideration students' other subject assignments.
4. Properly checked, evaluated, and returned in a timely manner (when appropriate).

Students must be sure to:

1. Always have their Panther Planners.
2. Copy down all homework in the Panther Planner. This includes work that must be finished before the conclusion of the school day.
3. Take the planner and all needed books and materials home on a daily basis, reviewing all assignments and work completed with parents.
4. Complete all assignments to the best of their ability and return them to the teachers on time.
5. Make up all homework and tests in a timely manner when absent, otherwise the assignment could receive a zero.

Parents must be sure to:

1. Assist the student in learning to schedule each day so that homework can be done at an optimum time.
2. Provide a quiet, well-equipped and properly lit setting in which to work.
3. Check the Panther Planner or teacher website daily, discussing assignments and reviewing any completed work with the student.
4. Support, clarify, and motivate the student, but not do homework for him or her.
5. Communicate with the teacher if a large number of assignments are too difficult or time consuming for the student to complete.

If homework is not completed on time:

1. It may result in an assignment failure, lowered grade, incomplete, and/or request to remain after school to finish the work.
2. The teacher may call parents if lack of homework completion is an ongoing problem.
3. The student may receive a progress report to be signed by a parent.
4. The student may have negative *comment codes* marked on his/her report card.
5. Both the student and parents may be requested to attend a conference.

ACADEMIC EVALUATION

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are mailed at the end of each trimester. The curriculum is aligned with Tam Union High School District (TUHSD), allowing middle school students to make a smooth transition to high school.

Students receive letter grades. To calculate a student's grade point average (GPA) use the following numbers:

A has a value of 4.0.

B has a value of 3.0.

C has a value of 2.0.

D has a value of 1.0.

F has a value of 0

I has a value of 0

Incompletes are given for missed work. Students have up to 2 weeks (or an agreed upon time with the teacher) to make up work or Incomplete grade becomes F.

Parents are encouraged to contact individual teachers to discuss any concerns. Once parents and teachers have communicated, a meeting with the student's counselor can be arranged.

The third trimester GPA of an eighth grader determines ninth grade athletic eligibility. Students who wish to participate in high school sports must maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher in the last trimester of eighth grade.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are mailed home to parents/guardians mid-way through each trimester.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

One of our primary objectives is that students are academically successful in all of their courses. After each trimester, we celebrate those students who have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.8 or higher as well as students who were able to improve their GPA by .5.

ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

In order to be eligible to take part in extra curricular activities, students must meet the following standards:

1. Student Council Officers and WEB leaders

Students must have at least a 2.5 GPA in all classes from the previous trimester, with no F's in order to be eligible to run for election for a Student Council office or WEB leader. Students must have an acceptable behavior record during the previous trimester (including the previous year) which includes no suspensions, police reports or citations.

2. After School Sports

In order to be eligible to participate in the Fall Talent Show, Spring Play and After School Sports activities, students must have a 2.0 GPA from the previous trimester with no F's. Students may have no suspensions from the previous trimester.

3. Graduation Speakers

The eighth grade graduation speakers must have a 2.5 grade point average for the year with no F's, no suspensions during the third trimester of the 8th grade year, and an acceptable behavior record for the entire year.

Note: Students who fail to maintain the above qualifying standards throughout the time period of participation in such events may lose the privilege of participation.

Students who are absent on the school day of an event may not participate in any school sponsored activities, such as sports, plays, or dances on that date.

RETENTION POLICY

MVMS policy states that a student who receives a total of four Fs in any combination of academic classes in one year, or three Fs in any one academic area (i.e. three Fs in math for three consecutive trimesters) is a candidate for retention. Candidates for retention will meet with the principal and parents to discuss strategies for improving their academic standing.

COUNSELING PROGRAM

Our counseling department consists of two counselors and 2 counseling interns. The mission of the department is to promote student health, socially and emotionally, and academic success. Counselors offer short-term individual and group services. Our small groups focus on such varied topics as dealing with stress, social skills, adoption, friendships, and family changes. Students can sign up for counseling or be referred by parents or staff members.

When students need to see their counselors, they sign up by completing pink counseling request slips which are located just outside the counselors' offices. They should receive an appointment slip within the next day or two. Information shared with a counselor is held in strict confidentiality unless released by a student or mandated by law.

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

Students are expected to be punctual and attend all classes on regularly scheduled school days unless ill or excused for another explained absence. Families play a central role in getting students to school on time. Parents/guardians are legally responsible for their child's attendance at school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to call the school, preferably by 8:20AM, if their student will be absent or tardy in excess of 30 minutes.

ABSENCES

Please telephone the school attendance Hotline at 389-7711 ext. 2890 and leave a message on the voicemail each day when your child is absent for the whole day or tardy in excess of 30 minutes.

Any absence that has not been verified by a parent/guardian within 24 hours will be considered unexcused.

Students are required to make up work missed during an absence. In order to facilitate this process, the school has provided websites for each teacher. We ask that you do one of the following to get missed assignments:

- Go to www.mvschools.org/ms and click on individual teacher websites for assignments.
- If you have trouble accessing the website or a classmate, you should contact the teacher directly via email or phone call to request homework.

If a student is absent from the school day, (s)he may not participate in any school events, such as sports, plays or dances on that date.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences include:

- Illness
- A medical or dental appointment
- Bereavement of an immediate family member
- Religious observance days

Parents are urged to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

In accordance with MVSD Board Policy 5113, when a student has accrued 14 excused absences for any combination of the types of absences listed above, any further absence for illness must be verified by a physician.

When a student is absent for more than 20 days throughout the school year, a student may incur any or all of the following consequences: denial of course credit or lowering of a grade due to unsatisfactory completion of work missed, referral to administration, referral to county Student Attendance Review Board, mandatory attendance at after-school program, or possible retention.

For security reasons, students who leave from and return to campus for any reason (medical appointments, illness) are required to sign out and sign in at the front reception desk. Students who leave campus without signing out may face disciplinary consequences.

