



Porter County Career and Technical Education Center Student Handbook

A Message From The Principal

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year and to a tradition of excellence at the Porter County Career and Technical Center (PCCTC) since 1990. Every adult in this building is here to help you be successful. You and your family will find this handbook helpful in learning about school policies and procedures. Have a great school year!

Porter County Career and Technical Education Participating Schools

Boone Grove High School	Chesterton High School	Hebron High School
Hobart High School	Kouts Junior/Senior High School	Morgan Township Junior/Senior High School
Portage High School	Washington Township High School	Wheeler High School
Valparaiso High School		

Porter County CTE Vision Statement

All students will be given the opportunity to reach their fullest potential as a citizen, professional, and lifelong learner in a positive, safe, and secure learning environment through a collaborative partnership of all stakeholders.

PCES Mission Statement

Providing a team approach to empower each student's pathway to success!

Student Support Services

The Porter County Career and Tech Center understands all of us need a variety of social assistance at some time in our lives. PCCTC offers student support services. Students may request permission to speak with a student support coordinator (SSC) at any time for any reason. Students will be met by a SSC in a timely manner. Students can also be referred to a student support coordinator by their teacher or administration.

Student Conduct

Students are responsible for their personal behavior. Students may be disciplined for on or off campus misconduct if their actions have a negative or direct impact on their school, programs, students, or staff. PCCTC is an extension of each high school, so students will adhere to the rules and regulations as described in each school's handbook. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to make themselves aware of all discipline policies and procedures at their home school and at PCCTC, as both sets of rules will be used to treat any disciplinary situation. The principal or his designee will contact the home school as well as the parents in the event of any disciplinary actions. Conduct viewed as just cause for disciplinary action shall include, but is not limited to, any violations listed on the discipline matrix.

Attendance Policy (See Policy 5200)

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to good performance in school and at work. Students have the responsibility of getting to class every day to be successful. Students should consult their teacher and follow directions concerning make-up work. All attempts to schedule medical appointments for outside of school hours should be made.

PCCTC classes follow the calendar of Valparaiso Community Schools when it comes to weather delays. If a student's home school is on a delay, the student does not need to attend a morning CTE session, unless some portion of the class is still meeting at their home school. If a student's home school is closed, a student is not expected to attend their CTE class.

Students and parents should not assume the home schools will contact the PCCTC about any absences.

An absence will be considered **excused** if a doctor's note, court excuse, a funeral excuse, or a college visit document are provided.

An absence will be considered **verified** if a parent/guardian or home school makes contact with PCCTC or CTE instructor. All absences must be verified within three (3) days of the absence.

An absence will be considered **unverified** if no contact is made with PCCTC.

The instructor will call home after three (3) absences.

Letters will be sent home for students who have five or more unverified absences. An attendance contract will be established when a student has five or more unverified absences.

Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Home schools will determine the final day of class for their students at the end of the school year.

Truancies are unexplained absences when the school and parents agree the student should have been in school.

Individual programs may have additional expectations/procedures.

School Cancellations

PCCTC will follow the same cancellation schedule as the Valparaiso Community Schools. Students are encouraged to follow their school system's cancellation policy in inclement weather. Students may listen to local radio FM stations 105.5, 95.9, and 103.9 for delays or cancellations. For any school closing or delay: students may log on to www.cancellations.com or to www.valpo.k12.in.us/. Any absences because of school closings or delays will be considered an **Administrative Absence** and not count against the student's attendance record. An administrative absence would also be recorded for things like a home school field trip day or not being provided a bus ride from the home school.

School Calendar

PCCTC will follow the following [calendar](#).

2023-2024 School Calendar



August 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023						
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October 2023						
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29	30	31				

November 2023						
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December 2023						
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31						

January 2024						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Aug 16	First Day of School for Students
Sep 4	Labor Day
Sep 29	AM Classes ONLY, NO PM CLASSES
Oct 16-17	Fall Break - No School
Nov 7	eLearning Day
Nov 22-24	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 21	AM Classes ONLY, NO PM CLASSES
Dec 22	NO SCHOOL-Teacher Records Day
Dec 25-Jan 5	Winter Break
Jan 8	Classes Resume
Jan 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Feb 16	NO SCHOOL-Weather Make-up Day
Feb 19	Presidents' Day
Mar 25-29	Spring Break
Apr 1	NO SCHOOL-Weather Make-up Day
Apr 12	AM Classes ONLY, NO PM CLASSES
May 7	eLearning Day
May 27	Memorial Day
May 29	Last Day for PM Classes
May 30	Last Day for AM Classes
May 31	NO SCHOOL-Teacher Records Day

