



# VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

## PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)

EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO BE  
CULTURE CHANGERS FOR CHRIST.

**2024-2025**

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# WELCOME TO VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Dear VCS Parents and Students,

**We are so glad you are here.** Valley Christian Schools has been blessed to serve the East Valley since 1982, first as a high school and now as a comprehensive K-12. The mission of our school is to equip students to be culture changers for Christ by delivering academic excellence, facilitating spiritual growth, and building lifelong community. This mission includes all of us, staff, students, and parents alike. We believe that when you choose a school, you are not simply choosing a school for your student, but for your entire family. We are excited that your family is now part of the Valley Christian family.

This handbook is intended to communicate to parents and students the school's expectations, along with the policies we will employ in our pursuit of excellence. Each of these policies aligns with our core values of honoring Christ, pursuing excellence, building community, and changing culture. This handbook also provides expectations that you can and should have of VCS. Thank you for taking the time to read it. Although we have prepared this handbook with careful and thoughtful planning, we do not intend it to be legalistic, so please view this as a practical guide for "getting along well" at VCS.

As parents, please encourage your student and support the school in creating a nurturing and successful environment for them. There are many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school and to share your time, talent, and treasure with VCS. We are grateful to partner with you in discipling and educating your student, equipping him/her to be a culture changer for Christ.

Please check the parent portal on the school website ([valleychristianaz.org/Parents](http://valleychristianaz.org/Parents)) and RenWeb for the most up-to-date information and the latest school news. We will also send weekly email updates, a monthly e-magazine, and frequent social media posts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) to keep you connected with the school.

On behalf of your campus principal and our entire staff, we are looking forward to a wonderful 2024-25 school year! Go, Trojans!

For His glory,



**Troy A. Thelen '03**  
Head of School



# K-12 BELIEFS, POLICIES, & PROCEDURES

## FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

### **Mission**

The mission of Valley Christian Schools is to equip students to be culture changers for Christ by delivering academic excellence, facilitating spiritual growth, and building lifelong community.

### **Core Values/The Valley Way**

1. Honoring Christ... in everything we do
2. Pursuing Excellence... in all things, for the glory of God
3. Building Community... connecting past, current, and future VCS families for lifelong community
4. Changing Culture... by developing well-rounded Culture Changers for Christ

### **Statement of Faith**

- We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
- We believe that for salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential.
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God (Sola Scriptura).
- We believe by Faith alone we are saved and not by works (Sola Fide).
- We believe Grace alone is the source of our salvation through Jesus Christ (Sola Gratia).
- We believe through Christ alone we are saved (Solus Christus).
- We believe all things must be done to the Glory of God alone (Soli Deo Gloria).
- We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning, the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We

believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5, Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

- We believe the differences between male and female, including biological differences, are divinely ordained, integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female, and meant for human good. Therefore, the rejection of one's biological sex and adoption of a transgender self-conception is inconsistent with God's holy purposes in creation and a departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.
- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Ps. 139).

### **Philosophy of Education**

Consistent with our name, we strive to teach students how to view their world and their lives through the Bible and to make decisions based on this guidance.

It is the purpose of the school to provide an excellent academic program permeated with Christian love and faith. Each person affiliated with the school is capable and well trained for their task and has a deep concern for the spiritual development of the students.

VCS attempts to establish and maintain an atmosphere that encourages growth in personal faith in Christ and the building of Christian character. VCS is unique because it presents and develops a distinctively biblical worldview in its curriculum and discipline systems. The school prepares students not only for college academics but for "works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph. 4:12). The Bible presents the explicit view that God created the universe, its laws, and human beings. Sin, redemption and reconciliation are concepts that the Bible presents to describe God's view of the human condition. Christ, the Son of God, is the answer to the human condition of sinfulness. VCS is governed by this biblical message and recognizes the Creator and Redeemer God. The Bible declares, "the knowledge of God is the beginning of wisdom" (Pro. 15:3). VCS seeks to integrate the knowledge of God's creation with training in righteous living to develop true wisdom and character in students.

As God's children, life only makes sense when we recognize that Jesus is Lord of everything. Romans 11:36 is very clear on this when it states, "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever." At VCS, our prayer is that our students will identify and develop their God-given talents to live a life of service for the Lord.



## **Statement of Objectives**

1. To enroll students who have accepted Christ as their personal Savior and to nurture their Christian character
2. To study Scripture as the only inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God
3. To study all subjects through the light of God's Word
4. To help students confront the sin in their lives and respond obediently to Christ
5. To encourage students to develop Christian maturity by involvement in or with school activities
6. To equip students to be active witnesses for Christ
7. To emphasize high standards of morality
8. To train and discipline students with Christ's redemptive love
9. To prepare and train students for college
10. To train students to be responsible citizens
11. To challenge students to use their abilities to their fullest potential
12. To motivate students to research and seek out answers independently
13. To encourage student creativity

## **Expected Student Outcomes (ESOs)**

### **1. ACADEMIC OUTCOMES – Intellectual Achievement**

Students should:

- a. Be well prepared in all academic disciplines, including mathematics, science, Bible, English, social studies, fine arts, applied arts, and foreign languages.
- b. Be skilled in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking.
- c. Be able to enter the post-secondary institution of their choice (HS).
- d. Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning by developing critical thinking skills, valuing reading, using good problem-solving and decision-making skills, and engaging in the open exchange of ideas.
- e. Know how to utilize available resources including technology to find, analyze, and evaluate information.

### **2. SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES – Personal Beliefs and Behaviors**

Students should:

- a. Love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- b. Know and defend a Biblical worldview and the Christian faith.
- c. Know and apply God's Word to daily life.
- d. Exemplify Christ by pursuing a life of faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.
- e. Treat their body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.

- f. Be active in a local church.
- 3. SOCIAL OUTCOMES – Beliefs and Behaviors Toward Others**

Students should:

- a. Serve others as their service to Christ.
  - b. Respect and relate appropriately to others at home, school, work, and society; demonstrating integrity, justice, mercy, and peacemaking, recognizing that every person has worth because they bear the image of God.
  - c. Apply Christian principles such as loving others, carrying out the Great Commission, loving God’s Word, and living a life based on prayer.
  - d. Demonstrate responsible, Biblical citizenship – understanding and engaging in appropriate social and political activities, appreciating, and properly managing God’s creation, and understanding that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God.
  - e. Implement Biblical personal values such as a commitment to healthy family living and proper stewardship of personal resources such as time, talents, and wealth.
- 4. PHYSICAL OUTCOMES – Beliefs about the Physical Body and Physical Fitness**

Students should:

- a. Treat their bodies as a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- b. Present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.
- c. Strengthen their bodies through physical education, extracurricular activities, and athletic competition.

### **Biblical Positions**

- Bible Teaching Policy

Since VCS is a non-denominational school, is not affiliated with any one church, and because we recognize that we serve families from many different backgrounds, we attempt to emphasize those matters of doctrine upon which we agree rather than emphasize those matters upon which there is disagreement among sincere Protestant Christians. The school has a general doctrinal statement that agrees with orthodox, conservative, Protestant Christianity. Aside from the fundamentals of the faith, which are written in our doctrinal statement, we do not dwell upon the specifics of any group or denomination, and we ask that students do the same.

- Genesis Doctrinal Statement

VCS promotes the following interpretation of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. God created the entire world and all that is living. This was a divine act with every step directed by His hand. The whole of the Bible is infallible, meaning all events and characters as recorded in its writing are historical, true, and real. God created man unique and in His own image God created man for the purpose of glorifying Him and serving on His behalf. (This rules out any possibility that man could have had any

evolutionary forbearers or evolved from another state). Adam and Eve fell into sin and the whole of humanity was made sinful by this act.

- Spiritual Emphasis

The Board of Directors urges parents to recognize their scriptural responsibility (Deut. 6:1-9, Ps. 78:5, 6, Pro. 22:6) to provide their children with a Protestant Christian education and to understand that the primary responsibility for this task rests with the parents (Eph. 6:4). VCS was founded on and continues to operate upon Biblical values and the desire and commitment for Bible-believing Christian parents to enroll their children in an intentionally Protestant Christian environment. VCS considers admission for students from families who are willing to support Valley Christian's philosophy of Protestant Christian education, student conduct requirements, and the school's above-stated positions, and who are willing to allow their children to be educated and influenced in an intentionally protestant Christian environment. Continued enrollment at VCS is contingent upon this same understanding and support.

- Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning. It is sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has prohibited intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, and attempting to change one's biological sex or otherwise acting upon any disagreement with one's biological sex) or advocacy of sexual immorality, is sinful and offensive to God. If a student advocates or practices lifestyles outlined in this paragraph and does not repent of it, they likely will not be retained as a student at VCS.

### **National Anthem**

At VCS, we respect the American flag and our country's national anthem as symbols of the freedoms we are allowed in the United States of America. We believe that demonstrating respect honors the many sacrifices by the men and women who have done so much to protect those freedoms. Therefore, we ask that all of those in attendance at events where the anthem is played stand in recognition of these freedoms. We also recognize that there are injustices in this country to which members of our community may want to draw attention. We humbly and respectfully ask that our community stand in unity in recognizing the freedoms that our flag represents, including the freedom to peacefully protest and the freedom of speech, and that community members would exercise those freedoms after the completion of the anthem.

## ATTENDANCE

### **Application Criteria**

The following criteria is used when evaluating students who apply to Valley Christian Schools. To be considered for enrollment, the student must meet the following standards:

- Student and parents must agree with the mission, statement of faith, school policies, and handbook.
- Student must want to attend Valley Christian and demonstrate an aptitude to meet the school's expectations.
- VCS is a covenant Christian school. This means that a member(s) of each family that attends VCS must know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. This includes:

#### **For students entering high school:**

- High school students and parents must have a Christian testimony and a church reference.

#### **For students entering K-8:**

- K-8 parents must have a testimony and church reference.
- A child must be five years old by September 1 to be eligible for kindergarten.

### **Philosophy of Student Attendance**

VCS sets a high standard of excellence in education. This high standard includes the expectation that all students will attend classes daily to achieve full educational benefit. Absences should occur only when unavoidable circumstances arise. VCS must abide by state attendance laws.

### **Wellness Policy**

VCS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. When ill, a student is more comfortable at home. Under no circumstances may a student come to school, or a parent bring a sick student to school, if the student is showing any signs of illness. Sick students have the potential to expose other students and staff members who they encounter. A student exhibiting any of the following symptoms should not attend school:

- A fever without medication, in the last 48 hours
- Diarrhea twice within the last 48 hours
- Vomiting twice within the last 48 hours
- Persistent cough
- An unexplained or undiagnosed rash
- Pink eye/conjunctivitis – pink to red, itchy eyes with a discharge

## **Additional Wellness Notes**

- **Head Lice**

If found at school, the student will be sent home to be treated; they can return to class after appropriate treatment has begun but must be cleared by the school nurse. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. When a report of lice or nits is made, all students in that classroom will be examined. If nits or lice are found on a student, the child's family will be discreetly notified, and appropriate treatment is required to return lice/nit-free to school. A notice will also be sent home to all families of a given classroom or grade level if lice is found with any student(s). Before returning to school, the student must be checked by the school nurse or authorized personnel.

- **COVID-19**

VCS does not have any COVID-19-related requirements for masks on any of our campuses or classrooms, nor do we conduct contact tracing or classroom quarantines. We reserve the right to quarantine an individual based on their exposure or to implement such procedures if a situation warrants us to do so. If a student is displaying COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of exposure or vaccination, they should remain home.

- **General Illnesses**

Designated office personnel provide episodic and long-term care as required congruent to the level of their training. Episodic care is defined as care that is given on an unplanned, unscheduled basis for a problem which may be acute. Long-term care is defined as planned, goal-directed care designed to provide symptomatic treatment, maintenance, and or rehabilitation, based upon the needs, resources, and readiness of the student (and family) to participate in the plan of care. The health office is required by law (ARS 36-621) to report suspect cases of infectious and communicable diseases to the local health department. The Arizona Department of Health Services has established guidelines for handling specific communicable diseases.

- **Injury Protocol**

Parents will be notified with a Medical Event Notification by email of any injury that goes beyond the need for minor first aid. Parents will be phoned for any injury that occurs to the head, as well as receiving a Medical Event Notification by email. VCS does have a registered nurse on staff on our Tempe campus. If the school nurse is not on campus when an injury occurs, first aid will be provided to each injured student by a VCS staff member congruent with the staff member's level of training. If this is not available, a call will be made to seek the services of trained personnel to include emergency services (911). First aid kits and related supplies are available on the playground, classrooms, and in the health office.

- **Immunizations**

If a student is to be exempt for reasons of personal beliefs, the parent/guardian must sign a Request for Exemption to Immunization form indicating that he/she received the information about immunizations provided by ADHS and understands the risks and benefits of immunizations. Arizona School Immunization Record Form 109R will be maintained as required as a part of the permanent Student Health Record (K-8). Enrollment is not complete until verification of immunization or exemption is provided to the health office or registrar. In the event of an outbreak of disease and upon notification by the county health department, the health office will assist school administration in the exclusion of all non-immunized students from the school. This exclusion period will be determined by the county health department and will last for the duration of the outbreak. In these cases, students may return to school as soon as they demonstrate proof of immunization.

