

# **The Walnut Ridge School**

**2019/2020**

[www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com)

## **Phone Numbers**

*Attendance...*

973-764-2801 (to report student absence)

*Main Office...* 973-764-2801

*Nurse/Health Office...* 973-764-2808

*Transportation...*

973-764-4344 (Board office)

Student Calendar, Handbook  
and other important  
information can be found  
online at [www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com)  
>Schools  
>Walnut Ridge  
>Digital Backpack

## **School Hours**

AM Preschool 9:35-12:00 PM

PM Preschool 12:50-3:15 PM

*Early Dismissal Schedule*

AM 9:35-11:35    PM 11:30-1:30

*Delayed Opening Schedule*

AM 11:15-1:15    PM 1:15-3:15

**VERNON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL CALENDAR 2016/2017  
A. No Spring Break  
(Based on 5 or more Snow Days by March 15, 2017)**

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TITLE	STUDENT DAYS
Sep.	1 & 2	Thursday & Friday	Teacher In-Serv.(closed for stud. only)	19
	5	Mon.	Labor Day (Closed)	
	6	Tuesday	School Starts for Students	
Oct.	10	Monday	Teacher In-Serv.(closed for stud. only)	20
Nov.	10 & 11	Thursday & Friday	NJEA Convention (Closed)	18
	23	Wednesday	EARLY DISMISSAL	
	24 & 25	Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving (Closed)	
Dec.	23	Friday	EARLY DISMISSAL	17
	26-30	Monday-Friday	December Recess (Closed)	
Jan.	2	Monday	New Year's Day (Closed)	20
	3	Tuesday	SCHOOL RESUMES	
	16	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. (Closed)	
Feb.	20	Monday	President's Day (Closed)	19
March	13	Monday	Teacher In-Serv.(Closed for stud. Only)	22
<b>FIVE SNOW DAYS TAKEN</b>				<b>-5</b>
April	14 & 17	Friday - Monday	Good Friday/Easter Monday (Closed)	18
May	29	Monday	Memorial Day (Closed)	22
June	14	Wednesday	Tentative Last Day for Stu.& Teachers	10
<b>TOTAL # OF DAYS FOR STUDENTS</b>				<b>180</b>
June	15	Thursday (6)	<b>IF MORE THAN 5 SNOW DAYS ARE NEEDED THESE DATES WILL THEN BE ANTICIPATED AS THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL</b>	
	16	Friday (7)		
	19	Monday (8)		
	20	Tuesday (9)		
	21	Wednesday (10)		

**VERNON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL CALENDAR 2016/2017  
B. Spring Break Restored  
(If less than 5 Snow Days used by March 15, 2017)**

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TITLE	STUDENT DAYS
Sep.	1 & 2	Thursday & Friday	Teacher In-Serv.(closed for stud. only)	19
	5	Mon.	Labor Day (Closed)	
	6	Tuesday	School Starts for Students	
Oct.	10	Monday	Teacher In-Serv.(closed for stud. only)	20
Nov.	10 & 11	Thursday & Friday	NJEA Convention (Closed)	18
	23	Wednesday	EARLY DISMISSAL	
	24 & 25	Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving (Closed)	
Dec.	23	Friday	EARLY DISMISSAL	17
	26 - 30	Monday - Friday	December Recess (Closed)	
Jan.	2	Monday	New Year's Day (Closed)	20
	3	Tuesday	SCHOOL RESUMES	
	16	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. (Closed)	
Feb.	20	Monday	President's Day (Closed)	19
March	13	Monday	Teacher In-Serv.(closed for stud. only)	22
April	14	Friday	Good Friday (Closed)	14
	17-21	Monday - Friday	Spring Break (Closed)	
	24	Monday	SCHOOL RESUMES	
May	29	Monday	Memorial Day (Closed)	22
June	13	Tuesday	Tentative Last Day for Stud. & Teachers	9
<b>TOTAL # OF DAYS FOR STUDENTS</b>				<b>180</b>
June	14	Wednesday (1)	<b>LAST DAY OF SCHOOL IF 4 SNOW DAYS ARE USED</b>	
	15	Thursday (2)		
	16	Friday (3)		
	19	Monday (4)		

**VERNON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**

539 County Road 515, P.O. Box 99  
Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-2900

Mr. Brad Sparta President

Mr. Justin Annunziata Vice-President

Mr. Mark Cilli  
Mrs. Natalie Buccieri

Mrs. Theresa Scura Coughlin  
Mrs. Adina Leuthner

Ms. Kelly Mitchell  
Mr. Joseph Sweeney

Mr. Michael Peek

**ADMINISTRATORS**

Mrs. Karen D'Avino  
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Charles McKay  
Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Steven Kepnes  
School Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary

**The Vernon Board of Education meets in public session on the third Thursday of each month.  
The public is cordially invited to attend.**

**VERNON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**THE WALNUT RIDGE SCHOOL**

Mrs. Karen Stoeckel, Supervisor  
PO Box 190, Vernon, NJ 07462

973-764-2801 FAX 973-764-0066

**CEDAR MOUNTAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ms Edwina L. Piszczek, Principal  
PO Box 420, Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-2890 FAX 973-764-3294

**ROLLING HILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dr. Stewart Stumper, Principal  
PO Box 769, Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-2784 FAX 973-764-3284

**CHILD STUDY TEAM**

Deborah Merrill, Director  
PO Box 99, Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-2935 FAX 973-764-0078

**LOUNSBERRY HOLLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Mr. Dennis Mudrick, Principal  
PO Box 219, Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-8745 FAX 973-764-0101

**GLEN MEADOW MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Mrs. Rosemary Gebhardt, Principal  
Mr. Eric Kosek, Assistant Principal  
PO Box 516, Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-8981 FAX 973-764-3295

**VERNON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL**

**Dr. Pauline F. Anderson, Principal**  
**Mr. Nick Demsak, Assistant Principal**  
Mrs. Jacquelyn Van Orden,  
Assistant Principal

PO Box 800 Vernon, NJ 07462  
973-764-2960 FAX 973-2961

District Website: [www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com)

Note that the district e-mail may be utilized to ask questions, offer suggestions, concerns, etc.  
If a response is necessary, you will be contacted.