February 2024						
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March 2024						
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31						

April 2024						
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May 2024						
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June 2024						
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July 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Board approved: 12/06/2022

Student Dress

The PCCTC prepares students for a variety of career areas. Student attire is different for each area of training and should be appropriate for the corresponding career. Some classes require uniforms or coveralls. The instructor will provide information on dress requirements. Building administration shall retain the final authority and determine the appropriateness of student dress. Violations of the student dress code may lead to disciplinary consequences. Please note:

- Students should wear shoes during the school day.
- Students may, at the discretion of the teacher, be required to furnish and wear appropriate safety devices.
- Students are not permitted to wear or use any electronic devices during school hours.

The following are not acceptable in school or on school property:

1. Shorts, dresses, skirts, or other similar clothing shorter than mid-thigh length when the student is seated
2. Sunglasses, hats, or coats worn inside the building
3. Inappropriately sheer, tight, or low-cut clothing that exposes traditionally private parts of the body. Men are not to wear sleeveless shirts.
4. Inappropriately sized pants that are not secured around the waist
5. Undergarments that are visible or uncovered midriffs
6. Any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, hair coloring, accessories, or body adornments that are or contain any advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches or pictures that:
 - Refer to drugs, tobacco, or weapons
 - Are of a sexual nature
 - By virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute denote membership in a gang
 - Are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, or legally libelous
 - Threaten the safety or welfare of any person
 - Promote discrimination against any class of people

Driving and Parking

Students driving cars, motorcycles, or bicycles are under the supervision and authority of the school upon entry into the parking lot and are expected to follow safe driving procedures. Driving to school and parking at PCCTC is a privilege. Specific driving behavior and responsibilities are expected as outlined below:

1. Speeding or careless driving on the streets bordering the school or in the parking lots will not be tolerated. Drug sniffing dogs will search our property to help us keep drugs off our premises.
2. Students shall not return to their cars during the school day without permission from the office.
3. Student drivers shall yield the right of way to buses and pedestrians.
4. Students shall park in the appropriately marked spaces and display approved student PCCTC hang tag.
5. The school provides a student parking area but assumes no responsibility for damage or theft.
6. The speed limit is 10 mph on school property.
7. Students driving to CTE classes should be extra cautious and not drive if their parents deem driving conditions to be unsafe. In such instance, they should call off by notifying their CTE teacher. These instances will be considered administrative absences, and any missed work may be made up with no penalty.

PCCTC will search vehicles when there is reasonable suspicion the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. Violations of these regulations will result in fines, suspension of driving privileges, or towing of the vehicle at the owner's expense.

Lockers

All lockers provided for student use remain the property of PCCTC. These lockers are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search pursuant to these guidelines. A student using the locker has, by statute, no expectations of privacy in said locker. No student shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker except with a lock approved by the administration. PCCTC is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Honor Code

Students, teachers, and administration of PCCTC are committed to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty is an action intended to obtain or assist in obtaining credit for work which is not one's own. Examples of academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Communicating with another student during an examination or quiz
- Copying material during an examination or quiz
- Allowing a student to copy from one's examination, quiz, or assignment
- Submitting falsified information for grading purposes
- Any other violation intended to obtain credit for work which is not one's own, including plagiarism

Photos and Video

The permission of the principal is required for any video or photography on school property.

Student Recognition Programs

Technology Honor Society

The Technology Honor Society will consist of high-achieving CTE students who have demonstrated the highest standards of academic excellence in a CTE field. CTE plays an essential role in the total educational process. The Technology Honor Society will reward good citizenship, a positive work ethic, and outstanding technical skills.

Criteria for admission into the Technology Honor Society are

- 1) Inductees are required to have a B or better average in their CTE program.
- 2) Inductees must have received a minimum of six credits in a CTE program.
- 3) Inductees must have junior or senior standing.
- 4) CTE instructors may establish additional criteria for inductees.
- 5) Inductees must have one sponsoring CTE instructor.
- 6) Inductees must be recommended by one other instructor from any discipline or an employer.
- 7) Induction will be limited to 10 per cent of the enrollment in each CTE program.
- 8) All candidates must be approved by the selection committee.

Outstanding Students of the Quarter

Teachers at PCCTC may nominate one morning student and one afternoon student for the "Outstanding Student of the Quarter" award. Criteria for this award are based on student academic achievement, good attendance, exceptional behavior, and community service.