## **Medications**

- **Prescription Medications**

The school will follow legal guidelines when dispensing prescription medication during school hours. The school nurse or other designated school personnel may administer medication to students if needed during school hours. For school personnel to administer medication, the following legal requirements must be met:

- The parents must sign a consent form (renewed annually) requesting that the school nurse or other designated personnel administer the medication during school hours. A new consent form must be submitted if the medication or dosage is changed.
- The medication must be in its original container and labeled by the pharmacy with the student's name, medication, directions for use, prescriber's name, and date of prescription.
- The original prescription label serves as the prescriber's order since the prescription is on file in the pharmacy.
- According to the Arizona Legislature, there is a law that allows students to possess and self-administer handheld inhaler devices for breathing disorders, if they have written parental consent to do so. If a child uses an inhaler, and you wish him/her to have this privilege, please contact the office and fill out a Medication Request Form.
- All inhalers must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.

- **Non-Prescription Medications**

Written permission from the parent for the administration of non-prescription medications will be kept on file in the health office. This information is also authorized by families via the student application for admissions. If written permission is not available, verbal permission may be acceptable, but is not preferred. This verbal permission will be noted in the health record via RenWeb. The dosage requested by the parent must be consistent with the manufacturer's recommendations. School personnel may first use other methods of treatment before deciding to give

medications, i.e., ice packs, rest, cough drops. Any decision regarding the necessity of medication will be the responsibility of the school nurse or other designated staff members.

Any student bringing prescribed medication to school is to leave the medication in the school nurse's office with the appropriate instructions for administering the medicine. Any prescription medication or drug found with a student will be confiscated until proper information can be attained. Medication will not be administered unless the school office or nurse has been notified appropriately. It is the responsibility of the parents and the students to follow these instructions and notify the office accordingly. It is suggested that only the medication needed for the day be brought. The school is not responsible for medicine left at the school at the end of each day.

### **Self-Harm**

If a student indicates a desire (and typically a plan) to self-harm (e.g. cutting, scratching, burning, hairpulling, etc.) with suicidal ideation:

- VCS will remove the student from class and house them in a safe place where they may be observed until a parent(s) can pick them up. If this occurs at home, the student must stay home from school.
- Parent(s) will need to seek out emergency care. Hospitals are one option, as they can assess in-house.
- If the parent desires, VCS will provide a list of crisis help organizations. However, it is suggested to seek Emergency care first.
- Prior to a student returning to campus, a licensed counselor's diagnostic impression and recommendations for the student's emotional support will be required.
- The principal will be notified and will be a part of an approved action plan for returning to school if it is deemed in the best interest of the student and or school.
- The health/wellness office will also reach out to attendance to ensure the student's absences for immediate treatment are excused.
- The administrative liaison will notify teachers (generally) of the student's absence to mitigate negative consequences to the student's academic record.
- If the absence becomes excessive, the principal, along with other personnel intricately involved, will determine if it's in the best interest of the student, or the school to remain enrolled.

If a student indicates self-harm without suicidal ideation VCS will:

- Remove the student from the class and house them in the health/wellness office.
- Parent(s) will be called.
- The principal will be notified and will be a part of determining if a student is able to return to class. (Self-harm can vary in degree – this can look like scratches, bruising, cuts, etc.
- Parent(s) will need to seek out a licensed counselor's evaluation and care.

## **Attendance Policy**

The privilege of attending Valley Christian High School carries with it certain responsibilities on the part of the parents and students. High School attendance is ultimately the responsibility of the student and his/her family. Parents and students must recognize the direct relationship between academic success and regular school attendance. Each day a student is absent represents lost time in the classroom and lost opportunity to learn.

### **Absences and Arizona Law**

*According to Arizona State Law (15-802.E, 15-803), every parent/legal guardian must ensure that children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) years of age attend school during school hours, unless a child is unable to attend due to illness or another legitimate reason.*

#### **ARIZONA TRUANCY LAWS**

- *Children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) are required by AZ law to attend school.*
- *Children are allowed to miss eighteen (18) days of school. That's a combination of excused and unexcused absences.*
- *Nineteen (19) absences or more per year is breaking the law.*
- *Five (5) or more unexcused absences is breaking the law*

*This applies to VCS as a private school. "Private school" means a nonpublic institution, other than the child's home, where academic instruction is provided for at least the same number of days and hours each year as a public school" (ARS 15-802).*

*"Failure to take the necessary steps to ensure your child attends school regularly may result in a Class 3 misdemeanor punishable by fine and/or jail time. Your support and commitment to ensuring that your child comes to school when s/he is well enough to do so is essential" (ARS 15-802,E.).*

### **VCS Attendance Policy (High School Specific)**

- To comply with Arizona State Statute 15-802 a student is allowed **no more than 9 absences**, per class per semester unless there are extenuating circumstances (excused absences as defined below don't apply).

### **Excused Absences**

Absences for the following reasons will be considered excused:

- School-related absences (do not count towards limit).
- College visits for juniors and seniors, up to 2 per year (do not count towards limit).
- School suspensions are considered excused (do not count towards limit).



- Extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are defined as an unforeseen event or set of circumstances that prevented the student from being present. The School Administration reserves the right to determine what qualifies as extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances include; death in family, family emergencies, extended hospital stays, being involved in a car accident.

### **Other Absences**

- Absences for reasons not listed in the excused absence sections are simply labeled absent.
- Personal illness with a note does count towards the limit of 9 absences per class per semester.
- Doctor, dental, or other official appointments with a note do count towards limit of 9 absences per class per semester.
- Missing 10 minutes or more of class at the beginning, middle, or end of class will be considered an absence unless it is an excused absence or excused tardy.
- Planned absences count as absences.

### **Excessive Absences**

Excessive absences is defined as a student missing 10 or more classes per semester (not including excused absences as defined above). Completing work assignments and receiving passing grades are not a replacement for in person attendance in school. The following actions will be taken:

- On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> absence per class per semester an automated awareness email is sent to students and parents or legal guardians (excused absences as defined above don't apply).
- On the 10<sup>th</sup> absence per class per semester students will be considered ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, i.e. games, productions, trips. Ineligibility will continue until the end of the current semester (excused absences as defined above don't apply).
- On the rare occasion a student reaches 15 absences in a semester, the student's case will be reviewed. Upon review, credit may be lost for the class or classes in which they have missed 15 absences per semester. The student and their parents/guardians will be responsible for arranging any class in which a student loses credit due to truancy. Any class made- up needs to comply with VCS's requirements. The exception being if a student is on a chronic health plan or other extenuating circumstance (excused absences as defined above don't apply).

- Additionally, students with chronic and excessive absences and/or tardies may be subject to disciplinary consequences ranging from in-school suspension to withdrawal from VCS.

### **Reporting Absences**

Parents should notify the school office via the VCS website ([valleychristianaz.org/ReportAbsence](http://valleychristianaz.org/ReportAbsence)) of a student's absence as soon as it is determined they will not be at school. This notification should be submitted no later than 8:00 am on the day of the absence. This must be done each morning of the student's absence.

### **Other Absence Information**

A student participating in an extracurricular activity must be in attendance for at least half of the day (4 of 8 periods at the high school) to be eligible to practice or participate in said activity on that day. If the student is in attendance fewer than four consecutive periods or less than half of the day, he/she may observe the practice or event, but may not participate.

Certain VCS activities require students to be absent from one or more classes. Some examples of activity absences include athletics, field trips, and choir/instrumental/band tours. These activity absences do not count towards the maximum of 9 absences.

- *Planned Absences:* These are absences known about in advance, are two or more days in length, and are not VCS activities. If a student anticipates taking a planned absence, they must follow these steps:
  - a) Receive Administrative Absence form from the front office two weeks before the planned absence with approval from the Principal or Vice Principal.
  - b) Have their teachers sign the Administrative Absence form and obtain any work or assignments that may be missed. If possible, work should be turned into the teacher in advance, unless other arrangements are made with that teacher.
  - c) Turn in the completed Administrative Absence form to the front office.
  - d) **NO** planned absences are permitted during semester finals.
- *Long Term Medical Absences:* Anticipated long-term medical absences will need to be approved by the administration. The parent will need to submit a "Release of Medical Information" form. This will allow VCS the opportunity to know the diagnosis and speak with the medical professional if necessary. All such absences must be verified by a health professional. Ultimately, this may result in a conference with administration to determine if VCS can continue to meet your educational needs. We reserve the right to ask for withdrawal until the medical concern is alleviated.
- *Truancy/Unexcused Absences:* Students who miss class for an unacceptable reason and without parent or guardian permission are considered truant/unexcused.

- *Skipping Class:* Any student caught skipping class is subject to immediate consequences ranging from detentions to suspension.

### **Tardy Policy**

For students to maximize their classroom learning and to teach self-discipline and responsibility, VCS requires students to come to class on time and fully prepared with the needed materials. Tardiness is defined as failing to be in class when the tardy bell rings and ready to learn. We are not only training our students academically but also in the development of essential habits which will be important to their success later in life. There will be penalties for excessive tardiness.

- Students arriving at school after the scheduled start time (8:30 for K-4, 8:20 for 5-8 8:00am for high school students) must sign-in at the office immediately upon arrival at school and before attending class. Parents must accompany K-8 students to the office and may not leave them unattended until they are fully checked in.
- If a student is tardy to class because of another teacher, that student must bring a pass from that teacher explaining the situation. If marked excused, it will not be recorded as a tardy.
- When a student receives a pass from the front office when arriving late to school, the pass will either be marked excused or tardy.
- If a student's parent calls in that a student will be late, this does not necessarily mean this is an excused tardy.

### **High School-specific:**

Tardies are accumulated from all classes on a semester basis based on the parameters listed below:

- Step 1: On the 8th tardy, the parent will receive a warning email.
- Step 2: On the 10th tardy, the student will be issued in-school detention/loss of recess.
- Step 3: On the 15th tardy, the student will be given an in-school suspension.
- Step 4: For every 5<sup>th</sup> tardy thereafter, the student will receive an additional in-school suspension.
- Students missing more than 10 min. of any class will be marked absent -whether tardy or leaving class after it has started for an appointment.
- When arriving late to 1<sup>st</sup> period:
  - Enter through the front office
  - Sign in on the clipboard in the hallway
  - Go directly to class (no need to check-in at the front desk)
- All students arriving 10 min. late to class (periods 2-8) without a pass must be sent to the front office except for 1<sup>st</sup> period.
- Every student who leaves the classroom during instructional time is required to have:
  - A current VCS ID in his/her possession
  - A valid office/class pass
  - Student cell phone must remain in the classroom (placed in the cell phone slot holder)



## ACADEMICS

### Grading

1. Grades are posted/recorded no later than five school days from the date the assignment is placed in the gradebook with exception given for projects or long-term assignments.
2. Grades are based on individual student mastery of standards using designated resources of which correlate to such standards. Grades should reflect a student's academic achievement for the grading period and align to some degree with schoolwide and classroom assessments.
3. Formalized accommodations and/or instructional modifications must be specified/approved within a specific learning plan established by our resource/support programs to modify existing grading practices (i.e., VINE or Intervention).

### Progress Reports & Report Cards

Progress reports will be issued to all students during each academic quarter. Report cards are issued every nine weeks. The report cards contain grades from the end of each quarter, semester, and overall academic year. Families are responsible for printing a copy of the quarter or year-end report cards after they are sent via email. The link to access report cards expires after a given span of time and will become inaccessible.

### Instructional Program

- Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59 and below

- Curriculum Goals/Standards-Based Instruction

VCS' curriculum goals are based on the targeted learner outcomes. The goal is for the student to acquire understanding/knowledge/skill, make meaning of knowledge obtained, and then transfer this understanding/knowledge/skill independently in a new setting. Arizona state standards will be utilized in core subjects excluding those areas requiring a biblical framework.

- Biblical Illumination

Biblical Illumination (BI) (sometimes called Biblical Integration) is intentionally planned and unit specific correlations of Biblical truth to subject content. BI's should be directly taught and explicitly stated without any assumption of prior knowledge of text or principle. At least one BI is included each week in every subject. Biblical Illuminations state a Biblical truth or principle, connect with the specific unit/content to be taught, and include a verse reference.

- Evidence of Student Mastery

VCS seeks opportunities as part of classroom instruction, interactive activities, unit plans, and lesson plans to provide students the ability to demonstrate their understanding of the content and skillsets they have acquired. This includes an ability to transfer this understanding independently in new situations. The assessments used at VCS are observable and measurable, directly aligned to standards, and varied to address different learning styles. This results in a goal of teachers utilizing various types of assessment methods while not solely depending on tests and quizzes to measure student outcomes.

### Citizenship Marks

VCS expects students to behave in a Christ-honoring way and believes this is an important part of educating students in the light of God’s Word. Students will be given a citizenship mark on their report cards under homeroom for each grading period. Citizenship marks are as follows: O - Outstanding, S - Satisfactory, N - Needs Improvement, and U - Unsatisfactory.

	<b>O</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>U</b>
<b>Respect for God, Others, &amp; Yourself</b> Luke 10:27, Psalm 86:12, I Peter 2:17, Leviticus 19:18, Psalm 8:3-5, Psalm 19:14, Proverbs 12:22, Ephesians 4:25	Always follows classroom rules, including those related to food, drink, preparation for class, distractions, and disruptions. Always works to the best of their ability.	Consistently follows classroom rules, including those related to food, drink, preparation for class, distractions, and disruptions. Consistently works to the best of their ability.	Frequently disregards classroom rules, including those related to food, drink, preparation for class, distractions, and disruptions. Consistently does not work to the best of their ability.	Consistently disregards classroom rules, including those related to food, drink, preparation for class, distractions, and disruptions. Frequently does not work to the best of their ability.
<b>Respect God's Facilities</b> I Chr. 29:11, I Cor. 4:2	Always respects school buildings, grounds, desks, etc.	Consistently respects school buildings, grounds, desks, etc.	Frequently disrespects school buildings, grounds, desks, etc.	Consistently disrespects school buildings, grounds, desks, etc.
<b>Encourage Others</b> I Thessalonians 4:18, Hebrews 3:13	Always encourages others through actions and words.	Consistently encourages others through actions and words.	Frequently inconsiderate to others through actions and words.	Consistently inconsiderate to others through actions and words.
<b>Do When Asked</b> Philippians 2:5	Always complies with directions, requests, or correction.	Consistently complies with directions, requests, or correction.	Frequently does not comply with directions, requests, or correction.	Consistently does not comply with directions, requests, or correction.