***“While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about.” ~ Anonymous***

Dear Walnut Ridge Parents and Guardians:

The information included in this calendar/handbook will enable you to become familiar with The Walnut Ridge School. Please take time to review its contents completely and keep it handy for future reference throughout the school year.

At Walnut Ridge, we believe that by working together with you, we can make your child's educational experience successful and enjoyable. We welcome your support and involvement in your child's education. If possible, please plan to visit our school sometime during the school year for special activities/programs. If you wish to visit your child's classroom, please contact your child's teacher in advance to schedule a convenient time.

We look forward to working closely with you for the benefit of all our students.

Sincerely,

Administration, Faculty and Staff

The Walnut Ridge School

### **DAILY SCHEDULE and SCHOOL HOURS**

#### **School Office Hours 7:35 am - 3:35 pm daily**

#### **Students in attendance AM Session 9:35 am - 12 pm**

#### **PM Session 12:50 pm - 3:15 pm**

**9:35 am** Students enter the building.

Children who walk or are brought by parents/guardians should arrive **no earlier than 9:35 am. At that time, we encourage you to leave your child with school personnel (Principal and Aides) who at that point will escort your child into the building.**

**12:00 pm** AM Preschool students dismissed to buses/parents/guardians

**12:50 pm** PM Preschool enter the building (**walkers/drop-offs no earlier than 12:50pm**)

**All dropped off PM students must be accompanied to the building by an adult.**

**Students should not arrive at school prior to 9:30 a.m. by policy of the Vernon Township Public Schools. We are governed and liable by New Jersey Law in terms of supervising students. Students dropped off prior to 9:30 a.m or 12:45 p.m. will be unsupervised and are not, therefore, permitted to arrive before the designated time.**

We realize parents/guardians schedules vary and we regret any inconvenience this may impose. Please note - All Parents picking up or dropping off students must park in the WR parking lot and escort their child(ren) to the front door.

## **ABSENCES and TARDINESS**

Parents/guardians are requested to call the school's recorded **attendance line #973-764-2018** by 8:30am to report their child's absence. It is necessary to call only once if your child will be absent for multiple days in a row. Should we fail to receive contact from a parent/guardian, the school will use the School Messenger calling system to encourage you to call The Walnut Ridge School to report your child as absent.

Whenever a child has been absent from school **for any reason, he/she is required to bring a written excuse from his/her parents/guardians explaining the reason for the absence. This note must be brought with the child upon return to school. A note explaining a pupil's absence for a non-communicable illness for a period of more than three school days must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the pupil's illness.** Children returning to school following a period of illness must report to the school nurse and are expected to resume a normal schedule, which includes physical education, outdoor recess, etc. Therefore, students should be well enough to participate in all activities and be adequately dressed for the weather conditions of that day. If a doctor does not believe that a student is ready to resume a full program and this is in writing, special arrangements will be made. **In alignment with the New Jersey Department of Education, the Vernon Township School District does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, with the exception of school imposed absences (suspensions), religious holidays, and Take Your Child to Work Day.**

New Jersey State law is very clear on school attendance. The laws of the state of New Jersey require regular attendance of all pupils enrolled in the public schools. The Vernon Township Board of Education believes that regular attendance in class, participation in class activities, and interaction between student and teacher are vital and integral parts of the learning process. Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process. Students cannot benefit from classroom instruction if they are not present. Poor attendance limits accomplishments and reinforces a habit which will handicap the individual in future education. Therefore, the Vernon Township Board of Education requires attendance of all students each day school is in session. Please make every effort to see that your child attends class regularly unless he/she is ill.

Based on a 180 day school year, any student who misses 18 days or more per year – or about two days every month – is considered chronically absent. Children can only be successful when they attend school regularly. Research suggests that chronic absenteeism in the early years can have significant impact on how successful a child is in school. During these early growth years, students learn basic social and academic skills necessary for future academic success. Absenteeism in the early years can be linked with long-term reading problems, lower test scores, poor attendance in future school years and weaker social-emotional skills. Students not meeting the Attendance Policy established by the Vernon Township School District may be excluded from school related Fun Days and/or Field Trips.

## **Vernon Board of Education Regulation 5410 Promotion and Retention**

*School attendance shall be a factor in the determination of a pupil's promotion or retention. Only extenuating circumstances should permit the promotion of a pupil who has been in attendance fewer than one hundred fifty days during the school year.*

**A half-day student will be marked absent if not present for at least 2 hours of the half-day session.**

**A full day student will be marked absent if not present for at least 4 hours of the full-day session.**

We would encourage you to instill the importance of being on time, even at this young age. It is a valuable habit that will serve your child well throughout life. If your child arrives at school more than ten minutes later than the scheduled arrival time for his/her session, he/she is required to obtain an admission slip from the office prior to going to class. If a child is tardy on a continual basis, you will be contacted in order to prevent further tardiness. Lateness is detrimental not only to the child who is late, but also to the teacher and all the other students in the class.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER NETWORKS/COMPUTERS AND USE OF THE INTERNET**

The Vernon Township school district provides computer equipment, computer services, and Internet access to its pupils and staff for educational purposes only. The purpose of providing technology resources is to improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration, dissemination and use of global communication resources.

Pupils are responsible for good behavior on computer networks/computers just as they are in classroom or a school hallway. Policy No. 2361R, an approved board policy, pertains to Acceptable Use of Computer Network/Computers and use of the Internet.

The policy states that behaviors including, but not limited to the following are prohibited:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
4. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks/computers
5. Violating copyright laws
6. Using another's password
7. Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
8. Intentionally wasting limited resources
9. Employing the network/computers for commercial purposes
10. Engaging in other activities that do not advance the educational purposes for which computer network/computers are provided.

