



MESA VALLEY

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Grades 6-12 Class Handbook

2023-2024

Contents

General Information.....	3
Signing In & Out.....	3
Drop off & Pick up	3
Safety & Student Discipline	3
Parents on Campus	3
Weather Cancellations	3
Study Hall	3
Test Lab	4
Lunch	4
Outside Areas	4
Immunizations & Health Conditions	4
Cell Phones	5
Textbook & Library Checkout.....	5
Math Lab—Middle School.....	5
Science and Math Office Hours—High School	5
Homework & Parent Support of Students	5
Parent Teacher Conferences.....	5
Grading Scale.....	5
Schoology	6
Dropping a Class.....	6
Attendance Information	7
Reporting Absences.....	7
Overview	7
Homework.....	8
Excused Absences.....	8
Makeup Work.....	9
Tardy.....	9
Extended Absence.....	9
Habitually Truant.....	9
Classroom Behavior Expectations & Student Dress Code	10
Classroom Behavior Expectations	10
Student Dress Code.....	10
Academic Integrity.....	11
Cheating	11
Plagiarism	11
Consequences	12



The guidelines in this handbook apply to all students in 6-12th grades. Because MVCS is a charter school, this handbook provides information specific to MVCS and supplements the School District 51 Student Handbook. The D51 Handbook sections on transportation, preschool, and food/nutrition services do not apply to MVCS, but all other sections do.

Signing In & Out

Students are not expected to sign in when they arrive, but should head straight to class or Test Lab. Attendance is taken in class and Test Lab. Students who are meeting with a teacher outside of class times must sign in at the front desk. Parents must notify the front office about any student who must leave during normal class times; students may not leave without this notification.

Drop off & Pick up

MVCS does not provide transportation for students. It is the responsibility of parents to get their children to class each day. **Drop off your child at the front door** to avoid the unsafe practice of children crossing the parking lot. Do not stop your vehicle and block traffic by dropping off your child on the east side of the building. At the end of the day, students will wait for rides at the front of the building. Make every effort to drop off or pick up your child **within 10 minutes** of the beginning or end of classes. If a student must be dropped off early or picked up late, the student should check in at the front desk and get directions about where they may wait. Please watch carefully for children when entering the parking lot, drive slowly, and follow a counter-clockwise pattern. Students with a driver's license are allowed to drive themselves.

Safety & Student Discipline

MVCS follows all District safety protocols including fire drills, lockdowns, etc. MVCS also follows District procedures for student discipline. Students are expected to treat each other and all staff members with respect. In the case of a student behavior issue, the classroom teacher will first try to resolve it in class; if that fails, the student will be referred for administrative intervention. Parents will be informed of any issues that involve an administrator. The School Counselor will be included as needed.

Parents on Campus

While students are in class, parents may meet with staff, use the library, or stay on-site in a reservable family study room (limited quantity available). Reservations are made at this website: <https://mvcsfamilies.skedda.com/booking>. Students may not book study rooms.

Weather Cancellations

MVCS follows District 51 decisions regarding weather/snow day cancellations. However, if there is a late start, MVCS may have a different start time than the District. Parents are informed about late start days or cancellations via email, phone, and text. On occasion, parents may receive an additional message from the District that has slightly different information than what has been sent out by MVCS (e.g. different start time). To make it clear which messages apply to our students, MVCS always includes the name of our school in messages we send out. You may disregard District messages that are sent out on days that your student is not scheduled to be on-site. If weather is concerning, you may also check the District website for school closures.