### Valley’s Individual Needs Enhancement Program (VINE)

At Valley Christian Schools, we believe that all people are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), and that all believers are indispensable to the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:21-27). It is our desire, and we believe God’s will, to reach out and serve all the children that we are able, including those who have learning challenges. Therefore, beginning in August of 2006, VCS began offering special education classes and accommodations for students with learning disabilities and other learning challenges.

We offer a program called VINE – Valley’s Individual Needs Enhancement. In VINE students are taught with content and methods that enhance, strengthen, and improve their individual needs so they can be successful in their classes, which in turn will help them to grow to their full God-given potential. However, we recognize that we are not able to service every child with special needs due to limitations on our finances, expertise, size, facilities, etc.

Admission to the VINE program is based on the extent to which our resources can help your child succeed. Your communication to us about your child’s needs and submission of records and testing information will help us determine our ability to accommodate his/her challenges. In an effort to make the most informed decision regarding our ability to serve a student, testing may be required prior to admission into the VINE program. In general, significant struggles of a behavioral nature are more difficult for our program to accommodate. In addition, non-academic services and therapies (such as speech and occupational therapy) are not provided by VCS and must be arranged by the parent with another organization.

As a private school, Valley does not receive government funding for special needs programs. Therefore, we are not legally bound to follow existing educational plans; however, the goals and recommendations contained in IEPs and other education plans will be considered in the development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) as part of the VINE program.

In our desire to do all things to the glory of God, the VINE staff will seek to do everything possible to provide the best education for your child that we are able. The VINE teacher will meet with the classroom teachers, parents, and other approved professionals to discuss any modifications and/or accommodations that can be made within the classroom to assist the student academically. This may also align with emotional support. The VINE team will write a learning plan for the student, which will be updated as needed and will be used during the transition between grades and placed on record in the student’s confidential file. Acceptance into the VINE program is at the discretion of the VINE director and principal.

#### Teacher Referral Process:

For students who have already been admitted to Valley, if a classroom teacher suspects that a student may have certain learning or behavioral challenges, s/he will follow the referral process listed below:

- ✓ The classroom teacher will identify a possible solution/accommodation to alleviate the problem and must document the use of this solution for two weeks.
- ✓ If no improvement is observed, the teacher should reach out to the parents, and to the VINE team, to discuss additional solutions or accommodations. Efforts to address the concerns should be documented for two additional weeks.
- ✓ If no improvement is observed after the second solution is tried, the teacher should meet with the VINE director to discuss the concerns and accommodations tried.



- ✓ The VINE director will then schedule a meeting with the parents, the classroom teacher(s) as applicable, and the principal (if found to be necessary) to discuss the concerns and options moving forward.
- ✓ At this meeting, the VINE director, in collaboration with the team, may recommend that a professional evaluation/assessment be completed for the student. This may be by Tempe Union High School District, (free), or by an independent professional, at the parent's expense. This may also involve requesting evaluations from outside resources at no expense to the family.
- ✓ Once the result of the evaluation is received, the VINE Director will meet with the principal to determine the services necessary for the student to be successful in the general education classroom.

If it is decided that services are needed in order to meet the needs of the student, the determination will be made whether the student will remain in general education and receive an accommodation plan, or whether the student will be placed in VINE program for one or more of his/her classes and will receive an individual learning plan.

- ✓ The educational team and VINE director will create an *Interim* Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) or an Accommodation Plan for the student as deemed necessary while communicating this information to the families. Copies of plans will be distributed to all teachers who have that student so they will be able to implement accommodations to help support the student.
- ✓ During the same school year, students who have been placed in VINE, will receive a formal Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that is created by an educational team consisting of the student, parents, current gen ed. teachers, VINE director, and additional VINE teachers.
- ✓ Once a plan of action is in place, the student will be quarterly monitored to evaluate progress. If a student does not appear to be making progress with the accommodations and modifications in place, the parents may be referred outside of VCS for additional support. The VINE teachers and director will work with the student and monitor progress with communication to both teachers and families. The VINE program targets academic instructional areas and works in conjunction with the classroom curriculum rather than employing a separate curriculum whenever possible. However, it may be determined that the learning needs of some students will be met through VINE classes that are instructed using specialized instruction to meet with learning needs of the students. This will be detailed in the ILP's.

## **Academic Honesty Policy**

- **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is “to steal and pass off [the ideas and words of another] as one’s own; use [a created production] without crediting the source; to commit literary theft; present as new or original an idea or product derived from an existing source; derived from the Latin word ‘plagiarius’ meaning ‘kidnapper.’ Plagiarism is also considered cheating and is subject to the same 0% penalty as any other type of academic dishonesty. If a student plagiarizes a rough draft of a paper, the teacher and the principal will confer and decide the outcome to include re-submitting the assignment.

At VCS, students are expected to complete a variety of research projects. Each project often receives several grades, one of which is for the final copy of the research paper. In the research process it is expected that students will give credit to the various sources they use to obtain information for their papers. Not giving credit to someone for his/her work can incur very heavy penalties. At the college level, students are likely to be expelled if they are found to have plagiarized. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and will be treated as such. The teacher will inform the principal regarding all instances of academic dishonesty. The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in a zero, the second instance in a zero and a parent conference, and a third instance will likely result in suspension from school.

- **Cheating**

Cheating on any assignments such as a test, homework, project, quiz, essay, etc., no matter what the subject is written for, shall carry the same consequences. Cheating is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at VCS. Students who have been found cheating on any assessment such as papers, projects, homework assignments or tests will be given a zero percent (0%) for the assessment. The following are common forms of cheating:

- **Sharing Answers**

Copying another student’s work with their permission or without permission. The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in a zero, the second instance in a zero and a parent conference, and a third instance will likely result in suspension from school.

- **Tests or Quizzes**

Cheating on a test or quiz could involve looking at another student’s paper, using extra information without the teacher’s permission or sharing answers. The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in a zero, the second instance in a zero and a parent conference, and a third instance will likely result in suspension from school.

- **Taking Credit for Work**

- Not acknowledging the help of a parent, tutor, sibling, classmate, or teacher. This also includes someone else completing or helping to complete the student's work to the extent that the work is beyond what the student can do. The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in a zero, the second instance in a zero and a parent conference, and a third instance will likely result in suspension from school.
- Telling/Asking What Is on a Test
- Asking or telling what question, answer, or information was on a test or quiz. When a student is found to be cheating on a test or quiz, he/she will be required to redo the assignment or complete an alternative assignment/assessment. The principal and parents will be contacted by the teacher. The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in a zero, the second instance in a zero and a parent conference, and a third instance will likely result in suspension from school.

### **Academic Probation**

A student may be placed on academic probation at the discretion of the administration. The administration may ask the student to leave the school when it becomes apparent that the student is not willing or able to comply with school policies. Criteria for this decision may include course work deficiencies, lack of effort, and failure to cooperate with school authority to include school rules. Some students may be accepted to Valley Christian Schools on a probationary period as set by the administration. This is an alert to the student and parent that the student's progress will be monitored, and that the student will be expected to apply diligent attention to their required progress to remain in the school. Students who fail to meet the school's eligibility requirements will also be placed on probation, which may include academic or other identified needs. Parents will be notified in writing if a period of academic probation is deemed necessary.

## STUDENT & PARENT CONDUCT

### Student Conduct

#### **Respect for God**

- Psalm 86:12 – I will praise you, O Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.
- Luke 10:27 – Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.

#### **Respect for Others**

- 1 Peter 2:17 – Show proper respect to everyone; love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. Leviticus 19:18 – Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people but love your neighbor as yourself.

#### **Respect for Yourself**

- Psalm 19:14 – May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.
- Proverbs 12:22 – The Lord detests lying lips but delights in men who are truthful.
- Psalm 8: 3-5 – When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man, that you care for him? You made him lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.
- Ephesians 4:25 – Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully...

#### **Respect for God's Facilities**

- 1 Chronicles 29:11 – Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head overall.
- 1 Corinthians 4:2 – Now it is required that those who have been given trust must prove faithful.

#### **Encourage Others**

- Hebrews 3:13 – But encourage one another daily, if it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:18 – Therefore encourage each other...

#### **Do When Asked**

- Philippians 2:5 – Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

### **Accident Prevention**

Students are expected to walk from one activity/class to another and not run/push while keeping hands off other students always. They are not to hit, trip, roughhouse, or fight with other students. Throwing any object(s) deemed inappropriate of any kind at anyone/anything is not allowed. Students are also expected to enter/exit the campus properly before and after school to include designated arrival/dismissal areas. Since the VCS staff are entrusted with the safety of the children, all students are to respond immediately and respectfully to any teacher or staff member when asked to stop a potentially dangerous activity. In addition, students are not allowed to be in a classroom or other areas of the campus without an adult present except when on a specific errand for a staff member or between class transitions.

### **Defacing or Damaging School or Staff Property**

Malicious or careless acts that result in damage to or destruction of the school, students' or staff members' property will result in both appropriate disciplinary action and the replacement or repair of such property by the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s).

### **Fighting**

Fighting or other related behavior/actions to harm students or faculty is prohibited. Upon investigation any student found responsible for causing, antagonizing, or provoking a physical confrontation will be disciplined by the school administration. Consequences may range from detention to expulsion. Depending on the circumstances, there may be cause for police to be called and assault charges or assault and battery charges may be filed. Any student will be considered responsible for participating in a fight if it is determined that they had a reasonable opportunity to walk away or avoid confrontation but chose to engage.

### **Hazardous Items**

Matches, lighters, fireworks, firearms, knives, items that simulate weapons and other such items that expose students, school personnel, or property to danger are forbidden.

### **Student Rights and Due Process**

Inherent in the discipline process is the following:

- Attendance at VCS is a privilege, not a right.
- Students and parents may expect to be treated in a manner that is safe, dignified, Biblical, and handled with appropriate confidentiality.
- Christians are to follow the format laid down in Matt. 18:15-17 to resolve complaints or problems.

- If a student or parent disagrees with a decision or practice at VCS they may follow the established Grievance Policy (below), which sets forth the specific steps that may be taken.

### **Grievance Policy and The Matthew 18 Principle**

A Christian school is made up of people – parents, administrators, teachers, and students. Like any other collection of people, those at a Christian school have the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement, and even wrongdoing. Nevertheless, it is God's will that we live and work together in harmony. Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35).

Due to our human nature, we may at times irritate others, resulting in misunderstandings or strong disagreements. In Matthew 18, Jesus provides His formula for solving person-to-person problems. We refer to this as "The Matthew 18 Principle." Matthew 18 specifically refers to sin issues within the church, but these key concepts and practices should be utilized for all types of disagreements.

Matthew 18: 15-17: "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

There are several clear principles that Jesus taught in solving people-to-people problems:

1. **Keep the matter confidential.** The very pattern of sharing the problem only with those directly involved establishes the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. "With their mouths, the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape." (Pro. 11:9). An overwhelming majority of issues can be solved when discussed only amongst the two parties involved.
2. **Keep the circle small.** "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you..." The first step and most often the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one of the two people involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two-person level. The administration will not give a hearing to disagreements before those directly involved have made a prayerful and earnest attempt to resolve the issue first. Taking an issue or grievance "over the head" of a staff member directly to the administration violates both the letter and spirit of The Matthew 18 Principle.
3. **Be straightforward.** "Point out their fault." Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Sometimes it is difficult to be straightforward and tell someone the very heart of the matter. But restoration and improvement can only come when the issues

are lovingly, yet clearly, presented. The Scripture says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." (Pro. 27:6)

4. **Be forgiving.** "If they listen to you, you have won them over." This implies that once the matter is resolved, we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. Most school problems are resolved at the two-person level. Forgiveness and restoration is the normal, proper conclusion.
5. **If needed, the parent and staff member should agree to share the matter with an appropriate school administrator.** At this stage, the counsel of Jesus would be "take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." Both the parent and staff member should communicate their version of the issue(s) with the school's administration. Each person should come to the meeting in a spirit of prayer and humility, willing to submit to the Lord's will in the matter and willing to submit to reproof and correction, if needed. Those of us who bear the name of Christ should joyfully conform to the will of Christ. An open and honest discussion among people who are sensitive to godly principles will most often reach an amiable solution.

Because the Board of Directors' policy delegates authority for operational (student, parent, staff, discipline, curricular) decisions to the school's lead administrator (Head of School), his/her decision should be considered final and not subject to review by the Board unless a Board policy has been broken or other extraordinary circumstances.

In summary, The Matthew 18 Principle requires that parents/students talk directly to their teacher, coach, etc. about any specific issues before they talk to an administrator. If unresolved at the two-person level, the matter should then be prayerfully and systematically moved upward in the school's organizational structure. This is the Lord's way of solving people-to-people problems, and the procedure we follow at VCS related to all disagreements, whether or not they involve a specific sin issue.

### **Parental Support and Cooperation**

At VCS, we value our partnership with families in educating our students. To this end, all communication and interaction is expected to be professional and respectful. Normally, a student is not to be deprived of Christian education or otherwise held responsible for the actions of parents. However, the administrator may recommend withdrawal of a student when parents have been persistently or overtly uncooperative with school staff, policies, regulations, programs, or have interfered in matters of school administration or discipline to the detriment of the school's ability to serve their own or other students. After reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation, the administrator may require withdrawal. Documentation of the basis for this action and of all consultation with the parents on the matter must be retained on file.