Students who violate acceptable use of computer networks/computers and use of the Internet shall be subject to consequences for violations under school and district discipline guidelines.

## **ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND EMERGENCY CONTACT CHANGES**

If you should change your address or telephone numbers, please go into your School Messenger Account to update the information and then notify the school office immediately. Also, please be sure that your child's emergency address and telephone numbers are always up-to-date and correct.

Please be aware that emergency contacts provided to the school are used for the school and/or school nurse to contact parents. If someone other than the parent/guardian is going to pick up the child, a note must be sent in from the parent/guardian informing the teacher.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

The Vernon Township Board of Education is an equal opportunity employer and adheres to all aspects of affirmative action guidelines. The affirmative action officer for the Vernon Township Public Schools is Charles McKay (PO Box 99, Rt. 515, Vernon, NJ 07462; (973) 764-2900, Ext. 4367). The affirmative action officer for The Walnut Ridge School is Mr. Joseph S. Piccirillo. A complete affirmative action/Comprehensive Equity Plan file, which includes our district's policies, plans, procedures, and compliance with all state and federal mandates in regard to affirmative action and the state's new Comprehensive Equity Plan for 2016-2017 is available in the school office.

Our school district achieves and maintains compliance with all applicable laws, codes, regulations, and guidelines governing equity in education including, but not limited to the following:

### Federal Law

- Titles VI and BII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Titles IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) of 1997
- Equal Pay Act of 1973

### State Law

- Article I, Paragraph 5 of the New Jersey State Constitution
- N.J.S.A. 18A:36-20, Equality in Educational Programs
- N.J.S.A. 10:5 New Jersey Law Against Discrimination
- New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 6A:7
- N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1, History of the United States and New Jersey
- N.J.S.A. 18A:36-20, Prohibition of Discrimination

If there are any problems or questions dealing with affirmative action, it is important that our school's affirmative action officer(s) be informed immediately so that a meeting can be arranged for remediation of any situation or problems that may arise. No pupil will be denied access to any educational program or activity based upon race, color, creed, religion, gender or economic status. The following approved board policies pertain to affirmative action and are covered by statute:

## Policies/Regulations

1510 Rights of Persons with Handicaps or Disabilities

1523 Comprehensive Equity Plan

1550 Affirmative Action Program for Employment and Contract Practices

3362 Sexual Harassment – Professional Employees

5512 Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and Harassment

5751 Sexual Harassment – Pupils

1520 Equal Educational and Employment Opportunities and Avoidance of Harassment by Reason of Gender

1530 Equal Employment Opportunities

2260 Affirmative Action Program for School and Classroom Practices

4352 Sexual Harassment – Non-Certified Employees

5750 Equal Educational Opportunity – Pupils

5755 Equity in Educational Program and Services

The District has developed a Comprehensive Equity Plan (CEP). Our main objective is to:

Provide staff development to all interested parents and community members, certified and non-certified staff to inform, identify and resolve problems in the following areas:

- Student achievement gap
- Bullying
- Sexual Harassment
- Prejudice, bias and stereotyping
- Diverse learning styles

The district will create and administer an interest survey to ensure equitable opportunities for female and male students to participate in athletics at Vernon Township High School. Survey results will be used to analyze the current athletic offerings to create a match.

The New Jersey Comprehensive Equity Plan has been developed and submitted to the NJ Department of Education Office of Specialized Populations/Equity and the Sussex County Office of Education.

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, and BULLYING**

A full copy of Policy 5512, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying can be found on the district's website, [www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com).

Pursuant to Policy 5512, the Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a pupil. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe and disciplined environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act or any electronic communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus. Electronic communication means communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager. Any act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic; and that a reasonable person

should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; and creates a hostile educational environment for a pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil is considered to be harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The district prohibits active or passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Pupils are encouraged to support other pupils who: walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, and report these acts to the building principal or designee.

The Board expects pupils to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment consistent with the Code of Pupil Conduct.

Policy 5512 and the Code of Pupil Conduct shall apply to instances when a school employee is made aware of alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurring off school grounds when the alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying has substantially disrupted or interfered with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and either, a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the alleged behavior will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or the alleged behavior has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or the alleged behavior creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

Pupils, parents, and visitors are encouraged to report alleged violations to the principal on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. Pupils, parents, and visitors may report an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying anonymously. Formal action for violations of the Code of Pupil Conduct may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Board believes that standards for pupil behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), staff and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of pupils, staff and community members.

Pupils are expected to behave in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. The Board believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the Code of Pupil Conduct as opportunities to help pupils learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall apply best practices designed to prevent pupil conduct problems and foster pupils' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for pupils who commit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of

problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the district's code of pupil conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, protect and provide support for the victim of the act, and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is a very significant concern. Federal and State laws guarantee that schools are absolutely free of sexual harassment. The Vernon Township Board of Education explicitly forbids any conduct or expression that may be construed as the sexual harassment of a pupil, by another pupil or by an employee of the district (Policy 5751). Any student who feels that he/she has been sexually harassed, or any employee who hears or has independent cause to suspect that a pupil has been subjected to sexual harassment, shall promptly notify the building administrator, who shall immediately initiate an investigation of the matter and report the findings to the Superintendent.

### **AHERA MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This is to advise that a Management Plan, as required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), is available in the main office of each district school building. A Management Plan for each school building and the Board of Education building is also available in the Board of Education office. Individuals interested in reviewing all of the Management Plans or a particular Management Plan for a specific location, may report either to the specific school main office or the Board of Education and request to review the Management Plan(s).

### **ASSEMBLIES**

Students usually go to assemblies with their regular classroom teacher. Each class sits together as a group and proper behavior is expected. We do not permit disruptive or disrespectful behavior. If a child continually causes a problem during assemblies, that child's privilege to attend may be suspended until a parent/guardian conference is held.

