



**Vilonia  
Pathways**  
**ACADEMY**

# *STUDENT HANDBOOK*

2023-2024

**EDUCATION PATHWAYS TO  
WORKPLACE SUCCESS**

**Assistant Superintendent**

Dr. Cathy Riggins

**Administrators**

Jody Brewer- Grades K-3

Mrs. Kim Lacy- Grades 4-8

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**High School**

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## **Vilonia Pathways Academy Conversion Charter**

The mission of the Vilonia Pathways Academy (VPA) is to provide high levels of learning through differentiated pathways that promote academic success while (1) providing a rigorous, standards based, core curriculum embedded with crucial workplace soft skills, (2) preparing all students to live as responsible, productive community members through service learning; and (3) expanding opportunities through a commercial construction pathway.

To accomplish the mission of the Vilonia Pathways Academy (VPA), the charter will offer an innovative blended learning environment to all K-12 students. All students enrolled in the district may apply to attend VPA. Students living outside the boundaries of the Vilonia School District must apply through school choice and school- to- school transfer guidelines. Students will be provided a schedule that includes virtual and required face-to-face onsite instruction.

### **Innovation Supported Through Research**

As we learn by doing, our capacity to innovate increases. The Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education has recently announced the realization that “every child, no matter the time or location can learn if given the right resources”. Hattie (2018) reveals that when students are engaged in their own learning, a correlation to higher achievement exists. Hattie (2018) also indicated that “Student Self-Reporting” has a significant positive effect size of 1.33 impact on student learning. VPA includes the following research-based pathways of innovation that distinguish the conversion charter from other schools within the geographical area.

The flexibility and personalized option of the charter will reduce the potential of educational gaps because it is more tailored to the child’s developmental needs. Flexibility in the educational process supports the communicated desires of the



district's community. Some students grasp new material faster or slower than other students. The online component of the charter will offer a unique blended approach that will allow teachers to personalize assignments and provide the individual attention that students need. Vo, Zhu, & Diep (2020) research revealed significant enhancements in students' learning performance for students participating in blended learning courses.

- Workforce readiness is a driving focus of the charter mission. Teaching communication skills for the workplace starts at the kindergarten level ensuring a strong foundation of reading and communicating exists. As students enter secondary education and advance through their educational journey, additional soft skills will be embedded into the curriculum. Career explorations and workforce readiness opportunities will be explicitly taught. Students will have choice and student voice in developing their pathways for workforce readiness. Gewerts (2018) indicates that “employers say their young hires haven’t learned the reading, writing, and verbal-communication skills that are most important to a successful working life” (p.1). Therefore, the mission of the charter is essential to providing opportunities that will allow students to develop these needed communication skills for the workplace. Ensuring students have workforce-ready communication skills is foundational to accomplishing the mission of the conversion charter. Curriculum will exemplify Arkansas standards and the connection to application of skills in the workforce. Flexibility through the charter will ensure that students are provided unique opportunities to practice and develop these skills.
- Service-learning will serve as the foundation to building intrinsic motivation in students to work. Students entering today’s workforce must possess a strong work ethic. These skills cannot simply be taught in the classroom; students must be given an opportunity to experience situations where they can apply their skills and recognize what strong work ethic requires. Liddell (2008) discusses the research of Brian Hoyt, associate professor of



management at Ohio University. In the study of over 800 students and 21 universities, research revealed that service-learning enriches engagement where students' ethical decision-making abilities apply. While providing tips to parents on ways to teach their child work ethic, Elmore (2020) indicates that by serving others children learn work ethic.

- Commercial Construction is a component of the charter mission for grades 9-12. Parsons (2017) while announcing the Go Build Campaign writes that “the long-simmering shortage of skilled trade labor continues to plague contractors of all sizes, specialties and locations. Go Build indicates that for every 4 workers retiring from the commercial construction industry, only 1 worker is entering the industry. The third-quarter Commercial Construction Index, produced by USG Corp. and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, found that 60% of contractors are having difficulty finding skilled workers” (p.1). Parsons continues on to state that high school programs are needed to introduce male and female students to the opportunities that exist in the field of commercial construction. Charter students in grades 9-12 will be provided unique opportunities, made possible through waivers, to experience various trades in the commercial construction industry allowing them to specialize in an area of interest. A focus will be placed on ensuring that the learning experience is geared to males and females. The industry needs both genders to fill open jobs.

