

Welcome

The Volinia Alternative School is pleased to welcome new and returning students to our program. A student's acceptance is based on a screening committee's recommendation that our program is suitable for the student and that the student is sincere in wanting to complete middle or high school in a learning style unique to our school.

Nearly every person in the program is participating for the essentially the same reason—to work toward a high school diploma. We want each student to reach that goal as quickly as possible. The staff asks that each student help make Volinia a relaxed and friendly place to work and to learn.

Volinia Alternative School is primarily a program of choice. Prior to enrollment, students and parents are asked to make a commitment to the program and to the positive growth it promotes. Contact with parents or guardians, probation officers, counselors and other school district personnel will occur through out the school year.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide positive and caring learning experiences in which students are expected to meet challenging academic expectations set forth by the state. Students will also have the opportunity to achieve the outcomes necessary to direct their lives toward making choices that will help them become cooperative, self-sufficient and responsible citizens.

Equal Education Opportunity

It is the policy of this district to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. In compliance with Title IX of the educational Amendments of 1972 as amended, and part 86 of the Rules and Regulations issued by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Board of Education of the Marcellus Community Schools has affirmed that: "...no person shall, on the basis of sex, race, or religion, be excluded from, participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity..."

Graduation

No student of Volinia School can graduate ahead of his or her graduating class.

Graduation Requirements – Beginning with the Class of 2011

<u>Core Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English Language Arts	4 credits
*Mathematics	4 credits
– Algebra 1 Geometry, Algebra 2, Math or math-related course in senior year	
Science	3 credits
– Biology, Physics (or Chemistry), 1 additional science course	
*Social Studies.....	3 credits
– US History, World History, ½ Civics (Gov't),, ½ Economics	
*Health & Physical Ed	1 credit
*Visual, Performing.....	1 credit
or Applied Arts	
Electives	7 credits

Total 23 credits

Online Learning Experience
Course, learning, or integrated learning experience

*modifications can be made sparingly, in compliance with the High School Graduation Requirements PA 123 and PA 124.

The completion of the Michigan Merit Exam is a graduation requirement and will be completed in the junior year.

Classes Previous to 2011

English	3
Math	2
Science	2
Social Studies.....	1.5
U.S. History.....	1
Government.....	.50
Computer.....	.50

Additional Courses

Fine Arts, Practical Arts, Work

Voc. Ed.....	3
Electives	9.5
Total	23

Credits may be awarded by way of:

Classes

Skills center/vocational education

Work experience

Family/homemaker experience

Testing

Military Service

7. Arranged independent course work

The completion of the Michigan Merit Exam is a graduation requirement and will be completed in the junior year.

Volinia Grading System

The school year consists of 2 semesters. Each semester is divided into two 9 week marking periods. Report cards are issued at the conclusion of each marking period. Students and parents are encouraged to review report cards and to contact teachers or the school office with any questions.

If a student receives a grade below 60%, he or she will receive an incomplete (I) for that class. All students who receive an incomplete may be allowed to make up their work and have their grade changed to a 'D'; however, the student must first have teacher approval. Approval for grade changes will be considered only under extenuating circumstances.

High school students are expected to achieve a minimum of 60% on all projects, assignments, quizzes and tests. In some instances, students will be allowed to re-submit assignments that are of inferior quality and to re-take course tests/assessments that are scored below 60%. However, all work re-submissions and test re-takes are to be completed before the end of the marking period. Teachers reserve the right to enforce their own classroom policy as to if, when and how these re-takes and re-submissions are to be completed.

Attendance

We believe that responsible attendance is important and students are expected to attend school every day. Volinia students who miss 7 days, either excused or unexcused, may not receive credit for that marking period. There is an appeals process for students who must miss more than 7 days. Appeals must be submitted in a timely manner and will be considered only if the student has successfully completed course outcomes.

