



Freshman Fundamentals 2020-2021

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Van Buren High School Freshman Academy reserves the right to address inappropriate conduct which disrupts the learning environment in the school even though such behavior is not specified in the following written rules.

Information contained in this handbook does not supersede Van Buren School District Policy

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Van Buren Schools shall establish and maintain an atmosphere in which all persons can develop attitudes and skills for effective, cooperative living including respect for the individual regardless of economic status, intellectual ability, race, creed, color, religion, gender, or age.

Van Buren Freshman Academy Student Handbook 2020-2021

Our Vision:

“Empowering students to discover their potential, set goals, and develop plans to reach them.”

Parents/Guardians and Students:

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year!

At the Freshman Academy, we have the honor and privilege to perform one of the greatest professions of all-Teaching, where we get to take care of and support the students who will soon be leading our future organizations, companies, and communities. We believe every student is important. Our focus is to provide you with the very best educational experience possible. We have high expectations for every student; however, we understand all students learn differently and at different rates, so we will support students as they challenge themselves to meet and exceed those expectations.

I want to take this opportunity to challenge you to try new classes, get involved in clubs and activities, and establish new friendships. Please take advantage of all the opportunities available to you so you will be well prepared for high school and beyond.

Parents/Guardians, thank you for partnering with us to help develop your student socially, emotionally, and academically. It is through the combined efforts of students, families, and staff that students can reach their full potential. . We're excited to work with you to build tomorrow's leaders!

****We want to assure everyone that we as a staff will adhere to District, State, and Federal Guidelines concerning safety measures pertaining to Covid-19. Procedures will be adjusted depending on the guidelines provided. Even though school may look a little differently than it has in the past, our desire is for students to have the most pleasant and meaningful experience possible at the Freshman Academy. We are introducing several measures to promote health, safety, and effective learning. One specific initiative is issuing an electronic device and carrying case to each student. We appreciate your help in maintaining them and returning them in good condition.**

Best Wishes,

Myron Heckman
Principal, Van Buren Freshman Academy

This procedure guide contains three sections:

Section 1 – Student Procedures

Section 2 – Academics

Section 3 – Clubs and Organizations

Section 1: Student Procedures

Attendance - Regular school attendance is vital to the overall academic success of every student. Van Buren Freshman Academy will follow VBSD board policy 4.2 – Student Attendance

Attendance Procedures for VBFA Students:

- All doctors/dentists notes must be turned in to the office.
- A written note or email must be given to one of the secretaries in the office within 5 school days for an absence to be excused by parent permission.
- Any student who missed over ten minutes of class will be counted absent for that class.
- Students who accumulate more than 10 unexcused absences in an individual class during a semester may be denied course credit. Students will be allowed six excused absences per semester (without doctor’s note) – any absence after the six excused absence days will be counted as unexcused (without a doctor’s note).
- Students may be assigned Saturday school to reduce their number of absences in an effort to retain/regain course credit in an individual class.

Attendance Appeals Committee

Students have the right to petition for credit which has been denied to be reinstated. The Attendance Appeals Committee will meet as needed and will consist of an administrator, a counselor, at least one faculty member and the attendance secretary.

Anti-Bullying/Cyber-Bullying Policy

Students will follow VBSD board policy – Student Conduct - Bullying 4.3.6

To ensure a safe environment, VBFA requires all students to report bullying to a teacher, counselor and/or administrator.

Bell Schedules:

Zero Hour classes: 7:00 to 7:50

Regular Day Bell Schedule

Per.	Time		Per.	Time
1	8:00 – 8:50		1	8:00 – 8:50
2	8:55 – 9:45		2	8:55 – 9:45
3	9:50 – 10:45		3	9:50 – 10:45
Lunch A	10:45 – 11:15		4	10:50 – 11:45
4	11:20 – 12:15		Lunch B	11:45 – 12:15
5	12:20 – 1:10		5	12:20 – 1:10
6	1:15 – 2:05		6	1:15 – 2:05
7	2:10 – 3:00		7	2:10 – 3:00

Eighth Hour classes: 3:05 to 3:55

Morning Event Schedule

Per.	Time		Per.	Time
1	8:00 – 8:45		1	8:00 – 8:45
Event	8:50 – 9:30		Event	8:50 – 9:30
2	9:35 – 10:20		2	9:35 – 10 :20
3	10:25 – 11:10		3	10:25 – 11:10
Lunch A	11:10 – 11:40		4	11:15 – 12:00
4	11:45 – 12:30		Lunch B	12:00 – 12:30
5	12:35 – 1:20		5	12:35 – 1:20
6	1:25 – 2:10		6	1:25 – 2:10
7	2:15 – 3:00		7	2:15 – 3:00

The office will announce other special schedules as they become necessary.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students may properly use electronic devices before school, between classes, during lunch, or after school. Personal use of cell phones is prohibited in classrooms. Any exceptions are at the teacher's discretion.