## **Innovative Programmatic Features by Grade Bands**

### **K-6**

Implementing the charter mission, students will engage in service learning project-based instruction to master Arkansas state standards, learn and apply soft skills, and contribute to their community.

Service-learning will also support students in developing reading skills which are foundational to communication skills. Projects will support the Science of Reading



by providing a multidisciplinary approach to accessing authentic text and exposure to rich vocabulary. Background knowledge will be enhanced as students work through a vast range of different topics.

Student voice is essential to engagement. Topics for service-learning projects throughout the year will be driven by students as they recognize the needs of their communities. Inquiry activities will be provided to help students investigate and recognize needs for service.

Curriculum will be supported with character development through the “16 Habits of Mind”. A priority focus will be placed on Reading and STEM skills.

### **Grades 7-8**

In addition to service-learning project-based instruction, the 7-8 grade levels will implement a strong blended curriculum with a focus on addressing the unique needs of the middle school child through career explorations. Career Exploration in Middle School: Setting Students on the Path to Success published by the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) will supplement the core curriculum to provide exposure of career options to middle school students.

Middle school students need social interaction, yet are seeking ways to express their own independence. The middle school student has a strong need to be accepted by their peers and needs support in learning how to develop interpersonal skills. These crucial developmental years are very important to helping children transition from elementary to secondary education. Foundational skills such as working together, communicating effectively, and problem solving are essential for students to develop skills needed in the workplace. Through the development of civic responsiveness and personal responsibility, students will gain confidence and self-awareness in developing their own personal strengths and identity.



While striving to address the needs of the middle school child, the charter will focus around domains that effectively address the needs of the middle school child as suggested by the National Diamond Schools to Watch program. The domains for implementation are as follows: (1) Academic Excellence, (2) Developmental Responsiveness (3) Social Equity and (4) Organizational Structures and Processes.

- Academic Excellence- Recognizing the need for students to better understand pathways that lead to successful careers, the charter will provide grades 7-8 with a rigorous, standards based, blended curriculum that is embedded with career explorations. Student success plans will be developed to offer a unique opportunity for students to master state essential standards while exploring the possible careers of the workforce they will enter. The curriculum provided will merge four units of career exploration throughout the year. Connections will be made across the curriculum to help students understand what they are learning and why. The 7-8 grades of the academy will ensure the students have a strong base to draw from while striving to choose a career pathway in the future. Academic excellence will be evidenced by increased scores and individual growth on standardized tests.
- Developmental Responsiveness- A personalized environment will be created that supports each student's intellectual, ethical, social, and physical development. Brain based research will be considered in regards to the uniqueness of each learner. Every student in the school will have an advisor/adult that he or she trusts and stays in touch with throughout their middle school experience. Each student's success plan will be embedded with creative activities that deliberately teach study and organizational skills. Using career explorations and service learning as vehicles to student engagement, students will be given an opportunity to exhibit mastery of skills through a non-traditional personalized education pathway. These pathways will provide opportunities to apply what they learn to real-life experiences emphasizing the soft skills of communication and collaboration. Students will collaborate virtually through Zoom / Google Meets with their peers, parents, community members, the family engagement liaison, and



teachers to plan service-learning projects. Onsite instructional days will be required as well as days for service-learning projects that will be conducted in the community.