### **BEHAVIOR**

All students are both members of the educational community and the local community. Conduct in the areas of **good manners, politeness, and courtesy** should be in line with that which is expected in the home. If an infraction does occur and disciplinary action is necessary, the school's intent is educational, not punitive. Methods of discipline generally relate directly to the misbehavior, for example, a student may be removed from the cafeteria for inappropriate behavior. The goal of our discipline is to encourage children to determine right from wrong and grow into self-disciplined young people. It is in this spirit that we hope parents/guardians will assist in helping our young people develop their own self-discipline.

The Vernon Township Board of Education has a zero tolerance position regarding any and all forms of fighting, violent assaults, and any other physical confrontations. Students involved in any of these acts will face disciplinary measures including the possibility of having such actions reported to the police.

The school district will not permit any student to be in possession of any type of weapon (including toy weapons) or ammunition in school. Any student found carrying such items will face disciplinary actions.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the school and its mission. Students shall not be permitted to interfere or prevent others from their right and privilege to an education. Therefore, behavior which disrupts class work, creates disorder, threatens the safety of others, or invades the rights of others shall be a basis for disciplinary action. In general, teachers handle routine discipline problems within their classroom.

The following school discipline practices will be enforced at the PK-4 level:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>First Infraction</b>  | -Teacher and student will conference to review incident. Teacher may contact parent/guardian.  |
| <b>Second Infraction</b> | -Teacher and student will conference to review incident. Teacher will contact parent/guardian with possible loss of recess.  |
| <b>Third Infraction</b>  | -Teacher and student will conference and incident will be reported to principal. Teacher will contact parent/guardian with loss of recess.   |
| <b>Fourth Infraction</b> | -Student and principal will conference. Parent/guardian will be contacted. Age appropriate Consequences will be applied, which may include lunch detention, recess restriction, temporary exclusion from class, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, etc. |

**It is important to note that, depending on the severity or frequency of the disruptive behavior, the building principal has the prerogative to enforce a suspension or other consequence at any level of infraction.**

### **DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Vernon Township Public Schools recognize that rapid societal changes have impacted upon the traditional school and its approach to instruction and discipline. One constant factor in the midst of society's changes has been the district's goal of providing a pleasant, safe and challenging learning environment for every Vernon Township student. The home and school have a shared responsibility in achieving this goal.

Every school district has the right and responsibility to establish standards for acceptable student behavior within the school setting, and every student has the potential for choosing appropriate behavior and for becoming a responsible citizen of his/her school community regardless of background or current level of ability. To assist students and parents/guardians, we list below this district's behavioral expectations for all students in grades PK-12.

We expect:

- that students will demonstrate an attitude of respect, courtesy, and kindness toward all;
- that students will refrain from using inappropriate, vulgar, and abusive language;
- that students will refrain from bullying, intimidating, threatening or harassing others;
- that students will avoid the possession, use, and abuse of dangerous and/or illegal substances;
- that students will resolve conflicts without the use of weapons, violence, and/or physical means;
- that students will come to school in clothing that is neither offensive, disruptive nor distracting within the school setting;
- that students will assist in maintaining a clean and beautiful school environment, free of litter, graffiti, and vandalism.

Since we expect each student to behave appropriately and to be a responsible and productive citizen of our school community, age appropriate consequences will be applied at each school for those students who are uncooperative and/or non-compliant.

### **CAFETERIA-LUNCH**

Our school cafeteria provides a federally subsidized Type A lunch for full-day students. Monthly menus are distributed to students in advance.

The cost of lunch (including milk) is **\$2.75 per lunch**, or the student may purchase prepaid lunches. If paying by check, please make the **check payable to Vernon Township Board of Education**. The cost for a **carton of milk is \$.35** (prices subject to change).

If your child brings a snack/lunch from home, please be sure to label the lunch box/bag with your child's name.

**Preschool half-day students** have a daily snack time. Healthy snacks and drinks which your child can open on his/her own are to be brought from home. All children get hungry between meals and look for snacks. Snack Packs are available (snack/a drink) is \$1.00 -- must be ordered in advance (prices subject to change).

Studies have shown that good nutrition plays an important part in your child's physical, emotional and educational development. There is reason to believe that a balanced diet aids a youngster's efforts in attaining maximum performance levels. It is easier to keep a child's mind on the task at hand if he or she is not tired, restless, or uncomfortable from the lack of proper nourishment. As a result, no snacks such as ice-cream, cookies, etc. will be sold at Walnut Ridge Primary School.

Please be sure that your child has a nutritious breakfast (or lunch in the case of PM preschool students) so that he/she will be energized for the day.

### **DRESSING FOR SCHOOL**

The Walnut Ridge School does not have a prescribed dress code. However, the wearing of any clothing that interferes with or distracts from the educational process will be subject to approval by the principal. The wearing of hats (by boys or girls) is not permitted inside the school building. Laced or velcro sneakers are required for participation in gym class. **Flip flops may not be worn to school.** Safe and comfortable footwear should be worn to school daily in order to promote enjoyment of the school's outdoor play areas.

With the exception of grade level fun days, which are days of athletic events for students, we strongly encourage students and parents/guardians to view the school as the students' workplace. We request your cooperation in providing appropriate apparel.

Parents/Guardians can assist in their child's health education by carefully reviewing and discussing the family's health and safety practices with their child, providing role model behavior in areas of nutrition, daily exercise and safety practices, and through family discussion of the lessons presented in the health curriculum. A positive home-school partnership will enable the students to learn in an optimal environment.

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest;

Other schools to which a student is transferring;

Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;

Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;

Accrediting organizations;

To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and

State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The

actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call 1-800-437-0833 or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are part of the educational program in Walnut Ridge School. If a school field trip is scheduled, you will be notified by your child's teacher as to the location and cost of the trip as well as permission to attend. Field trips may take place within the school setting or at a facility in another location.