If listening to music during appropriate times, students must keep one ear clear or free from headphones for safety purposes.

- First offense: Device will be confiscated – students will receive at the end of the school day.
- Second offense: Device will be confiscated – parent/guardian will be required to collect device between hours of 2:00 – 4:00 on day it was taken, or during office hours for any days following. Refusal to turn over their device will result in a minimum of one day of ISS.
- Third offense: Device will be confiscated – parent/guardian will be required to collect device between hours of 2:00 – 4:00 on day it was taken, or during office hours for any days following. Refusal to turn over their device will result in a minimum of one day of ISS. Loss of phone privileges.

The use of electronic devices is a privilege. Using electronic devices to take, transmit, or disperse images which disrupt the learning environment will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action as determined by school administration.

VBFA DOES NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS MENTIONED ABOVE.

Closed Campus

Van Buren Freshman Academy is a closed campus. A student is expected to arrive on campus before school begins in the morning and remain on campus until the close of the school day. If it becomes necessary to leave campus during the school day, the student must be checked out through the office. In order to check a student out, a parent/guardian must pick-up, call the office, email, or send a note stating the time that the student needs to check out. The person that picks-up the student must come in the office and sign the student out. Parents may check students out for lunch if they come in the office and sign their student out. Students may not leave campus for lunch based on a phone call or note from the parent.

Students leaving and returning to campus will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes leaving campus at the close of the school day and returning for a ride home.

Computer Usage

Computer usage at VBHS Freshman Academy is available for all students and staff of VBHS-FA from 7:25 AM to 4:00 PM. Students shall abide by the District and school's "Acceptable Use Policy" (District Policy Handbook), including proper use of printers. Failure to do so will result in loss of privileges, payment of damages, any and all other discipline or punishments set out by VBHS-FA or federal authorities. Students may use the computer lab during non-class time only when proper supervision is provided.

Conduct Behavior Code

Students will follow all procedures according to VBSD board policy – Student Conduct Behavior Code 4.3

- Fighting or violent behavior will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students who fight will be suspended a minimum of three days for the first offense and may have assigned seating at breakfast and lunch when they return. A second offense will result in a minimum suspension of five days and the student(s) may be referred to the IZARD Center. Students may be arrested and charged. Students who are caught recording a violent offense may be charged with conspiracy to commit battery and may receive the same punishment as the offenders.
- Weapons of any kind are prohibited on campus or at school events. Any look-alike, such as a toy gun, air soft gun, etc. are also prohibited. Possession of weapons other than firearms will result in a minimum 10-day suspension. Possession of firearms will result in a recommendation for expulsion for one calendar year (365 days.)

Dress Code – Students will follow VBSD board policy – 4.3.4 - Appearance code

Examples of dress, which would be considered disruptive to the learning environment, are:

- Straps and tank tops not meeting the width of a dollar bill
- Shorts not meeting length of mid thigh
- Holes in jeans being higher than mid-thigh
- Any hat or cap.

*These examples are not all-inclusive; the administration and teaching staff reserve the right to make final decisions on dress issues.

Students who dress inappropriately will be given appropriate attire.

Early Arrival

At the Freshman Academy, the doors will open at 7:15 and students will immediately report to the indoor courtyard.

Early Check-Out Procedure

All students are required to have their parent/guardian sign them out in the office. Any student who misses more than 10 minutes of class will be counted absent for that period.

Hall Passes

Students at the Freshman Academy will only be allowed in the halls during class with a principal approved hall pass in their possession.

Internet Acceptable Use

See VBSD Board Policy 3.18

In School Suspension (ISS)

Students will be assigned by the Principal’s Office to ISS when events or disciplinary action necessitates removal of the student from the classroom. Students will serve ISS at the Freshman Academy campus from 8 AM to 3 PM. Students will be supervised and all classroom assignments will be provided for each assigned student. A student is then expected to complete these assignments before returning to class.

Students will be considered present at school when attending ISS.

A student should not be assigned to ISS for more than ten (10) days within a school year. Disciplinary infractions beyond the ten (10) day ISS limit may result in Administrative Disciplinary Action.