Students who arrive to school late must bring a note from home indicating the reason for the late arrival. Students who need to leave school early for a scheduled appointment must bring a note from home and show it to the teacher of the class they will be leaving early from. The student will then leave the class at the appointed time, bring their belongings and their note to the front office where they will sign out at the front desk.

If your student will be leaving with anyone other than a legal guardian, please be sure to note this. Without written permission your child will not be released.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

All other absences, including missing a single class without a verifiable excuse, are unexcused and are not considered legal as defined by the Education Code of the State of California. Going on vacation during school days, oversleeping or staying home to finish a homework project for a class are examples of unexcused absences.

EXTENDED UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Regular attendance plays an important role in student achievement. Absences as a result of family vacations are not considered excused under District Policy and California Education Code and will be recorded as unexcused.

It is the responsibility of students who are out of school for unexcused absences to make up any work missed while away. When planned in advance, teachers will make an effort to provide students with assignments and homework during the absence. However, there are many assignments, including those taught and completed in the classroom setting, that cannot be made up and which may result in adversely impacting a student's grade.

Students who are out of school due to unexcused absences for more than fifteen (15) consecutive student school days will be un-enrolled from school and must re-enroll with the district upon return. There can be no guarantee that a student, upon reenrolling, will return to the classes/teachers from which he or she left.

ILLNESS POLICY

From experience, we have learned that sick children seldom, if ever, gain anything by attending school. It is better to keep them at home where they are most likely to get the necessary care for recovery and early return to school. Keeping ill children at home also protects other children, their parents, and the school staff.

Your child should be kept at home when you suspect he(she) is ill or observe the following:

Diarrhea	Vomiting
Skin Rash	Ear Infections/Earaches
Sore Throat	Red and Runny eye(s)
Elevated Temperature (>100F.)	Pain

Early signs of colds, such as sneezing, runny nose and/or coughing

Keep your child home at least 24 hours after a fever (>99) and 24 hours after starting antibiotics. **Reminder: If your child needs to take medication at school, you are required to send a form signed by you and the health care provider with the medication.** Medication must be in the original prescription bottle.

Regular attendance at school is necessary for your child to receive full benefits from school. It is your duty to send him/her to school every day unless he or she becomes ill. At the same time, prompt care and isolation of a sick child will minimize the total time wasted or lost by your child and/or other children.

If your child is kept at home, please call the attendance line at 389-7711 ext. 2890 to notify the school. If you have questions, call the school nurse at 389-7768.

TARDY POLICY

All MVMS students are expected to act responsibly by getting to their classes on time. Arriving late to class puts students at a disadvantage. They miss out on valuable teaching and learning; they disrupt the learning of others, and they start the day disorganized and behind. Academic performance may suffer over time.

Students who arrive late to school in the morning may be assigned detention.

Class tardies are reported each period to the attendance office. In any given trimester, once a student accrues 5 tardies (including arrival to school in the morning and to classes throughout the day), the Assistant Principal may meet with the student and have him/her sign the Attendance Contract, and send a copy of the Attendance Contract home with the first Attendance Letter. **Every 10 tardies accrued during a trimester will count as a referral for the student and may contribute to the student's loss of privileges assigned to that trimester.**

Students who accrue 11 tardies in a single trimester may be placed on a program that assigns a lunch detention for each tardy. Excessive tardies beyond 10 may lead to additional notification, parent conference with the Assistant Principal, and referral to the MVMS Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). See SARB on page 37. The school will do everything possible to work with parents to help students stay in school. However, students, with the help of their parents/guardians, are ultimately responsible for addressing their tardy problems.

Please note that teachers may have their own classroom tardy policies; they may detain students after school for up to fifteen minutes without notifying parents in advance.

TRUANCY

The majority of students at MVMS arrive promptly and have good attendance records.

Education Code Section 48260 defines a “**truant student**” as one who has been **absent from school without a valid excuse three days or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of three days**, or any combination thereof, in a school year.

Furthermore, Education Code Sections 48261/448262/48264.5 defines a “**habitual truant**” as one who has been **absent from school without a valid excuse for three days, or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of three days**, or any combination thereof, in a school year.

The formal procedure for addressing truancy includes issuing letters of notification to parents of truant students, meeting with the Assistant Principal and/or counselor as a means of intervention, request to appear before the MVSD Student Attendance Review Board (SARB), and referral to the Marin County Student Attendance Review Board, which may result in a student attending an alternative school setting.

Students who arrive 30 minutes late in the morning without a valid excuse will serve a lunch or after school detention for one hour.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Mill Valley Middle School is a closed campus and has areas that are considered out-of-bounds to students. Students must remain on campus from the time they arrive until the time they are dismissed to go home. **Leaving campus without permission is grounds for suspension. The Mill Valley Community Center is not a part of our campus.**

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPOINTMENTS DURING SCHOOL

We ask that medical and other appointments be scheduled outside of the school day whenever possible.

If you must make an appointment during school hours, the procedure is as follows:

1. Send your student to school with a note (see page 20) explaining what time the student should be in the office. Do not leave a message with a teacher.
2. Your student will show their teacher the note, leave class and bring the note to the front desk where they sign themselves out and give the note to the attendance secretary.

If the appointment is last minute and the student does not know about it, please arrive at the office with enough time for us to send for your student to meet you.

BICYCLES

State law requires helmets must be worn when riding a bike. Students are never to ride inside the building. Bikers riding to and from school should enter from the west at the Camino Alto Gate and follow the fence line bike path to the bicycle storage ring or enter from the east parking lot and walk to the storage ring. With the exception of the fence line bike path, bicycles are not to be ridden on campus during the school day; they must be walked. Violations may result in disciplinary consequences, including confiscation. Bicyclists riding in or near the parking lot before and after school need to be extremely careful because of drop-off and pick-up traffic.

Bicycles must be locked up to the bike rings and not left leaning on the fences. The campus has a bike ring at each end of the campus, and these areas are locked/secured

only during instructional time. Students bring their bikes to school at their own risk as MVMS is not responsible for personal items. Students are urged to bring their own bike locks to lock their bikes to the rack inside the ring.