Dress Code

Students, in conjunction with their parents, have the responsibility to dress and groom themselves in a manner that does not detract from the educational process. Revealing, vulgar attire and clothing supporting illegal activities, substances or profanity are prohibited. Clothes that depict allegiance to a group, club or gang are prohibited. Coats, outerwear, jackets and non-prescription sunglasses shall not be worn in the building.

When and Where the Code of Conduct Applies

The Code of student conduct applies before, during and after school:

When a student is at school

“at school” means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus, or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event, whether or not it is held on school premises;

When a student’s conduct at any other time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintained order and discipline, or on protecting the safety and welfare of students or school district staff; and

When a student is using school telecommunications networks, accounts, or other district services.

Fire, Lockdown and Tornado Drills

Fire Drills: The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. The alarm signal for fire drills consists of a continuous, high pitched siren.

Tornado Drills: The alarm signal for tornados consists of a continuous, lower pitched siren sound. Students will follow the safety procedures as directed by their teachers. Students are to remain quiet during the drill.

Lock Down drills: Lock down drills are those in which students are restricted to the interior of the school buildings/ locked classrooms and the buildings/classrooms are secured. Drills will occur at least 2 times per year. The alarm system for lock downs consists of a public address system announcement.

Student Valuables

Students are encouraged to leave personal items of value at home. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment and non essential money are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The school/ school staff cannot be responsible for their safe keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

Homework

The assignment of homework can be expected. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the MEAP and Michigan Merit Exams as well as for graduation.

Vacations During the School Year

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the principal and the student's teachers to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip.

Use of Breath-Test Instruments

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized, reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness. The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school district to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, sent home for disciplinary reasons, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas the school determines to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Aiding or Abetting Violations of School Rules

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decisions-making regarding their behavior.

Bullying

Any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause to threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

Bullying – intimidation of others by acts, such as but not limited to:

- threatened or actual physical harm;
- unwelcome physical contact;
- threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications;
- taking or extorting money or property;
- damaging or destroying property;
- blocking or impeding student movement;
- electronically transmitted acts – i.e., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA or wireless hand held device) for text messaging, instant messaging, blog web sites or online bullying through social networking sites (e.g., myspace.com, facebook.com) to harass through unpleasant or aggressive messages.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim or bullying or aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the principal or counselor.

Communication Devices

Students at Volinia may not use pocket pagers, cell phones, electronic communication devices or other personal communication devices during the school day. However, they may have them in their cars or lockers as long as they are turned off. These devices may be used only after school hours.

Code of Conduct

Unacceptable behavior and possible consequences:

Arson: Purposefully setting fire on school property is forbidden.

Action: Minimum 5 day suspension-- possible expulsion--referral to police

Possession of weapons: Students shall not bring to school or have in his or her possession at bus stops or on school property a pistol or other firearm, explosive, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto or knife, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument or any look-a-like of these weapons. This shall include any knife having the appearance of a pocket knife, the blade or blades of which can be opened by the flick of a button, pressure on the handle or other mechanical contrivance.

Action: Indefinite suspension pending Board of Education expulsion hearing—referral to police

Alcohol/drugs: Possession of, use of, transference of, sale of or under the influence of alcoholic beverages, narcotics or drugs, including look-a-like or what is represented as a drug or alcohol inclusive of any paraphernalia is prohibited. Over the counter and prescription drugs must be checked in at the office.

Students may not bring to school pop on which the seal has been broken. If pop or a similar substance is brought in that is questionable, it will be confiscated. Any student who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be allowed to participate in classes or school activities. Parent/guardian will be phoned and directed to pick up the student.

Action: Suspension—possible expulsion—referral to police

Tobacco: Displaying of tobacco or lighter inside school is prohibited.

Action: Confiscation of tobacco and paraphernalia. If under 18 years old, tobacco will not be returned.

Smoking: Smoking in un-designated areas, such as in front of the school, inside the building or during non-break times is strictly prohibited.

Action: Minimum 1 day suspension

Assault: Striking or threatening of students or school personnel is illegal and forbidden. This also extends to students and others on school property or at school sponsored events.

