

The Village Charter School
Staff Handbook
2015-2016



Dale G. Caldwell, Head of School
Keoke Wooten-Johnson, Principal

SCHEDULE

All Staff must sign-in by 7:45 AM

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| 7:30-8:00 | Breakfast for students |
| 8:00-8:15 | Supervision of students |
| 8:10 | Classroom teachers bring students to classroom and conduct daily morning activities |
| 8:30 | Morning announcements |
| 8:45 | Instruction begins |
| 3:45 | Parent pick – up and bus students escorted to the front of building/gymnasium by teachers and instructional aides |
| 3:45 | Buses depart |
| 4:00 | Staff sign out |
| 6:45 | School building closes for the day |

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

1. The daily sign-in sheet will be located in a convenient location in the Main Office. Please sign in promptly by 7:45 AM.
2. All teachers and assistants must sign “in and out” when entering or leaving the building for any reason. Staff may not record any name but their own.
3. Employees must place their initials in the appropriate box when entering and leaving the building. This sign-in sheet will serve as a record of staff entering or leaving the building on a particular day.
4. All completed “Daily Sign-In Sheets” will be filed chronically and kept in the Main Office.
5. Sign Out is at 4:00 PM, except when staff meetings are held (Staff meetings are held on Tuesdays until 5:00 PM).

Monitoring Staff Lateness

1. All employees are to call immediately, if they **are going to be late**.
2. Prompt arrival at work will be strictly enforced via the following procedures:
 - Lateness will be highlighted on the daily sign-in sheet.
 - Warning letters will be issued.
 - Staff/Principal conferences will be scheduled.
 - Anecdotal records will be kept on file per quarter.
 - An unsatisfactory rating due to excessive lateness will be recommended where appropriate.
 - Pay increments may be withheld.

Staff Attendance

- A. All staff are required to call in absences by 6:30 AM to the Main Office (609) 695-0110 Ext 2.
- B. Excessive absenteeism is detrimental to the school's instructional program.
- C. Please refer to staff attendance policy #4151.

Accident Procedure

- A. Report every student injury/accident to the nurse's office. It will be documented.
- B. Accidents to staff personnel should be reported and an incident report completed.
- C. Report any unsafe or unhealthy conditions to the Main Office.
- D. All injuries to the head, face, eyes, and ears must be reported to parents immediately by the teacher and the school nurse.

Student Attendance

Students are expected to be present on all days that the Village Charter School is in session. The Village Charter School is required to comply with New Jersey policy; NJSA 18:38:26 which requires regular attendance if a student is to receive full credit for any course.

There are two general categories of absences:

Excused Absences- Examples of excused absences are illness, religious observance, and family emergencies. If an absence is excused, the student is permitted to make up assignments including quizzes and tests.

Unexcused Absences- When a student misses school for family vacation or other reasons that do not fit in the above categories the student is marked truant. If a student is going to be absent from school, the parents/guardians should notify the school before the absence. If the absence is unanticipated the parents/guardians should call the school office (609-695-0110) before 9:00 AM. If you have questions about an absence, please call the office.

Attendance (Students)

- A. Daily attendance should be recorded into Power School **by 9:00 AM**.
- B. Emphasize punctuality! Students are late after 8:25 AM.
- C. Three (3) days or more tardy will result in a letter sent home by the Social Worker; five (5) days tardy is equivalent to one day absent; continued infractions will result in additional consequences, including possible retention and referral to the Judicial system.
- D. The Social Worker will investigate all absences of three consecutive days.

Committees

Staff members will be asked to serve on committees whose activities will benefit the school community and the students.

Examples of committees are as follows:

- Spirit/Sunshine Committee
- Literacy Committee
- Math Committee
- 8th Grade Committee
- I & RS Committee

Communication (Email/Voicemail)

Email and voicemail are the school's primary methods of communication. Please check them often throughout the day for messages. Establish open communication with parents. Use your prep conference time to return parent telephone calls and emails. Keep a parent contact log for documentation in the back of your Legacy Plan Binder.

