

The Villages®  
Charter School

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Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed citizens can change the world;  
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead

2023/2024 SCHOOL YEAR

**Parent Involvement  
Handbook**



The Villages®  
Charter School

[tvcs.org](http://tvcs.org)

***Celebrate the Spirit of Volunteerism!***

**Our mission is to provide quality learning opportunities that promote personal responsibility and inspire children's thirst for knowledge.**

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## *Vision and Core Values*

### *Vision*

We are a school where a supportive community of students, parents and staff tailor the educational experience to meet individual needs, resulting in successful, well-rounded, responsible individuals with an entrepreneurial spirit.

### *Core Values*

- **HOSPITALITY** - We create an atmosphere of support where people feel welcome, comfortable, and challenged to learn and grow.
- **HARD WORK** - We are committed to excellence in all we do. Our high expectations and data driven decisions are reflected in our work ethic, personal pride at school, and in our community. We strive to exceed everyone's expectations with both effort and results.
- **STEWARDSHIP** - We do what is in the best interest of the student, family, school, and community. We treat all resources as ours to nourish and protect.
- **CREATIVITY** - We encourage and embrace innovation, risk taking, and "out-of-the-box" thinking for the purpose of finding a better way.



## Celebrate the Spirit of Volunteerism!

At The Villages Charter School, our students are surrounded by the ***Spirit of Volunteerism!*** Each and every day you will find parents who are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to insure the success of their child's education and as a result, positively impacting each and every student they come in contact with.

Our students are in a very unique environment. They are surrounded by a phenomenal group of working parents. All of them bring with them their own creative talents and experiences and are willing to share those gifts with our children in new ways every day.

- Helping with classroom activities
- Assisting staff in our offices and clinics
- Reading with our students
- Celebrating special occasions with us
- Serving lunch in our cafeterias
- Reading and AR testing on parenting books
- Hosting/lecturing during our Career Expo/Career Days
- Restocking books on the shelves of our libraries
- And so much more!

An essential element for the success of students at The Villages Charter Schools is the inclusion of parents in our day-to-day activities.

Throughout this manual we hope you will find meaningful and enjoyable ways to utilize your P.I. time. We look forward to you celebrating your child's educational experience with us!

### ***Going Above and Beyond is Rewarded!***

At VCS, we recognize that there are many parents who are willing to go above and beyond. We thank you for being great role models, showing hard work, hospitality, stewardship and creativity in action; living our core values. ***Your efforts will be recognized at the first H.E.R.D. meeting of the new school year (September) for the highest level you have reached the previous school year with certificates and special tokens of appreciation...***

- Doubling your minimum required hours-99 hours: Green Buffalo level
- Reaching 100-149 involvement hours: Gold Buffalo level
- Reaching 150-199 involvement hours: Platinum Buffalo level
- A total of 200+ involvement hours: White Bison level

## How P.I. Works

Parent Involvement (P.I.) is mandatory for your child to attend The Villages Charter School. It is our hope that the following information will prove helpful as we journey through the school year together. While involvement may take many forms, our charter and The Villages Charter School Board have determined a minimal acceptable level of participation for each family, as well as specific areas where involvement has the largest impact on student success.

### ***Who Can Earn P.I. Time?***

The qualifying parent(s)/guardian(s), who are classified as a: father/mother/stepfather/stepmother and/or spouse, legal guardian or associated parent\* are responsible for earning P.I. time.

\*The Associated Parent—The Villages Charter School is sensitive to the needs of the single parent. In the absence of a second parent, a child's legal parent/guardian may appoint one adult per school year to assist their family with parent involvement responsibilities.

**Contact the Enrollment Office at 352-259-6848 for more information.**

### ***How Much Time is Required?***

- The parent/guardian(s) must complete \*20 hours every year for each school on campus where children are enrolled.
- Ten (10) of your total hours must be informational hours.
- The Primary Center, the Intermediate Center and the 4th & 5th Grade Center are one Elementary school and therefore count as one school.
- The maximum number of hours required for any family will not exceed 50 hours per school year.
- As a parent/guardian you may contribute time at any school, regardless of where your child attends.

While other family members, relatives or friends are encouraged to participate as community volunteers, their time cannot be calculated as P.I. hours but will go toward our community volunteer hour total which is counted and helps our school earn awards based on total involvement.

