

## **VEGA ACADEMY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Every student has the right to learn in a safe, healthy, and engaging environment. This core belief guides the implementation of the Safe Schools Act, the Code of Conduct, and the development of policies to ensure our schools are safe and supportive places to learn. A positive and inclusive school environment is essential for students to succeed. Staff, students, parents, and community partners have a part to play in making our schools safe. VEGA Academy's policies have been developed in accordance with provincial legislation and Ministry of Education directives to ensure schools are safe and caring communities.

### **Well-Being School Team**

Each school has a well-being team. Well-being is fundamental to overall student success. The team is composed of students, parents, teachers, support staff, community partners, and the Principal.

### **VEGA Academy's Expectations Regarding Students' Responsibilities, Achievement, and Attendance**

#### **Student Responsibilities**

##### **Missed Assignments**

When students miss Academy, they are responsible for finding out about any assignments that they missed. They can do so by consulting with the Dean of Students, and contacting class members and/or teachers. If the illness is a protracted one, the family should contact the student's dean for assistance. Students must be prepared to make up tests and/or quizzes within two days of their return to Academy unless arrangements for an extension have been made with the teacher. The maximum extension is one week. Students who must be absent for scheduled medical procedures or for religious reasons are asked to turn in work in advance or make arrangements with their teachers.

It is the Academy's intent to receive all required student submissions in order to make the best possible judgements regarding student achievement and to be able to provide feedback to the student to improve their learning. The Academy follows the guidelines provided by *Growing Success* (page 43) in its approach to missed and late assignments.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Living with integrity, in and out of the classroom, is part of the Academy's mission. Academic dishonesty is considered a major infraction of Academy rules and may be handled by the honor board. Cheating or plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Academy. Plagiarism is using another person's material in a paper or presentation without giving proper credit to the author. Cheating includes copying someone else's homework, copying information from the internet or other published material, or dishonestly acquiring information about a test. Cheating also includes assisting another student in either of these activities. Expectations can differ from class to class, so students must be sure they understand teacher expectations. In-class lessons will include direct teaching with clear examples of proper citation of others' academic work.

Academic integrity also includes the submission of documentation that outlines students' previous achievement for the purposes of a PLAR assessment.

#### **Acceptable Use Policy**

Students at VEGA Academy are expected to follow our Acceptable Internet Use Policy. The policy is shared with the students and parents at the time of the student's registration and is signed by the student as well as the parent(s) for students under the age of 18. (See Appendix A at the end of this document.)

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to be on time for classes, assemblies, class meetings, appointments, and Academy service assignments. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in the Academy building on time. The main building is open from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. each day.

Students who arrive at Academy more than 30 minutes before their first scheduled class must sign in with security at the main gate or inside the registration office. This is important for accountability in the event of an emergency.

While in class, students are expected to follow their daily schedules and attend classes, activities, and other Academy obligations. Participation in class, collaboration and engagement with the teacher, peers and the learning materials are fundamental to students' success at the Academy.

**Staying inside VEGA Academy building during Academy hours (except for lunch) is also expected.**

### **Lateness**

Students who are late to Academy for any reason must first report to the registration office to officially check in. This rule applies even though time spent checking in at the attendance office will further delay the student's arrival to class. The reason for a late arrival must be provided by a parent within two days via an excuse note or phone call. The excuse note may be handed in or submitted electronically through the VEGAacademy.com parent portal by using the Absence Note form.

### **Absence**

If a student will be absent from or late to the Academy for any reason, a parent should inform the registration office by submitting an excuse note electronically through the VEGAacademy.com parent portal by using Day Absence Note form. If sending a note through the parent portal or making a phone call is not possible, a written excuse note must be submitted within two Academy days of the absence.

### **Partial-day absence**

Students who miss a morning class must report to the attendance office to officially check in. This rule applies even though time spent checking in at the attendance office will further delay the student's arrival to class. The reason for a late arrival must be provided by a parent within two days via an excuse note or phone call. The excuse note may be handed in or submitted electronically through the VEGAacademy.com parent portal by using the Absence Note form.

Students who will miss a class because they are leaving Academy early must sign out in the registration office upon departure. Students will only be released to parents, other authorized persons as specified under Early Pickup within the Health & Emergency Form section of the online enrollment contract, or other persons authorized by the parents prior to the Academy's release of the student. Parents

acknowledge and agree that the Academy is not responsible for the student after that student has been released by the parents.