### **Parent Volunteers**

All volunteers must follow all current VCS requirements to volunteer on campus. VCS has an active volunteer organization known as the Valley Christian Volunteer Community (VCVC; [valleychristianaz.org/VCVC](http://valleychristianaz.org/VCVC)). Parent volunteers are vital to the healthy development of a school. The standard of conduct for Volunteers is as follows:

- Volunteer work falls under the authority of the activity's coordinator and, subsequently, the authority and direction of the teacher and administration of the school. The teacher, school administration, and likely VCVC must approve all activities.
- Volunteers should respect the time and schedules of the teachers and staff. Volunteers and parents should avoid unannounced visits to the school – and especially classrooms – that are not pre-planned if they desire to support through volunteerism.
- Clean, modest attire must be always worn.
- Language, actions, and attitudes which model high standards of moral behavior are always expected while on campus.
- Gossiping or speaking in an inappropriate or complaining fashion about the school, students, families, faculty, or staff members will not be permitted and will be reported to the administration. We encourage our students, staff, and community to always “speak victory” about VCS and about others.
- Volunteers are accountable for performing their assignments in the safest manner possible, avoiding personal injury or injury to students or faculty.
- To give one's undivided attention to the task at hand, we ask that volunteers do not bring preschool-aged children when serving. Exceptions are at the discretion of the activity's organizer.
- Respect and care are to be given to property belonging to VCS, a facility VCS is using, or to the property of another volunteer, parent, or visitor.

### **Visitors/Guests**

Visitors to campus must sign in at the front office and wear a Visitor's Badge while on campus. Visitors are not permitted to exit the lobby area unaccompanied without first receiving approval from the office staff. Unless there is an emergency or special circumstance, visitors are generally not able to see students during the school day. All visitors must adhere to the code of conduct and dress. Visitors wishing to meet with a teacher or administration are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving on campus.

### **Gifts to Faculty and Staff from Parents and Students**

Gifts to faculty and staff members may not be used for any purpose of influence or coercion to affect a child's assessment results. If a faculty or staff member receives a gift that they



believe was intended to coerce them, the faculty or staff member must report the matter to the principal for review and follow-up.

### **Use of Music/School Events**

VCS believes that a Christian should be selective in the kind of music one enjoys. To maintain this standard, it is necessary at school events to avoid playing music that has lyrics that contain inappropriate language/cursing or have messages that are sexually explicit, have heavy references to drugs or alcohol, are degrading to men or women, are degrading to another race or nationality, or have references of violence.

The school maintains the right to supervise the kind of music performed or played by or for any group of students. Students and owners of vehicles are required to turn down loud music upon entering the school property.

All playlists for events, dances, or performances must be submitted to the appropriate advisors or administration prior to the event for approval.

### **Technology Use Policy**

This policy defines the boundaries of acceptable use of VCS computing and communication resources, including computers, devices, electronic data, networks, services, information sources, communication services, and other communication resources.

VCS' computing and communication resources are the property of VCS. They are to be used for the advancement of VCS' spiritual, educational, service, community outreach, administrative, and business purposes. Computing and communication resources are provided for the use of faculty, staff, currently admitted or enrolled students, and other properly authorized users.

- Requirements and Prohibited Uses
  - Requirements for the Use of VCS Computing and Communications Resources
    - Users must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, and with VCS policies. Users must be truthful and accurate in personal and computer identification.
    - Users must respect the rights and privacy of others, including intellectual property, and personal property rights. Users must not compromise the integrity of electronic networks, must avoid restricted areas, and must refrain from activities that may damage the network, or transmit, or stored data.
    - Users must maintain the security of their accounts and are to protect their account passwords.
  - Prohibited Uses of VCS Computing and Communications Resources
    - Unlawful posts or communications, including threats of violence, obscenity, pornography, and harassing communications, are prohibited.

- Any alteration of addresses, uniform resource locator (URL), or other action that masks any VCS domain as a host site is prohibited unless authorized by the VCS Technology Department.
- Unauthorized anonymous and/or pseudonymous communications are prohibited. All users are required to cooperate with appropriate VCS personnel or other authorized personnel when investigating the source of anonymous messages.
- Misrepresenting or forging the identity of the sender or the source of an electronic communication is prohibited.
- Unauthorized acquisition attempts to acquire and use of passwords of others are prohibited.
- Revealing passwords or otherwise permitting the use by others (by intent or negligence) of personal accounts for computer and network access without authorization by the VCS Technology Department is prohibited.
- Unauthorized use and attempts to use the computer accounts of others are prohibited.
- Altering the content of data or communications originating from another person or computer with intent to deceive is prohibited.
- Unauthorized modification of or deletion of another person's files, account, or communications is prohibited.
- Use of VCS computer resources or electronic services without authorization or beyond one's level of authorization is prohibited.
- Making VCS computing resources available to individuals not affiliated with VCS without approval of the VCS Technology Department is prohibited.
- Interception or attempted interception of data or communications by parties not authorized or intended to receive them is prohibited.
- Compromising the privacy or security of electronic information is prohibited.
- Infringing upon the copyright, trademark, patent, or other intellectual property rights of others in computer programs or electronic information (including plagiarism and unauthorized use or reproduction) is prohibited. The unauthorized storing, copying or use of audio files, images, graphics, computer software, data sets, bibliographic records and other protected property is prohibited except as permitted by law.
- The act of or attempt to circumvent, alter, interfere with, disable, or disrupt any computer or network accounts, applications, communications, services, systems, or equipment is prohibited.
- The propagation of computer "worms," "viruses," "trojans," or "malware," the sending of electronic chain mail, and inappropriate "broadcasting" of messages to individuals or hosts are prohibited.

- Failure to comply with requests from appropriate VCS officials to discontinue activities that threaten the operation or integrity of computers, systems, or networks, or otherwise violate this policy is prohibited.
- Altering or attempting to alter files or systems without authorization is prohibited.
- Scanning of networks, networked devices, or applications for security vulnerabilities without specific authorization by the VCS Technology Department is prohibited.
- Attempting to alter or connect any computing or networking components/services (including, but not limited to, bridges, routers, firewalls, DNS servers, DHCP servers, wireless access points or “hot spots,” switches, and hubs) on the VCS network/campus without approval of the VCS Technology Department is prohibited.
- Installation or alteration of wiring, including attempts to create network connections, or any extension or retransmission of any computer or network services without the approval of the VCS Technology Department is prohibited.
- Conduct leading to disruption of electronic networks or services is prohibited.
- Conduct leading to the damage of VCS electronic information/data, computing/networking equipment, and resources is prohibited.
- Unauthorized use of VCS trademarks or logos and other protected trademarks and logos is prohibited.
- VCS and department web pages may link to commercial websites, but any link that generates, or has the potential to generate, revenue to VCS or to any individual or company, including click trade or banner advertising, must be approved by the VCS Development Office.
- Use of VCS computer resources for private business or commercial activities, fund-raising or advertising on behalf of non-VCS organizations is prohibited.
- The unauthorized reselling of VCS computer resources is prohibited.

### **Privacy and Security**

- Confidentiality

Confidentiality of communications and other network transmissions cannot be assured. Therefore, all users should exercise caution when sending personal, financial, confidential, or sensitive information electronically.

- Routine Logging and Monitoring

Certain electronic and network activities are routinely logged and monitored. These activities include but are not limited to:

1. Use of passwords and accounts accessed

2. Time, duration, and amount of activity
  3. Access and use of VCS equipment and services access
  4. Use of web pages and Internet services access
  5. Use of electronic resources and services
- Detailed Session Logging  
In cases of suspected violations of VCS policies, especially unauthorized access to computing systems, the VCS Technology Department or school administration, may authorize detailed session logging. This may involve a complete keystroke log, screenshots, application use, and transaction details of an entire session. In addition, the Technology Department or school administration may authorize searching of user files to gather evidence on a suspected violation.
  - Responsibility for Data Security  
Software and physical limitations, computer viruses, and third-party intrusions can compromise security of data storage and communications. VCS takes reasonable precautions to minimize risk. VCS is not obligated to maintain backups of any file/data for any length of time.
  - Right to Examine Computers and Equipment  
VCS-owned computers and equipment may be examined to detect illegal content and to evaluate the security of the network. Networks, networked devices, and applications may be scanned for vulnerabilities as authorized by the VCS Technology Department.

## **Technology Violations and Enforcement**

### *Reporting Violations*

Any actual or suspected violation of the rules listed above should be brought to the VCS Technology Department.

### *VCS Response to a Reported Violation*

Upon receiving notice of a violation, VCS may suspend a user's privileges or move or delete the allegedly offending material pending further proceedings.

A person accused of a violation will be notified of the charge and have an opportunity to respond before VCS imposes a permanent sanction. Appropriate cases will be referred to the VCS disciplinary authority appropriate to the violator's status (e.g., school administration or employee's supervisor) or to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

In addition to sanctions available under applicable law and VCS and regents' policies, VCS may impose a temporary or permanent reduction or elimination of access privileges to

computing and communication accounts, networks, VCS-administered computing rooms, and other services or facilities.

If VCS believes it necessary to preserve the integrity of facilities, user services, or data, it may suspend any account, whether the account user is suspected of any violation. VCS will provide appropriate notice to the account user. Servers and computers that threaten the security of VCS systems will be removed from the network and allowed to reconnect only with the approval of the VCS Technology Department.

#### *Termination of Services*

When a user's affiliation with VCS ends, VCS will terminate access to computing and communications resources, electronic services, and accounts. The user will have one week to request access to any user generated documents or communications stored. After that time, the user's data will be deleted. VCS may, at its discretion, permit the user to have access to accounts and have communications forwarded or redirected for a limited period. VCS may keep select files as examples to assist with future classes.

#### **Anti-Hazing Policy**

VCS enacts this policy to maintain a safe learning environment for students that is free from hazing. The school does not tolerate any brand or degree of hazing.

- **Definition:** Hazing means any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization or team, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct includes whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, forced consumption of any food, beverage, or other substance, or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity that is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or other person, or that subjects such student or person to extreme mental stress, including deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.
- **Where and When Policy Applies:** This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property; before, during, or after school hours; and including vacations and breaks.
- **Informal Reporting:** Students and staff may seek advice on matters related to the hazing policy without having to file a formal complaint. Students who feel they have been subjected to hazing should talk with an administrator, teacher, coach, or advisor. Staff members approached by students shall counsel them on options available to them under this policy. Staff members who have concerns about possible hazing behavior are encouraged to talk with an administrator, teacher, coach, or advisor. The school intends to use this informal reporting procedure to try to prevent hazing, not to determine intent or blame.

- Formal Reporting Procedure: Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to the school administrator.
- Discipline: The school will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, coach, volunteer, contractor, or other employee who is found to have violated this policy. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge.

## GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### **Length of Day & School Year**

The normal school days at VCS are as follows:

<b><u>Grade Level</u></b>	<b><u>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.</u></b>	<b><u>Wed.</u></b>
Lower Elementary (K-4)	8:30 – 3:10	8:30 – 1:30
Upper Elementary (5-6)	8:20 – 3:25	8:20 – 1:30
Junior High	8:20 – 3:25	8:20 – 1:30
High School	8:00 – 3:10	8:00 – 2:10

Please review the school calendar ([valleychristianaz.org](http://valleychristianaz.org), select “Calendar” at the top) for any holidays, early releases, or other modified days. The school year typically includes 180 days in which students are in class for more than half of the day. Teacher and staff in-service times are adjusted annually by the school’s administration.

### **Admissions and Nondiscrimination Policy**

Subject to the Constitution of the United States and all applicable state and federal laws, VCS admits students of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

To be considered for enrollment, the student must meet the following standards: student and parents must agree with the mission, statement of faith, school policies, and handbook. Student must want to attend Valley Christian and demonstrate an aptitude to meet the school’s expectations.

### **Academic Placement**

- Entrance Testing

To be sure we meet the needs of your new or transfer student, it may be necessary to participate in placement testing. VCS utilizes MAP testing (Measures of Academic Progress) provided by NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) for admissions, placement, and yearly benchmark achievements. The school office will arrange for each student to take these assessments before enrolling and throughout each academic year.

- Grade Placement

Students are not permitted to “skip” any grades, including current and transfer students, and agree to follow the natural progression of grade placement as established by the school.

- Classroom/Teacher Placement

Families should consider that just as each child is unique, so is each teacher. An experience that other students may have had with a teacher may be different from what your child could have with the same teacher.

All decisions made by the administration regarding placement should be honored while showing Christ-like character and continual support to their child’s assigned teacher(s). The ending goal for placement is to create a classroom environment that is balanced to best meet the needs of the class.

- Educational

Consideration is given for the class as a whole to ensure a relatively balanced mix of social, gender, and academic growth within each classroom based on current and previous assessments. This also considers the experience of the classroom teacher and instructional approach, while remaining within the class size guidelines.

Consideration is also given toward a reasonable social dynamic, as each classroom needs students with good leadership and a variety of social skills. Some children work well together outside of the classroom, but do not work well together inside the classroom and may need to be separated.

We also consider a balance of maturity levels and behavioral considerations. All classes must attempt a balance of students who may require special attention to their behavioral needs.

- Parent Input

Parent information regarding their child’s personality and how he/she learns is accepted and considered by the team as students are placed. This information must be written in a letter or email to the campus Principal. Please note that due to

the specific considerations and criteria listed above, it is impossible to honor specific teacher requests. Please do not assume a request for a specific teacher will be granted.