### **GUM CHEWING**

**Chewing gum is not permitted in any primary school.**

Throughout the school year, your children may be bringing home books from our school library. This can be a particularly rewarding experience if you take some time each week to share the book with your child. A young child can discuss the pictures with you while you read the story; an older child might enjoy reading the book to you. Please remember that in the library, the child has the freedom to choose a book that satisfies his/her personal interests. Although children will be encouraged to sign out books that are on their own reading level, they will often be given the opportunity to choose materials which satisfy their curiosity.

Please be sure to read aloud with your children frequently. Students are encouraged to borrow books from the school library in an effort to instill the love of learning. Books are signed out for a period of one week. Please help your child remember to return the book(s) the day before his/her class is scheduled to visit the library so that he/she can sign out a new one.

Proper care of the book at home will ensure a longer life for the book and also develops a habit of responsibility for the child. Help your child find a safe place to keep the book so that it will not get lost or damaged. The book should be carried to and from school in a book bag or plastic bag to keep it from becoming soiled or wet; this is particularly important on a rainy day. If an accident does occur and the book is damaged, please send it back to the library to be mended.

### **LIVE ANIMALS**

Live animals may **not** be brought to school without the permission of the building principal. Please contact your child's teacher for further information.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Items found are usually turned in to the office and are forwarded to the Lost & Found box outside the nurse's office. Children who have lost something may inquire about it at the nurse's office prior to class and at lunchtime. The labeling of all children's possessions (lunchboxes, book bags, coats, boots, etc.) has proven to be a successful method of returning items to their rightful owners!

### **NURSE/HEALTH OFFICE INFORMATION**

#### **FOR ALL STUDENTS**

Please contact the school nurse, Mrs. Jennifer Gallant, regarding any health matter at 973-764-2808. Parents/Guardians are welcome to discuss their child's health needs with the nurse. Please call the health office to arrange an appointment.

Students who are not feeling well enough to learn should **NOT** be sent to school. Parents/Guardians will be notified if a child becomes ill at school. Students will be sent home if they have an elevated temperature, may be exposing others to infection, or feel so ill that they cannot participate in classroom activities. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing transportation to pick up their sick child when necessary.

Any student who returns from an absence must bring a note from a parent/guardian stating why he/she was not at school. Students returning to school following a communicable illness must be seen by the school nurse before returning to class. A note explaining a pupil's absence for non-communicable illness for a period of more than three school days must be accompanied by a physician's statement of the pupil's illness.

**Medication will be given in school only when the pupil's attendance depends on the timely administration of such medication.** "Medication" as per this law means any prescription drug, prescribed and/or over-the-counter medicine including, but not limited to, aspirin, cough drops and cough medicines. Requests for the administration of medication in school must be made in writing and signed by the physician.

**STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO TRANSPORT MEDICATIONS TO AND FROM SCHOOL.  
PARENTS/GUARDIANS MUST DELIVER AND PICK UP ALL MEDICATIONS USED BY STUDENTS IN SCHOOL.**

**PLEASE NOTE: All medication must be in its original prescription bottle.**

**IMPORTANT:** Hand written notes cannot be accepted from parents/guardians to administer medication. Physician permission only, as explained above, is required by regulation.

**Self-administration of medication for life-threatening illness (such as asthma):** Parents/Guardians must provide the Board of Education with written authorization for the self-administration of medication by the pupil's physician. This authorization form must state that the pupil has asthma or another potentially life-threatening illness and is capable of and has been instructed in the proper use of the medication (authorization form may be obtained from the school nurse). Permission to self-administer one medication shall not be interpreted as permission to self-administer other medications.

If your child has allergies, please inform the health office of this in writing, especially if medication is needed. If your child needs oral medication immediately for insect bite reactions (bees, wasps, etc.) you are strongly encouraged to bring that medication to the nurse's office labeled correctly and accompanied by a note from the physician.

**PLEASE NOTE: THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, THE BOARD AND ITS EMPLOYEES OR AGENTS SHALL INCUR NO LIABILITY AS A RESULT OF ANY INJURY ARISING FROM THE SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION BY THE PUPIL.**

All students are expected to participate in the outdoor recreation periods and all physical exercise programs. If a student is well enough to attend school, then he/she is expected, if capable, to go outside with the other children.

Physical Education excuses are to be issued by the school nurse. To obtain an excuse, students must:

1. Have a note from a parent/guardian for a one to two-day excuse.
2. Have a doctor's note for three or more days.

Students excused from physical education will not be permitted to participate in recess. Repeated requests from parents/guardians for physical education excuses may require a doctor's note.

Parents/guardians should be aware of the importance of obtaining a physical exam at least once during each of the student's developmental stages: early childhood (pre-school through grade 3), pre-adolescence (grade 4 through grade 6), and adolescence (grade 7 through grade 12).

During the course of the school year, your child will have a height and weight check, as well as a hearing/vision screening. If the results of the hearing/vision screening are not within the accepted normal range, parents/guardians will be notified. If your child appears to be having difficulty in these areas, please feel free to contact the nurse.

New students from out-of-state need to be tested for tuberculosis by the Mantoux test in accordance with the law. Parents/Guardians will be notified if the test is positive so that there can be follow-up with further medical study.

Statutes of the State of New Jersey require full immunization for all students in schools across the state. Parents/Guardians are urged to contact the school nurse should they have any questions regarding these requirements.