*Continued*

## How Do I Earn My Time?

The time frame for completing parental involvement hours begins the day after the closing of one school year until the last day of the next school year. Please plan your activities and meet your obligation in a timely manner each school year.

## What Are the Different Type of Hours I Can Earn?

Parent Involvement opportunities are divided into one of three categories: Service Hours, Informational Hours/Meetings or Donations.

**SERVICE HOURS** - are accumulated by physically working or helping with projects, programs or events that you have been *requested* to help with by your child’s teacher or by a staff member. Such events might include:

- Helping in a classroom
- Completing special projects at home
- Helping with special programs or athletic events
- Chaperoning field trips
- Volunteering in other areas in the schools

**INFORMATIONAL HOURS/MEETINGS\*** - are classified as meetings, events or seminars where information is being shared with you that pertains to or influences your child’s education. Such meetings might include:

- Orientation/Open House
- Grade Level Meeting Nights
- Buffalo H.E.R.D. Meetings
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Athletic Informational Meetings
- Field Trip Meetings
- Parent Accelerated Reading Books
- Year End Surveys (School & Teacher)

\*You are required to earn 10 hours in this area

**DONATIONS** - You can also receive P.I. time for your family by making donations. Donations contribute to the success of our schools and are a great way to utilize P.I. time. In order to make a donation, the item(s) donated must be *requested* by a teacher or staff member. You may make donations to earn up to 50% of the required P.I. time per year. Donations can be made in a variety of ways:

### MONETARY DONATIONS

- Materials Donations (construction paper, craft supplies)
- Prize Donations (Buffalo Romp, treasure boxes)
- Athletic Donations (healthy snacks, sports drinks)
- Clinic Donations (water, sports drinks)
- Store purchased snacks, baked items or paper goods
- And so much more!

### P.I. TIME FOR DONATIONS IS CALCULATED AS:

A \$50 Donation=1/2 hour of P.I. time.

*Time is accumulated and posted as donations are made.*

**HOMEMADE ITEM DONATIONS** - Baking items for class parties, special events and functions is a huge help to our teachers and tons of fun for our students when their parents involve them in the process too! While spending quality time with your child, you will be reinforcing valuable skills that they have learned in school, such as: measurement, addition, subtraction and time calculations.

In an effort to provide consistency to the time given for the donation of homemade items, this chart will help provide a guideline for your donation.

QTY	ITEMS	P.I. TIME
1	Cake	1 hour
1	Main Dish	1 hour
1	Fruit/Vegetable Tray	1.5 hours
1	Sandwich Platter	2 hours
12	Brownies/Cookies	1 hour
24	Brownies/Cookies	1.5 hours
	Each additional dozen	.5 hour

**PLEASE NOTE:** To receive P.I. time for donations, a *request* for the donation must be made by a teacher or staff member.

## Special Opportunities

**PARENT ACCELERATED READING (AR)** - Our parent AR reading option has become a very exciting part of our Parent Involvement program! Each school's Media Center offers a great "school-age specific" selection of parenting books for you to check out. Upon completion of the book you will take an AR test. With a passing grade of 60% or better, 2 hours of informational P.I. time will be added to your account.

**MINDSET VIDEOS** - VCS now offers an opportunity to complete informational hours online. Learn about the Growth Mindset by watching videos and reading articles that address how the research of Dr. Carol Dweck who states that the way students think impacts their attitudes toward learning and how they perform in the classroom. Each lesson and an accompanying survey may earn eligible parents/guardians 30 minutes of informational time. While both parents/guardians may review the videos and articles, credit will be awarded once per lesson per household. Please visit the Media Center website for your child's school to learn more.

**ATHLETIC NEEDS** - The athletic programs at the charter middle and high schools offer a great selection of events to become involved with. If your child participates in school athletics, we suggest that you earn at least 2 hours of service time within athletics. Athletics utilize the talents of our parents in many ways! Ticket takers, concessions, gate keepers and scorekeepers are always needed. If helping athletics from your home fits into your schedule better, we like to have one parent wash team uniforms for the season. This task would need to be coordinated with the team coach and time is based on the number of loads washed, dried and folded. P.I. time for doing laundry is calculated as 1 hour per game and time is given at the end of the season. Regardless if your child plays/participates in the sport or not, you are always welcome to help out.