Computer Technology and Networks

For students to use school and computer networks, students and parents must sign an agreement, which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Any misuse of computer or network access may result in suspension or revocation of computer and/or network privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by school officials. Misuse shall include the use of a home computer to interfere with the educational process.

Grievance Procedure

It is the policy of the Porter County Career and Technical Center to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. PCCTC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or individuals with disabilities, including limited English proficiency. If any student believes his rights have been violated, he or she may file a complaint by following the procedure listed below:

- 1) He/she will identify the problem and discuss the complaint with the Principal at PCCTC. A formal complaint must be made in writing.
- 2) The Principal will conduct an investigation.
- 3) The Principal will resolve the problem or refer the student to the home school to file a formal complaint to the School Corporations' Compliance Officer or Civil Rights Coordinator.

Americans with Disabilities Act (See Policy 2260)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but all individuals who have access to the Corporation's programs and facilities. The law defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- A. Has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- B. Has a record of such an impairment; or
- C. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

The Corporation has specific responsibilities under these two laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

High School Code of Responsible Behavior

(See Policies [5500](#), [5600](#), [5610.02](#), and [5611](#))

Philosophy

The primary focus of the Porter County Career and Technical Education Center is to create and maintain safe and caring schools which promote high expectations for behavior and learning, responsible choices, and success for all. Strict adherence to the Code of Conduct is required.

As students mature from childhood to adolescence to young adulthood, our practice will be to initially teach children to understand how their actions affect themselves and others, and expectations for acceptable behavior are based on our culture and civilization. We will guide students to assume increasing responsibility for making decisions for their individual behavior based upon the laws and rules of our community and society.

Through our actions with students, we will demonstrate and model compassion, kindness, and integrity so our children learn how to make good decisions, resolve conflicts peacefully, and work together cooperatively. Parental/Guardian support is essential for the proper development of our students.

We believe students have a right to attend school without fear and should be able to express themselves in their words and actions as individuals. However, this right to express one's self cannot be harmful, disrespectful, or disruptive to others or to the educational process.

Rights and Responsibilities

When a student fails to meet expectations or makes inappropriate choices, the student will be subject to a series of interventions and/or consequences with the goal of improving future behaviors. Behaviors which occur outside of school but have the effect of disrupting the educational process are subject to the consequences covered in this handbook.

When a student engages in actions considered irresponsible, the following process will occur:

Students will be afforded Minimum Due Process, which is defined as:

- The student will be informed of the alleged violation of this Code of Responsible Behavior;
- The student will have an opportunity to respond to the accusation;
- The student will be informed of the consequences for this action.

In assessing the consequence for the student, the age of the student, the frequency of the misbehavior, and the seriousness of the situation will all be taken into account.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the administration of student due process. The school will work together with the parent/guardian to monitor and correct irresponsible and inappropriate actions.

Schools will follow due process in instances of suspension (whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period of not more than ten school days) and expulsion (a denial of the right of a student to take part in any school function for any period greater than ten school days).

Any student recommended for expulsion shall be entitled to Formal Due Process as provided by law. Formal Due Process requires a written statement and notification to parent the school intends to seek expulsion and the parent/guardian has a right to a due process hearing with a Hearing Examiner.

The disciplinary interventions and/or consequences for Special Needs students will take into account the unique circumstances of their Individual Educational Plan and any behavior intervention plan and will be subject to procedural safeguards in accordance with state and federal regulations including Indiana's Article 7 and the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Consequences for Irresponsible Actions

The following is a list of actions subject to disciplinary action. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, but is a general list of actions which do not meet expectations for responsible behaviors, or are highly disruptive or illegal. While the Levels of Behavior are designed to follow a logical progression, the final determination of these responses rests with the building administration, who will take into consideration the results of any investigation and all relevant facts. Responses for an irresponsible action will always involve consequences and may involve other interventions as well.

Generally, Level One behaviors are behaviors which do not require administrator intervention and can be resolved at the point of contact between staff and students. Level Two and Three behaviors require a disciplinary referral. At this point, resolution rests with the administrator assigned to the behavior subject to all applicable due process requirements and within the general framework of possible consequences and responses.