- **Social Equity** – One unique area of concern when providing a blended learning experience is how to ensure social equity within the school. All middle school students need social support and opportunities to embrace their uniqueness. A virtual option for learning often seems inviting because students are struggling to function in the traditional setting. VPA will offer a blended learning environment that will establish social goals that ensure all students feel connected and respected within the school community. Each student will be a member of a collaborative team. Discussion board activities will be provided to encourage students to discuss important topics of interest, share celebrations, and provide student input concerning school improvement. Activities will provide students learning opportunities to understand their uniqueness as a person and recognize their strengths. Student voice will drive service-learning projects while considering the social and cultural needs of the community. Presently, much of the world's workforce has taken on a virtual workplace. We must prepare our students to work in this non-traditional setting while learning how to ensure social equity. The skills students will learn through the blended model will be foundational to social soft skills needed to work in a blended model workforce. Since the COVID 19 pandemic, the blended model workforce is becoming more prevalent and students must be educated in a manner that is comparable.
- **Organizational Structures and Processes**- While striving for excellence through a student-centered culture, the norms, structures, and expectations for learning will be fully communicated. A district commitment exists to ensure that all faculty and staff are provided with rich professional development which is connected to reaching and sustaining the charter vision and relevant to educating the middle school child. Expectations for continuous improvement will permeate the school culture. The vision for





each student's plan will be driven by constant improvement. Progress monitoring of student achievement will include: self-reflection from students and adults, student interactive data notebooks, student led parent conferences, and standardized test scores. Grades will be assigned based on mastery of essential standards.

- Students in grades 7-8 will utilize the outdoor classroom, as well as local community locations, to enhance their units of study through career explorations and service-learning.

### **Grade 9-12**

Students enrolled in grades 9-12 will choose a pathway of study focused around commercial construction. Students may choose between a college preparation or workforce pathway. Through the educational experience, students may change pathways or crossover to take specific courses from both pathways. A blended core curriculum utilizing Google Classroom and Pearson learning management system will be provided. All 9-12 students will participate in at least 1 ongoing service-learning project and 4-8 short term projects per year. The number will be determined based on the timeframe of projects. Students will have the option to participate on-site in extracurricular activities, such as sports, prom, homecoming events, clubs (for example, FFA, FBLA, Beta, Math, FHA, etc.) All extracurricular participation by Vilonia Pathways' students will follow the Arkansas Activities Association rules. Students participating in AAA extracurricular activities, or in offerings such as band will be required to attend onsite classes daily. VPA will be inclusive in nature allowing personalized plans to include flexibility in coursework. Students may choose to attend onsite CTE courses relating to commercial construction content available to all students in the district. All students completing the course of study through Vilonia Pathways Academy will meet all requirements for graduation and will be eligible to participate in the district graduation ceremony.



The need for student choice over the learning process is a core belief when implementing the mission of the charter. When students are given control over their learning process, they are required to communicate, collaborate, and solve problems in groups. Learning is much more meaningful and students learn to network with others, hence developing essential workforce skills.

Choices for individual student pathways are as follows:

- College Prep- (Concurrent Credit, AP, Core, Internships, Construction Management Studies) The district has created a strong partnership with the Construction Management Program at UA Little Rock. The university has committed support to working with VPA to provide pathways that will allow for students to advance toward the construction management program. Through this program, students will acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and experiences to achieve success in their chosen construction fields. UA Little Rock will provide onsite labs and multi-day seminars to be embedded into the virtual charter course work.
- Students are eligible to earn an Associates of Science in Construction Management or Non-degree Level 1 and Level 2 Certifications in Construction Management
- Workforce- The workforce pathway will ensure students gain knowledge to enter the commercial construction workforce immediately following graduation. Students will participate in a blend of virtual and onsite instruction that introduces them to opportunities in the commercial construction industry. Core curriculum standards will be taught with an application connection to jobs available in the industry. Blended with virtual online instruction, students will attend face to face instruction located at the Vilonia High School campus and at industry partner training centers. The district curriculum team and industry partners have worked together to create and offer courses that will prepare students to gain entry level jobs



immediately after graduation. Apprenticeship hours and internships that promote work based learning are available for students to apply with industry partners. It should be noted that this program is not a traditional workforce model but a method of training that provides the students with appropriate exposure to the industry, the base knowledge, and the employability skills to acquire jobs. This program will create pathways for direct employment. Industry partners have indicated that once students are hired, they will provide specific job-based education and pathways for advancement through their companies.