**Requests for payment of medical bills shall not be presented to the Vernon Township Board of Education. The Board, as a public body, under the Statutes of the State of New Jersey, assumes no responsibility or liability for such claims for medical payments. Such payments are made only as a result of adjudication through the courts.**

### **HEAD LICE INFESTATION**

Head lice infestation can occur at any age, and each year 6 to 23 million Americans report having contracted head lice. One of the most prevalent misconceptions about head lice is that it occurs only from unclean environments or because of poor hygiene. Everyone is at risk and if it happens in your family, it is not something that should cause embarrassment. The most important thing is to treat the problem immediately and notify your child's school, in particular the school nurse, and everyone else with whom your child has come in close contact. Presently, the chances are better than ever before of bringing this nationwide public

health problem under control. More cases of head lice infestation occur than all other communicable childhood diseases combined. The Vernon Township Public School Head Lice Procedure is as follows:

1. After a case of head lice is reported to the school nurse or detected by the school nurse, the student will be excluded from school until treated and free of nits (eggs).
2. The student identified with head lice will not be allowed on the school bus until cleared by the school nurse.
3. The student must be seen by the school nurse prior to re-admission to school.
4. Parents/Guardians of students in the infected child's class and bus will be notified via letter from the school nurse.

If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse, Mrs. Forrest, at 973-764-2808.

### **PEST MANAGEMENT**

This notice is being distributed to comply with the New Jersey School Integrated Pest Management Act. Vernon Township Board of Education has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy and has implemented an IPM Plan to comply with this law. IPM is a holistic, preventive approach to managing pests that is explained further in the school's IPM Policy, which is available on request.

All schools in New Jersey are required to have an Integrated Pest Management Coordinator (IPM Coordinator) to oversee all activities related to IPM and pesticide use at the school.

The IPM Coordinator for Vernon Township Board of Education is:

Name of IPM Coordinator: Darryl Storms

Business Phone number: 973-764-2900

Business Address: PO BOX 190, 625 Route 517, Vernon, NJ

07462

Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) (when one is available), of each pesticide product that may be used on school property are available for review by a parent, guardian, staff member, or student attending the school. Also, the IPM Coordinator is available to parents, guardians, and staff members for information and to discuss comments about IPM activities and pesticide use at the school. A list of products used during the past 12 months is listed below.

As part of a school pest management plan Vernon Township Board of Education may use pesticides to control pests. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) register pesticides to determine that the use of a pesticide in accordance with instructions printed on the label does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health and the environment. Nevertheless, the EPA and the DEP cannot guarantee that registered pesticides do not pose any risk to human health, thus unnecessary exposure to pesticides should be avoided. The EPA has issued the statement that where possible, persons who are potentially sensitive, such as pregnant women, infants and children, should avoid unnecessary pesticide exposure.

PRODUCTS USED DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS:

- a. EcoExempt Jet Wasp and Hornet Killer
- b. Catchmaster Rodent & Insect Glue
- c. DuPont Avion Ant Gel
- d. ExoExempt D. Dust Insecticide

**PLAYGROUND**

Children are not to bring footballs, baseballs, tennis balls, toys, etc., to bus stops or to school to be used on the playground. Equipment such as this is provided by the physical education department or your child's teacher. Banning such equipment will help avoid problems at bus stops and on buses.

**PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES (Policy 9130)**

Any person or group having a legitimate interest in the schools of this district may present a request, suggestion, or complaint concerning district personnel, the educational program instructional or resource materials, or the operations of the district. The Board directs the establishment of procedures for the hearing and settlement of requests and complaints that provide a means for resolving them fairly and impartially, permit appropriate redress, and protect district personnel from unnecessary harassment.

Any misunderstandings or disputes between the public and school district staff should, whenever possible, be settled by direct, informal discussions among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve differences that more formal procedures shall be employed. A complaint about a school program or personnel should be addressed to the Building Principal.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the hearing of requests and complaints.

Any complaint or grievance alleging discrimination on the basis of disability, sex, or age may, but need not, follow the steps and levels described in Policy 9130 and Regulation 9130. Complainants or grievants alleging discrimination in such areas may file a formal complaint with the appropriate State or Federal agency at any stage of the complaint/grievance process.

## **RIGHT TO KNOW**

A complete “Right to Know” file is maintained in the main office of our school in compliance with NJ state law which states that any chemical substances utilized by school personnel will be labeled appropriately, including materials ordered and purchased from various companies that supply our school.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING, DELAYED OPENING AND EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS**

A) Regarding the closing of schools due to inclement weather or emergencies:

1. **WEATHER** - In case weather conditions make it necessary to close schools, the following method of notifying the community will be used.

**School Messenger** - Parents/Guardians that have signed up for School Messenger through the Parent Portal will be notified via text, e-mail and/or phone call regarding any weather emergency.

Parents/Guardians sign up online to receive notifications from your child’s school to your phone, email or pager.

Information on how to sign up is sent home at the beginning of the school year or by calling the school’s main office.

Those without computer access can be signed up by the school’s main office to receive notifications by phone.

*NOTE: If you do not update your preferences online, notifications will only be sent to the home phone number on file.*

**NEWS CHANNEL 12** – read the bottom of the screen to find out about closings, early dismissals, or delayed openings.

**RADIO STATIONS – WSUS 102.3FM** - Announcements regarding closing of schools between 6:15 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

**WEBSITES** – [www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com)

2. **DO NOT CALL THE POLICE STATION** - Calls tie up the police telephone lines, which must be kept open for serious emergencies and are not to be used for the dispensing of information.

**THE POLICE WILL NOT GIVE OUT INFORMATION REGARDING SCHOOL CLOSING** - Any other information specifically regarding a certain grade level or session will be sent home as the need arises.

3. **TRANSPORTATION** – Parents are reminded that in the event that hazardous road conditions or any other emergency exists, it may be necessary to dismiss students in the PM from the bus, at alternate dismissal points leading into various developments. When such road conditions exist, every effort will be made to notify parents of alternate drop off locations.

**B) DELAYED OPENING –  
ALTERNATE TO CLOSING SCHOOL BECAUSE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS  
ALL VERNON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL OPERATE ON A 2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE.**

Specifically, this alternate will be the opening of school two hours later. When an alternate opening is announced, school children should go to their bus stop two hours later than normal. If, during the two hour delay, road conditions do not improve, it may be possible that school will be cancelled. Please continue to listen to WSUS or wait to hear from School Messenger during this time. This alternate gives us a greater amount of time to get roads cleared and assessed. We trust we will have your full and unqualified assistance and support in this matter.