Confidentiality

Seeking out the advice of colleagues is commendable, as is the sharing of information to provide students with the most effective learning environment. However, discussions between staff members and parents/guardians are best conducted privately, not in the teachers' lounge, at the copier or in other areas that conversations can be overheard. Please avoid disparaging comments at all times.

Releasing Information Over the Telephone/Email

Very careful judgment must be used before releasing student or staff information via the telephone or email. Under no circumstances are addresses or telephone numbers of students or staff to be released. Protecting the rights and privacy of our students and staff is of the utmost importance.

Classroom Appearance

Classrooms are to be **neat and organized** at all times. Bulleting boards must be **current** and student work should reflect the curriculum and standards. There **must be ample evidence of student writing and math.**

Bulleting Boards

- A. Four curriculum areas must be visible (Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science)
- B. The standard you are addressing during instruction should be written on or near the board (just the number is sufficient- i.e. LA Standard #1) along with essential question.
- C. Student's work should be rotated every six weeks.

Discipline

Rules that you and your class have established should be posted somewhere in the room.

- A. Students cannot be "put out" of classrooms.
- B. **Do not** send students to the Main Office or Counselor without a "write-up" form and a phone call to the designated office.
- C. Never leave students unsupervised. **Do not have students stand outside the classroom alone.**
- D. Meet your class in the morning and after lunch at their assigned area. **ON TIME.**
- E. Keep anecdotal records of any problems. (For your use only).
- F. Record conferences and/or telephone calls to parents on parent contact log.
- G. Contact the Main Office in all emergencies.
- H. Seek help before a problem gets out of hand.
- I. Do not send children anywhere without a pass!
- J. Parents should be notified beforehand if a student is to be detained.
- K. Sign and date all data submitted to a student's folder.

Corporal Punishment

- Corporal Punishment is not permitted by any staff member.
- Do not put your hands on students in a forceful manner.
- Do not have students stand in classroom for lengthy periods of time.
- Do not yell or scream at students for any reason.
- Treat every child with the same respect you expect and that you would give if their parents were present.

Duty Assignment

- A. All staff must cover classes (students) during lack of substitutes.
- B. Recess is optional and teachers are to monitor their assigned students.
- C. During inclement weather, recess may be held in the classroom at the classroom teacher's discretion.
- D. Assistants will monitor students at arrival, lunch, and dismissal times as well.

Evaluations and Observations

Classes will be visited daily. Formal observational visits will begin with newer staff members first. A written report and conference will follow after each observation. Non-tenure teachers are formally observed at least three times a year, tenured teachers three times a year as well. Individuals who are being considered for tenure should anticipate a more rigorous review. All staff receives an annual evaluation.

Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will be used:

1. To maintain open communication between grade levels.
2. To provide the opportunity to discuss school programs.
3. To meet in-service requirements in a variety of areas.

Staff meetings will be held on Tuesdays. There will be one general staff meeting per month on the 1st Tuesday. Remaining Tuesdays will be used for team and committee meetings. Your attendance is expected and mandatory. Requests for absences must be submitted in writing for approval by the principal. Arrangements should be made in advance to avoid the necessity for early departures. We will begin promptly at 4:00 PM and end at 5:00 PM.

Field Trips/Cultural Excursions Activities

- A. Field trips are extension of classroom instruction. Plan trips/activities well in advance of the date. Submit request for trips to Main Office one month in advance.
- B. All trips must be chaperoned; one adult to 10 children minimum.
- C. All trips must be approved by Principal.
- D. All trip request forms should include exact number of chaperones and bus quotes.
- E. All children are required to have permission slips.
- F. Grade group planning of excursions should be part of grade planning sessions and reflect the curriculum. Field Trip Plans must be in Legacy Books. (Reference Field Trip Lesson Form)
- G. Students who take medication or have health issues must be cleared by the school nurse prior to trip. A Nurse must accompany student who are not cleared to self medicate.
- H. The School food coordinator must be notified in advance.
- I. Trip Attendance Forms must be filled out completely and turned into the Main Office the morning of the trip.