### How is P.I. Time Tracked & Reported?

For every opportunity to earn P.I. time, we ask that each parent be responsible for the the usage of specific QR codes at in-person meetings, answering questions at virtual meetings, and signing in and out for in-school volunteering and meetings. If signing in/out, please give your name, the qualifying parent's name (if you are an associated parent), and the name of the student you are doing parent involvement time for. Please check your Parent Involvement Account online periodically to ensure that you are being credited for all of your work. **You may obtain your username and password from the Enrollment Office at 352-259-6848.**

Discrepancies should be reported immediately so that we may insure the accuracy of your account. It is your responsibility to contact the school if there are any concerns.

## Checking Your P.I. Time

**READING YOUR P.I. REPORT** - After the beginning of school each year, a letter will be sent to the qualifying parent of each family. The letter will contain your family username and password that will enable you to check your Parent Involvement account online, 24/7, on the VCS website: **www.tvcs.org** under the Family Information / Buffalo Adventures / Parental Involvement link.

Your account will look similar to this:

### PARENT INFORMATION

Smith, John

Family Required Hours: 40    Hours Earned: 85    Required Hours Remaining: 0

Informational Meeting Hours: 10    Service Hours: 69

Donation Hours: 6    Dollars Donated: \$615.44

Recognition Level Reached: Green Buffalo Level

Date	Time	Hours	Donated Dollars	Allowed Hours	F A C	Code	Description
<b>Informational Meetings - 10 Hours minimum</b>							
8/16/16	3:30PM	1		1	Elem	32	<b>Orientation</b> Meet the teacher
8/16/16	11:00AM	1		1	Middle School	32	<b>Orientation</b> VCMS
8/30/16	6:00PM	1		1	Middle School	28	<b>Athletic Info Meeting</b>
9/11/16	5:30PM	1		1	Middle School	30	<b>Informational Meeting</b> Keys Trip
9/11/16	7:00PM	0.5		0.5	Elem	31	<b>Open House</b> Thanks for coming!

## Chaperoning/Fingerprinting/Driving

**CHAPERONING** - This is just one of the many fun ways to enjoy utilizing your Parent Involvement time. When the opportunity arises you will receive information from your child's teacher asking for volunteers to chaperone their field trip, special event or outing. You will be notified in advance of the number of hours to be awarded for each trip.

To insure the safety of our students it is school-wide policy that any parent/guardian accompanying a student group must have on file a completed Volunteer Application and copy of your driver's license. Volunteer applications may be picked up from your child's school main office. You will only need to complete one Volunteer Application per school year, for the entire campus. Forms must be returned by the required deadline as a background check will be performed.

**FINGERPRINTING & BACKGROUND CHECKS** - Some parent involvement requires fingerprinting or a background check. You will be notified if an opportunity has this requirement.

Please contact your child's school secretary for information on how to set up fingerprinting appointment with Fieldprint, Inc. The cost is \$45.00\* and can be paid online when you schedule your appointment with a credit or debit card. Please schedule your appointment in a timely manner. Your fingerprinting will remain on file with us for two years, at which time it must be renewed.



**DRIVERS** - If you volunteer to drive students on a school sponsored trip or event, you will be required to have a completed volunteer application, a copy of your driver's license, proof of current insurance, and completed and cleared fingerprinting background check on file with the school.

\* Price is subject to change.

## BUFFALO H.E.R.D.

**BUFFALO H.E.R.D.** - As the parent of a Villages Charter School student you are an honorary member of the parent/teacher organization at The Villages Charter School known as the Buffalo H.E.R.D. (Helping Educate Responsibly Developing Children).

Meetings are hosted the first Tuesday of each month (excluding January) either in person or online. At H.E.R.D. meetings you will be updated on the events and progress taking place in your child's school. You will also learn about upcoming special events, meetings, and H.E.R.D. sponsored fundraisers. This is a great opportunity for you to ask questions and learn more about the whole charter school experience. Meetings usually last 1 hour. On special occasions, 2-hour seminar meetings will be hosted and offer an array of educational lectures for you to attend.

*Informational P.I. time is earned by attending these meetings.*

### H.E.R.D. SPONSORED EVENTS

Visit the H.E.R.D. link on the VCS website for information about these events. Special events in the past have included...Founders' Day Festival, Buffalo Basket Auction, Running with the Herd 5K, BBQ Bash, and the VCS Golf Tournament.