Level One Behaviors

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Possible Interventions</i>	<i>Possible Consequences</i>
<p>Behaviors which:</p> <p><u>do not</u> significantly violate the rights of others</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><u>do not</u> endanger the safety of self or others</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><u>do not</u> appear to be chronic</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><u>do not</u> require administrator involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cellphone/ electronic device in unauthorized area • classroom disruption • dishonesty • disrespect to staff • horseplay • inappropriate use of equipment • littering • out of assigned area • public display of affection • put-downs/minor teasing • refusing to follow directives • tardy • truancy • using inappropriate language (isolated incident) 	<p>Closer monitoring/ proximity</p> <p>Describe and teach expected behavior</p> <p>Goal-setting</p>	<p>Apology</p> <p>Loss of class participation points</p> <p>Parent conference</p> <p>Redirection</p> <p>Restitution</p> <p>Teacher-issued detention</p>

Level Two Behaviors

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Possible Interventions</i>	<i>Possible Consequences</i>
<p>Behaviors which: <u>are chronic</u> Level One behaviors</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p><u>violate the</u> rights of others</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p><u>may endanger</u> the safety of self or others</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><u>require</u> administrator involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic dishonesty • defiance or disrespect • excessive absences • extortion • fight instigation • forgery, deception, misuse of any document • gambling • inappropriate language or gestures • insubordination • obscenity • provocation • throwing objects • unauthorized presence in an unsupervised area • vandalism/theft (minor) 	<p>Inform student of violation</p> <p>Contact local agencies who can provide support, which may include police contact or teen court referral</p> <p>Parent contact/conference</p>	<p>In-school suspension</p> <p>Out-of-school suspension</p> <p>Restitution</p> <p>Revocation of parking privileges</p>

Level Three Behaviors

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Possible Interventions</i>	<i>Possible Consequences</i>
<p>Behaviors which:</p> <p><u>are chronic</u></p> <p>Level Two behaviors</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p><u>violate</u> district or state policies or laws</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>endanger safety of self or others</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><u>require</u> administrator involvement and possible external assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arson • bomb threat • bullying/intimidation/harassment/hazing • drug/alcohol violations • drug paraphernalia violation • false alarms • fighting/assault/battery • gang-related activities • harassment: sexual, ethnic, racial, gender, or religious slurs • sexual misconduct • sexual harassment • technology-related offenses • cyberbullying • digital images • sexting • tobacco violation • threat or attack against a staff member • unlawful activity • vandalism/theft: felony • weapon/explosive device 	<p>Contact local agencies who can provide support, which may include police contact or teen court referral</p> <p>Parent Contact/Conference</p>	<p>Discipline referral</p> <p>Expulsion <i>(requires all formal aspects of due process)</i></p> <p>In-school suspension</p> <p>Out-of-school suspension</p> <p>Restitution</p> <p>Revocation of parking privileges</p> <p>Revocation of technology privileges</p>

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic Dishonesty includes the following behaviors:

- Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any assignment or exam.
- Using external assistance on an “in class” or “take home” examination, unless the instructor has authorized such assistance. This includes (but is not limited to) the use of tutors, books, notes, the Internet, calculators, and electronic devices.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit more than once without permission of the teacher.
- Allowing others to conduct research or to prepare work without authorization from the instructor. This includes (but is not limited to) commercial term-paper companies, web sites, and past papers/work of other students.
- Collaborating with other students on a single project and turning in multiple copies represented as individual work.
- Falsifying or inventing information or citations in an assignment or exam.
- Plagiarism. A student must not adopt or reproduce the ideas, words, photographs, illustrations, or statements of another person without acknowledgment. A student must give credit whenever quoting another person’s words; using another person’s idea, opinion, or theory; or borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative material — unless the information is common knowledge.
- Stealing, changing, destroying, or impeding another student’s work. Impeding another student’s work includes (but is not limited to) the theft or destruction of common resources to deprive others of the information they contain.
- Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Arson is the act of setting fire to the school or any part of the school or school premises.

Bomb Threat includes any act which indicates the presence of a bomb or other destructive material when in fact there is none.

Bullying and Intimidation

Under Indiana Law, “bullying” means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors, which are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile environment which:

- (1) Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student’s person or property;
- (2) Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student’s physical or mental health;
- (3) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s academic performance; or
- (4) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

School staff will comply with the reporting and investigation requirements in Indiana Law. Consistent with Indiana Law, every school will enable an anonymous reporting procedure. Witnesses to the bullying or intimidation of another student are encouraged to report it to a staff member. Failure to report bullying and/or intimidation may be cause for disciplinary action.

Class Disruption is any combination of actions which interfere with, interrupt, or create disorder to the extent the instruction cannot take place.

Consumption or Possession of Food or Drink in Unauthorized Areas: Students may only consume food or drink in the cafeteria and other designated areas. This includes beverages carried in and consumed from portable water bottles. Only those students with permission from the school nurse may consume beverages in classrooms.