Study Hall

If a student needs to be on site while not scheduled for a class (on a regular basis), he/she will be enrolled in study hall during that time. These students are expected to bring work to complete quietly, use computers or other devices for schoolwork (not electronic games, social media, YouTube, etc.), and are encouraged to read if there is no schoolwork. Students may be excused to attend Test Lab, but they should check in at the Study Hall first. Additionally, students who are struggling to keep up with classwork may be required to attend Study Hall during a time that does not conflict with

their regularly-scheduled class times. Attendance is taken and absences must be excused by a parent as for any other class. Students with somewhat irregular schedules for Study Hall may be accommodated (e.g. will attend on Tuesdays but not Thursdays), but clear and specific arrangements must be made with the Study Hall Coordinator, and wildly irregular schedules will not be accommodated. No credit is given for Study Hall. **Students not enrolled in a study hall must not be on campus when they are not in class.**

Test Lab

Students are required to take most tests outside of class time in the MVCS Test Lab. This is a monitored drop-in setting. Use of this lab allows for all classroom time to go toward instruction and still preserves test integrity. When a test is assigned, the teacher will provide copies of the test to the Test Lab proctor and students must take their test within the timeframe specified by the teacher (roughly one week). Most tests must be taken during one sitting (not splitting it up across different days or times, including lunch). Students should plan to arrive early enough to be able to complete testing. The Test Lab schedule is suspended during times of MVCS school-wide testing.

Day	Morning Session	Afternoon Session
Monday	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	N/A
Tuesday	8:00 AM – 11:35 AM	12:05 PM - 3:50 PM
Wednesday	8:00 AM – 11:35 AM	12:05 PM - 3:50 PM
Thursday	8:00 AM – 11:35 AM	12:05 PM - 3:50 PM
Friday	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	N/A

Lunch

MVCS does not provide lunch to students. During their lunch period, students may eat lunch either at designated tables in the lunchroom or at picnic tables outside, behind the building. A small, common-use refrigerator is available for student use, but there are no student microwaves. Students are encouraged to bring a lunch that does not need refrigeration. Students are expected to be courteous to each other and to staff by cleaning up after themselves. MVCS has a closed campus policy; no students of any grade are allowed to leave campus during lunch. All students are expected to be in class on time following the lunch break (this includes students in study hall). If a student forgets to bring lunch, his/her parent may drop it off at the front office prior to lunch. Students are NOT allowed to eat lunch in class; if a lunch is dropped off late, the student will not get his/her lunch until after class times.

Outside Areas

MVCS staff do not directly monitor students outside the building. Students briefly waiting for a ride may sit inside the foyer or out front on one of the benches. Students in the foyer are expected to use “library” voices and allow the staff in the office to work. If staff are concerned about the safety of students outside, the students will be asked to come in the building. Please give your student good direction about where you want him/her to wait for you to arrive, and pick up your student promptly. Students may be behind the building during non-lunch hours ONLY if their parent (or responsible adult) is with them.

Pledge to the Flag

In accordance with state law, MVCS provides an opportunity each school day for willing students to recite the pledge of allegiance. Any person not wishing to participate in the recitation of the pledge of allegiance shall be exempt from reciting the pledge of allegiance and need not participate. Parents are encouraged to discuss this with their children and help familiarize them with this custom if they are not used to public recitations of the pledge.

Immunizations & Health Conditions

MVCS follows D51 processes for all health matters. Students must meet state immunization requirements. Student medication use at school must be formally documented at the school; parents should notify the school nurse, Megan Murray, if their student has a health condition: megan.murray@d51schools.org or 970.254.7202 x 68142.

Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during class time. Phones must be kept in the student's backpack or an area designated by the classroom teacher for the entirety of a class period. Students may only use them during passing periods, lunch, or by teacher direction.

Textbook & Library Checkout

Students will have textbooks checked out to them and parents may elect to check out books/materials from the MVCS library. Materials are expected to be handled with reasonable care and returned at the appropriate time. Checkout expectations are as follows:

- Textbooks must be returned by the last day of class or within 14 days for items checked in mid-year.
- Items other than textbooks are due within 4 weeks.
- A replacement fee is assessed for items that are not returned or are damaged beyond normal wear and tear.