Fire Drill Procedure

- A. Fire drills are state mandates. Everyone must leave the building.
- B. Staff members are to maintain absolute control and move students quickly out of the building.
- C. Have a student roster ready for quick pick up as you exit. Shut all doors and windows before leaving. All classes are to meet at their assigned areas.
- D. All staff and students are to wait for the signal from the Principal or designee before returning to the building.
- E. Post exit routes in all classrooms.
- F. Place a copy of the emergency exit route in your plan book and in your emergency plans.
- G. All Evacuation Drill Forms must be turned into the Main Office at the conclusion of every drill.

Grades/Evaluation System

Keep accurate and sufficient records on each of your students throughout the year. Recording test scores, homework, class work, etc. is important in monitoring a student's daily performance. The following will serve as a guide to achieve this objective:

Report Card

- A. There will be four reporting periods throughout the school year. Please note our school calendar as well as the staff handbook to locate the information.
- B. Parent/Guardian conferences will be held at the end of the first and third marking period. There will be one day for afternoon conferences along with one for evening conferences.
- C. Grading reflects an evaluation of the child's work at his/her level of achievement.
- D. Progress Reports and ten day failure notices will also document student achievement or lack thereof.

Flag Salute

- A. Must be conducted in every homeroom every day.
- B. Children not pledging to the flag are still required to stand; **18A.36-3**.
- C. All assembly programs must begin with saluting the flag.

Hall Passes and Classroom Logs

All students not escorted by staff must have a hall pass when leaving their classrooms. Students in grades 2-8 must sign in and out on your class hall log. Keep this log updated and know where your students are traveling to.

Children in Hallways

- A. Students and classes are to be monitored by their teachers traveling to recess and special events.
- B. When using lavatories, teacher monitoring is required, this includes recess.
- C. Students must be responsible for walking the hallways in an orderly fashion.
- D. All students should walk quietly and stay to the right.
- E. **Teachers** should always walk behind students in order to see the entire line.

Health and Nursing Services

Our school nurse is on duty every day. In case of accident or injury, first aid will be administered at the school. Students must have a pass to see the nurse. This pass should state the reason for going to the nurse, as well as the time they left class. The nurse will send them with a pass back to class stating the time they left the office. Directly notify the nurse of all health emergencies. In the case of severe injuries, also notify the Main Office.

Lesson Plans – Legacy Books

Successful teaching requires long and short term planning. Each teacher is responsible for creating a legacy plan book. Your teaching plans provide you direction as well as any substitute in your absence. Written plans should be prepared with clarity, neatness, and in sufficient detail. Your plans should include the following key components:

1. A three (3) part objective for each lesson.
2. The procedures used to obtain that objective.
3. The homework assignment for that evening.
4. The method in which the lesson will be evaluated.
5. The assessment used.

Please coordinate your lesson plans with the curriculum guides and state standards. Check off the standards you are addressing in each lesson on the standards check list.

Please note that lesson plans must be updated bi-weekly. Your entire legacy book must be on your desk daily, and easily accessible for viewing.

Emergency Substitute Lesson Plans

Each teacher is required to submit emergency substitute plans. Teachers will develop emergency lesson plans for three days and will submit them to the Main Office by **September 18, 2015**. Substitute plans should be reviewed and updated after each absence.

To help the substitute and to provide meaningful work for the students when you are absent, prepare a folder of subject related seatwork activities which a substitute can utilize.

All emergency substitute plans must also include:

1. Special plans and hints for the substitute.
 2. The opening procedure exercises.
 3. A copy of the master schedule.
 4. Names of students who leave for instructional support or special activities.
 5. Seating chart clearly diagramed.
 6. Classroom rules and expectations.
 7. Homework assignments to be completed.
 8. Any special instructions you want carried out by the substitute.
 9. Emergency exit route plans and procedures.
- Follow up with your students after an absence is important, and discuss behavior problems during the substitute teacher's stay. Hold students accountable for their behavior. Take time and review homework assigned the previous night. Demonstrate to your students that the instructional program continues regardless of your absence.

Lunchroom Procedures

Students are expected to present normal and appropriate behavior in the lunchroom and throughout the school at all times.

The Lunchroom is an environment which must remain clean, orderly, and sanitary to ensure the safety of all students.