Lockers

*****Lockers will not be used this year. Students should bring a backpack or something to carry their materials to class with them.**

Lost and Found

At the VBHS Freshman Academy, lost and found is located in room 203C across from the office.

Lunch

Students will not be allowed to have food delivered to school by a restaurant. Food brought from outside the school may not be shared with other students. *****Continuing with our limited restrictions, we are not allowing visitors to eat with students at this time.**

Media Center

Students at VBFA have the privilege of using the media center for research and study skills, recreational reading, and exploring and retrieving information by way of an automated library program and the Internet. The library is open from 7:25 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Admittance during class time is allowed only by way of a principal approved hall pass that will be issued by the classroom teacher. Overdue charges will be assessed at 10 cents per day for library material. Students should renew material in order to avoid fines and then clear all fines in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of the students to return books when due.

Medical Policies

Students will follow board policy 4.12 – Health Services and 4.14 – Communicable Diseases.

The office of the school nurse is located just to the right of the main office on the right side of the hallway. A supply of first aid materials are kept on hand in the nurse's office. **Please do not enter the nurses station without permission.**

MEDICATION

In order for your child to take medication at school it must be brought to the office by a parent or guardian and a permission form signed. Permission forms are available in the school office and on the Van Buren School District web site. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TRANSPORT PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.**

MEDICATION BROUGHT TO SCHOOL BY A STUDENT WILL BE CONFISCATED AND WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED. Transportation of medications via school buses is strictly prohibited. The exception is self-carry emergency medications which are limited to asthma inhaler, epinephrine, and/or insulin. If your student is required to self-carry an emergency medication, a parent/guardian will need to conference with the nurse BEFORE school starts or when the need arises. All medication must be in the original bottle. Prescription medications must also be properly labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, current date, and dosage. We will not accept any over-the counter medication without a doctor's note. Our medication guidelines are strictly enforced.

Public Display of Affection

Public displays of affection will not be allowed on the VBFA campus. Any students engaged in PDA will be sent to the office. Students may not have body contact by hugging, kissing, holding hands, etc. Minimum consequences are as follows:

- 1st offense – Warning
- 2nd offense – Detention or 1 day ISS
- 3rd offense or more – 1 or more days ISS

Safety Drills

Fire, Tornado, Evacuation and Lock Down drills will be performed throughout the school year. Students will follow procedures as directed by staff.

Search and Seizure

Authority to do Reasonable Suspicion searches was established by VBSD board policy 4.4. (See District Student Policy Handbook.)

Student Parking

At the VBHS Freshman Academy, Freshman Academy students are not allowed to park on campus without Principal Approval.

Student Participation at School Sponsored Activities

Students will follow all District and AAA Guidelines

Tardy Policy

Disciplinary actions for tardiness may result in the following:

- **1st and 2nd Tardies** within a class in a semester...Teacher Warning
- **3rd Tardy** within a class in a semester...Teacher warning and parent notification via disciplinary slip. Student will return the disciplinary slip to teacher with parent signature the following day to avoid disciplinary action.
- **4th Tardy** within a class in a semester ... Disciplinary referral and 1 day of detention
- **5th Tardy** within a class in a semester ... Disciplinary referral and 3 days of detention.
- **6th Tardy** within a class in a semester ... Disciplinary referral and 1 day of ISS.
- **7th Tardy** within a class in a semester ... Disciplinary referral and 1 day of Saturday School.
- **8th Tardy** within a class in a semester ... Disciplinary action at the discretion of the Principal.

Textbooks

Textbooks will be available for checkout from the library for each class and students will be responsible for payments for lost or damaged textbooks.

Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, and Tobacco Products

Tobacco and tobacco products of any kind are prohibited on school property or at school events. This includes using or being in the possession of any tobacco or nicotine delivery system or product. Specifically, the prohibition includes any product that is manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, or under any other name or descriptor. E-cigarettes are prohibited and will be treated as tobacco. The delivery device or instrument will be destroyed as provided in ACA. 5-78-102 (2015). Minimum consequences are as follows;

- 1st Offense -- 3 days ISS, confiscation of tobacco materials, and parent notification
- 2nd Offense -- 5 days ISS, confiscation of tobacco materials, and parent notification
- 3rd Offense -- 3 days ISS, 2 days Saturday School, confiscation of tobacco materials, and parent notification
- 4th Offense or more -- Disciplinary action at the discretion of the Principal.

Tuancy

A student who is absent without parent/guardian consent is considered truant. A student is also truant if he/she leaves school without permission; he/she obtains a pass and does not report to the place for which the pass was obtained; or he/she does not report to his/her assigned class.