A request for a child not to have the same teacher that a sibling has is typically honored. All such requests must be in writing and received prior to the end of the school year. Note that in the spirit of transparency, letters or emails of this type will be shared with the teacher.

- Timeframe for Placement

Parents will be notified of teacher placements via email prior to scheduled back-to-school orientation days. This allows maximum flexibility due to fluctuating enrollment or related needs. Total enrollment tends to fluctuate throughout the summer, while may cause class sections to be added or reduced.

### **Student Files**

Student files are how the school collects and organizes student information. These files are confidential and are only available to school personnel who are directly involved with the academic affairs of a student. If a parent wishes to look at his/her child's file, the parent should set up an appointment with the school office. These files are not available to other parents or individuals. In the case of a divorce or separation, the guardian that has signed the school enrollment application will be eligible to view a student file or receive academic documentation. Any other party must present legal verification that they have equal rights. The authorized school office staff will make sure that other academic service personnel are supervised and accountable if student files have been requested for academic testing and psychological evaluation.

### **Lunch Ordering**

Families are able to log into the Family Portal and order lunch for their student(s). As soon as the order is submitted through Family Portal, it displays in FACTS SIS. If the order is changed in FACTS SIS, the change is immediately reflected on Family Portal.

- Lunch orders for the following week are due by 11:59pm on the previous Thursday.
- Lunch credits are not given.
- Bottled water comes with each meal.
- For lunches being delivered by parents for students, an unmanned table will be placed outside the office for drop off/pick up. NO third-party deliveries allowed (Grubhub, Door Dash, etc.).
- Lunch Questions: Contact our Lunch Operations Coordinator.



### High school-specific:

Lunches may be eaten in Barnes Assembly Hall, the Student Union, outdoors, or in a classroom with permission and supervision of individual teachers. Teachers are assigned to monitor lunchtime activities. No food is to be consumed in the hallways during lunch. Seniors who have a signed "off campus" form, have obtained a car sticker, and are wearing their student ID may leave campus at lunchtime. The campus may be closed to seniors at lunchtime if the open campus policy is abused.

### **Transportation**

Valley Christian Schools provides some designated routes of transportation to school each year. This is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange with the VCS Transportation department.

The applications to participate and more information can be found at [valleychristianaz.org/Transportation](http://valleychristianaz.org/Transportation).

### **Logo Use and Representation of VCS**

The school logos and name are federally registered marks of VCS and may not be used or reproduced without express written authorization from the VCS Marketing and Communications Department. Any effort to represent the school or group, whether in name only or with accompanying logos, must be expressly authorized prior to use (Ex: Valley Christian Parents Group or Valley Christian school group on social media; Valley Christian logos or name on custom apparel).

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents are encouraged to attend parent/teacher conferences, typically held each semester. Teachers are well-prepared for parent/teacher conferences, with access to the student's grades and examples of student work for reference. Parents, teachers, or administrators may schedule a conference throughout the year on an as-needed basis.

#### Other Parent/Teacher Conferences

Teachers are encouraged to schedule ad-hoc parent/teacher conferences as needed, as VCS teachers are asked to dialogue regularly with parents. A conference should be scheduled with parents regarding any student in danger of failing or having other complications or concerns. Parents and teachers should be mindful that conferences should take place as needs arise and not simply during schoolwide conferences per the school calendar.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Students are expected to use good personal hygiene. This includes bathing daily, wearing deodorant, and wearing clean clothes to school. If student hygiene continues to be an issue, this may result in the office or member of the administration requesting a meeting with the parent and student to come up with a reasonable but effective solution.

### **Public Display of Affection (PDA)**

Inappropriate public display of affection will not be tolerated. We believe that proper, God-glorifying relationships between young men and women should be encouraged. While we recognize that our Biblical standards may be outside what modern society encourages and promotes, we will continue to promote high standards of moral and ethical conduct. The school will not permit students to participate in PDA or "prolonged contact" of any kind whatsoever.

K-8: No public display of affection (PDA) is allowed. This includes placing arms around the person, holding hands, playing with hair, or placing hands anywhere on another individual while at school or any school activity on or off-campus.

High School: Inappropriate public displays of affection will not be tolerated. Holding hands will be the limit of body contact. Violations will result in a consequence.

### **Pregnancy**

A pregnant student will not be allowed to continue classes. This policy applies equally to either a boy or a girl involved in a pregnancy whether the partner in the pregnancy is a VCS student. In all such cases, measures will be made to assist and counsel each student to encourage right choices and continuing education.

### **Pet Policy**

The only animals allowed in and on school property are service animals and therapy animals; animals that support an instructional lesson; and – at the discretion of the teacher – turtles, fish, or frogs kept in clean and maintained aquariums. The use of service animals must comply with all state regulations.

### **Child Safety Guiding Principles**

VCS believes the Bible teaches that all persons, male and female, adult and child, are created in the image of God and therefore are worthy of respect. (Gen. 1: 26, 27). Women and men are equal in the sight of God (Gal. 3:28). The human body is good, including human sexuality (1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19, 2 Cor. 6:16). Through the fall of humanity into sin, the goodness of God's creation was distorted; the evil of abuse and neglect are results of the fall. VCS strives for

excellence in caring for the intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each student in his/her life-long pursuit of learning. VCS strives to provide a safe and secure learning environment.

We recognize, however, that we live in a broken world and that abuse and neglect also could occur within the school. Appropriate steps will be taken to prevent abuse, and if it occurs, appropriate action will be taken. Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated. As a community, VCS is committed to prevent abuse and to foster the development of healthy relationships. As a Christian school we acknowledge what the Bible teaches concerning the legitimate mandate of local authorities, and we pledge to cooperate with them in seeking justice in abuse.

VCS is also committed to the protection of children and to provide a healing environment for those whose lives have been affected by the sin of abuse.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

In accordance with A.R.S. 13-3620, school personnel are required to report to a peace officer or to child protective services any reasonable grounds to believe a child is the victim of physical or sexual abuse. The school will not contact parents before making a report to authorities. The law is clear on the duty of school personnel to report, and there is no legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation.

### **Kingdom Diversity Statement**

At VCS, we recognize and celebrate “Kingdom Diversity.” This is to say that we recognize and celebrate the beauty and truth in the well-known children’s song, Jesus Loves the Little Children when it says, “Red & yellow, black & white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.”

Sometimes, in our good faith efforts to be inclusive, we unintentionally adopt phrases that, while well intentioned, are ultimately not helpful. In fact, sometimes these well-intentioned efforts can be hurtful to the people we are trying to make feel special. One prominent example is when we say that we are colorblind – that we do not see color. This is not true and cannot be true for any of us. We cannot ignore, despite our best efforts, differences in physical characteristics of people any more than we can force ourselves not to notice the differences between a rose and a sunflower. And we should not, either.

Ultimately, our identity is in Christ. We should never lose sight of this. Unity in Christ is our eternal destiny. This is our primary focus for everyone at VCS – that we understand and embrace our identity as a member of God’s family. We are all part of God’s family; this is our collective core identity.

While we continually emphasize our collective core identity in Christ, we also recognize that people, as part of God’s wonderfully diverse creation, are fantastic displays of our Maker’s creative genius. We should recognize and embrace each other’s God-given uniqueness in ways that celebrate God’s creativity and honor everyone. Placing our core identify in Christ

does not strip us of our God-given ethnic identity, nor does Scripture compel us to ignore, suppress, or reject our ethnic heritage.

The reality is that one's ethnicity is an integral part of who they are, regardless of ethnic heritage. Attempting to stifle, ignore, make fun of, or downplay someone's ethnicity is disrespectful to that person and dishonoring to God. The celebration of one's ethnic identity can be more or less important to people of different ethnicities, and there are often historical and cultural variables that account for this. Additionally, within each ethnic group, there exists a wide range of beliefs, opinions, and practices relative to the importance and celebration of one's ethnicity. We should never assume that "one speaks for all."

A person's ethnic heritage is part of God's gift of individuality and a testimony of how much God values diversity within His creation. At VCS, we do not ignore, downplay, suppress, or otherwise pretend that we do not recognize the diversity of our student body. We celebrate God's creativity and the diversity of His creation. We seek to celebrate ourselves and each other for how God made each of us. The recognition and celebration of a diverse student body at VCS involves saying to one another, "I see you, and I love you for who you are. I see God's creation in you, and I celebrate you, all of you."

Finally, our primary emphasis will always be what unifies us, and that is our collective unity in Jesus Christ – this will never change. We can and we will appropriately recognize and celebrate our God-given uniqueness as individuals without allowing those differences to distract us from our main mission. We will honor God and each other in these moments as well as we grow in celebrating Kingdom Diversity at VCS.

### **Harassment-Free Policy**

At VCS, we believe that all people have dignity because they are created in God's image and are of infinite value. We further believe that as a Christian community we are called to reflect the values of Jesus in His regard and respect for all people. In this way, we provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for all members. Any form of harassment directed toward any member of our school community by another member of the community is contrary to these Christian values and is not acceptable at any time.

1. **Sexual harassment** is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where A) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's evaluation, B) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting such student, C) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Including, but not limited to:
  - Unwelcome sexual flirtations or propositions
  - Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
  - Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body
  - Sexual words or phrases used to describe an individual.

- Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures in the educational environment
2. **Harassment**, including bullying, hazing, or intimidation, of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or for initiation into memberships, or anything which constitutes teasing/taunting consistently, is also prohibited. Harassment would include verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a student because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, and that:
- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
  - Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student’s academic performance.
  - Otherwise adversely affects a student’s academic opportunities.

3. **Reporting Procedure:**

To take corrective measures to remedy the situation of harassment, the school must be informed of such an event. Any student who believes he/she has been a victim of harassment is encouraged to make a complaint verbally or in writing to any VCS teacher or administrator. Teachers or supervisors shall notify an Administrator immediately. Parents and/or guardians must submit a written report to school administration if reported outside the school setting. Each complaint will be fully investigated individually. At its sole discretion, VCS may take interim action (e.g., suspension) pending a full investigation and resolution. All matters will be handled with discretion.

4. **Investigation Procedure:**

Upon notification of a harassment or discrimination complaint where the complainant self-identifies, the Administrator shall:

1. Inform the Board of Director’s Chairman immediately.
2. Authorize the investigation of the complaint and supervise and/or investigate the complaint. The investigation will include interviews with a) the complainant; b) the accused; and c) any other persons the Administrator has reason to believe have relevant knowledge concerning the complaint. This may include victims of similar conduct.
3. Review information gathered through the investigation, to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual or other forms of harassment; considering all information, the totality of the circumstances, including the conduct and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.
4. Report the results of the investigation and determination as to whether harassment occurred to appropriate persons including the complainant, the accused, the supervisor, or director. If discipline is imposed, the discipline will not be communicated to the complainant.

5. Any student or employee who has been found, after investigation, to have engaged in behavior that VCS deems inappropriate or in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, which may include immediate suspension or termination.
6. Take reasonable steps to protect the victim and other potential victims from further harassment.
7. Take reasonable steps to protect the victim from any retaliation because of communicating the complaint.
8. Inform the Board of Directors.

Upon notification of a harassment or discrimination complaint where the complainant does not self-identify (typically, this would be received through the online portal), the Administrator shall:

1. Inform the Board of Director's Chairman immediately, as appropriate.
  2. Authorize the investigation of the complaint and supervise and/or investigate the complaint to the extent possible. Note that this situation can and must be handled differently, given that the complainant is not available for interview. At the discretion of the Administration, the investigation may include interviews with a) the accused, and b) any other persons the Administration has reason to believe may have relevant knowledge concerning the complaint. This may include victims of similar conduct.
  3. Review any information that was able to be gathered through the investigation to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment or discrimination; considering all information, the totality of the circumstances, including the conduct and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.
  4. Report the results of the investigation and determination as to whether harassment or discrimination occurred to appropriate persons including the accused, the supervisor, or director.
  5. Any student or employee who has been found, after investigation, to have engaged in behavior that VCS deems inappropriate or in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, which may include immediate suspension or termination.
  6. Take reasonable steps to protect other potential victims from further harassment and discrimination.
  7. Inform the Board of Directors, as appropriate.
5. **False harassment** complaints, or negative behavioral responses to complainant after making complaint, will result in appropriate disciplinary action. In all listed examples above, disciplinary action may include discharge from employment or dismissal from school.

### **Security and Emergencies**

VCS takes security seriously. We regularly practice drills in order for staff and students to practice and become aware of protocols. Parents will be alerted through RenWeb, with instructions, of any emergency situations.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participating in extracurricular activities should be considered a privilege. As a participant, you represent Christ and the school. This privilege is extended to students that are in good standing with the school. The administration reserves the right to make that determination.

### **Behavioral Regulations**

- If a student violates the school's substance abuse policy, they will be subject to the discipline listed under the policy. If a student remains at Valley Christian Schools, the following will apply to those involved in extracurricular activities. If a student violates the policy during the off-season, the suspension shall begin at the start of his or her next extracurricular activity. The penalty for violating this rule is as follows:
  - 1st violation – suspension from games/events for at minimum one week
  - 2nd violation – removal from extracurricular participation
- Behavior in school must be exemplary. An extracurricular participant involved in any administrative disciplinary action, such as excessive tardies, unexcused absences, or misbehavior in class, will be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled event. Continued violation of school rules will result in the student being dismissed from the team/activity.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct and language at any time is cause for dismissal from a team. The severity of the incident will be taken into consideration before a decision is made regarding any penalty given. Normally the following action will be taken:
  - 1st violation - Students will be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled event.
  - 2nd violation - Students will be ineligible for the next four regularly scheduled events.
- End of season violation - If a penalty is imposed at the end of the season and no event remains, the penalty is to be enforced at the beginning of the student's next extracurricular activity.
- A student participant must attend school a minimum of four periods (or 50% of the school day) to be eligible to practice or participate in any extracurricular activity on that day. If the student is in attendance for less than four consecutive periods, he/she may observe the practice or event, but may not participate.
- Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of equipment checked out to them. They must pay for any equipment lost or unnecessarily damaged.
- Students are expected to be well-groomed and appropriately dressed during all extracurricular outings.