- Students in the commercial construction program are eligible to merge workforce and college prep paths. They may also choose solely workforce or college prep. As required, each student will complete and maintain a student success plan. The blended learning model provides for a flex schedule to allow students to complete the innovative experience.
- Certifications – To ensure students are equipped to immediately gain entry level jobs in the field of construction after graduation, all students will be required to complete the NCCER OSHA 10 certification and NCCER CORE certification for commercial construction. In addition to the two required certifications, students may choose to obtain additional NCCER certifications in areas that correlate with their specific interest to jobs in the commercial construction industry. These certifications will be obtained through a blend of onsite and online learning. The district has worked with industry partners and the Department of Career and Technical Education to establish certifications to be available for the 2023-2024 school year of implementation. Construction partners are also supporting the district in creating the courses of study for the construction program. Partners will provide support in providing human resources, field experiences, training,



financial support, and construction total stations equipped for hands-on experiences in the industry. Students will leave the charter fully equipped with the knowledge of jobs available in the industry and with the understanding of how to secure entry-level positions in the workforce or continue to higher education programs.

In addition to the district campus, all 9-12 students will be provided onsite instruction at various partnership locations to support the goals of the charter. Locations scheduled, but not limited to include: UA Little Rock located at 2801 S. University Ave, Little Rock, AR, Associated Builders and Contractors of Arkansas training center located at 6 Collins Industrial PL, North Little Rock, AR, Nabholz Construction training center located at 612 Garland St., Conway, AR, Nabco training center located at 1750 S Amity Rd, Conway, AR, Kinco Constructors training center located at 12600 Lawson Rd #2711, Little Rock, AR, and Weaver and Bailey Contractors, 1601 Mayor Ln., Conway, AR. These training centers will provide core instructional opportunities for students to be exposed to hands-on learning while receiving direct instruction from individuals working daily in the commercial construction industry. These lab-based training days will provide students with a wide range of exposure to the jobs that exist in the commercial construction industry. Students will also utilize these training centers to meet commercial certification requirements included as core curriculum of the charter.

### **ASSURANCE STATEMENT**

The Vilonia School District adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination and complies with Federal regulations and requirements as set forth in Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, IDEA,



and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) of 1990.

It is the policy of the Vilonia School District to maintain learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by any staff member or student in the District should make their complaint directly to the principal, guidance counselor, or the District's compliance officer listed below.

Persons having questions or seeking information regarding the district's compliance with and implementation of these regulations should contact:

Cathy Riggins  
Assistant Superintendent  
Vilonia School District  
P.O. Box 160  
Vilonia, AR 72173  
501-796-2113

### **VPA/DISTRICT WEBSITE**

Visit [www.vpa@viloniaschools.org](http://www.vpa@viloniaschools.org) to connect to the Vilonia Pathways website. Users of the Vilonia Pathways website are accountable for all policies as related to the Vilonia School District website.

The Vilonia School District shall maintain a web page to provide information about its schools and activities to the community. This policy is adopted to promote continuity between the different pages on the district web site by establishing guidelines for their construction and operation.



The Vilonia School District website shall be used for educational purposes only. It shall not create either a public or a limited public forum. Any link from any page on the District's site may only be to another educational site. The web site shall not use "cookies" to collect or retain identifying information about visitors to its web site nor shall any such information be given to "third parties." Any data collected shall be used solely for the purpose of monitoring site activity to help the district improve the usefulness of the site to its visitors.

Each school's web page shall be under the supervision of the school's Web Master and the District's website shall be under the supervision of the District's Web Master. They shall have the responsibility for ensuring that web pages meet appropriate levels of academic standards and are in compliance with these guidelines and any additional administrative regulations. To this end the District and School Webmasters shall have the authority to review and edit any proposed changes to web pages to ensure their compliance with this policy. All such editing shall be viewpoint neutral.

District and school web pages shall also conform to the following guidelines.