Cyberbullying - See “Bullying” and “Technology-Related Offenses.”

Dishonesty includes those occasions in which students choose to be untruthful or fail to disclose information.

Drug and Alcohol Violations involve selling, purchasing, possessing, consuming, or distributing alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances. Participating in a plan to sell, purchase, process, possess, consume, or distribute these substances is also prohibited – including prescription medication prescribed for someone else. Being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance or any prescription medication prescribed for someone else is prohibited. The possession of look-alike drugs is also prohibited. These rules apply on school property or at any school-related activity or event, or while traveling to or from school or any school-related activity or event.

Drug Paraphernalia Violations involve selling, purchasing, possessing, distributing, or participating in a plan to sell, purchase, possess, or distribute drug paraphernalia. This includes items associated with illegal drugs such as rolling papers, pipes, clips, razor blades, lighters, and hypodermic needles. Possession of these items at school or at any school-related activity or event, or while traveling to or from a school-related activity or event, is prohibited.

Excessive Absences - see the attendance policy section of this document.

Extortion occurs when a student forces another student to give him or her something, including but not limited to money, through force or threats.

False Alarms are the actions of setting off an alarm or sprinkler system when there is no fire or emergency.

Fight Instigation includes instances in which a student or students motivate, encourage, or plan to fight or motivate/encourage others to fight.

Fighting includes instances in which harmful or offensive contact occurs with another person. Fighting can include but is not limited to assault, battery, and bruising.

Fighting (Verbal) - See “Provocation.”

Forgery is the alteration or falsification of documents (i.e., passes or permission slips) or signatures.

Gambling involves playing any games in which money or items of value can be won or lost.

Gang-Related Activity includes involvement in gangs or gang-related activities. No student on or near school property or at any school activity may show, wear, possess, use, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, image, symbol, or sign which may be viewed as evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang. This includes any badge, symbol, or sign which may be present in anything in the student’s possession while on school grounds or at a school-related activity. No student may commit any act or use any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, carving in hair, *etc.*) showing membership or affiliation in a gang. No student shall use any speech or commit any act promoting the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to: recruiting others for membership in a gang; requesting any person to pay for protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening; inciting others to physical violence; or committing any other illegal act or violation of school policies.

Harassment: Sexual, Ethnic, Racial, Gender, or Religious

Sexual Harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by any student to another student, or by a student to a staff member. This includes conduct of a sexual nature and may include verbal or physical sexual advances and/or comments of a sexual nature regarding physical or personality characteristics. Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when the allegedly harassed student has indicated, by his or her conduct or verbal objection, that such conduct is unwelcome. **Note: A student who has initially welcomed such conduct by active participation must give specific notice to the alleged harasser that such conduct is no longer welcome in order for subsequent conduct to be deemed unwelcome.**

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment or abuse.
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications.
- Unwelcome touching.
- Pressure for sexual activity.
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, or promotion.

Ethnic, racial, gender, or religious harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Written or oral innuendos, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, race, national origin, religious beliefs, or disabilities directed toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the school corporation; or conducting a "campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the Corporation.
- Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the school corporation.
- Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, hissing, or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the corporation.

False Reporting of Harassment

Students who knowingly file false charges against an employee or a student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse or embarrass said individual shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Hazing is an abusive, often humiliating form of initiation into or affiliation with a group (such as organizations, clubs, and athletic teams). It includes any willful action taken or situation created recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of another. Urging or encouraging hazing is also prohibited.

Horseplay involves such actions as pretend/play fighting, tapping, poking, smacking or pinching, pulling on others' clothing, or placing hands or feet on others which would place anyone in danger or if property damage may occur.

Inappropriate Language or Gestures includes behaviors and actions directed toward students/staff which are reasonably considered profane, vulgar, lewd, or obscene.

Insubordination and/or Disrespect includes those behaviors by which students refuse to respond to or follow the directions of staff members and/or act disrespectfully toward staff members. Examples of this kind of behavior include but are not limited to leaving a classroom without permission or obstructing staff in the performance of their duties.

Libel and Slander are two forms of defamation. **Libel** consists of printed communication whereas slander consists of oral communication. The actions of **Libel** and **Slander** consist of a false statement printed or broadcast about an individual which brings said person into public ridicule, contempt, or hatred, or inflicts injury. (Also see Technology-Related Offenses.)

Littering includes behavior which causes an area to be in disorder or in an unsanitary, unhealthy condition.