### **Eligibility for Extracurricular or Related Activities**

Extracurricular activities normally require significant amounts of time outside of school, which may subtract from time available for academic work. Students must maintain satisfactory progress in their academic studies and display good conduct to have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities. Students who fall below the academic standards will be declared ineligible to encourage them to spend their extra time on academic efforts.



To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (including, but not limited to, athletics and performing arts), students must meet these standards:

- Receive no academic grades of “F”, receive no conduct grades of “U” or below a 2.0 GPA for the quarter.

### **Quarter Report Card**

- Determines Eligibility (No probationary period)  
An “F”, a conduct code of “U” or GPA below 2.0 would result in a student being ineligible for at least 4.5 weeks.  
Ineligibility from the fourth quarter carries over to the first quarter activities the following year.

### **Progress Reports**

- Students do not become ineligible for poor academic performance on Progress Reports.
- Ineligible students can become eligible for improved academic performance on Progress Reports.
- Progress Reports can only help academically ineligible students become eligible.

### **NOTES:**

- Extreme or unique cases will be evaluated by the administration
- Coaches and activity sponsors have the prerogative to enforce a stricter eligibility policy with the approval of the administration

### **Fan Behavior at Valley Christian Schools Events**

Although Valley Christian Schools realizes that adults (parents/guardians) are not bound by the same code of conduct as their children enrolled at Valley Christian Schools, it should be noted that all persons attending VCS-sponsored events (social events, athletic events, etc.) are expected to abide by all school policies pertaining to appropriate behavior. Any persons who exhibit inappropriate, rude, unsportsmanlike, and or unchristian behavior may be requested to leave such events at the discretion of the coach, Principal, or those in charge of the event and or any VCS administrator in attendance. All parents and students should refrain from talking or interacting with the coach or players during practices, games, time-outs, halftime, and or coaching from the sidelines.

# HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

GRADES 9-12

## ADMISSIONS & GETTING STARTED (HIGH SCHOOL)

### **Classroom Supplies**

VCS provides all basic initial supplies for students in the classroom. The school/teacher reserves the right to request certain items purchased by families to accommodate specific projects or related activities.

### **School Hours**

The normal school days at VCS are as follows:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.</b>	<b>Wed.</b>
Lower Elementary (K-4)	8:30 – 3:10	8:30 – 1:30
Upper Elementary (5-6)	8:20 – 3:25	8:20 – 1:30
Junior High	8:20 – 3:25	8:20 – 1:30
High School	8:00 – 3:10	8:00 – 2:10

Please review the school calendar ([valleychristianaz.org](http://valleychristianaz.org), select “Calendar” at the top) for any holidays, early releases, or other modified days. The school year typically includes 180 days in which students are in class for more than half of the day. Teacher and staff in-service times are adjusted annually by the school’s administration.

At the high school, all students at dismissal time are expected to vacate the school’s premises within two hours, unless involved in a school-sponsored activity. There is no supervision or chaperoning of students provided after the final bell. The high school office is open 7:30am-4:00pm Monday-Thursday, and 7:30am-3:45pm on Friday.

### **Chapel and Assemblies**

The weekly High School Chapel is a time set aside to worship together. The Ministry Development Team is responsible for planning the weekly chapel services. Students' behavior in chapel should demonstrate a reverent attitude and heart. Special assemblies may also be held on various occasions. All students are required to attend weekly chapels and any scheduled assemblies. Parents are invited to join us for weekly chapels.

### **Cell Phone/Smart Watch Policy**

- Students are to turn off then place their cell phones/smart watches in the classroom cell phone holder at the beginning of every class. The phone or device is not to leave that designated area until the bell rings at the end of each period. Teachers may allow students to use cell phones for school related activities only.
- Cell phones are not allowed to be used in chapels or school assemblies.

- It is encouraged for students to not be on their cell phones during school hours.
- Students can have possession of their cell phones during off-campus school-related events, i.e. school field trips, sports away games etc. However, the staff responsible for each event will determine the phone restrictions during those trips or events.

**Consequences:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> violation= Phone will be taken and held until the end of the day. Students can pick up the phone at the end of the day. VP notified.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> violation= Phone will be taken and held until the end of the day. Students can pick up the phone at the end of the day. VP notified. Detention issued.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> violation= Phone will be taken and held until the end of the day. Students can pick up the phone at the end of the day. VP notified. ISS issued.
- 4<sup>th</sup> violation= Phone will be taken and held until the end of the day. Students can pick up the phone at the end of the day. VP notified. 2 Day OSS. Parent meeting arranged.
- 5<sup>th</sup> violation= Phone will be taken and held until the end of the day. Students can pick up the phone at the end of the day. VP notified. Student may be expelled or denied re-enrollment.

## ACADEMICS (HIGH SCHOOL)

### **Earning College Credit**

There are two methods by which eligible students can receive high school credit with the opportunity to also earn lower division college credits in a variety of content areas. There are prerequisites that students must meet to be accepted into these courses.

#### Advanced Placement (AP)

Students are enrolled into AP classes, with consideration to GPA, teacher recommendations, AP potential scores, previous grades and GPA. Once enrolled, students are required to take the AP exam at the end of the year and must submit payment for that test (approximately \$95 per test) by the end of the first month of school.

To receive college credit, one must take the exam and earn a score of typically a 3, 4, or 5. (Requirements differ between universities). It is the student's responsibility to contact colleges or universities (of interest to them) regarding the requirements for acceptance of AP scores for credit.

#### Dual Enrollment (DE)

VCS currently uses Colorado Christian University for DE courses. Students are enrolled into DE classes with consideration to GPA, teacher recommendations, and previous grades. These courses are taught online with a university professor, facilitated by a VCS teacher, or taught entirely by a VCS teacher. VCS provides the technology and class period. All grading and policies are strictly through CCU for the courses taught by them. It is the student's responsibility to contact colleges or universities of interest to them regarding the acceptance of DE credits. Students must register and pay the school's tuition and other fees. They will grant students 3 or 4 college credits (amount varies per course) if they earn a "C" or higher for the semester. All DE courses are weighted on a 5.0-point scale and designated as DE on transcripts. Upon successful completion of these courses, it is the student's responsibility to send transcripts from CCU to the college or university of their choice.

### **Academic Information**

Freshman through Junior students are required to have 7 assigned periods (not including study hall or TA). Senior students may be excused from periods 1 & 2, 7 & 8, or 1 & 8 or 1 or 8, assuming they will meet the requirements for graduation and choose to take only 6 assigned periods (not including study hall, opens or TA.) Study Hall, morning/early release, or teacher's aide do not count for credit.

Only under extenuating circumstances will administration consider waiving requirements which are specific to Valley Christian Schools and not a matter of state law.

#### Scheduling

It is important that students choose their high school courses wisely, as their choices will affect their future education and work experiences. Obtaining a broad base of educational

experience is essential in our rapidly changing society; therefore, students are encouraged to select courses from all areas of the curriculum. Wise planning will allow a student to adequately prepare for college, pursue career interests, and take courses for personal enjoyment and enrichment of life in general. Students and their parents are encouraged to seek the advice of teachers and staff as they make plans for registration.

### Schedule Changes

- All schedule changes must be coordinated through and approved in writing by the Advising Department. No schedule changes will be considered after the first week of classes. All schedule changes must be submitted in writing and must occur during the first week of school ONLY - our goal is to have a final class roster by the end of the first week of the semester.
- Requests for specific teachers, sections, or to be with friends will not be considered. Teachers and/or administrators may initiate a student schedule change to improve student placement. Withdrawal from a course, two weeks after the start of each semester is done only when there are extenuating circumstances and must be approved in writing by the teacher, parent, and administrator.
- Withdrawal after six weeks will result in an WP for withdraw passing or WF for withdraw failing.
- Students will not be permitted to submit a schedule change for electives at the semester, they will stay in their chosen elective for the entire year.

### Transfer Credits

VCS will allow students enrolled in high school to complete online courses during an assigned class period during the school day. In addition, under special circumstances, VCS will allow students to take courses outside the regular school day. In each case, students must receive prior approval by the Academic Advising Department and Administration. The rationale for allowing students to take courses outside of VCS is as follows:

- It provides students an opportunity to take courses which VCS does not currently offer.
- It allows students to explore fields of study which may guide them to a college major.
- It introduces students to online learning, which is part of the college experience at many colleges.
- It allows for credit recovery by students needing to meet graduation requirements after failing a class taken at VCS.
- It provides options for students taking dual enrollment courses.
- It provides the Academic Advising Department with more flexibility in scheduling classes to meet students' needs.
- All high school level classes taken outside of VCS must be pre-approved by the Academic Advising office and Administration. Additionally, they must be taken at a Christian School. Dual Enrollment classes can be taken at any accredited university.

How many outside courses may be taken during a student's high school years?

- With prior approval by the Academic Advising Department and Administration, students are permitted to take up to a total of four classes over their four years of high school outside of VCS with a maximum of 2 per year. This includes regular high school courses and dual enrollment courses.
- All classes taken outside of VCS must be taken through an accredited Christian education provider that is approved by the Academic Advising Department and Administration.

How are the credits counted?

- After completing an online course, the student must arrange for an official transcript to be sent to VCS. The course, credit, and grade will be added to the student's official VCS transcript and will be calculated into the student's GPA.

What requirements must be met for a student to take an online course?

- A student will be required to graduate from VCS with the 28 required graduation credits.
- A student must take the required number of credits each semester—seven assigned class periods for 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students: six assigned class periods for seniors. (Not including study hall or opens.)
- Students may only be given one extra study hall per semester to work on outside classes and students must submit an official transcript at the end of each semester before the extra study hall is scheduled for the next semester.
- A student must be available to attend weekly chapel services.
- All costs related to classes taken outside of VCS are the responsibility of the student/family.
- Prior to enrolling in any course outside of VCS, a student must submit an Outside Class Request form to the Academic Advising Department/Administration for approval.
- Students can only take one outside class per core subject (Bible, English, Math, Science and Social Studies).
- For seniors taking an approved, necessary online course – the registrar must receive an official transcript 3 weeks prior to graduation. If it is not received this could jeopardize a student from participating in graduation.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Twenty-eight (28) credits are required for graduation. Below is a summary of specific courses needed to fulfill graduation requirements in each offered discipline.

<b>Required Course</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credits</b>
<b>Bible</b>		<b>Foreign Language</b>	
Bible 9	1	Spanish or Amer. Sign Language	2
Bible 10	1		
Bible 11	1		
Bible 12	1		
<b>Total: 4.0</b>		<b>Total: 2.0</b>	
<b>Career Technology Education</b>		<b>Math</b>	
Freshman Seminar	0.5		4
Survey of Engineering	0.5		
College, Career, Life	0.5		
<b>Total: 1.5</b>		<b>Total: 4.0</b>	
<b>English</b>		<b>Physical Education</b>	
Pre AP English 1	1	Physical Education/Health	1
Pre AP English 2	1		
English 11 or AP English	1		
English 12 or AP English or DE	1		
<b>Total: 4.0</b>		<b>Total: 1.0</b>	
<b>Fine Arts</b>		<b>Science</b>	
Speech	0.5	Integrated Science STEM Biology Chemistry	1 1 1
Fine Arts Elective	1		
<b>Total: 1.5</b>			
		<b>Social Studies</b>	
		World History or AP World History	1
		US History or AP US History	1
		US Gov't/Economics or AP Gov't Economics	1
		<b>Total: 3.0</b>	
<b>Total Required Courses: 24</b>			
<b>Total Additional Electives: 4</b>			
<b>Total Credits Required for Graduation: 28</b>			



## **Honor Cords**

Seniors with an unweighted cumulative average GPA of 3.5 to 3.74 will graduate Cum Laude and will be honored with a silver cord at graduation. Seniors with an unweighted cumulative average GPA of 3.75-3.99 will graduate Magna Cum Laude and will be honored with a gold cord at graduation. Seniors with a weighted cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher will graduate Summa Cum Laude and will be honored with a gold sash at graduation.

National Honor Society members will be recognized at graduation by wearing a NHS specific adornment, e.g., medallion, tassel or sash in addition to the Honor cord.

The National Honor Society (NHS) began in 1921 as an organization that honors and recognizes students who demonstrate excellence in four areas: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Seniors, juniors, and sophomores, who have completed their second semester and are in good standing with the school, are eligible for membership if they have earned and maintain an unweighted cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or higher. NHS students complete an additional ten hours of Christian service and participate in several important service projects throughout the school year.

The only other honor cords allowed to be worn at graduation are those who have met the standards of a State or National organization which sponsors an Honor Society and to which the local organization has an active affiliation. Students who have been accepted into military service may also wear an honor code representing their branch.