Truancies are cumulative and the minimum consequences are:

- 1st offense within a semester results in 1 day in ISS and a parent notification.
- 2nd offense within a semester results in 2 days in ISS and parent notification
- 3rd offense within a semester results in 2 days in ISS, 1 day in Saturday School, and parent notification.
- 4th offense or more within a semester results in parent notification and Administrative Disciplinary Action.

Video surveillance and other student monitoring

Video/recording devices may be in use in school buildings, on school grounds, and in school vehicles as determined by the VBSD. Refer to policy 4.48.

Visitors

Visitors will follow board policy 4.19 – Contact with Student While at School and 6.11 – Visitors to the School. All visitors to VBFA MUST report to the office first. ***** Visitors will be limited to one family in the front office at a time.**

Section 2: Academics

Academic Academy Awards

Students who meet the following qualifications at the end of the 3rd Quarter are eligible to participate in the Annual Academic Academy Awards Banquet.

- Cumulative GPA of 3.75
- Department Honors recommended by teachers
- Students of the Month

Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to recognize selected students for scholastic achievement as measured by their academic records and ACT scores. The AACS is a four year scholarship of an amount to be determined by the state each year to students in financial need who score a composite “Super” score of 19 or better on the ACT.

Diploma Information

Students will follow board policy 5.14 – Graduation Requirements.

Students may earn a College Prep, College Prep with Honors, or College Prep with High Honors diploma by obtaining 23 credits and meeting additional requirements listed in the course catalog.

Students may earn a Smart Core or General Core diploma by obtaining 22 credits and meeting all state requirements.

Enrollment on the High School Campus

Students must complete four credits with passing grades to be enrolled as a sophomore on the Van Buren High School campus. Students will three credits may be conditionally enrolled with High School principal approval.

Extracurricular Eligibility

Students will follow board policy 5.6 – Interscholastic Activities.

Grades

Students will follow board policy 5.10 – Grading Policy. Students and parents may access student grades through the Home Access Center or the eSchoolPlus Family app. App may be downloaded from the iPhone app store or from Android's Google Play store. Please contact Tammy Poole, Parent Involvement Coordinator, for passwords.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students will follow board policy 5.21 – Grade Point Average.

GPA will be based on grades earned in academic courses in grades nine through twelve. Official GPA will be ranked on a 4.0 scale.

Homework Policy

Students will follow board policy 5.11 – Homework Policy.

*Pre-AP classes are exempt from the homework policy as they are to prepare for rigorous guidelines of AP coursework set by College Board.

Make-Up Work

Students will follow board policy 4.2 – Student Attendance.

Students and/or parents will have the responsibility of acquiring the work they have missed. Students who are absent for multiple days may request that missed assignments be collected for pick up in the office.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing someone else's words or ideas without giving credit to that person or source. It is characterized by claiming work published in print, on digital media, such as CD or Internet, as one's own. Copying assignments could be construed as plagiarism as well. The penalty for plagiarism will be a minimum reprimand and notification of the parent, but could also constitute an F in a class in its most blatant or severe form.

Schedule Changes

If space allows, schedule changes must be made before the end of the first two weeks of both semesters. Students must present a valid reason for the change. Changing schedules to arrange lunch times, or because they do not "like" a teacher, are not valid reasons. After these deadlines, students must stay in their classes until the end of the semester. Students may be placed in only one non-credit class per semester.

At VBFA, students will not be allowed to change teams.

Semester Assessments

In all classes, students may be given a cumulative semester assessment at the end of each semester. These semester assessments may account for up to 10% of the students' grade for the semester.

Semester Test Exemptions

Students who have an A, B, or C in a class and have only (3) excused absences (these include medical) or less in that class have the option of being exempt from the semester test in that class. Any unexcused absences, in school suspensions, or out of school suspensions will make a student ineligible for the exemption. School business will not count as an absence. If a student who is exempt chooses to take the test their grade may not be lowered from the result of that test. Pre-AP, AP, or Concurrent may not be exempt (teacher/class discretion).

Resolution of Parental/Patron Concerns- See school board policy 4.3.9

Individuals with complaints concerning personnel, curriculum, and student discipline (including specific discipline policies), or other day-to-day operational or management issues should address those complaints according to the following sequence:

Level One: Teacher or other staff member against whom the complaint is directed

Level Two: Principal (or appropriate supervisor)

Level Three: Superintendent (or designee)

Section 3: Clubs and Organizations

The following school sponsored organizations are scheduled into the school day and therefore a student may earn ½ or more credits for participation.