Lockers (Inappropriate Use): Students should not misuse or abuse their lockers, as it will be considered an act of vandalism. Students are not to share their lockers or give their locker combinations to others.

Obscenity includes those items or behaviors which an average person, when viewing the material or behavior and applying community standards for children of a relevant age, would find offensive and lacking in serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

Portable Electronic Equipment includes cellphones, pagers, laser pointers, iPods, or any other electronic device. (See Technology-Related Offenses.)

Procedure Violation is any behavior or action which does not follow established, school-wide expectations.

Provocation includes verbal confrontations with a student or staff member, fight instigation, and other aggressive gestures and behaviors.

Sexting - See "Technology-Related Offenses."

Tardiness to Class is the act of not being in the assigned classroom at the time the bell rings to begin class. See the Handbook section of this document.

Technology-Related Offenses:

Please refer to the Valparaiso Community Schools Technology Acceptable Use/Email Guidelines (Appendix B) for expectations and descriptions surrounding the use of VCS/PCCTC technology. In addition, the behaviors below are subject to Leveled Responses under the PCCTC Code of Responsible Behavior.

- **Electronic Devices:** See the Handbook section of this document.
- **Digital Images:** Electronic devices capable of taking and/or transmitting digital photographic images can create a risk factor in locker rooms, restrooms, private areas, and other locations where students and/or staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy. In addition, because of their capacity to be used to carry out acts of academic dishonesty, use of electronic devices for the purposes of taking digital photographic images in the school is strictly prohibited.
- **Cyberbullying** occurs when a student harasses, mistreats, or makes fun of another person online or while using a personal communication device or other electronic device. Violations off campus which cause a disruption of the school environment are subject to appropriate school discipline.
- **Sexting** is sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude photos or sexually suggestive messages through any personal communication device or electronic equipment.

Threat or Attack Against Others involves any display of aggressive or negative gestures toward another individual. Written, verbal, or physical behavior and places another person in reasonable fear of harm is prohibited. Actions which have the effect of threatening, insulting, demeaning, or intimidating in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school and the school environment are also prohibited. Violations off campus which cause a disruption of the school environment are subject to appropriate school discipline.

Tobacco Violations involve the possession or use of tobacco products or paraphernalia (such as lighters) by students. This policy applies when students are at school or at any school-related activity or event, or while traveling to or from school or any school-related activity or event. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, or tobacco in any other form, including smokeless tobacco which is loose, cut, shredded, ground, powdered, compressed, or leaf tobacco.

Truancy is a student's absence from school or class without a parent/legal guardian's or the school's knowledge. Any absence not phoned in or verified by a parent or legal guardian within three (3) days of the student's return will be labeled as truant. Truancies accumulate throughout the school year. Should a student be found truant from school, the child's parent will be contacted and relevant legal authorities, such as Project Attend, may be notified. Student truancy may be considered an act of academic misconduct, which may result in loss of credit for missed class period(s) and may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to loss of work permits and/or driver's license.

Unauthorized Presence in Unsupervised Areas is defined as being in an area without prior authorization from staff. Examples include but are not limited to athletic facilities, locker rooms, auditoriums, science labs, computer labs, resource centers, and classrooms.

Unlawful Activity includes any activity or behavior which violates the laws of the State of Indiana, or conviction under the laws of any other state in the United States, which takes place either while school is in session or on weekends, holidays, school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions. A student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order to protect persons on school property. Note: **Trespassing** is considered an unlawful activity; students who have been suspended or expelled are not permitted on school grounds.

Vandalism/Theft includes behaviors such as theft, destruction of school property, and possession or sale of stolen materials. Note: Vandalism causing a loss of more than \$300 is considered **major vandalism**. Vandalism causing a loss of less than \$300 is considered **minor vandalism**.

Weapons/Explosive Devices: No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any weapon or destructive device while on school property. The following devices, while not a complete list, are considered weapons or explosive devices:

1. any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or forced air;
2. any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than 4 ounces;
3. any missile, rocket, or similar device having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce;
4. any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled;
5. any explosive, incendiary, or overpressure device which is configured as a bomb, a grenade, a rocket with a propellant charge of more than 4 ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter ounce, a mine, a Molotov cocktail, or any device substantially similar to any of these items;
6. any knife, taser, electronic stun gun, equipment, chemical substance, or other material in the manner it is used, or could ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury;
7. bullets or gun ammunition of any kind.
8. any toy or look-alike weapon which, in the judgment of school staff, can be used to deceive others into believing the weapon is real.