Action: Suspension—possible expulsion—referral to police

Extortion: Taking money or items of value through force, illegal activity, ingenuity or intimidation.

Action: Suspension—possible expulsion—referral to police

False Alarms: Pulling fire alarms, removing fire extinguishes or making bomb threats is prohibited.

Action: Suspension—possible expulsion—referral to police

Fighting: Fighting on school property, to or from school or at school sponsored events is illegal and forbidden.

Action: Suspension—possible expulsion—referral to police

Gangs: Gang-associated gestures, expressions and drawings are prohibited.

Action: One day suspension

Intimidation or harassment: Interfering with school personnel or students with threat of force, violence or vandalism at any time or place is prohibited. This includes sexual harassment, which refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

Action: 1st offense - five day suspension

Repeated offense - ten day suspension and expulsion recommendation

Use of technology violations: Students are encouraged to use the available technology at the Volinia Outcomes Alternative School. However, all computers, video equipment, software and other technology must be used responsibly and for appropriate educational endeavors.

All Marcellus School Board of Educational rules and regulations for technology apply. An acceptable use policy (AUP) form must be signed by both students and parents prior to using Internet services.

Action: Violations of the AUP will result in an immediate referral to the principal and a possible 1 – 10 day(s) out-of-school- suspension depending on the severity of the infraction.

***Consequences for violations of the following rules are subject to principal and staff judgment:

Forgery: fraudulent means to use or obtain use of school related documents

Hygiene: habits or bodily conditions detrimental to the school

Indecency: offending acts against recognized standards of good taste as interpreted by school administration

Profanity: the use of inappropriate, offensive language, either written or spoken or actions of vulgarity

Obscenity: vulgar acts in verbal or written form, pictures or gestures

Disobedience or disorderly conduct: any inappropriate behavior which infringes upon others who wish to teach or learn

Insubordination: attitudes or behavior insulting or contemptuous in speech or conduct; disobedient; refusal to follow directives

Theft: stealing

Truancy: skipping classes or skipping school

Vandalism: defacing or destroying school, staff, or student property

Possession of or use of any miscellaneous disruptive items: such as beepers, electronic devices, gambling paraphernalia, walkman or other headset radios, or the playing of cards during class time will not be tolerated.

Inappropriate display of affection: strong displays of affection are not acceptable. Students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible, mature individuals who reserve strong displays of affection for private time and places.

Unauthorized leaving of school property: students may not leave school grounds without authorization from the school office.

Careless or reckless driving: on school property or at school sponsored events is prohibited.

Transportation violations: students who park in unauthorized areas or drive to school without insurance, driver's license or car plates will be in violation of school rules.

Improper bus behavior: students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with all school rules and regulations while on the bus. Each student must also adhere to rules set-up by his or her home district or private transportation company.

Cheating or lying: the act of deceiving

Car Searches

All cars on school property are subject to searches conducted by the administration or other designated officials. If a student refuses a car search, a warrant may be issued and the student will lose all driving privileges for their high school career. All vehicles must be registered with the office.

Write-Up and Suspension Policy

The Volinia staff believes that students will make productive choices and follow school policies; however, should a student be written up, the following policy will be followed:

***Three write-ups, no matter the reason, will constitute a suspension.

***Each write-up after the third may cause a suspension. All write-ups will be 'dropped' at the end of each semester. In the event that a student is suspended from school, he/she will not be allowed to attend district activities and events, including dances, games, and ceremonies.

***If a student is suspended for a second time and/or has not improved or shown that he/she is reasonable, responsible and respectful, he/she may have to:

Reapply to the program

Conference with staff on possibility of re-entering program.

Put on student contract

Indefinitely suspended/expelled from program

If a student's violation of school rule is severe, that student may be indefinitely suspended or expelled. If a student is allowed to return, they will be placed on a contract. If the student violates this contract, he/she will not be allowed to return for the rest of the school semester and an expulsion process will take place.