**Students returning to Academy after leaving Academy early must sign in at the registration office upon arrival.**

### **Excessive absenteeism**

Students who have more than 20 absences (= 25 hours out of 110) per year in a full-year course or more than 10 in a semester course for reasons other than required Academy commitments may be denied credit in that class. In such cases, an attendance review with the student, the student's parents, the student's advisor, and the Academy principal, will be convened. Parents remain financially responsible for all tuition and other payments in the event the Academy denies credit under this section.

## **VEGA Academy's Code of Conduct and Safe Schools Policy**

### **Code of Conduct**

To achieve success, students must adhere to the school's Code of Conduct and Safe Schools Policy. Both of these are presented, reviewed, acknowledged and signed at registration. There is zero-tolerance for actions and behaviour that is in direct violation of the school's values and standards of conduct.

See Appendix B at the end of this document.

### **To ensure a safe environment, students must:**

- respect the authority of all staff (administrators, teachers, office staff, caretakers)
- carry a current student card and provide their name in full upon request to any staff member
- not wear jackets/coats in the classroom or library
- not use an unassigned locker
- treat personal and school property with respect
- dress in accordance with Academy policy
- follow the Academy policy on use of personal electronics
- follow COVID-19 policies and procedures as set out by Toronto Public Health and the Academy

### **Behaviour that will not be tolerated:**

- harassment, intimidation, bullying, racism, sexism, homophobia of any kind
- abusive language or gestures
- threatening or performing acts of violence, fighting
- possession of weapons or replica weapons on school property
- possession/use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol or illicit drugs on school property

- littering, vandalism, willful destruction of school property
- gambling on school property
- possession/use of laser pointers on school property
- aiding/inciting harmful behaviour
- opposition to authority

### **Consequences for failure to comply with the Code of Conduct:**

- informal interview and counselling of students
- before or after school detentions and lunch detentions
- formal interview with an administrator; parents/guardians may be invited to participate in the process
- behaviour/performance contract and probation
- restitution-financial or other restitution may be expected to compensate for damages to school or private property
- withdrawal of privileges, including co-curricular and extra-curricular
- detention
- suspension
- expulsion

### **Progressive Discipline**

The staff at VEGA Academy will consistently address concerns regarding school safety in a way that supports and protects all of our students. We adhere to the following principles of Progressive Discipline:

- The goal of our code of conduct is to support a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach their full potential.
- All inappropriate student behaviour, including bullying, will be addressed.
- Responses to behaviours that are contrary to our code of conduct will be developmentally appropriate.
- Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of preventions, interventions, supports, and consequences that build skills for healthy relationships and promote positive behaviours.
- The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the school are implemented to reinforce positive behaviours and help students make good choices.
- Our administrators will consider all mitigating and other factors, as required by the Education Act and as set out in Ontario Regulation 472/0.

The Code of Conduct is shared with the students and parents at the time of the student's registration and is signed by the student as well as the parent(s) for students under the age of 18.

## **Additional Information Provided and Collected at Time of Registration**

### **Ethical Conduct**

It is the school's expectation that all members of our community conduct themselves in an ethical manner. Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.

### **Medical Concerns**

#### **Sabrina's Law**

This law ensures that all schools have policies and procedures in place to address anaphylaxis in schools, which includes providing instruction to staff and guidance on the administration of medication. At the time of registration, students and parents are asked to inform VEGA Academy about any health risks associated with a student's allergies.

#### **Ryan's Law**

This law ensures that all schools support students with asthma and protect their health by allowing them to carry their inhalers. At the time of registration, students and parents are asked to inform VEGA Academy about any health risks associated with asthmatic conditions and students' need to carry an inhaler.

#### **Rowan's Law**

This law is designed to create a safer environment for competitive amateur athletes, children and youth to play sports. At the time of registration, students and parents are informed of steps the school is taking to ensure students' safety during physical activities.

### **Immunization Records**

Ontario's Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) requires that children and adolescents attending primary or secondary school be appropriately immunized against designated diseases, unless they have a [valid exemption](#). All immunization requirements for school attendance align with [Ontario's publicly funded immunization schedule](#). Provincial routine immunization schedule begins during pregnancy and continues into adulthood. As per Ministry of Health regulations, at the time of registration, students are asked to provide proof of routine immunization to the school. Students who are unable to provide their immunization record, may face suspension from school.