Athletics

A full range of competitive athletics is offered at VBFA. A valid physical and permission from the coach of the team is required for participation.

Band

VBFA band meets 2nd period.

Cheer/Dance

VBFA Cheer squad and Stepper Dance team meet during 7th period.

Choral Music

VBFA students will meet with the VBHS choir.

Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps

JROTC is a student military leadership training organization. Students participate in a wide range of military oriented training activities.

The following clubs and organizations are also available for student participation. No course credit is given.

Chess Club (9-12)

Chess Club exists for students who have an interest in the game, and who may desire competition either at the intramural or between school levels. Membership is open.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (9-12)

FCA is a student led Christian organization geared toward continued spiritual development in students who are interested in athletics.

Family Career Community Leaders of America (9-12)

FCCLA is a community leadership organization for students who have an interest in competition in various state/regional and state leadership contests. Membership is open to all students.

Future Farmers of America (9-12)

FFA is promotes agricultural awareness and literacy, business, communication, science, technical, and life skills. Membership is open to students taking CASE (Agriculture) courses only, as per National FFA Organization rules.

Junior Literacy and Arts (9th)

JLA is a student-based organization for the study creation and illustration of graphic novels.

Project Unify (9)

Project Unify involves VBFA student's activities with Special Olympics and Project Unify activities. Membership is by application only.

Quiz Bowl (9-12)

The VBFA bowl team meets during encore, after school, or before school for the purpose of preparing for interscholastic quiz bowl competition. Students must try out for the team. Membership is by try-out and acceptance.

Student Council (9th)

Student Council is the student activities and leadership organization on campus. Membership is by election.

Youth Alive (9th)

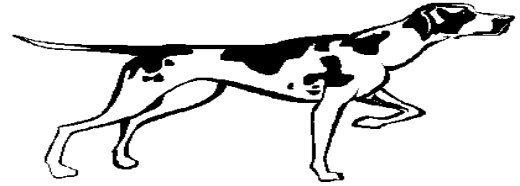
Youth Alive is a student led Christian organization which is non-denominational and is organized to promote student spiritual development.

All clubs must have principal approval. The use of "Van Buren Freshman Academy" (VBFA) is strictly prohibited without prior principal approval.

Get involved in school activities! It is proven that active students are more academically successful!

VBHS Alma Mater

*In Arkansas you'll find us
With all our main and might
We'll shout aloud forever
Our love for the Green and White
Three cheers for Van Buren High School
She loves the truth and right
All hail the Alma Mater, All hail the Green and White...
GO DOGS!*



Van Buren Freshman Academy Parent Involvement Policy

Purpose:

The Van Buren Freshman Academy has created this policy because we know that the more involved a parent is in their child's education the more likely that child is to succeed. We want all parents to be informed about how they can become involved.

Our goals are:

- To let parent know how important they are to the child's success
- To encourage parents to come to the school and get involved.
- To keep parents constantly informed and include them in our decision making process when it comes to their child.
- To teach parents what they need to know in order to help their child succeed.

Improving School Communication with Parent

The school will work to communicate with parents through mailings, phone calls and email. Parents will be given the following items and contact information in order to help them stay informed.

- School Calendar
- District handbook
- School procedural guide
- School personnel contact information
- Website and School contact information
- Log in information for weekly newsletter
- Volunteering information
- Parent Link information
- Facebook page
- Twitter account

Parental Involvement Activities:

The Van Buren Freshman Academy:

- Welcome parents into the school and recognize that parents are full partners in their child's education.
- Will give a "Report to the public" during a parent meeting. Regular parent meetings and parent-teacher conferences will be held.
- Communications will be published in appropriate languages to meet the needs of our diverse community.
- Recognize parents collectively in local newspaper for attending parent conferences.
- School performance reports will be made available to parents.
- School staff will receive professional development to create positive interaction between home and school.
- Designate a parent involvement facilitator with a current Arkansas teacher's license to organize meaningful training for staff and parents, and organizing and promoting a welcoming atmosphere for parental involvement.
- A parent center in the library provides the following materials:
 - Parenting books
 - Parenting magazines
 - Information on the school
 - Teaching aids
 - And other information
- Post upcoming school events on the school website, the school closed-circuit media, the school phone message system, or in the local newspaper
- Invite and encourage incoming 9th graders and their parents to participate in 9th grade Orientation/Open House
 - Online grade viewer passwords available at Open House and all year.
 - Training available for using Home Access grade viewer.
- Host an Academic Awards Banquet