CELEBRATIONS

Honor your friends with cards and verbal congratulations at school. **Do not bring flowers, food, or balloons** to school as they are disruptive to our learning environment and will be held in the school office until the end of the day. All other arrangements must be approved ahead of time by the teacher of the class in which you want to acknowledge a birthday. Class celebrations are at the discretion of each individual teacher.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is imperative that you keep all emergency card and student information current, including changes in phone numbers and e-mail addresses. If you move, you must provide three current proofs of residency to the school registrar. You may also email changes to directory@mvschools.org. Changes that are sent to this email address are intended for the District's Directory and are not reported to the middle school.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

Computer and Internet Use Agreement for the Mill Valley School District

Educational Computer Use and Internet Privileges

The Marin County Office of Education and the Mill Valley School District provide educational computer accounts, allowing access to the Internet. Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional and state networks. The smooth operation of the network depends upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of your responsibilities. In general, the smooth operation of the network requires efficient, ethical, and legal use of network resources. If a user violates any of the following terms and conditions, school computer use and Internet privileges will be revoked and future access may be denied. The Mill Valley School District computer use is governed by policies and administrative regulations established by the Board of Trustees.

Terms and Conditions (for Educational Computer Use and Internet Privileges)

Acceptable Use

The use of your school computers must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of your district. Use of another organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

Unacceptable Use

Transmission of material in violation of any US or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, illegal, threatening, harassing, violent or obscene materials, and matter protected by trade secrets. Altering or removing computer files not belonging to the user, installing unlicensed software, creating links to inappropriate materials, disconnecting equipment, and vandalism of any kind are also prohibited. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited. Any transmission or reception of pornographic material is expressly prohibited and will result in the cancellation of your computer privileges.

Privileges and Consequences

The use of school computers and the use of the Internet are privileges, and unacceptable use will result in the cancellation of those privileges. The system administrator may revoke privileges at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of any district school may request that the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges and that appropriate school disciplinary action be taken. Depending on the severity of the violation (to be determined

by the system administrator and/or administration), computer privileges may be revoked for an extended period of time. A student who has his/her computer privileges revoked is not allowed to use **any** computer at her/his school site.

Indemnification

The Marin County Office of Education and the Mill Valley School District make no guarantees of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service they are providing. The Marin County Office of Education and the Mill Valley School District will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from faulty software or equipment, delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by their negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the school computers and/or the Internet is at your own risk.

Computer Use Rules

- Food and drink are not allowed in any computer area.
- Personal iPads, kindles or laptops are not permitted in school unless student has prior permission from administration.
- Outside software is not permitted in any computer area; no software is to be downloaded, stored, or installed on any computer or in any computer account.
- Pirated software (*warez*) and MP3 are not to be downloaded or stored on any computer or in any user's account.
- Modification or removal of computer files that are not your own is now allowed.
- All copyright laws are to be observed. Copyrighted material is not to be placed in the system without the author's permission.
- You are not to move or disconnect any computer or peripheral device or piece/part of any equipment.

Contact a supervisor or teacher concerning problems with any of the equipment.

- Appropriate behavior and common courtesy are expected at all times.
- You should not send anything to a printer unless you absolutely need a hard copy of the information; do not print Web sites without knowing exactly how many pages will be printed; do not print multiple copies of any document without specific permission.
- If a student brings their own portable device to school, they are expected to have it in good working order with the battery fully charged. Student use of portable devices must be teacher-approved and teacher-supervised. All devices are to remain in the possession of the student and turned off at all times, unless directed and supervised by a teacher for class use. MVMS is not responsible for damage, loss or theft, whether accidental or deliberate, to any equipment brought to school by the student.
- Do not read other users' electronic mail or files, nor attempt to delete, copy, modify, or forge others' files or email.
- Do not interfere with others' ability to send or receive email.
- Do not disseminate personal identification information about yourself or others, including personal address, social security number, and phone number.
- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- Do not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal/inappropriate activities.

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you can identify a security problem on the network, notify your teacher, the system

administrator, or the principal. You are not permitted to use another individual's account, and you should never allow anyone else to access your account. If, at any time, you feel that your password may have been compromised, see the system administrator immediately to have your password changed. You are responsible for all activity that occurs with your account. Attempts to login to the network as a system administrator or gain unauthorized access will result in the cancellation of your computer privileges.

Vandalism

Vandalism will result in the cancellation of your computer privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to alter, harm, or destroy data of another user, computers, accessories, the Internet, or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading, downloading or creation of computer viruses.

Restitution and Consequences of Contract Violation

Students may be suspended or subject to other disciplinary actions for violation of this contract as provided in the current school Student Handbook under the provisions of Education Code 48900 (k): disruption of school activities and willful defiance of the valid authority of the school. Students will be required to provide restitution for damages to school equipment while the student is logged into any computer.

Duration of Agreement

The duration of this agreement begins upon signing and ends when the student leaves the Mill Valley School District. This agreement is binding in all district schools and will be included with all paperwork forwarded should a student change schools within the district.

DRESS CODE

As a public school, MVMS has a dress code. Clothing, jewelry or personal items that advertise or make reference to tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sex, or violence are not allowed at MVMS. Students are not allowed to wear inappropriately tight (or loose) clothing that reveals cleavage, midriffs, or underwear (i.e. inappropriately tight or revealing leggings or yoga pants; loose-fitting, low-cut, or revealing tank tops, shirts, or blouses; or sagging pants. Pajamas are not appropriate for school and students are not allowed to wear them, unless it is an ASB sanctioned Spirit Day. In addition, dresses, skirts, and shorts must fall below fingertips when arms are extended down straight at the side. Students are also not allowed to wear hats in our buildings. It is important that all students show respect for the learning environment.

Students not complying with the dress code may be sent home or asked to change their clothes. Repeat offenders will be considered a disciplinary issue.

PE Dress Code:

Shirts: School PE or plain gray/no logo; Shorts: School PE or navy blue, mesh basketball shorts/no logo; Sweats: School PE or navy blue/gray/no logo; Shoes: laced up/Velcro, closed toe athletic.