- 1) All pages on the District's web site may contain advertising and links only to educational sources.
- 2) The District's home page shall contain links to existing individual school's web pages and the school home pages shall link back to the District's home page. The District's home page may also include links to educational extracurricular organization's web pages which shall also link back to the District's home page.
- 3) Photos may be posted on district or school web pages, but PII (Personally Identifiable Information) will not be associated with photos. In a situation where the school wants to provide special recognition for an individual or group of individuals, written permission from the student and/or parent would be obtained to allow first and last name only to be associated with a photo or other image.



- 4) The District's web server shall host the Vilonia District's website.
- 5) No web page on the District web site may contain public message boards or chat rooms.
- 6) All web pages on the District web site shall be constructed to download in a reasonable length of time.
- 7) The District's home page shall contain a link to a privacy policy notice which must be placed in a clear and prominent place and manner.
- 8) With the exception of students who may retain the copyright of material they have created that is displayed on a District web page, all materials displayed on the District web site are owned by Vilonia School District.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Students in the Vilonia Pathways Academy will adhere to all district technology policies. District policy 4.29 is located on the district website under Section 4: Students.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY (VPA will follow the district school year calendar. The calendar is located on the district website under state required information.)**

The Vilonia Pathways Academy is a blended learning opportunity. All students are expected to be in attendance on designated face to face days and present at all field experiences. The district virtual policy 4.7 located on the district website under Section 4: Student, will be applied to offsite days. Truancy policies for days allowed will be 5 days per semester. After students have two absences a letter will be sent to ensure parents/guardians have clear



communication concerning student absences. After day 5, without doctor's notes, a truancy letter notification will be sent.

All students are expected to be prepared and on time for all on-site learning and field experiences. If students have an incident that will result in being tardy, they should communicate immediately with Lisa Evans. Repeated unexcused tardiness will result in a formal conference to create a personalized plan of action.

### **DAILY SCHEDULES**

VPA offers daily flexible scheduling. Students should follow daily schedules provided by their teacher. Each schedule will vary based on grade band, charter initiatives, and personal learning plans. Due to the nature of a blended learning environment, students are encouraged to schedule appointments at times in which they are not required on campus. This allows teachers to provide additional support to any student who needs assistance.

### **REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Each school within the Vilonia School District will, through its teachers and staff, communicate personally with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each student during the school year to discuss the student's academic progress. More frequent communication is required when students are not performing at the level expected for their respective grade levels. All schools will schedule two (2) parent-teacher conferences during each school year. Notice of conference dates will be communicated to parents and guardians of students at all grade levels. Conferences will be scheduled at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conferences. Each school shall document participation or nonparticipation in required conferences. An Interim Report will be sent home each nine-week period to the parents of each student. This Report will be sent home with the student to be





signed by the parent and returned to the student's teacher. Report Cards will be sent each nine week period and should be signed and returned promptly. Parent/Teacher Conference Days will follow the district calendar. Other conferences will be scheduled as needed. Telephone calls will be made or emails can be sent to informally request or share information. Letters and notes will be written when appropriate. Teachers are pleased to discuss your child's progress with you but will not be available for phone calls, conferences, or emailing during class time.

### **SPECIAL SERVICES**

- Gifted & Talented- CLUE (Creative Learning in a Unique Environment)
- Methodist Family Counseling Services
- Special Education
- Speech Therapy
- Dyslexia Interventions
- ESOL

### **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)**

Response to intervention is the school district's pre-referral process that has been developed as mandated by the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004. The function of the RTI team is to receive pre-referrals; meet, develop, and assist with implementation of an appropriate intervention plan for the student. For a parent referral, the parent should submit in writing, to the classroom teacher or building administrator, specific reasons why their child should be considered for a referral.