Fundraising at The Villages Charter School has far exceeded the expectations of most nationally based organizations! Since the inception of The Villages Charter School our parents have helped raise funds to allow many of the special events and celebrations we have here at The Villages Charter School, and we are always looking for new ways to expand our horizons. We attribute this success to the dedicated group of parents within The Villages Charter School.

*We look forward to seeing you at a meeting soon!*

# School Calendar

## How We Communicate

We consider communication the most valuable tool we use in The Villages Charter Schools. It is extremely important to us that we not only make ourselves available to you, but also make as much school related information available to you, at all times. We encourage you to visit our website where many of your questions may be answered at [tvcs.org](http://tvcs.org). Our P.I. Calendar lists up-to-date parent involvement opportunities across campus.

### Parent Involvement opportunities, upcoming programs and special event listings can also be found in:

- Classroom fliers and letters home
- **Buffalo H.E.R.D.** Meetings
- Special event brochures
- Via Skyward / School Messenger
- School bulletin boards, and
- Via E-mail

If at any time you are unable to fulfill a volunteer obligation that you have committed to, please contact the school as soon as possible, to open that position to another parent and to ensure we have coverage for all needs.

Each of The Villages Charter School sites has a Parent Involvement Coordinator that will be happy to help you with any parent involvement questions.

*Please feel free to contact us at:*

#### Elementary School

**Buffalo Ridge Campus** 352-259-2300

**Middleton Campus** 352-259-6820

#### Middle School

**Buffalo Ridge Campus** 352-259-0044

**Middleton Campus** 352-259-6860

**High School** 352-259-3777

July '23						
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					

27 New Teachers Report  
31 Returning Teachers Report

August '23						
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		

7 Non-instructional Staff Report  
8 Orientation  
10 1st Day for Students

September '23						
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						

4 Labor Day - No School\*

October '23						
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				

12 1st 9 Weeks Ends  
16 No School\*  
16 Teacher Professional Day  
20 Report Cards

November '23						
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		

20-22 Fall Break Camp (PK1-5th)  
20-24 Fall Break  
27 Students Return

December '23						
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					

22 Last Day Before Break  
22 2nd 9 Weeks Ends  
23 Winter Break Begins  
26-29 Winter Break Camp (PK1-5th)

January '24						
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					

2-5 Winter Break Camp (PK1-5th)  
8 No School\*  
8 Teacher Professional Day  
9 Students Return  
12 Report Cards  
15 MLK Day - No School

February '24						
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					

19 Presidents Day - No School\*

March '24						
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					

13 3rd 9 Weeks Ends  
21 Report Cards  
22 No School\*  
22 Teacher Professional Day  
25-29 Spring Break (PK1-5th Camp)

April '24						
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					

1 Students Return  
26 No School\*  
26 Teacher Professional Day

May '24						
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					

24 Last Day for Students  
24 4th 9 Weeks Ends  
25 VHS Graduation  
27 Memorial Day

June '24						
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						

6 Last Day for Teachers

QUARTER LENGTHS
<b>1st Quarter</b> 8/10-10/12 (45 days)
<b>2nd Quarter</b> 10/13-12/22 (45 days)
<b>3rd Quarter</b> 1/9-3/13 (45 days)
<b>4th Quarter</b> 3/14-5/24 (45 days)

START & DISMISSAL TIMES	
<b>Buffalo Ridge Campus</b>	<b>Middleton Campus</b>
<b>Primary Center</b> (Grades K-1) 7:45am-2:35pm	<b>K-8 School</b> (Grades K-5) 7:45am-2:35pm
<b>Intermediate Center</b> (Grades 2-3) 7:40am-2:30pm	<b>K-8 School</b> (Grades 6-8) 7:55am-2:55pm
<b>4th &amp; 5th Grade Center</b> (Grades 4-5) 7:50am-2:40pm	<b>High School</b> (Grades 9-12) 7:40am-2:35pm
<b>Middle School</b> (Grades 6-8) 7:55am-2:55pm	

Supervision of students is offered between the hours of 6:30am and 6:30pm. \*Indicates a designated school make-up day, if necessary. All teacher professional days and weekends attached to holidays are student holidays.