Students not complying with the PE dress code will be given consequences in their PE classes. Repeat offenders will be considered a disciplinary issue.

GUM CHEWING

Gum chewing is not allowed on campus and may result in an office referral.

HALL PASSES

Any student out of class during class time must have a hall pass.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Parents and students are made aware of school activities and students' progress through a variety of means. These include:

1. The school website, ms.mvschools.org
2. PTSA Panther Press, monthly newsletter e-mailed home*
3. PTSA Panther Express, bimonthly newsletter emailed home*
4. Parent group email for special communications or announcements
5. The MVMS Daily Bulletin read aloud each morning and posted on the web
6. Midterm Progress Reports
7. Report Cards
8. MVMS Handbook given to all students first day of school

*Parents are strongly encouraged to sign up for email communication on www.mvschools.org/ms

LOST AND FOUND

Lost articles are kept in a large container in the library hallway. Unclaimed items are sent periodically to charitable organizations. **MVMS is not responsible for personal items.**

LUNCH AND RECESS

Students must stay within the school boundaries (noted by red lines) during recess and lunch. Students may not be in front of the school, between the portables, behind the gym, or in other restricted areas, such as The Mill Valley Community Center. The field and courts may be used after eating. During lunch and recess, the hall doors are to be used only by students who have an emergency and need access to the office, have an appointment with a teacher or counselor, or are going to the library.

Students may not leave the campus during school hours without a written note or phone call from a parent/guardian and must sign out in the office; this includes going to the Mill Valley Community Center.

All litter should be deposited in waste cans; recycling bins are provided for plastic, paper and aluminum. **Glass containers are prohibited on campus.**

Tackle football and other rough contact games are not permitted. Ball games must be played on the basketball courts or field. Lacrosse sticks, baseball bats, and skateboards are not permitted outside during recess or lunch and should be stored during the day in the 1st session class.

MEDICATION

School staff are not allowed to give students any medication unless authorized by MVSD nurse and a signed form is on file. If a student needs to take medication during school hours, we must have a written statement from the parents authorized by a physician. Medication will be kept in the office and must be labeled with the name of the student and the required dosage. Please pick up an *Administration of Medication* form at the front desk for further information. This form is available on the school website www.mvschools.org/forms/students.html

Students are never allowed to carry any prescribed or over-the-counter medicine with them or to self-medicate unless the Administration of Medicine form is on file and authorized by the MVSD nurse.

Distributing medication to classmates is grounds for suspension and possible expulsion.

Parents, short-term medication requires the same paperwork as on-going medication.

MESSAGES AND FORGOTTEN LUNCHES

Only emergency messages from parents will be delivered to students. If you must get a message to your student, the office aide will take the message, and the student's name will be announced at recess or lunch to come to the office.

If your student has forgotten a lunch, a parent may bring it to the office and leave it clearly marked in the front office cabinet. If the student does not pick up their lunch, their name will be announced to come to the office. Do not drop off lunches on a regular basis. Students should either have a lunch pre-ordered at the Panther Café or bring their own lunch each day in their backpack. Check our website for information about Choice Lunch Program.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

Cell phones, cash, and iPods are all vulnerable to theft when students leave them in unattended backpacks or classrooms. Electronic items are **not** allowed to be turned on during the school day. We highly recommend they NOT be brought to school, as we cannot keep them secure. For this same reason, no more than \$10 should be brought to school. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen money, or personal items.**

NUISANCE ITEMS

Items that distract from the educational program must be left at home or they will be confiscated until they can be returned to a parent. These include water guns, balloons, radios, disc recorders, cameras, rubber bands, slingshots, iPods, game systems, gadgets, toys, and laser pointers (laser pointers are not allowed on campus).

PANTHER CAFE

We are proud to serve healthy lunches. Please refer to the MVMS website for directions on how to order. www.mvschools.org/ms

PANTHER PLANNER

Thanks to our PTSA, every student at MVMS is provided with a Panther Planner (a daily agenda/planner) which they use to write down their homework, tests, projects, and other reminders. The Panther Planner also includes Audit Sheets that we sometimes implement when we find that students struggle with getting their homework turned in. Students are expected to fill out their Panther Planners in every class, every day, to help them track and prioritize their school-work. Located in the back of the Panther Planner is a Hall Pass page which students will use to seek help from another teacher during Panther Time.

We encourage parents to check the Panther Planner on a regular basis.

PHONES/CELL PHONES/IPODS

Cell phones/iPods/iPads/kindles/E-books are to be turned off at all times during the school day, unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or staff member for an educational and/or school appropriate activity in the classroom or library. It is the student's responsibility to turn the device off at the end of any teacher or staff member supervised activity. Also, parents are advised not to call/text their son or daughter during the day on their phone. If parents need to get a message to their son or daughter, they can leave it with the front desk.

First offense – Item confiscated and kept in safe, returned to the student at the end of the day (parents notified)

Second offense – Item confiscated and kept in safe, returned to the student at the end of the next school day (parents notified)

Third offense – Item confiscated and kept in the safe, returned to parent after 7 days, formal referral and detention (parents notified)

REPLACEMENT POLICY

If a student loses a textbook or library book, they or their parents are required to pay for its replacement. Similarly, if a student damages any school equipment, including sports uniforms or the personal belongings of another student, these items must be repaired, when

possible, or replaced. Yearbooks and/or end of year privileges may be withheld if books are not returned in good condition or paid for.

SAFE TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL

MVMS encourages students to walk or bike to school as much as they can. It's safer, healthier, cleaner and more fun for the students than riding in a car. Wednesdays are Walk or Wheel Wednesdays at MVMS. The Mill Valley School District is part of a model program for the nation that promotes children walking and biking to school.

Crossing guards are located at Sycamore/Camino Alto and E. Blithedale/Lomita. Please remind your children to obey the crossing guards, the signal lights and the crosswalk signal. In addition, student bicyclists **MUST** wear a buckled helmet when crossing, look left, right, and left again and use hand signals when turning.