### **IDEA REFERRAL PROCEDURE**

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the



Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be disabled within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act even though they do not require services pursuant to the IDEA. For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District shall follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of services to children with disabilities provided in the state and federal statutes governing special education. Implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in accordance with the IDEA satisfies the district's obligation to provide a free and appropriate education under Section 504.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Each school maintains academic and health records for each student. The principal or designated school official must be contacted when inquiring about all academic and personal records. These records are considered confidential and can only be inspected by parents, school officials, and students who are 18 years of age, or who are attending an institution of post-secondary education. These records are maintained in a secured location. In order for records to be released, written consent must be obtained from the parents of the student, except in the following cases:

1. Other school officials within the same school may request and receive a student's record.
2. Officials of other schools or school systems in which the student has enrolled may request and receive a student's records.



Vilonia School District does not distinguish between a custodial and non-custodial parent, or a non-parent, such as a person acting in loco parentis or a foster parent with respect to gaining access to a student's records. Unless a court order restricting such access has been presented to the district to the contrary, the fact of a person's status as a parent or guardian, alone, enables that parent or guardian to review and copy his child's records.

If there exists a court order which directs that a parent not have access to a student or his records, the parent, guardian, person acting in loco parentis, or an agent of the Department of Human Services must present a file-marked copy of such order to the building principal and the superintendent. The school will make good-faith efforts to act in accordance with such court order, but the failure to do so does not impose legal liability upon the school. The actual responsibility for enforcement of such court orders rests with the parents or guardians, their attorneys and the court which issued the order.

### **PHONE AND/OR ADDRESS CHANGE**

Please notify Elizabeth Simon at [vpa@viloniaschools.org](mailto:vpa@viloniaschools.org) immediately if there is a change to your address, phone numbers, babysitter, or emergency contact information. This information is very important in case your child becomes ill or injured and for written correspondence sent by mail. To be effective, our AlertNow calling system requires updated phone numbers. We need your physical mailing address, not a post office box, for our records.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

While our district provides a system of transportation, it also requires parents of students to accept responsibility for supervision until the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the day. Since the bus is



an extension of the classroom, it is a requirement that children conduct themselves in a manner consistent with standards for classroom behavior.

Transportation will be provided to all VPA field experiences. If a parent chooses to allow their student to drive or ride with other students, a self-transportation form must be completed and on file.

The purpose of the transportation department is to provide the safest, most efficient transportation possible for those students who are to be transported to and from school. Our buses are full. All matters concerning bus transportation should be directed to Mark Brewer, Director of Transportation, at 796-8160.

### **FOOD SERVICES**

The school cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch each day. Lunch will no longer be provided free, from the federal government, to all students for the 2023-2024 school. Therefore, it is very important that parents still complete federal free and reduced lunch forms. This impacts the district's federal funding and will be required for students to qualify for free and reduced lunches. For specific food service guidelines, please consult the individual campus student handbook. Students who would like to request meals for days they are not onsite may contact Sophia Hogan, food service director. [sophia.hogan@viloniaschools.org](mailto:sophia.hogan@viloniaschools.org).

### **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

The district provides a limited accident insurance policy on every student. If you have any specific questions about this coverage, call the Central Office at 796-2113.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The health services rendered by the school nurse are always inspectional and never diagnostic. A parent/guardian is usually called and referral to the family



physician is the suggested procedure in case the health problem of the student cannot be handled at school by the nurse. No medication or medicine is given to any student at school except the usual and accepted items used in first aid.

Students who must take medication must follow these guidelines:

1. There must be a written note from the parents/guardian.
2. A standard medication form must be signed by the parent/guardian specifying the student's name, the name of the medication, the name of doctor (prescription medicines), and other statements not holding the school or its personnel responsible if undesired reactions occur.
3. Prescriptive and non-prescriptive medicine may be given if the above conditions are followed.
4. All medication must be in the original bottle and not mixed.
5. The giving of medication may be delegated by the principal to a teacher or an aide.
6. All medication will be distributed by the nurse and stored in the nurse's office.
7. If the medication needs to be given on a long-term basis, a doctor's statement is necessary for giving the medication during the school day, and the statement should describe any reactions that might occur.
8. Students are not allowed to be in possession of prescription or over-the-counter medications unless a doctor's note is provided stating that it is necessary to possess it.