- Students must arrive orderly and quiet.
- Students must keep their hands and feet off others.
- Students must remain seated until further direction is given.
- Students should not take food from other student's trays or lunchboxes.
- Students will not be allowed to bring glass or cans to school for lunch.
- Students will be allowed to engage in meaningful discussion and at a level which does not create a disorderly environment.
- Students will be required to show respect for themselves and others in the lunchroom.
- Students will have recess outdoors for recreation (weather permitting).
- Students will line-up for teachers in a straight, orderly line when given that direction.
- Students are not to bring treats to school, unless packed with a nutritional lunch.
- **Candy, gum, and sugary snacks with no nutritional value are not permitted in school per the state health mandate (HHKFA.)**
- **Bottles of water are not to be brought to school to drink from throughout the school day unless deemed a medical necessity.**

Office Referral

If you have for any reason(s) to refer a student to the office for extreme disciplinary concerns, please follow the procedures below:

Fill out a Disciplinary Referral Form then call Mrs. Jackson. She will dispatch security.

Prep/Conference Time

- A. Opportunity to plan and prepare lessons, gather materials, conference with students, principal and/or parents attend I&RS or IEP meetings.
- B. Cancelled Prep Periods are not "free periods" for students.
- C. All specials can be taught in the classroom.
- D. Teachers must request to take students to the gym when the Physical Education teacher is absent.
- E. Teachers are not to run personal errands during prep time. Personal business should be scheduled during your lunch break.

Professional Off-site Day

All staff are eligible for off-site professional development.

- A. Request for leave forms are in the Main Office. The form must be signed by the Principal.
- B. Can be used for religious holiday.
- C. Unused sick days may be carried over to next year.
- D. **Please do not request leave prior to or after a holiday or the last three (3) weeks of the school year.**
- E. Personal Day request must be submitted 3 days in advance.

Professional Development

Staff will meet on five staff development in-service days. These professional sessions (mandatory attendance) are conducted from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Laminating

Designated teachers are authorized to operate the laminating machine. Please contact them for your laminating needs.

Religious Holidays

Students are not to be penalized in any way for absence on holidays. Plan tests and projects on days other than holidays.

Requests for Facility Services

- A. In the event of an emergency (students' sickness, broken glass...) call the Main Office and report the relevant information. For all other requests, please use the maintenance form. Place the form in the Facility Manager's mailbox.
- B. Your classroom should be left neat and free of trash daily. Children should not be allowed to throw or drop trash on the floor for the maintenance staff to clean.
- C. Chairs must be stacked daily at the end of each day.
- D. **** No pencil sharpener shavings, or food are to be kept in student desks.**
- E. Please remember the maintenance's staff is here to support a clean safe environment.

ABSOLUTELY NO GUM CHEWING OR CARRYING OF COFFEE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL BUILDING.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PENCIL SHARPENERS ARE NOT PERMITTED FOR USE IN THE CLASSROOMS.

Room Security

All rooms are to be locked whenever the students and teacher are not present. This includes short absences, such as taking classes to recess, bathroom and/or special classes.

- A. All grade books should be in a secure location when the teacher is not present.
- B. All valuables, such as purses, coats, trip money, calculators, should always be secured.
- C. Leave windows uncovered. Do not obstruct the view into your classroom.

Settling Disagreements

A basic tenant of the Village Charter School is that people are capable of resolving disputes if they will confront issues (and other's points of view) with honesty and compassion, a word which, going back to its roots means "feeling with". The organization and operations of the Village Charter School is participatory, open and compassionate in order to minimize the opportunity for unresolved conflict. Disagreements are to be handled candidly, with the intention of bring those involved to a consensus solution at the most immediate level of organization possible, whether it is within the classroom, executive office or board room.

If you have a disagreement with another individual and it relates to the school's operations, you should, of course, try to work things out with that person. If the matter is still not settled, you may then choose to explain your concerns to someone at the next level of authority.

School Telephone

For School Business Only

- 1. School phones are for official business and emergencies only. No toll phones are to be made without the consent of the Principal.
- 2. Staff will not be called to the telephone during school hours except in the case of an extreme emergency. The main office will relay messages to you or forward to your message inbox.
- 3. Each teacher has his/her own voicemail. To access your voicemail hit the envelope on the phone then follow the voicemail directions. (See the main office to get your password.)
- 4. Parent calls will be forwarded to your inbox. Check your voice mail messages daily.