Carpool: If you must drive, please carpool. Note that traffic congestion continues to be a major problem at the school, so we suggest you drop-off/pick-up at alternate locations:

MV Community Center by the baseball diamond, not the front door, Safeway, Miller Avenue 7-11, Hauke Park, Rite-Aid/Whole Foods parking lot.

Drop-off zone: MVMS has one drop-off zone. Please drive east on Sycamore Avenue past the gym, follow the drop-off signs and make a hard left turn into the drop-off lane, which is parallel to Sycamore Avenue and next to the gym. Drive all the way forward along the curb, drop your student at the curb, and exit slowly. Do not enter the staff parking lot, which is the larger lot next to the drop-off zone. Please be cautious of students crossing the driveway entrance to the staff parking lot as we have had many near accidents at this location. **[The parking lot in the front of the school is NOT open for drop-off/pick-ups.]** Please be safe and courteous to all students.

Dangerous/reckless drivers: We encourage all our students to be vigilant, and to note the car make, color, driver and license plates when they see bad drivers. Every school in Mill Valley has "Driver Alert" forms at the office which students or parents can complete. The school office will fax this form to MVPD, and the registered owner of the car is sent a warning letter by MVPD.

SCHOOL BUILDING HOURS

MVMS doors open every morning with the first bell at 8:15AM. Before that time, there is limited adult supervision on campus.

The school building closes Monday & Friday @3:30, Tuesday & Thursday @4:00 and Wednesday @2:30, and the first and third Wednesday of each month at 2:30PM for staff meetings. Students must be off campus by those times, unless they are participating in supervised clubs, sports, or working with a teacher. Students may not loiter on campus after school.

SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS

State law requires helmets must be worn when using skateboards and scooters.

Skateboards and scooters are permitted, but must be folded and left in the student's first period class each day and picked up when school is over. They can only be used before and after school. If used during school hours, these items will be confiscated and will be kept in the school office and parents notified. Skateboards and scooters may not be ridden inside the buildings or on campus.

First offense – Item kept in office until the end of the next school day.

Second offense – Parent may pick up the item in 7 days (including weekends) at the end of the school day.

Third (or more) offense – Parent may pick up the item in 14 days (including weekends) at the end of the school day and have a parent conference.

VISITORS

In order to maintain a safe instructional environment, all visitors are **required** to register at the front desk upon entering and leaving the campus. Campus visitors who fail to register will be required to return to the front office.

- Parents and other adults wishing to talk to teachers or visit classrooms must make an appointment with the teacher.
- All visitors, including parents, must wear a visitor's pass.
- No students from other schools are allowed to visit our campus or shadow classes.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Student Council sponsors many student activities, such as spirit days, assemblies, student recognition activities, contests, and community service projects. Yearbook, clubs, after school sports and intramural games are organized periodically at lunch times.

In order to be eligible to take part in extra curricular activities including, but not limited to, student council or after school sports, students must meet academic and behavior eligibility standards. These are outlined on page 18.

All these student activities are designed to make MVMS a fun and rewarding environment in which to be. Students will hear about these activities from their student council representatives as well as through announcements in the daily bulletin.

AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS

After school sports programs operate during various times of the school year. We offer volleyball, basketball, wrestling, cross-country, and track and field. Listen for announcements in the daily bulletin. There is a participation donation that will be requested of all participants.

PROJECT WISDOM

As one step towards creating a more positive school environment for all students, MVMS has adopted a program called Project Wisdom. Project Wisdom is a special curriculum which provides schools with quotes and words to live by. These quotes by famous people encourage students to reflect upon important moral and ethical values. The quotes are preceded by an anecdotal story that demonstrates the application of these values in one's daily life. Project Wisdom provides thought provoking messages that inspire and teach students as well as stimulate discussions in classes. The messages are read over the school's PA system each morning by students following the Daily Bulletin, and all students are expected to listen quietly during this time.

SIXTH GRADE PARTY and GRADUATION DANCE

A sixth grade party is held in the gym from 7-9PM usually in January. This event is a fundraiser for Student Council. There is a special graduation celebration for eighth grade graduates the evening of graduation day which is a gift from the parents of the graduates.

Rules:

1. You must have your student body card for admission.
2. Only MVMS students who have been in school that day may attend (no visitors).
3. No one may leave before the end of the dance unless parents come inside to accompany the student out of the dance.

4. Students who behave inappropriately (inappropriate dancing, running, etc.) may be asked to leave. Parents will be called to pick them up.
5. Parents must be available to pick up students any time during a dance, as well as promptly after the dance. It is the parents' responsibility to arrange for pickup if they are not available.

Any student on the Loss of Privileges list at the time of the dance/party will not be allowed to attend. (See page 33 for description of LOP)

STUDENT COUNCIL

This is the decision-making organization of the students, which operates under the MVMS Constitution. The purpose of the student council is to promote school pride, to organize special events for students, and to organize community service projects. It strives to provide students with opportunities to take on leadership roles in our school and to make specific contributions to our community. Fall elections are held for the officers. Serving on the student council is a wonderful opportunity to develop leadership skills and to contribute to MVMS.

WEB (Where Everybody Belongs)

WEB is our middle school orientation and transition program that welcomes incoming sixth graders to MVMS. Its goal is to make their introduction and transition to middle school as smooth and comfortable as possible.

WEB teacher advisors train 60+ WEB eighth grade students to be WEB leaders for the school year. As positive role models, WEB leaders are motivators, leaders, and mentors, who help guide sixth graders with a variety of activities throughout the year. These activities are designed to help sixth graders learn what it takes to be successful in middle school.

The goal of the year-long program is to provide a structure in which students make connections with one another. Through WEB, students learn that older students and adults care about them and their success.

Please direct questions regarding this program to WEB Coordinators Maggie Front and Cari Pompanin

YEARBOOK

The yearbook club produces a hardcover book, available for purchase by all students during the school year. This book is distributed the last week of school.