Possible rewards for positive behavior:

*Eligible for field trips

*Coupons, certificates, awards

*Use of break area

*Special privileges or activities

*Honor roll/recognition

*Job reference

* Student leader/employee participation eligibility

*Other incentives as arranged by student committees

Possible actions for negative behavior:

*Break Ineligibility

*Parent call/conference

*Option period detention

*After school detention

*Campus clean-up

*In-school suspension

*Out of school suspension

*Removal from program

*Student placed on contract

*Police contacted

*Omission from all school events (including Marcellus and Decatur)

*Write Up

* Referral to Peer Court

Volinia Peer Court

When a student violates school rules, he or she may be given the option to go before the Volinia Peer Court.

The court consists of 3-5 students who have been elected and who have successfully completed a peer court exam. The court will hear the case, arrive at a verdict and recommend a 'sentence.' All sentences must be approved by the office and no student is required to go before the court.

Break Area

- Students must have written parental/guardian permission before going to the break area.

Note: The area is not directly monitored by the school.

- Students must pass a Volinia handbook test (70%) before becoming eligible for the break area privilege.
- Violations of any school rule in that area may result in loss or suspension of break privilege.
- Students must be on appropriate levels in order to have the opportunity to earn the afternoon break privileges.

Miscellaneous

*Excessive tardiness may result in break loss and/or a requirement for the student to make up missed time.

*Excessive break losses may result in a write-up or IHS time.

*Individual classroom rules must be followed.

*The office phone can be used only in emergencies and only with permission of the office.

*Students are not allowed to leave campus during the day without prior permission from their parent/guardian.

*Students are not allowed to be in other school buildings during school hours.

*Visitors and new students must have approval from their home district and be cleared by the office before arriving at Volinia.

*Students must get permission from both the event sponsor and the Volinia office to participate in district activities such as dances or proms.

*Students must follow Volinia's calendar; their original school's schedule will not be honored.

Medication

If it is essential that your student take medication while at school, the guidelines listed below must be followed:

Parent or guardian must sign a permission slip which can be acquired at the school office.

Medication must be in the original container which lists the doctor's directions, the child's name and the exact dosage to be given. Two types of medication cannot be in one container. If there is a change in medication, then the bottle must be updated as well.

It is the student's responsibility to go to the office at the time the medication is to be given.

Medication which can be given at any other time will not be given at school. An example would be for medication to be taken three times per day - can be given before school, after school and before bedtime and, therefore, would not be given at school.

If a child forgets to take his/her medication before school, it is the parent's responsibility to come to school to give it. We will not be responsible for calling to get permission over the phone.

Snow Days

*When Marcellus Community Schools are closed, there will be no school for Volinia students.

*When Decatur Schools are closed for inclement weather, classes will be canceled for Decatur students only.

*When Dowagiac Schools are closed for inclement weather , classes will be canceled for Dowagiac students only.

Note: The general rule to follow is if your home district is closed due to inclement weather, you are not required to attend classes on that day.

The following radio and television stations will announce school closings:

WLKM - FM 95.9 Three Rivers

WKZO - AM 550 & Channel 3 TV- Kalamazoo

WDOW - FM 92.1 Dowagiac

WNDU - FM U-93 & Channel 16 TV- South Bend

WWMT Channel 3 Kalamazoo

Volinia Alternative School Student Agreement

This contract is an agreement between staff, parent/guardian, probation officer and student. These parties agree to the following:

That the student wants to learn and will try his or her best to do so.

That the student will be responsible, respectful, and reasonable when he or she is on school grounds or traveling to school or from home.

That the student will conduct himself/herself in a manner that will encourage success for him/herself and others.

That the student will treat all teachers, staff, guests and peers with dignity and respect.

That the student will abide by rules and regulations set forth in the school handbook.

That the student will attend class regularly.

That the student will work toward achieving outcomes.

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE RULES ABOVE.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian /Probation Officer Signature

Date

Principal/Advisor Signature

Date