Smoking

The Village Charter School is a smoke free environment. Teachers/staff members are not permitted to smoke inside or outside of the school building at anytime.

State Testing Dates

PARCC April 11th – May 13, 2016 & NJASK Grades 4 & 8 only May 25th

TO BE ANNOUNCED

Student Intervention Services/Child Study Team Referrals

The Intervention and Referral Service Team (I&RS) is comprised of a group of your professional colleagues with various areas of expertise and is intended to help students who are at risk of academic failure and their teachers to be more successful. The team, in collaboration with the teacher, parents and other professionals will make recommendations aimed at supporting the students in the classroom. Mrs. Wooten-Johnson is the administrator and co-chair on the team. Ms. Hinton is the chairperson. In order to expedite the process and assure that we are doing all we can to meet the needs of everyone, we have prepared the following step-by-step outline to clearly define the procedures for all formal referrals to the I&RS.

Step I – Initial Documentation

Teachers will collect dated samples of the child's work in all relevant subject areas, report cards, test scores, and a written narrative detailing your observations and interventions over a minimum of one month. This is then submitted to Ms. Hinton in a clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL FOLDER. It is **IMPORTANT** to remember that students who are struggling in the classroom may be experiencing vision and/or hearing difficulties. Therefore, it is necessary to **have the nurse check the child's vision and hearing prior to making a referral.**

Step II – I&RS Initial Review

The I&RS will then meet, review the material, possibly invite you to meet with them for additional clarification, and reply to you in writing with their suggestions for possible additional interventions and strategies.

Step III – Implementation of Additional Classroom Interventions

The team's suggestions should then be put in place and utilized for a period of not less than one month. If the teacher feels that the student is still not making adequate progress, they will again submit dated samples of the student's work with the suggested accommodations in place, and a second narrative describing their observations and concerns. These interventions will be monitored by Team Leaders.

Step IV – Second Review

The I&RS will meet again to review all the materials submitted by the teacher. After the team has had time to consult with the teacher, possibly the parents, and other appropriate professionals they will make recommendations for further steps aimed at helping the student to reach their academic potential.

Student Personnel Services

- A. CST referrals are to be submitted to the SP ED Coordinator
- B. IRS referrals to Guidance Counselor. IRS referrals should be used to help remediate difficulties in the classroom. Failures on report cards warrant referral to IRS.
- C. Parents are to be informed of referrals by the Social Worker or Guidance Counselor **ONLY**.

Observations

- A. Classes will be visited daily on an ongoing basis.
- B. Formal observations will be conducted no less than 3 times a year for all staff.
- C. All formal conferences will consist of both a pre and post conference, followed by a written report.

Student Dismissal During School Day

- A. A student should have a note from their parent.
- B. The note will be stamped by the Main Office.
- C. Parent picking up child must sign the Early Dismissal Book and present identification.
- D. Students are only permitted to leave with a parent, a guardian or a person listed on their emergency cards.
- E. Students will not be dismissed after **3:30** PM for early dismissal.

Building Security

- A. All visitors to The Village Charter School must report to Main Office or to the Home and School Coordinator Office, sign in and get a Visitor Pass. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- B. Parents/Visitors are not permitted beyond the **Foyer** without permission from the Main Office.
- C. All exterior doors will be locked after 8:00 AM.
- D. Please help keep all exterior doors closed at all times.
- E. Report any unusual circumstances to the Main Office immediately.
- F. Call the Main Office to announce any intruders.
- G. Close circuit cameras monitor all exits during school day, including staff entering and leaving premises.

Student Folders

- A. Registration folders are in the Front Office
- B. Student Work Folders are to be kept in the classroom and should contain dated samples of student work.
- C. Confidential referrals, reports, and cumulative cards are kept in the Main Office on file.
- D. Confidential Data can not be removed from the Main Office
- E. All IEP's must be read and signed immediately upon notification from the SP ED Coordinator.