STUDENT CONDUCT

SCHOOL CLIMATE: A CULTURE OF RESPECT

All students have the right to a public education in a positive environment free from disruptions that interfere with teaching and learning activities. In order to promote an atmosphere conducive to learning, attitudes and behaviors that promote mutual respect and harmonious relations will be highly encouraged. Additionally, all students have the right to a public education free from discrimination or harassment, including harassment based on gender, race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, perceived orientation, disability, or any form of bullying.

WHAT IS BULLYING AND HARASSMENT?

Bullying (repeated harassment of a specific student or group of students) and harassment of students occurs when a student, or group of students are disrespectful to their peers. It also includes conduct that purposefully alarms, annoys, or torments a student that causes emotional distress. Types of bullying and harassment can be anything from a verbal insult, to a physical altercation that harms, insults, threatens, or hurts another student, or group of students. Bullying and harassment of others is illegal in the state of California, and schools have the right (and responsibility) to hold offenders accountable for these actions (this includes suspension from school and/or involvement of law enforcement). The same applies to any form of cyberbullying, which is bullying and harassment found on various social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Ask.FM, Snap-Chat, etc., as well as messages or images sent via text message. All students have a responsibility to respect everyone on campus.

MVMS EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Teachers will review these expectations with students and have them sign as an agreement.

1. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to be kind and respectful to others:

- Be considerate and respectful with other students, teachers, staff, substitute teachers, parents and visitors.
- Use proper language: no swearing, verbal insults, harassment using or words as put-downs.

2. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to be honest:

- Be truthful with teachers and administrators when discussing incidents.
- Abide by the Academic Honesty Policy described on page 18 of this handbook.

3. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to be safe:

- Fighting, teasing, bullying or harassing others will not be tolerated.
- Leave unsafe items at home. (see Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion on page 34 of this handbook).
- Unsafe games such as tackle football, piggyback rides, and tabletopping, are not allowed before, during or after school.
- Walk when in the hallways and stairwells.
- MVMS is a closed campus-students must stay on campus within the designated areas during the school day.
- The exterior walls and roof of the school building are off limits.
- Controlled drugs and alcohol are illegal and not allowed at school.

4. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to be responsible:

- Safeguard valuables, snack bar tickets and money by keeping them on you, not in your backpack or on your desk.
- Gum chewing is not allowed anywhere.
- Eating and drinking in the building is only allowed if you are with a supervising adult.
- Cell phones and pagers must be turned off during the school day.

5. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to respect school property and the personal property of others:

- Be responsible about picking up litter.

- Engaging in graffiti or destruction of school or private property will not be tolerated.
- Taking, hiding or stealing school or private property is not respectful.

6. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to dress in such a way that does not present a distraction that would interfere with teaching or learning:

- No midriffs or cleavage showing.
- No clothing that reveals underwear.
- No clothing promoting tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sex or discrimination.
- Student must adhere to PE dress policy.
- Hats may not be worn in the building.

7. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to use bicycles, scooters, skateboards and skates responsibly:

- California State Law requires that bicyclists, skaters, and scooters under age 18 must wear a helmet.
- These items must be walked or carried on campus.
- Riding is not permitted on tables, blocks or benches.
- Bicycles are to be locked securely in the bike racks and removed at the end of the school day.
- Scooters, skateboards, and skates are to be stored in the student's locker or first session classroom.
- Middle Valley Middle School is not responsible for theft or damage to bicycles, scooters, skates, or skateboards that are on the school property.
- Violations may result in confiscation of equipment and referrals.

8. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to refrain from public displays of affection at school.

9. Mill Valley Middle School students are not allowed to buy, sell or trade merchandise for personal profit on campus.

10. Mill Valley Middle School students are expected to behave appropriately during lunchtime:

- Eat only in designated eating areas that are supervised.
- Only 6th graders are allowed in the 6th grade area.
- Students may not throw food.
- Students are expected to clean up personal lunch/recess litter.
- Students may play only in designated, supervised areas.
- Students may not leave campus.
- Students are not allowed in the school building unless attending a supervised club or using the library.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The Mill Valley Middle School administration and staff make every attempt to create a safe and positive school environment free from disruptions that interfere with teaching and learning activities. School rules are clearly outlined in this handbook. In addition, the administrators review school rules with students at the start of each year.

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher establishes his or her classroom rules. These rules are consistent with the general rules outlined in this handbook; teachers may use their own consequences to reinforce rules prior to referring students to the office. Teachers are responsible for

informing all students about classroom expectations at the beginning of each year. Actions they may take for improving student behavior include meeting privately with a student, contacting or meeting with parents, changing student's seating, referring a student to the school counselor, and requiring classroom community service or detention. Teachers may detain students for up to 10 minutes after school without notifying the parent/guardian. Teachers may also utilize the discipline referral process.

THE DISCIPLINE REFERRAL PROCESS

All Mill Valley Middle School staff, including teachers, administrators, office personnel, custodians, and campus supervisors, have the authority to refer a student to the administrators for misconduct.

A referral is a written or verbal request for a higher level of disciplinary intervention by the administration. A student may receive a discipline referral for:

1. doing something so serious that he or she must be removed from the class or school yard for their safety or the safety of others, or for the purpose of maintaining classroom order due to:
 - willingly doing something that endangers or could endanger other people,
 - using obscene language or gestures,
 - making remarks that are racist, homophobic or hate-motivated,
 - possessing dangerous objects,
 - being in possession of or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
2. continual disruptive misbehavior in class or at lunch/recess after earlier attempts to redirect student have not changed inappropriate behavior.

ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

At the administrative level, efforts are taken to educate the student about the school rule being broken and to guide the student in making better choices about his/her behavior in the future. Parents/guardians are notified when a student has been referred to the administration for incidents which result in a consequence. Disciplinary interventions include, but are not limited to, the following progressive consequences:

- Student conference with the administrator including a first warning.
- Detention assigned for after school.
- School community service.
- Parent/student conference with the administrator.
- Suspension from school for one or more days.
- Loss of trimester privileges for repeated referrals.
- Request to appear before the Mill Valley School District Student Attendance Review Board (MVSD SARB).
- Referral to the Marin County SARB (MCOE SARB) with possible referral to another school.
- Expulsion

DETENTION

Students who violate school rules may be assigned to detention before school or after school on Wednesdays from 1:30-2:30PM. Parents will be notified by the school administration.