## **Grades**

### **Grade Point Average**

A student's GPA is based on semester final grades with all courses included in accordance with the credit received. Quality points are assigned as follows:

<b>Grading Scale</b>			
<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Unweighted GPA Regular VCS Classes</b>	<b>Weighted GPA AP/DE Classes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	4.000	5.000	90-100
B+	3.333	4.333	87-89
B	3.000	4.000	83-86
B-	2.667	3.667	80-82
C+	2.333	3.333	77-79
C	2.000	3.000	73-76
C-	1.667	2.667	70-72
D+	1.333	2.333	67-69
D	1.000	2.000	63-66
D-	0.667	1.667	60-62
F	0.000	0.000	59 and below

### **Semester Exams**

Exams are a major factor in determining semester grades. They count as 20% of the semester grade. Exams reflect the learning over 18 weeks and should be taken seriously as they help determine grades which are placed on their permanent high school transcripts. Planned absences are not allowed. Students missing an exam due to illness will be required to take the exam during the make-up period. A student who does not show up for a scheduled exam without administrative approval will receive a 10% reduction of their semester grade.

### **VINE Program Graduation Requirements**

Most students in the VINE program will complete the standard requirements for graduation. However, graduation requirements may be modified depending on the special needs of the individual student. This modification requires written approval of the administrator. The VINE Director will present graduation requirement modification proposals to the principal and the guidance counselor each year for all students in grades 10-12. This will include a review of previously approved modification proposals.

### **Questions about Grades**

Since grades are recorded in RenWeb, we expect parents to routinely monitor their student's grades. Questions about a grade must be initially addressed within one week of the grade being posted or released with the classroom teacher. We will not entertain changes once grades are posted to the transcript.

### **Incompletes**

Students who receive an "incomplete" in a course must complete the work within two weeks of the end of the semester. Incompletes are only to be used in rare situations where a student has suffered a significant hardship preventing him/her from submitting a portion of the required work for a class. The two-week period is a grace period to allow the student to recover from the hardship. If the student does not make up the incomplete work, then the grade will be calculated with zero credit for the missing work.

### **Failures**

Failing a class necessitates enrolling in a summer credit recovery course to bridge the knowledge gap and prepare for upcoming coursework. If the course is not completed prior to the start of the next year, this could affect a student's requested courses, schedule and graduation status. Before enrolling in a course students must submit an Outside Class Request form for approval from the Academic Advising office/Administration.

Seniors who fail a required first semester course must complete an approved equivalent course and submit an official transcript 3 weeks prior to graduation to participate. The monitoring and completion of an outside course is the sole responsibility of the student/parent. Seniors who fail a required second semester course must complete an approved equivalent course by July 1 to receive a VCS diploma. These students will not participate in graduation ceremonies nor go on the Senior Trip.

### **Student Contracts**

***Academic Contracts:*** A student may be placed on an academic contract at the discretion of the school administration when the student is not meeting the school's academic eligibility requirements. A student may be placed on a contract if they earn one or more Fs on a quarter or semester report card, or a student receives less than a 2.0 GPA on a quarter or semester report card. Criteria for this decision may include course work deficiencies, type of class(es) (core, non-core) lack of effort, and failure to cooperate with authority and school rules. The length of the academic contract will be determined by the advising/academic department. Once a student completes the expectations of a contract, the contract will be withdrawn. The expectation is that the student will no longer need to be on contract for the remainder of their time at VCHS. Should that not be the case the school reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw.

***Behavior Contracts:*** A student may be placed on a behavior contract at the school administration's discretion when they are not meeting the school's behavior expectations in the parent/student handbook. A behavior contract may be issued for consecutive minor violations or for a single major violation. A behavior contract gives the student a final opportunity to stay enrolled at VCS. Should the terms of the contract not be adhered to, the student may be asked to not re-enroll or be expelled. The length of the contract will be determined by the school administration. Once a student completes the expectations of a contract, the contract will be withdrawn. The expectation is that the student will no longer be a behavior problem and will look for ways to be respectful and cooperative for the remainder of their time at VCS. Should that not be the case the school reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw or be expelled.

***Attendance Contract:*** A student may be placed on an attendance contract at the school administration's discretion when they are not meeting the school's attendance requirements as described in the parent/student handbook. This includes absences and tardy policies. A student who does not meet the contract terms will be considered ineligible for extracurricular activities and may be in danger of not receiving course credit. Once a student completes the expectations of a contract, the contract will be withdrawn. The expectation is that the student will no longer exceed allowed absences or tardies and will comply with all attendance requirements. Should this not be the case, the school reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw or be expelled.

## **Late Work Submission**

### **Makeup of Excused Late Work**

Excused absences (as it applies to late work) can be defined as:

- Work missed due to school-related activities.
- Work missed due to college visits.
- Work missed due to personal sickness or injury with a note from parent or legal guardian.
- Work missed due to medical or other official appointments with note from provider.
- Work missed due to other extenuating circumstances must be approved by the administration.

The student is held responsible for obtaining work missed due to absences. All work missed during absences must be made up. No points will be taken off for excused late work that is turned in according to policy. The following applies to turning in of excused late work:

- Any assignment given before the absence will be due the day the student returns.
- Any assessment taken on the day of the absence must be taken the day the student returns.
- It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the teacher to gather any information missed from lectures or assignments given on the day of the absence.
- Teachers may allow extra time to complete work assigned during an excused absence, but no more than the number of days absent. Work not turned in during this time frame will be considered unexcused late work.
- If a student is present for part of the day on which an assignment is due but will be leaving early due to an excused absence, they are required to turn in any assignments due before leaving to the appropriate teacher.
- Students who will be out for multiple days due to school related activities are responsible to communicate absences with classroom teachers and collect any work that can be done while they are gone. The assigned work will be due the day they return unless other arrangements are approved by the teacher.

### **Makeup of Unexcused Late Work**

Unexcused late work can be defined as any work not turned in on time that does not meet the excused late work criteria. Teachers may accept unexcused late work but are NOT required to do so. A teacher may assign a score of zero for all unexcused late work. If a teacher should allow unexcused late work – the penalties are as follows:

- 1 day late = 10% reduction - max score 90%
- 2 days late = 20% reduction – max score 80%
- 3 days late = 30% reduction - max score 70%
- 4 days late = 40% reduction - max score 60% - After unit completion no late work is accepted – 0% is given

Excessively late or missing assignments will be addressed with parents and a conference scheduled at which the student must be present. Continual submission of late or missing assignments may also result in a temporary suspension from after school activities/athletics to attend any assigned detention as determined by the principal.

### **VINE and Accommodations Late Work**

Students are allowed 2 additional school days w/o penalty. Teachers are not required to accept late work after the 2 school days. If a teacher should accept the assignments the penalties are as follows:

Day 3 after the original due date – 10% reduction – max score of 90%

Day 4 after the original due date – 20% reduction - max score of 80%

Day 5 after the original due date – 30% reduction - max score of 70%

After day 6 of the original due date – 40% reduction - max score of 60%

After unit completion no late work is accepted – 0% is given

### **Homework**

VCS identifies the purposes of homework as an opportunity to practice newly taught skills, review previously mastered skills, develop independent study habits, or to extend and enrich the curriculum. Homework is not used to create “busy work” for students. Families should understand that homework serves as a formative assessment tool to ensure content is mastered before moving on to new concepts.

#### A student’s responsibilities for homework:

- Get the assignment and ask for help if the assignment is not clear.
- Copy all assignments carefully, recording due dates, and important information.
- Set a time each day to do homework.
- Check work and, if possible, explain it to an adult.
- Maintain the highest quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all necessary resources, such as packets, textbooks, notes, and study guides.
- Bring the completed homework to school when it is due.
- Be responsible for getting assignments when absent from school.
- Be responsible for taking care of, and returning, any borrowed resource materials.

#### A parent’s responsibilities for homework:

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for the quality of student work.

- Provide structure, a site, and tools needed to help the child organize and complete homework.
- Be available to provide supervision and support, but do not do the assignment.
- Understand the amount of assistance appropriate for homework assignments.
- Communicate often with the student and his/her teacher, giving feedback to the teacher with homework concerns.
- Learn strategies and techniques for helping the student by taking advantage of opportunities such as parent/teacher conferences.

The timeframe may vary for those students that require more study time, are taking advanced classes, or have a lack of good time management skills. Therefore, VCS does not operate with a specific intention or number of “homework minutes” each day. Special projects such as Science Fair, Math Fair, International Fair, research papers, or other long-term projects may be an exception. As students progress through different academic stages, homework may increase and become more difficult. Each teacher is encouraged to assign homework as appropriate, yet the amount will vary from day to day. Homework and projects are not assigned during Christmas break or summer break.

Homework guidelines for students with special needs may be determined by the VINE Director or Manager in conjunction with the principal. These modifications/accommodations, if any, should be specifically stated in the student’s individual learning plan (ILP). This information will be communicated to both teachers and families as needed.

### **Classroom Management**

We believe that respect for authority is an essential ingredient to quality education and character development; therefore, our classrooms are controlled with a firm, loving discipline by qualified and dedicated Christian teachers (Hebrews 12:6-11). It is our desire that all of our students be controlled with self-discipline in their attitudes and actions. To develop such self-discipline, though, it is necessary for us to teach and train the students in this process. VCS teachers are tasked with the primary responsibility of ensuring that their students behave in a proper and fitting way at school. At the beginning of the school year, each teacher creates a classroom management plan, clearly communicates the expectations and consequences to the students, and then consistently implements it. These classroom rules/policies are distributed to all parents at the start of the school year and are posted in the classroom for reference.

Valley Christian Schools believes each student is a special person that deserves to be respected (Genesis 1:27). Students need to feel safe and secure at school. Students need to be taught how to interact correctly with others and how to make good choices about their behavior (Proverbs 22:6). If a student chooses to disregard these expectations, there are consequences for their choices. Those consequences may include: a verbal warning, loss of recess/break time, note or phone call to parents, or being sent to the principal’s office. If inappropriate behavior continues, a conference with parents will be arranged. For more serious violations, there are further disciplinary actions detailed within this handbook, such as in-school or out-of-school suspension. As students learn to get along with each other and

respect those in authority, they will develop into productive citizens who will function well in society. They will also experience a greater sense of security, joy, and peace.

We ask that the utmost support be given to both teachers and administrators in their decisions and to let your child know that you and the school are on the same team – his/her team. We regularly pray for wisdom when counseling or disciplining children. Your support of the VCS staff will teach your child much about respect for authority.

### **Parent Engagement in the Learning Process**

*Ensure your child gets adequate amounts of sleep:*

Sleep is food for the brain. During sleep, important body functions and brain activity occur. Skipping sleep can be harmful and can impact your scores on school exams, on the court, or on the field.

*Ask specific questions:*

Rather than asking, “How was your day?” Try asking: “What was the best thing that happened to you today? Which was your most interesting class today? What was the most difficult thing you encountered today?”

*Show interest in the details:*

Your child may want to communicate in detail the story they discussed in their literature class. Try to listen carefully and ask questions.

*Go over your child’s assignment book with them:*

Ask your child if any of the assignments are difficult for them. If the answer is “I don’t have any homework,” discuss the upcoming tests or projects (i.e., weekly vocabulary quizzes). Check the test and projects posted in RenWeb or Student Agenda to help your child plan.

*Set up a homework center for your child:*

Find a pleasant place for your child to work that is free from distractions. Encourage your child to keep this area neat and uncluttered. Equip the center with all the things he may need to do his work (pens, pencils, and calculator). Do not let your child study in front of the TV or use social media websites while studying.

*Help your child learn time management:*

Make a time schedule with your child. Plan free time and study time. Post a calendar in his room to record upcoming tests, projects, field trips, special events, etc.

*Display a positive attitude towards teachers and school:*

Your child will pick up on any critical attitudes you may have. Do not allow your child to blame poor results on the teacher but help him/her to take responsibility. Encourage your child to go to the teacher with any problem he/she has.

*Communicate with your child’s teacher:*

Our teachers are here to help you and your child. Please feel free to call them and discuss your concerns. Remember that we are all working together for the same goal. Do not wait for the official Parent-Teacher Conference to talk with the teacher if you have immediate concerns.

*Encourage your child:*

Look for ways to praise and encourage your child daily. As he or she is developing socially, academically, and physically, your encouragement is a very powerful tool to steer him on the right path.

**iPad Requirements**

If it is a test/quiz day, the student will either take the test/quiz on another iPad or be sent immediately to room 8 or 14 to take the assessment on a desktop computer. If a teacher has a paper version of the test, with the teacher's permission, the student may take it in the original classroom.

If it is a "regular" class period, the student will have to make do without an iPad. This may include looking on with another student, missing a class activity (even one with a grade attached), or doing the assignment as homework. This is up to the teacher's discretion.

*Consequences for arriving to school without a charged iPad*

- 1st time – Teacher sends student to the office. Event is recorded in RenWeb and staff is alerted. An informational email is sent to parents/student (any assignments not turned in because iPad was not in class are considered "late assignments").
- 2nd time – Teacher sends student to the office. Event is recorded in RenWeb and staff is alerted. Administration counsels student and sends an email with prevention tips to parents/student.
- 3rd time – Teacher sends student to the office. Event is recorded in RenWeb and staff is alerted. Administration emails parents and student. A detention is issued to the student.
- 4th time – Teacher sends student to the office. Event is recorded in RenWeb and staff is alerted. An email is sent to parents/student, detention is issued to student. Student receives 50% credit on all work turned in that day in classes using iPads.
- 5th time – Teacher sends student to the office. Event is recorded in RenWeb and staff is alerted. An email is sent to parents/student, detention is issued to the student. Student receives 0% credit on all work turned in that day in classes using iPads.



## STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE (HIGH SCHOOL)

### **Discipline**

Teachers, for the most part, will handle discipline cases in their own way in harmony with school policy. Such discipline may range from reprimand to detention and may include conferences with parents. The administration will handle cases referred to them by staff, as well as cases occurring outside the classroom, and may use a wide range of disciplinary means.