**Two Hour Delayed Opening Hours**

AM Preschool	11:15-1:15
PM Preschool	1:15-3:15

- C) **MATTERS OF EARLY DISMISSAL** - On occasion it may be necessary to close school earlier--an early dismissal. When this occurs WSUS will be called immediately and School Messenger will be activated. Please listen to them for the announcement of early dismissal. If you are not going to be home, it is necessary you have arrangements made for your child's care (a neighbor, a grandparent, etc.). In an early dismissal, buses will leave Walnut Ridge School at approximately **1:30 p.m.** In order for this system to work, however, once buses arrive we will let them leave as soon as they are full. Since this system may be necessary if roads are bad because of snow, etc., then it is very likely that the time spent on the bus trip will be longer than normal. In such weather it will probably take your children a longer time to walk home from the bus stop. This early dismissal process helps to give more time for buses on the road so that your children will arrive home safely.

**Early Dismissal Hours (Closing due to weather conditions)**

AM Preschool	9:35-11:35	9:15-1:15
PM Preschool	11:30-1:30	9:30-1:25

\*\*Emergency Snow Closing - PM may be cancelled.\*\*

**Note:** In such weather it will probably take your child's bus longer to get to the bus stop.

**D) SCHEDULED EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS**

**(Weds. 11/22/17, Fri. 12/22/17, AND END OF SCHOOL YEAR)** The children will have a short snack break sometime prior to dismissal.

**Scheduled Early Dismissal Day Hours**

AM Preschool	9:35-11:35	9:15-1:15
PM Preschool	11:30- 1:30	9:30-1:25

**ALL Preschool classes will dismiss earlier than usual time.**

**SCHOOL SAFETY**

Vernon Township Public Schools has prevention, intervention, and postvention plans to deal with issues of school safety at all schools. These plans have been developed in coordination with local, county, and state officials. In all cases, the safety of the students is paramount. Periodically throughout the year, drills will be held at each location to simulate a building evacuation and lockdown(s).

In the event of a real emergency, parents/guardians will be notified via the emergency calling system and local radio stations. Parents/Guardians should refrain from coming to the school during a declared emergency, as there will be no access to the school. The presence of non-emergency personnel could hinder the efforts of the first responders at the scene of the emergency. In addition, students will not be released to parents until law enforcement officials clear the scene for danger.

Parents/Guardians need to discuss and emphasize with their children the importance of reporting suspicious conversations, actions, or Internet activities that may indicate a potential for violence or to disrupt a school building. It is necessary in these situations to notify the building administrator or contact the Anonymous Tip Line at 973-764-8151.

**NEW JERSEY STATUTES ANNOTATED TITLE**

**18A:40-4.0**

Whenever it shall appear to any teaching staff member, school nurse or other educational personnel of any public school in this State that a pupil may be under the influence of a controlled dangerous substance as defined in P.L. 1970, chapter 226, section 2 (C. 24:21-2) or any chemical or chemical compound which releases vapor or fumes causing a condition of intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction, or dulling of the brain or nervous system including but not limited to glue containing a solvent having the property of releasing toxic vapors or fumes, as defined in P.L. 1965, chapter 41, section 1 (C. 2A:170-25.9) taken for purposes other than the treatment of sickness or injury as prescribed or administered by a person duly authorized by law to treat the sick and injured human beings, such teaching staff member, school nurse or other educational personnel shall report the matter as soon as possible to the school nurse or medical inspector, as the case may be and to the principal or, in his absence, to his designee. The principal or his designee, shall immediately notify the parent or guardian and the superintendent of schools, if there be one, or the administrative principal and arrange for an immediate examination of the pupil by a doctor selected by the parent or guardian, or if such doctor is not immediately available by the medical inspector, if he is available. If such doctor or medical inspector is not immediately available, the pupil shall be taken to the emergency room of the nearest hospital for examination accompanied by a member of the school staff designated by the principal and a parent or guardian of the pupil if available. The pupil shall be examined as soon as possible for the purpose of diagnosing whether or not the pupil is under such influence. A written report of said examination shall be furnished within 24 hours by the examining physician to the parent or guardian of the pupil and to the superintendent of schools or administrative principal. If such diagnosis is positive,

### **TRANSFERRING STUDENTS**

Students transferring to other schools must obtain a transfer card from our school office. Before a student will be permitted to transfer out, all textbooks, library books, etc. must be returned and any lunch charges/snack and activity fees must be paid. School records will be mailed to your child's new school upon receiving the new school's request.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

## SCHOOL BUSES AND BUS STOPS

Most primary school students ride a school bus/van. While riding the school bus/van, your child is governed by State Law. Therefore, disruptive behavior, insubordination, foul language, and other inappropriate behaviors are **strictly prohibited and**

**will result in disciplinary action.** The bus driver has complete charge of the bus/vans, and students are required to obey directions given by the driver. **Parents/Guardians are never permitted to board buses/van.**

Although vans will be transporting PK students, students will be brought back to school if no one is at home for their child. Parents are to contact their child's school in an emergency and the child will be held in the main office.

It is the school bus driver's responsibility to devote full attention to driving the school bus while the bus is in motion. Children's misbehavior on the school bus constitutes an extreme hazard because it can divert the driver's attention from the primary responsibility of conditions and possible hazards on the road as well as tending to the actual responsibilities of driving. Therefore, security cameras have been installed on the majority of our school buses for the purpose of monitoring student misbehavior.

The following bus discipline practices will be followed in the primary schools.