During detention, students will be expected to remain quiet and work on homework or complete service projects assigned by the detention supervisor.

In general, detention lasts one hour. However, students may be released a few minutes early at the discretion of the supervisor for good behavior.

Students who miss detention without prior notification or whose behavior is inappropriate during detention are subject to further consequences.

LOSS OF PRIVILEGES (LOP)

A student who has committed a serious infraction of the rules or a series of minor infractions may be placed on the Loss of Privileges List. This is intended to raise the student's awareness of the need to follow behavior expectations and school rules, and teach the student to be accountable for his/her conduct. The student may be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities: dances, after school sports, school plays, assemblies, and field trips.

A student may be placed on the LOP list for any of the following reasons:

- Receiving 4 or more referrals in an 8-week period (for discipline or tardiness).
- Acquiring a total of 6 referrals during the trimester.
- Receiving one or more days suspension during the trimester.
- Being asked to appear before the MVSD or MCOE SARB.

Being placed on LOP during the first trimester may result in the following:

- Loss of attendance or participation in the fall Talent Show.
- Loss of attendance at the grade level dance in January or February.

Being placed on LOP during the second trimester may result in the following:

- Loss of attendance at the grade level dance in January or February.
- Loss of attendance or participation in the spring musical.

Being placed on LOP during the third trimester may result in the following:

THIRD TRIMESTER DISCIPLINE POLICY

Eighth Grade:

There are a variety of end of the year activities and honors that eighth grade students can look forward to at MVMS. It is important that eighth grade students stay focused on their work and be on their best behavior throughout the year.

Students who demonstrate poor behavior or failing grades in 2 or more classes during the third trimester may lose privileges as indicated below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Three office referrals | Yearbook held until last day of school |
| • Four office referrals,
one suspension, or 2
or more F's | Lose participation in class trip |
| • Five office referrals,
two suspensions, or 2
or more F's | Lose participation in graduation dance |
| • Six office referrals,
three suspensions, or 2
ore more F's | Lose participation in graduation ceremony |

An office referral is any incident that results in a consequence given by either administrator. The loss of activities is cumulative. For example, students who receive five referrals or two suspensions, lose the yearbook distribution, class trip and graduation dance. Students who do not participate in the graduation ceremony will still be promoted to high school. **A serious behavior infraction may result in the loss of all privileges, upon the discretion of the administrators.**

Seventh Grade:

Seventh grade students and teachers, traditionally, go on an end of year off-campus trip. All students are welcomed and encouraged to attend this fun and relaxing day to celebrate their accomplishments during the year. Students who demonstrate poor behavior or failing grades in 2 or more classes during the third trimester may lose these privileges as indicated below:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Three office referrals | Yearbook held until last day of school |
| • Four office referrals or | Lose participation in class trip |
| One or more days of suspension, | |
| Or failing grades | |

A serious behavior infraction may result in the loss of all privileges, upon the discretion of the administrators.

Sixth Grade:

Sixth grade students and teachers enjoy an activity-filled Field Day as their end of year celebration. All students are welcomed and encouraged to attend this fun afternoon. Students who demonstrate poor behavior or failing grades in 2 or more classes during the third trimester may lose privileges as indicated below:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Three office referrals | Yearbook held until last day of school |
| • Four office referrals, | Lose participation in field day |
| One or more days of suspension, | |
| Or failing grades | |

A serious infraction may result in the loss of all privileges, upon the discretion of the administrators.

GROUND FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

According to EC 48900, administrators may suspend students and, in some cases, recommend them for expulsion, for the following:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object. Examples of dangerous object include, but are not limited to B.B. guns, pellet guns, air rifles, pepper spray, razors, laser pointers, brass knuckles, fist packs, nunchaku, and any object likely to cause injury to person or property that has no reasonable use at school.
4. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
5. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and then either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
7. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
8. Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property.
9. Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel.
10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
11. Had unlawful possession of, or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.

12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
13. Knowingly received stolen school property (including electronic files and databases) or private property.
14. Possessed an imitation firearm.
15. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code section 261.266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code section 243.4.
16. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that student from being a witness, or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
17. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
18. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing as desired in Section 32050.
19. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.
20. Committed sexual harassment as defined in the Education Code. The sexual harassment must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive as to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. (EC 48900.2)
21. Caused, attempted to cause, or participated in an act of hate or violence as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233. (EC 48900.3)
22. Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against a pupil or group of pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of that pupil or groups of pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile environment. (EC 48900.4)
23. Made a terrorist threat against school official(s) or school property, or both. (EC 48900.7) Terrorist threats shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand (\$1,000) dollars, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is not intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its fact and under the circumstances in which it was made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family.

Hate-motivated behavior is defined as any act or attempted act to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, bigoted slurs or epithets, vandalism, force, or threat of force motivated in part or in whole by hostility toward the victim's real or perceived race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation.

Acts of hate-motivated behavior include, but are not limited to, criminal acts that are statutory violations and

- posting or circulating demeaning jokes, leaflets, or caricatures

- defacing, removing, or destroying posted materials, announcements, or memorials, and the like
- distributing or posting hate-group literature and/or posters
- using bigoted insults, taunts or slurs and
- possession of hate-group literature, caricatures, and the like

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated if that act is related to a school activity or school attendance that occurs at any time including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- while on school grounds
- while going to and from school
- during or while going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity whether on or off campus

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended shall provide to the student all assignments and tests the student will miss while suspended by leaving work in the office for pick up or posting on the teacher website. The teacher may require the suspended student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. Suspension days are considered excused absences.