Math Lab—Middle School

Math Lab is available on a drop-in basis for students who would benefit from additional help. Any student with a grade of C or less in class will be required to attend one or more sessions each week. Times are as follows:

- Tuesdays & Thursdays—7:50 - 8:50 AM
- Tuesdays & Thursdays—1:30 - 2:45 PM

Science and Math Office Hours—High School

High school math and science teachers have office hours available for students needing help outside of class. Times are as follows:

- Math: Tuesdays & Thursdays—3:05 - 3:45 PM
- Science: Wednesdays—12:05 - 1:05 PM

Parent Support of Students

Because MVCS uses a hybrid class approach and classes meet on-site one, two, or three days each week, work will be assigned for students to complete between classes. Parental involvement is needed to encourage students to complete work during off-site days. This is critical to student success. Things that the parent should expect to do are the following:

- Ensure that the student has structured homework time, helping him/her get started if needed.
- Read the assignment & go over it with the student to make sure he/she understands it.
- Check in as the student begins the assignment—are they getting it, or do they need more resources?
- Be available for help when needed, especially to review the student's written work if needed.
- Ensure that the student is keeping up with homework (including checking weekly on the Schoology website for assignments, grades, and class progress).
- If the student doesn't read at grade level, it can help to read with him/her, get an audio version of the book, and help the student with vocabulary.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Signups for parent-teacher conferences are handled online and a link will be emailed out before conferences. If needed, parents are also welcome to set an appointment at another time to meet with a teacher to discuss student progress.

- Fall conferences—September 20, 2023
- Spring conferences—February 7, 2024

Grading Scale

MVCS uses the following grading scale:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = 59% and below

Schoology

Each MVCS class has a page on the online platform Schoology where the teacher posts class resources, notices, student progress updates, assignments, attendance, and grades. A parent account allows access to materials for each of their children from the same login. Please log in to Schoology weekly and remain aware of your child's progress. If a teacher asks students to submit homework electronically, that can only be done from a student (not parent) account. Login to Schoology at: <https://mesavalley.schoology.com>.

student username: D51 username

student password: D51 password (*available from teachers or front office staff*)

parent username: i.last (parent first initial.last name)

parent password: parent (*staff cannot retrieve—but can reset—forgotten passwords if necessary*)

Dropping a Class

The deadlines to drop a class without academic penalty are as follows:

- Fall—August 18, 2023
- Spring—January 19, 2024

If a class is dropped within this timeframe, it will not appear as an incomplete or withdrawal on the student's transcript.



Reporting Absences

Please make every effort to ensure your child is in attendance on time each day. Do not schedule doctor or dentist appointments or vacations during school hours. Consult the school calendar when scheduling. Parents must report all absences on or before the day of the absence to Jeannine Purser by using the attendance tab on the MVCS website, by email (jeannine.purser@d51schools.org), or by phone (970-254-7202 x 68117). In your message, please leave your child’s name and the reason for the absence. Reasons may be brief: illness, family business, out of town, etc. Children should remain home if they are sick.

Overview

MVCS must document a student’s attendance for the purposes of determining compliance with federal and state compulsory attendance laws. While students do not physically attend MVCS five days a week, the school has instituted proxies for attendance to allow it to operate on the basis of a five-day school week to record attendance for truancy purposes. This pertains to blended learning classes, online classes, and independent study classes only; it excludes the following:

- **Class on a different campus (e.g. crossovers, concurrent)**—Attendance for these classes is taken in accordance with the policy of the receiving institution.
- **Class in the community (e.g. work experience, internship)**—Attendance is validated near the middle and again at the end of the semester rather than on a daily basis.

Classes for grades 6-12 are scheduled in-person one, two, or three days a week. The remaining days of the five-day week must be documented through completion of Off-Site Tasks. These Tasks are assigned to students to document attendance on days for which the student has no in-person attendance.

Example: *The student attends class on-site on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and needs to complete Off-Site Tasks on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Since hybrid schooling provides students choice over time and place for learning, as long as the student completes and turns in the Off-Site Tasks by their due dates, the student may choose to actually do the Off-Site Tasks on different days. In this example, if the due date for the Friday task is the following Tuesday, the student might choose to perform the Friday task on Saturday instead, and will still be able to turn it in on Tuesday. The teacher, however, will count the Off-Site Task for Friday’s attendance after he receives the assignment on Tuesday, even though the student did the work on Saturday.*

Each Off-Site Task is projected by the teacher to take an average student at least 45 min. Each Off-Site Task counts as one day of attendance and (if it has been received by the due date) it is recorded in Schoology in the same way as in-person attendance is recorded. In this way, all student attendance is ultimately recorded in Schoology to allow for unified attendance recordkeeping.