- ✓ Upon receipt of the first bus discipline report filed by the driver, the student is informed of the problem and will be given an opportunity to address the problem as a matter of his or her responsibility; parents/guardians will be notified of the report.
- ✓ Should there be a second bus discipline report, the first and second reports are reviewed and parents/guardians will be notified by the guidance or the principal's office.
- ✓ Usually, on the third report, the student's privilege of riding the bus is removed temporarily and the parent/guardian must transport the student to and from school daily. Subsequent bus reports may result in additional bus suspensions.

**Important to note: The building principal has the prerogative to enforce a bus suspension at any level depending on the severity of the infraction.**

While waiting for school buses, all students are to remain in the bus shelter, where available, or off public roads. Parents/Guardians are asked to observe the behavior at the bus stops as a possible means of preventing accidents. The very presence of an adult often acts as a deterrent and might keep a child from throwing something or running into the road. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action. Students at the primary school level are not permitted to bring athletic equipment, radios, music players, video games, animals, glass containers, toys, etc. on the bus. Gum chewing is not permitted.

According to the Board of Education policy, students are not permitted to change buses for social reasons. In scheduling transportation for students who are attending child-care centers before and after regular school, all requests must be made for five days per week both to and from school. Emergency situations concerning bus changes are taken care of by the

Transportation Department at the Board of Education office on Rt. 515. The telephone number is 973-764-2900, option #2, then option #1.

It is important that all parents/guardians know their child's bus route number and the contractor who owns the bus. This information is displayed on the exterior of the school bus. Bus route numbers are also given on the bus pass, which is sent to every student before the first day of school. In the case of car/van routes, the information can be requested from the driver.

**Should your child be late in arriving home or not get off at the appropriate bus stop, you should immediately contact the following:**

- First: Call the school your child attends (Walnut Ridge 973-764-2801). If no one is available, call...
- Second: the Board of Education Office at 973-764-2900, Ext. 8025.  
If no one is available there, call...
- Third: the Vernon Township Police Dept. at 973-764-6155. The police will contact a school district official.

Bus Contractor Telephone Numbers-Krapf	Transportation	973-764-4066
	Decker Transportation	973-764-8005
	First Student Lafayette	973-579-5272
	First Student Newton	973-383-1210

### **SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENT CLAIMS**

In case of a school bus accident, the following steps must be followed for a parent/guardian to receive payment for any medical bills:

1. The parent/guardian is to submit the medical bills to their personal auto insurance carrier and/or their individual/group hospitalization carrier.
2. If any amount still remains, the parent/guardian must submit those bills to any other collectible insurance, which may include a student accident policy.
3. If any amount still remains, the parent/guardian could present the school bus contractor with the bills.

## **PICKING UP YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL**

We encourage you NOT to pick up your child early unless absolutely necessary since classes are disrupted, students miss instruction, and added confusion may result. We understand that occasionally it may be necessary for you to arrange to pick up your child for special “early release” from school. If such a family circumstance or emergency should occur, the steps below must be followed to ensure the safety and security of your child:

1. If your child needs to be released early, we require a **written, signed request** from you when your child arrives at school. This note should be given to the classroom teacher, who, after being made aware of the circumstances, will send the note to the main office.
2. In the event of some crisis or emergency, a phone call can be made to the main office. We understand that, on rare occasions, you will not be able to write a note in advance. At such times, we require you to arrive at the school **ten minutes before class dismissal time. We cannot hold a child in the office without a written note beyond bus departure time.**
3. In all cases, the parent or guardian must come to the main office or other designated area of the school. We **will not** release a child to wait outside to be picked up.
4. Under normal circumstances, your child will meet you either at the main office or another designated area. **Parents or guardians are NOT, under any circumstances, to go to the student’s classroom and take their child from class or from the playground.**
5. We will not release your child to anyone other than a parent or guardian unless we have written authorization from you. If there is a special circumstance and a neighbor or relative appears to pick up your child, that release will only be made after we call you and verify the person’s identity. We cannot release children to siblings under 18 years of age, even with written parental permission.
6. Anyone picking up a child will be required to present proof of identification, specifically a valid driver’s license. They will be required to sign the child out, including date, time, child’s name, reason, and their signature.
7. Under no circumstances will a child be released if the child does not recognize the person who is there to pick him/her up.
8. If a serious question by school office personnel arises regarding the above, it is possible that the building principal or his/her designee will immediately call the police for intervention and will hold the child until the police arrive.

For both drop off and pickup, we ask that you do not park in the driveway. Please do not park in the “Handicap” or “Reserved” parking spaces.

## **VISITING THE SCHOOL**

Parents/Guardians are always welcome at The Walnut Ridge School. To ensure the safety of our students and for security reasons, **ALL VISITORS MUST STOP AT THE OFFICE. All Visitors must present a valid driver’s license to be scanned into our district Raptor System before proceeding to any classroom.** Parents/Guardians dropping off cupcakes, forgotten lunches, homework, etc. may leave these items in the main office. We will ensure that they are brought promptly to

your child's classroom. Open visitation days are scheduled during the school year for parents/guardians to visit your child's classroom(s). Please check the school calendar for exact dates and times.

### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Volunteers are always welcome in our preschool school to help children in the classrooms, library, and during Fun Days. In addition, help may be needed at home (if you are unable to come to school) with preparation activities. Please share your desire to contribute your time with your child's teacher at Back-to-School Night or in writing.

### **WEBSITE CONSENT**

Vernon Township Public Schools maintain a website at [www.vtsd.com](http://www.vtsd.com) regarding district and school information. Anyone wishing to contact the district via e-mail may do so at [jpiccirillo@vtsd.com](mailto:jpiccirillo@vtsd.com). Frequently, we find it appropriate to recognize and honor our students' achievements, and our website is a good place to do so. Therefore, parents/guardians of all students will receive a letter from the principal regarding their right to withhold permission for having their child's personal information and/or photograph on the website. Permission is granted or withheld on a yearly basis. **A website consent form is to be filled out and returned to Walnut Ridge School for every student.**

We look forward to working with you and your child as we make this school year a very special one.

*“If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others.”*

~ Dr. Haim Ginott