### **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

The Vilonia School District will provide guidance and counseling services to all students as prescribed by the regulations of the State of Arkansas. The district will endeavor to employ high qualified and certified school counselors to provide educational, vocational and personal counseling for all students. The Counseling Department of the district will work together as a team to provide assistance to



students, faculty and administration. All counselors will receive opportunities for professional growth which will allow them to learn new strategies and services which can assist all students.

### **MEDIA SERVICES**

Students in the VPA will have access to all services of the media center located in the building they attend for onsite days.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. If alleged maltreatment of a child by parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing in loco parentis is named and the alleged offender is being investigated by the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, or an investigator, or employee of the Department of Human Services, the principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to make contact with parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing in loco parentis.

### **VISITORS**

For the safety and security of our students and staff, all visitors (including parents) must check-in through the school office. Sign in and pick up your visitor's badge. Children who are not enrolled in this school may not attend classes. *Note: Under current ADH guidance, visitors will not be allowed in the school except for the reception area.*

### **CONTACT BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

If there is any question concerning the legal custody of the student, the custodial parent shall present court documentation to the principal establishing the parent's



custody of the student. It shall be the responsibility of the custodial parent to make any court ordered “no contact” or other restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent known to the principal by presenting a copy of a file-marked court order. Without such a court order on file, the school will release the child to either of his/her parents. Non-custodial parents who file with the principal a date-stamped copy of current court orders granting visitation may eat lunch or otherwise have contact with their child during school hours. Prior approval from the school’s principal is always appreciated and encouraged. Such contact is subject to the limitations outlined in Policy 4.16, Policy 6.5, and any policies that may apply.

#### **TRANSFER OF STUDENT BETWEEN CUSTODIAL AND NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT**

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the school’s principal, Arkansas law provides that the transfer of a child between his/her custodial parent and non-custodial parent, when both parents are present, shall not take place on the school’s property on normal school days during normal hours of school operation.

#### **DISTRICT CELL PHONE POLICY**

VPA students will adhere to the cell phone policies of the campus they are attending. Please consult the individual school’s handbook for these policies.

#### **DISCIPLINE MINIMUMS AND MAXIMUMS**

Each student has certain rights as a part of the learning community. Each student also has the responsibility to act in a manner that promotes a safe and orderly learning environment for all students. Students of the Vilonia Pathways Academy are expected to show proper respect to staff members, other students, visitors, and all with whom they come in contact. The minimum and maximums may consist of verbal conference to expulsion. All students should refer to the district building handbook for which they will attend for onsite days. Students should be familiar with student behavior expectations/protocols for the building of their grade band.



**PARENT CONCERNS & DUE PROCESS**

The administrator may suspend, for good cause, a student from school for a period of up to ten (10) school days.

All students will be afforded due process whenever deprived of their right to an education through exclusion from regular classroom instruction or other activities because of:

1. Suspension
2. Probation
3. Withdrawal of privileges

Due process procedures are:

1. Prior to any serious disciplinary action the school principal or his designee, shall advise the pupil in question of the particular misconduct of which he is accused, as well as the basis for such an accusation.
2. The pupil shall be given an opportunity at that time to explain his version of the facts to the school principal or his designee.
3. The principal, upon suspending a student shall notify his parents and the superintendent.
4. When a pupil has been notified that he is suspended from school, he shall remain away from school premises and all school functions until the principal reinstates him.
5. Upon request of the parents/guardians, a conference concerning the suspension will be arranged with the principal.
6. The principal's decision may be appealed to the superintendent.