Because blended learning classes are scheduled in-person one, two, or three days a week, classes have a different number of Off-Site Tasks required within a week.

Off-Site Task Requirements	
Days of On-Site Attendance	Number of Off-Site Tasks
1	4
2	3
3	2

Teachers determine which type of Off-Site Tasks are used in each class. Weekly expectations are clearly communicated to students, due dates for Off-Site Tasks are made clear, and Schoology clearly lists which Tasks are required each week to document attendance for off-site days.

Off-Site Tasks	
Student Action	Documentation
Take a test in the Test Lab	Teacher receives the test and/or sees that the student signed in and took the test in the Test Lab.
Complete a reading	A brief comprehension quiz done off-site validates the reading.
Complete an assignment	Teacher receives the assignment (physical document or online submission).
Login and remain active on an online class platform	Teacher verifies student login(s) of at least 45 minutes. Multiple logins may be added together to reach the 45-minute minimum equivalent to one day's task.
Perform activity	Student submits a weekly activity log which lists what was done and how much time was spent on activity each day, signed by the parent/mentor. Each 45 minutes equates to one day's Task.

Note that it is possible for a student to complete more than one Off-Site Task in the same day, or to attend class on-site and also complete an Off-Site Task in the same day. Because hybrid schooling provides students choice over time and place for their learning, each of these things is counted as a day of attendance—even if they occur on the same calendar day.

Additionally, because Off-Site Task completion is used as a proxy for physical attendance, completion of the Task (regardless of how well it is completed) is what is used to document attendance. However, Off-Site Tasks are also used to calculate the student's grade in the class. The student's grade in the class may also include a percentage tied to attendance. Teachers reserve the right to not count an Off-Site Task as sufficient for attendance if the student clearly did not engage with the Task (e.g. turning in an assignment which has only one or two out of twenty questions answered.)

Homework

On-Site class attendance and Off-Site Task completion must be done for the sake of meeting attendance requirements. However, teachers may require homework in addition to the Off-Site Tasks which the teacher has assigned to demonstrate attendance during a week.

Example: *The teacher's Off-Site-Task for Wednesday is an assignment which the teacher anticipates will take 60 minutes instead of 45 minutes. While the student is expected to complete the entire assignment, essentially 15 minutes of student work is the "homework" portion of the assignment.*

Excused Absences

Parents should make every effort to have their students attend in-person class days. Please note that occasionally the MVCS calendar differs from the D51 calendar, and MVCS families are accountable for the MVCS calendar. Students attending classes on a different campus or in the community follow the calendar for those institutions, which may also differ from the MVCS or D51 calendar. A parent (not student) must excuse absences, and advance notice is required where noted below. In addition, students are required to arrange for their makeup work with their teacher.

All absences are considered to be unexcused, except in the following circumstances:

1. Student sickness.
2. Student injury or hospitalization.
3. Serious injury or hospitalization of a household family member.
4. Death within the family (bereavement).
5. Participation in a recognized religious observation (advance notice required).
6. Attending a school-sponsored activity (advance notice required).
7. Attendance at a wedding or graduation of a close family member (e.g. sibling, parent/guardian, aunt) (advance notice required).

Examples of unexcused absences include the following, even if a parent notifies the school:

1. Family vacations.
2. Hunting.
3. Sleeping in.
4. Other avoidable incidents that could have been scheduled when student is not in school.

If a student is not able to complete an Off-Site Task before it is due because of a valid absence reason, the parent should excuse this type of absence in the same way as on-site attendance is excused.

Makeup Work

If an absence is anticipated, the student should contact the teacher in advance to arrange for work to be done during the absence to avoid falling behind in class. Parents are encouraged to help their students learn how to take on this responsibility. Homework is posted in Schoology so students can easily get assignments on their own.