GROUND'S FOR EXPULSION (EC 48915)

1. The principal shall immediately suspend and shall recommend to the Board to expel a student that he or she determines has committed any of the following acts:
 - Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm
 - Brandishing a knife at another person
 - Unlawfully selling a controlled substance
 - Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or battery
 - Hate crime
2. The principal shall recommend a student's expulsion for any of the following acts, unless (s)he finds that expulsion is inappropriate due to the particular circumstance:
 - Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense
 - Possessing any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student
 - Unlawful possession of any controlled substance except for the first offense of the possession of not more than one ounce of marijuana
 - Robbery or extortion
 - Assault or battery, as defined in Penal Code sections 240 and 242, upon any school employee
3. **Except as provided in 1 and 2 above, the principal may recommend a student's expulsion for the student's commission of any of the acts listed as grounds for suspension or expulsion.**
4. For disabled students, refer to Conditions for Expulsion according to EC 48915.5.

SARB

The Mill Valley School District Student Attendance Review Board (MVSD SARB) is a cooperative effort between the school and the community aimed at keeping students in school by addressing serious attendance and behavior problems and identifying solutions. The MVSD SARB convenes as needed and is comprised of city and school officials, including representatives from the Mill Valley Police Department, community and school district administration.

Students and parents may be asked to attend the MVSD SARB for any of the following reasons:

- Chronic or excessive absences beyond the District's Attendance Policy.
- Accruing 25 or more tardies during a trimester.
- Accruing a total of 8 or more disciplinary referrals during a trimester.
- Chronic or severe misbehavior.

Students asked to attend the MVSD SARB are expected to attend the meeting with a parent or guardian.

For serious truancy or discipline problems, students may also be referred to the monthly Marin County Office of Education Student Attendance Review Board (MCOE SARB) hearing. Students who meet with the MCOE SARB may be placed in a different school.

A student whose behavior has reached a level to cause him or her to appear before any SARB will be automatically placed on the Loss of Privileges list for the trimester.

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD

It is imperative that you return your completed emergency card by the second day of school. You must have an emergency card on file in the office. Parents will be notified of accident situations and are responsible for transporting students in case of extreme emergency. **Two local emergency numbers are required for each student in case parents cannot be reached.** Please contact the office immediately if your information changes.

MVSD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Using the emergency preparedness model developed by the Marin County Red Cross, in conjunction with school personnel and our parent community, the Mill Valley School District has developed an emergency plan for its own use.

Marin residents have learned the following from prior less severe disasters:

- There is little or no advance warning.
- Highway 101 and other roads may be closed.
- Telephones and other utilities may be out for several days.
- In a major disaster, deaths and injuries will exceed the capacity of our health facilities.
- Because public safety agencies are limited in their capabilities, it is likely that our schools and our nearby community will have to operate completely on their own for several days.

The objectives of the Emergency Preparedness Plan are as follows:

- To minimize injuries and loss of life of students and personnel and to insure their safety and protection if an emergency occurs during schools hours;
- To provide for maximum use of school personnel and school facilities;
- To arrange for a calm and efficient plan for parents to retrieve their children from school, if necessary.

Should an emergency occur while the children are at school, to meet these objectives the following actions will be implemented as specified in our plan:

Principal will:

1. Decide if the school emergency plan is to be implemented and if students are to be dismissed.
2. Assign available adults to tasks as needed.
3. Decide if evacuation to a designated shelter is necessary.

School Administrative Assistant will:

Notify MVSD District Office of status of school, staff and students.

Teachers will:

1. Give "Duck and Cover" instructions in event of earthquake.
2. Evacuate building in case of fire or after an earthquake.
 - Take emergency folder and evacuate students to assigned area on yard.
 - Take emergency bag when evacuating the classroom.
 - Hold students in assigned yard area, take roll, and report missing students.
 - Certain teachers will report for assigned, special duties (e.g. first aid or search and rescue). Otherwise, remain with and supervise the class.
 - Take appropriate first aid action.
 - Will not re-enter buildings until deemed safe.
3. Dismiss students to go home only to parent/responsible adult. (Child must be signed out by parent or responsible adult.)

Special Information for Parents

Telephones and Communications-In the event of any earthquake, flood, etc., keep your radios tuned to KCBS 740AM or KGO 810AM for advisory information. Please do not call the school as we must keep the lines open for emergency calls. Use the designated hotline for recorded information and updates (530) 895-7603.

Dismissal – In the event of a major earthquake, CHILDREN WILL REMAIN UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL AUTHORITIES until parents or designated responsible adults can pick them up.

Student Release Procedures – These are general guidelines for picking up children in case of emergency.

Do not drive on campus. School campuses must be clear of cars to allow for emergency vehicles.

The student pick-up location following a major earthquake is: basketball courts.

Do not remove your child or any other child from school without having signed your name on the emergency release form.

Many of you may not be able to reach school by automobile or telephone. If conditions make it necessary, we will release your child to a responsible adult. We will keep a written record of the child and the adult to whom the child has been released.

The principal or teacher in charge will determine the need to leave the building. In the event the building cannot be reoccupied, we will care for the students on campus until picked up by parents/designated adult.

If children are caught in an emergency between home and school, it is recommended that they go immediately to school.

Food and Water Supply – In the event that children need to remain on campus for several hours after an emergency, we have a supply of fresh water and food purchased with your contributions for emergency supplies.

First Aid – Every classroom has a specially designed first aid kit, and certain teachers have been trained and assigned first aid duties.

Emergency Release Forms – Schools are prepared to care for your children in times of critical situations. If you are unable to reach the school, personnel will care for your child until you can safely get there. In order to assist staff in the safe caring for your child, be sure you have filled out, signed and returned the Release Form. If there is any special medical information the school should know about, please record it clearly and notify the school office if there are any significant changes. It is vital that the school has permission to release your child to an adult deemed responsible by school personnel in the event your designated adults are unavailable. Conditions may be such that it is necessary to remove children from the immediate area. A notice will be posted on the front door of the school with the location of the students.

You and your family are encouraged to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan for your home. The Red Cross recommends the following:

- 3 day supply of water (1 gal/person/day) and food that will not spoil
- 1 change of clothing/shoes for each person
- first aid kit, including prescription meds
- sanitation supplies
- extra set of car keys and cash/traveler's checks
- extra set of glasses
- emergency tools, including flashlight with batteries and battery-operated radio
- special needs of infants, elderly and pets