**BULLYING & CYBER BULLYING**

Act 1437 of 2005 required school districts to adopt Anti-Bullying Policies. For the purpose of this policy, "bullying and cyberbullying" are defined as; when a





student or faculty member is exposed repeatedly and over time, to intentional negative actions on the part of one or more students. It may include but not be limited to, repeated intimidation of others by real or threatened harm (written, verbal, physical or emotional abuse) to another student or their property. Examples may include, but not be limited to intentional name calling, verbal taunts, ethnically based or gender-based verbal put-downs, extortion of money or possessions and threats to hurt, maim, or kill. **Please explain to your child the disciplinary possibilities when these activities occur at a public school.**

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited by the Vilonia School District. Specifically, students are prohibited from bullying and cyberbullying while on school property, while attending any school sponsored activities, and on any school provided transportation, or at any school bus stop. School employees who witness bullying or cyberbullying, or have reliable information that a student has been the victim of bullying or cyberbullying, as defined in this policy, shall report the incident to the building principal immediately. **Students who are involved in the bullying or cyberbullying of another student or faculty member are subject to disciplinary action. The discipline for the offense of bullying or cyberbullying will range from a parent conference to expulsion.**

### **ACADEMIC & STUDENT DISHONESTY**

The most common offenses subject to grade penalty and/or disciplinary action are:

1. **Cheating on an examination or quiz:** To give or receive, to offer or solicit information on any quiz or examination including (a) copying from another student's paper; (b) using prepared materials, notes, or texts other than those specifically permitted by the teacher during an examination; (c) collaborating with another student during an examination; (d) buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, or transmitting an examination, or any material purported to be the unreleased content of an upcoming examination, or the use of such material; (e) substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such substitution for oneself; (f) bribing a person to obtain examination information.



2. **Plagiarism:** To adopt and reproduce as one's own, to appropriate for one's own use and incorporate in one's own work without acknowledgment, the ideas of others or passages from their writings and works.

3. **Collusion:** To obtain from another party, without specific approval in advance by the teacher, assistance in the production of work offered for credit to the extent that the work reflects the ideas or skills of the party consulted rather than those of the person in whose name the work is submitted.

4. **Duplicity:** To offer for credit identical or substantially unchanged work in two or more courses, without specific advance approval of the teachers involved.

### **DRESS CODE**

The Vilonia Board of Education recognizes that dress can be a matter of personal taste and preference. At the same time, the district has a responsibility to promote an environment conducive to student learning. This requires limitations to student dress and grooming that could be disruptive to the educational process because they are immodest, disruptive, unsanitary, unsafe, could cause property damage, or are offensive to common standards of decency. Any distracting or disruptive type of clothing, dress, jewelry, or makeup will not be permitted.

**Each campus has established specific guidelines. Please consult the student handbook of the campus you are attending.**

**9-12 Students: Proper PPE will be provided and must be worn to all field experiences. All students should dress appropriately for field experiences on job sites. PPE is required at each field visit unless otherwise specified. Pajama pants, open toed shoes, and shorts are not appropriate for field visits. If students do not follow this code requirement, they will not be permitted to participate. Non-participation will result in an attendance absence.**



**SEVERE WEATHER**

When weather conditions make it dangerous for school buses to run, local radio stations and Little Rock television stations will announce school closings as early as possible. The schools may send out mass phone messages alerting parents of school closings. Many times it is impossible to predict the road conditions in advance, so the decision on bus operation may have to be made shortly before regular bus departure time.

**SCHOOL CLOSING UNDER EMERGENCY CONDITIONS**

When school is not open due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, public announcements will be made at the earliest possible time by the administration through the local television stations and Alert-Now phone notification system. Parents and students are encouraged to listen to your local station on days that the school opening may be in question.

**FIRE/TORNADO DRILLS**

Fire drills are very important for your safety and should be taken seriously. We will have one drill each month. Follow your teacher's orders and leave the building quickly and quietly when we have a drill. Tornado drills will be conducted four times a year, and you will be taught what to do before each drill.

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

VPA values parental involvement and will strive to create partnerships with parents and community members that support and promote academic achievement.

*The 2023-2024 school year is the third year of implementation for the Vilonia Pathways Academy. As the program continues to grow, the VPA team will continue to reflect and seek ways to make continual improvement to provide excellent opportunities for students. Parents and students are encouraged to submit suggestions to improve protocols to [vpa@viloniaschools.org](mailto:vpa@viloniaschools.org) for continuous improvement*