Students are granted two weekdays to make up work for an excused absence. If a student is absent for more than one day in a row, one weekday is granted for each subsequent absence day.

Example: *A student normally attends class on-site on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but is sick on Tuesday and Wednesday. When the student returns on Thursday, the student is told by the teacher that the work from Tuesday and Wednesday has three weekdays to do the work (Thursday, Friday, and Monday). This means that the student will be expected to submit the two assignments for the days of absence on the following Tuesday, along with the two regular assignments for Friday and Monday.*

If an absence is excused, the student must turn in makeup work by the adjusted due date to receive full credit. If an absence is not excused, the student is accountable for the original due date. For every weekday work is late, it will receive a 10% grade reduction. After five weekdays, the assignment will not be accepted or graded.

Independent Study Connection and Online Connection classes may follow different guidelines for makeup work.

Tardy

Coming late is disruptive to the entire class. Students should make every effort to be on time to every class. If a student arrives up to ten minutes late to a class, he/she will be marked as tardy. If he/she is ten or more minutes late to a class, he/she will be counted as absent. On days a student is scheduled for off-site work, no tardies are recorded. In the event that a student has been tardy ten or more times, the parent will be notified. At fifteen, the parent will be required to meet with the school.

Extended Absence

In rare occasions, a parent may have cause to arrange for an extended absence for a student (more than two weeks). Such absences must be approved by the Director and all decisions pertaining to excused/unexcused and makeup work timelines are determined by the Director. An absence for a medical condition that lasts more than two weeks requires documentation from a qualified health professional. This documentation should be submitted to the school nurse.

Habitually Truant

Because classes are not held five days a week, all absences are significant. Students are defined as habitually truant according to District guidelines:

- 4 unexcused absences within a 30-day period
- 10 unexcused absences within the school year

When a student reaches the threshold of habitual truancy, a letter will be sent to the student's parents, the parents will be required to meet with the school to resolve the issue, and the student will be referred to the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process. The School District 51 Student Handbook has more details regarding ongoing absenteeism and truancy.



Classroom Behavior Expectations

MVCS operates within District 51's student conduct and discipline policies. Specific expectations for students attending MVCS classes are the following:

1. Arrive on time.
2. Come prepared with supplies and homework.
3. Show respect for the teacher and all members of the class at all times. This includes your words, actions, and attention to hygiene.
4. Keep your hands to yourself and do not engage in extended touching (aggressive behavior or public displays of affection).
5. Treat classroom materials and equipment better than you would your own.
6. Clean up your area before leaving the room. Food is not allowed in the classroom. Drinks must have lids.
7. Keep gum in your mouth and your mouth closed when chewing.
8. Do not use your cell phone during class.
9. Watch for children when entering the parking lot, drive slowly, and follow a counter-clockwise pattern.

The behaviors listed below will result in disciplinary action. This is not an exhaustive list.

1. Tampering with or damaging any program on the school computers.
2. Theft or attempted theft, including other students' work.
3. Accessing or attempting to access pornographic content on the Internet—including on your phone while in the building.
4. Plagiarizing or attempting to plagiarize material.
5. Tampering with projects belonging to other students.
6. Any action that is detrimental to the learning environment.
7. Any action that places students or property at risk.
8. Any action that can be interpreted as bullying or harassment, including verbal, non-verbal, or electronic interactions.
9. Bringing a weapon to school.

Student Dress Code

MVCS students are expected to dress for an educational setting. Problematic dress items are not to be worn by students. Such items include—but are not limited to—the following examples:

1. Any article or apparel which displays obscene words, pictures, or designs; any article that conveys a sexually suggestive remark, a pro-alcohol, tobacco, and/or drug related message.
2. Skirt, dress, or shorts that do not extend beyond the fingertips fully and/or reach mid-thigh; tube or halter tops, strapless dresses and backless dresses.
3. Apparel that exposes the mid-section or body below the armpits.
4. Pants or shorts worn below the natural waistline.
5. Shorts and/or pants with rips or holes that are above where the fingertips fall when fully extended and/or mid-thigh.
6. Jewelry or accessories that may be used as a weapon.
7. Any item that may be considered disruptive to the educational process.