Supplies

Supplies will be issued on a monthly basis. Submit a request form to the Facility Manager, Mr. Morgan. Please request ink jet cartridge for printer through supply order when needed. *Personal supplies will not be reimbursed.

Textbooks

- A. All Text Books should be numbered.
- B. Records of condition and assignment of books should be maintained in your grade books. Use a specific number system for each student.
- C. Report any shortages in writing to the Academic Coach or Dean of Students.
- D. Review and model the proper care of all textbooks and instructional materials.
- E. Parents are to sign a Book Contract for books. (optional).

Computer/Television Viewing

All viewings are to be scheduled in advance through either:

Lesson Plans

Regularly scheduled assemblies

Special request to the Principal

All programs must be age and content appropriate and reflect the approved curriculum.

(Reference Video/Trip Form)

- Sign out T.V.'s in Library.
- All T.V.'s must be returned to storage area.
- **They cannot be left in the hallway due to safety codes.**

COMPUTERS AND TELEVISIONS ARE TO BE USED AS AN INSTRUCTINAL TOOL NOT AS A BUSY WORK OPTION TO ENABLE TEACHERS TO COMPLETE OTHER TASKS.

Tenure

All teaching staff members, janitors and secretaries shall acquire streamline tenure after five consecutive academic years, together with employment at the beginning of the next succeeding academic year, in accordance with the tenure acquisition criteria as set forth in New Jersey charter school law.

Savin (Copying)

- A. All staff members have access to a copier in the school.
- B. **Savin Machine in Main Office is to be accessed only by the Office Staff or Support Personnel ONLY.**
Each staff member is issued a code number and the number of copies made by each staff member is monitored monthly.

****Please notify the office if there are any problems with the Savin machines.**

Curriculum

The curriculum is the sum total of all the learning experiences that further the aim of education. It includes such things as: classroom activities, homework assignments, field trips, library lessons and assembly experiences. It encompasses what the child does independently, in small groups and as a member of the entire class. It is more than the sum total of knowledge; it is the medium through which the child will develop human values, standards of appreciation of differences. A well-designed curriculum includes both perspectives of competence and independent thought. A well-designed curriculum promotes improved social and emotional skills.

Effective Lessons

Effective teaching strategies include the following:

- ★ Classroom Management
- ★ Management of content
- ★ The teacher demonstrates knowledge of content and is able to deliver that knowledge to students
- ★ The lesson is grade and age appropriate with enrichment for those who need it
- ★ The content is aligned with the standards
- ★ Do the students understand? How does the teacher know?
- ★ Individualized instruction and planning

Your Lessons should include the following:

- ★ Assessment of Prior Knowledge
- ★ Higher order questioning and thinking skills
- ★ Rigor
- ★ Maintenance of previously learned skills is present
- ★ Children are made aware of what they will learn and how they will be assessed (this cannot be a secret)
- ★ Rubrics
- ★ Teachers model for students (think aloud)
- ★ Teachers guiding children through examples
- ★ Students work independently and in groups
- ★ Students are required to write during the lesson
- ★ Minimal use of worksheets
- ★ Use of Concrete materials
- ★ A summary of the lesson is present (refer back to your stated objective)
- ★ Evaluation of the lesson is present (did the students learn?)

CONSTRUCTION MEANING

(BUILDING-CONSTRUCT-HIGHER ORDER THINKING USING AUTHENTIC LITERATURE)

CONSTRUCTING MEANING

Making Inferences
Predicting Outcomes
Using Context Clues
Recognizing Paragraph Structure

HIGHER ORDER (ORGANIZING INFORMATION)

Sequencing
Comparing/Contrasting
Relating Cause and Effect
Distinguishing Fact and Opinion
Summarizing

AUTHENTIC LITERATURE (APPRECIATING LITERATURE)

Visualizing Story Structure
Interpreting Figurative Language
Analyzing Characters

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONING (MULTIPLE CHOICE/CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE)

Balance Literature
Rich Environment of Quality Literature
Appropriate Instruction in Effective Strategies
"Best Practices 2005" by Steven Zemelman, Harry Daniels, and Arthur Hyde