If an item is deemed inappropriate, the student will be referred to the office and denied entrance to class until the situation is rectified. Further violations may require more substantive measures be taken.



At MVCS, we place great importance on integrity and honesty. Students are expected to do original work. An additional goal is to provide our students with an understanding of what is and is not acceptable to maintain their academic integrity.

Cheating

Cheating is not tolerated. Examples of this type of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using cell phones to receive/communicate answers.
- Using any tool besides a calculator to solve a math problem (e.g. including using apps or online tools).
- Copying a fellow student's work and turning it in as your own.
- Copying another student's computer file and turning it in as your own.
- Using another student's project work (e.g. science experiment/demonstration, art work, collection) as your own.
- Buying an essay, paper, project, poster, or written work online and presenting it as your own.
- Copying answers from a teacher's manual.
- Allowing others to use your material/answers and turn it in as their own.

Regardless of the student's intent, acts such as those listed above constitute academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a specialized type of academic dishonesty, defined as the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work (Random House dictionary). It is possible to plagiarize from many types of materials (text, multi-media, images, etc.). Any time ideas have been paraphrased or copied from another source (including online) without proper credit and are represented as a student's own ideas, it is plagiarism. Students must research, paraphrase, and cite sources accurately. Teachers at MVCS educate students about the proper approach to this; for further information on how to correctly cite sources, refer to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/> or <https://style.mla.org/>. Teachers may run papers through a website designed to monitor plagiarism. The following are examples of plagiarism:

- Changing every third or fourth word but keeping the rest of someone else's text.
- Cutting and pasting and submitting work as your own.
- Acting as if text on the Internet belongs to everyone.
- Paraphrasing someone else's structure or argument without acknowledging the source.
- Rephrasing the thoughts, ideas, words or ideas of another without properly acknowledging the source.
- Using more from a source than you acknowledged in your citation.
- Citing information not traceable to the document source.

Plagiarism is avoided by:

- Handing in original work, even if it's not perfect.
- Keeping careful notes of sources of information.
- Finding your own writing voice.
- Understanding ideas are property, and credit should be given.
- Learning to cite sources, paraphrase, and synthesize.
- Remember that your ideas are your intellectual property; the ideas of others are theirs.
- Taking great care to distinguish your own ideas and language from information derived from other sources. Sources include published primary and secondary materials, electronic media, and information and opinions gathered directly from other people, with or without their knowledge.

Consequences

A student who behaves in an academically dishonest way will face consequences, and repeat occurrences at MVCS will have increasingly severe consequences. Note that incidents will be counted regardless of which class the offense occurred in, and can accumulate across several years. If a student is suspected of academic dishonesty, the teacher will investigate. If it is confirmed that the student has been academically dishonest, MVCS reserves the right to exercise discretion in applying consequences (including doing so more severely) depending on the facts and circumstances involved in each situation. The following are the typical consequences that will be applied:

First Incident

- Student will receive a zero on the assignment in question.
- The student will be required to redo the assignment but the grade will not factor into the grade for the semester. Teachers may elect to require an alternate assignment.
- A meeting with the student, parent, teacher, and school administrator may be held.

Second Incident:

- Student will receive a zero on the assignment in question.
- The student will be required to redo the assignment but the grade will not factor into the grade for the semester. Teachers may elect to require an alternate assignment.
- The student's grade in the course will be reduced by one letter grade (10%).
- A meeting with the student, parent, teacher, and school administrator will be held to explain the seriousness of the student's actions, provide additional support, and explain that the student's is endangering his/her ability to pass the class.

Third Incident:

- Student will receive a zero for the course.
- A meeting with the student, parent, teacher, and school administrator will be held.
- Student may be disciplined in accordance with applicable due process provisions, and District and MVCS policy.
- Related educational records, including disciplinary records, may be provided to colleges or other school districts where the student seeks to enroll or transfer as permitted in accordance with applicable law.