### **Probation**

Probation may be academic, disciplinary, or both. Probation is a period during which the student is expected to make significant academic or behavioral progress to show that he/she has changed sufficiently to allow them to stay at VCS. During this time, the student must demonstrate real change in behavior and personal growth. Probation may include the loss of privileges, such as attending certain extracurricular activities for a period. Students who successfully complete a period of probation may be restored to full student privileges.

### **Detention**

Detentions are issued by staff for minor infractions and offenses by the students. These may be issued by email with a detention slip attached. Students will be required to print and obtain appropriate signatures. Detentions are served with the Detention Hall Supervisor for a 40-minute period after school and begin promptly at 3:20pm. Detention slips are to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned with the student to the Detention Hall Supervisor. Failure to show up to detention or showing up without a signed detention slip can result in additional detention. If students ride in a carpool or play after-school sports, they must make the necessary arrangements to serve their detentions as assigned.

### **Suspension**

The administrator may suspend any student for violating the discipline policy set forth above and for neglecting to comply with previously imposed discipline. The purpose of suspending a student is to remove the student from fellowship in the general student population thereby sending him/her a strong message that the student is in jeopardy of losing the privilege of attending VCS. This time away gives students the opportunity to think about their choices with the hope that they will repent and change their hearts and actions. In general, suspensions are two types:

- In-school: Suspended students will be assigned to a room in the school for the term of the suspension. Suspended students are not to have any contact with other students without the expressed permission of the administration.
- Out-of-school: It is the parent's responsibility to supervise students while on out-of-school/at-home suspension.

Students may be given 50% on work due during an out of school suspension, tests included.

### **Withdrawal**

In some circumstances, the administration may recommend that a family withdraw their student from school in the interests of the student and/or the school. Re-admittance to VCS after any withdrawal, especially a disciplinary withdrawal, requires an administrative review upon admittance. A family who withdraws a student during the school year - whether voluntary or involuntary - will be charged the full tuition for the month withdrawn, plus a \$750.00 withdrawal fee per student. This fee is used to reimburse VCS for digital textbook licenses and other resources VCS commits to during a student's enrollment.

### **Expulsion**

The administrators of the school may expel a student if, in their opinion, it is in the best interests of the school to do so. Expulsion may be the result of chronic violation of school rules and standards or refusal and/or inability to successfully complete the academic program of the school.

Expulsion may also be the result of a single incident or episode that endangers the safety, reputation, or environment of the school.

### **Lifestyle Behaviors**

Since VCS bears the name of Jesus Christ, a high standard of conduct is expected of staff and students. Public conduct should be consistent with our basic concept of life, and since we profess to love God above all and our neighbors as ourselves, we should reflect that love in all our actions, as well as in our attitudes toward each other and our work.

The Bible teaches that parents are responsible for the training and instruction of their children. The Christian school stands ready to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities. We seek not to assume a task that God gives parents, but rather to serve as the parents' appointed and authorized representatives in the training process. The school expects the parents to support the administering of discipline. The administration determines compliance with policy and has the final word in all instances.

## **Substance Abuse**

Students who possess, use, or appear under the influence of a mood or mind-altering chemicals are in contradiction to God's Word and interfere with the school's responsibility of providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. The use of such substances impairs the ability to learn, thus limiting the ability of the school to educate the student and accomplish our mission. Valley Christian Schools students are forbidden to use or possess alcoholic beverages, tobacco, vaping paraphernalia or simulated products, and mood or mind-altering chemicals during their time at Valley Christian Schools either on or off-campus (including all vacations or breaks).

The following corrective actions may be taken, which may include immediate up-to-five-day suspension or expulsion. In addition, the school may require counseling or drug testing at the parents' expense. A student who distributes or sells mind-altering chemicals will be reported to the police and is subject to immediate expulsion from VCS. A student who possesses illegal substances on campus or school events will normally be asked to withdraw or be expelled from VCS.

## **Social Media and Personal Communications**

VCS believes students should portray Christ-like character on and off this campus. This also includes the area of social media. It is impossible to make an all-inclusive list of inappropriate or offensive behaviors; however, the following is a list that includes some things that would be considered inappropriate or offensive. If a student chooses to participate in them, appropriate disciplinary action will take place, including possible expulsion. Personal electronic devices should not contain any content of a sexual or graphic nature. Photos, videos, online content, text/picture messages, links to websites, tweets/re-tweets, comments, images, or posts that deal with any of the following areas:

- The personal use or possession of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products, or items that condone drug-related activity. This includes any drug paraphernalia.
- Content that is of a sexual nature.
- Actions that might be considered cyber-bullying, including content that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning, or threatening toward any individual or entity. Examples of these include comments regarding our school, another school, coaches, or students as well as against any race or gender.
- Content that depicts or encourages unacceptable, violent, or illegal activities. Examples of these include hazing, sexting, sexual harassment/assault, full or partial nudity, inappropriate gestures, stalking, gambling, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, and illegal drug/alcohol use.

VCS seeks to help our students build a positive legacy. Students should always remember that they live in a digital world and create digital footprints with anything they do online—the internet is permanent. Please keep in mind that college admissions counselors and future employers do read online profiles and do make decisions based upon the information they find. Students should be careful about sharing personal information online and the digital

reputation they build. VCS expects students to model Christ even through their online activities.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

AI is a quickly developing and a continually evolving resource. VCS embraces technology integration into our education program. We value the advantages technology can provide when being used appropriately as an educational tool. Although AI may have some helpful features when used correctly it can also be used incorrectly in an educational setting.

#### *AI as a Resource*

You may not submit any data generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any work submitted using un-cited AI content will be considered plagiarism, a form of cheating, and will be dealt with according to relevant school policies.

AI programs like ChatGPT can be helpful to generate and brainstorm ideas. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that AI use may also stifle your own independent thinking, creativity and academic skills. Teachers of each course have the right to modify or adjust the use of AI generated content for each course including not allowing it for any part of the learning process.

#### *AI Deepfakes*

Any possession, creation, distribution, or solicitation of AI generated deepfake images that are offensive or sexual in nature or shows nudity or partial nudity is not considered appropriate for our students and will result in significant consequences, ranging but not limited to suspension, withdrawal or expulsion. In some cases, police may be notified.

### **Theft**

Theft of personal property or of school property is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Theft will almost always be punished by suspension from school and police notification. Continued violations may result in administrative withdrawal or expulsion.

### **Obscene Behavior**

Obscene behavior, which includes cursing, lewd, offensive, or vulgar language or gestures, whether physical, written, or spoken, are not permitted.

### **Felony Conviction**

A student will not be retained without Board approval if they have committed a felony.

### **Disrespectful and/or Disruptive Actions, Language or Attitudes**

Disruptions in class, unruly behavior, and defiant conduct will not be tolerated.

1. The teacher will issue a verbal warning and contact the parent.
2. On the second occurrence the student will be issued a teacher-based detention. If a student fails to show up for detention it will be referred to the principal for recording in the RenWeb behavior log and the student will need to serve extra detention time.
3. Further refusals to appear for detention will result in out of school suspension.
4. Students will be referred to the Principal for disciplinary action. However, if the disruption is severe and/or continuous, the teacher may choose to move directly to step 4.

### **Display/Possession of Sexual Paraphernalia**

The possession or display of sexual paraphernalia is a violation of school policy. Students will be referred to the Principal for disciplinary action.

### **Desired Characteristics of a VCS Student**

Appropriate behavior is always expected from our VCS students. Violations of school rules should be out of the ordinary. The VCS student should be characterized by his/her respect for him/herself as a creation of God, respect for others, and respect for creation and property. A VCS student should:

- Pray and worship sincerely, and respect others while they pray and worship.
- Tell the truth and demonstrate integrity.
- Speak kindly about others, hold confidence, and do not gossip.
- Respect all adults, obeying them, calling them by their proper title, and making eye contact when speaking to them.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Be polite and use proper social manners, saying please and thank you, opening doors for others, saying hello when you pass someone, using one's name when speaking to other students and adults.
- Listen attentively.
- Be diligent with all responsibilities, whether in the classroom or during activities.
- Appreciate the efforts of others, whether in academics, athletics, the arts, or leadership.

- Encourage teamwork and community, and not sow discord.
- Accept direction and correction from any authority without being defensive or evasive, and without quibbling.
- Put others before themselves.
- Encourage others to seek out their gifts, reach their potential, and grow to be more Christ-like.

### Guiding Principles

Discipline addresses the areas of prevention, correction, and restoration. Discipline decisions must consider the good of the individual and the good of the whole school community. This handbook addresses many rules and consequences but is not exhaustive. The Administration will use its best judgment in all cases of misconduct.

### Off-Campus Misconduct

The Student Disciplinary Code and all VCS penalties may apply to conduct off school grounds, particularly those that may endanger the health or safety of VCS students within the school setting or substantially interfere with the educative process.

Examples of off-campus misconduct that may be subject to VCS discipline include, but are not limited to, illegal activity, threats of violence, alcohol possession/use, fighting, inappropriate social media postings, hazing, drug possession/use or sales, firearm possession, violent offenses, robbery, burglary, arson, and sexual assaults.

- VCS considers a student an official member of the student body from their first day of acceptance at VCS until they graduate, withdraw, or are removed. There is a "24/7/365" aspect to the VCS Code of Conduct. VCS reserves the right to discipline for both on-campus and off-campus misbehavior during the student's tenure at VCS.
- When deemed necessary and/or required by law, certain acts of student misbehavior, whether on campus or off-campus, may be reported to appropriate authorities.

VCS parents or guardians shall not knowingly facilitate or allow the violation of rules of VCS or the law, such as the failure of parents to adequately safeguard any alcohol or drugs they possess, or to provide reasonable supervision standards in order to significantly minimize the possibility of alcohol or drugs being brought into the home, another location of social gathering, or to school functions or property. When parents or guardians knowingly facilitate or allow the violation of rules of VCS or the law, the result may include the immediate termination of the relationship between the family and VCS. It is not the responsibility of the school, nor does it have the resources or ability to police a student's behavior off campus during non-school hours or days. Members of the VCS family who become aware of violations of school policies that occur beyond school property, school activities, or school hours should first consider speaking directly to the other families involved, as VCS often is not in the best position to do anything about the concern under such circumstances.

### Student Responsibilities When Wrongdoing Occurs

Occasionally, a VCS student may find himself/herself in a situation when clear violations of this Code of Conduct (e.g., consuming alcohol, taking drugs, immoral behavior, etc.) are occurring. It is the responsibility of that student to take immediate and reasonable steps to remove himself/herself from the location of the wrongdoing. If such steps are not taken, the student may be subject to disciplinary action. When VCS employees request truthful answers from a student regarding allegations about their own actions or the actions of others, it is done with a presumption of full disclosure.

### Zero Tolerance Policy

VCS Zero Tolerance Policy: A student who at any time is in possession of or in the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or lethal weapons on the VCS campus or at any school-related event will immediately be suspended from school pending an investigation, with expulsion from school as a potential outcome.

- Possession or use of Lethal Weapons, Drugs and Alcohol on Campus or at School Events – It is illegal and forbidden to use, sell or possess firearms/weapons/explosives, drugs or alcohol on campus, traveling to or from campus or at any school function, including school-sponsored trips and occasions when one is representing the school. This includes attending any school function when one is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Law enforcement officials shall be notified where deemed necessary. Students are encouraged to lessen consequences by coming forward on their own under the guidelines of the Self- Reporting process outlined below.
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse at Non-School Activities – If an agent of the school becomes aware of alcohol and/or drug use involving our students, this information will be shared with the parents and the appropriate school authorities. VCS will investigate the details, and the VCS Zero Tolerance Policy will be implemented.
- Immoral or illicit sexual behavior.
- Serious threats or intimidation.

### Self-Reporting

Students who choose to seek help and who recognize and confess that their behavior and action is in violation of VCS' standards exhibit high character and maturity and will stand a much better chance of lessening potential consequences, although VCS reserves the right to administer discipline according to the situation at hand.

1. A student may contact a faculty or staff member on campus with whom he/she is close and confide in that person the problem that he/she is planning to correct.
2. The student must then inform his/her parents of the problem (note: the student is welcome to have the faculty or staff member present).
3. The faculty will notify the Vice Principal or another Administrator.
4. Finally, the student must agree to submit to a correction plan that is designed collaboratively by the school, student, and the parents.

Notwithstanding these policies on discipline and behavior, VCS reserves the right and authority to govern and rule regarding all matters of student behavior, whether listed here or not; and reserves the right and authority to govern and rule regarding any matter concerning a student who is involved in illegal activities, whether on-campus or off-campus.

Substance Abuse—Comprehensive Drug/Substance Abuse Policy Purpose

**The purpose** of VCS' Comprehensive Drug/Substance Abuse Policy is to:

1. *Promote healthy lifestyles for all students, on and off campus, specifically related to physical health.*
2. *Ensure a safe, drug-free learning environment for all students.*
3. *Cultivate a culture where self-reporting and peer reporting of drug/substance usage is encouraged and celebrated.*
4. *Express God's love, His desire for restoration, and His power to set students free from harmful addictions.*

**Process**

1. Parents and students have all given consent to random drug tests or testing due to reasonable suspicion by signing the application to attend VCHS, which states: *that by signing below I am indicating I have read, agree and will abide by the standards of the school as outlined in the handbook.*
2. Parents will not be notified prior to the students being given the initial saliva test on our campus.
3. For random tests, the school will use an online randomizer to select student names.
4. The same steps below are followed for students with whom we have reasonable suspicion to give them a saliva drug test.
5. For random tests once a student's name is selected, a convenient time will be chosen to call them into the office. Times and days will vary.
6. For cases that involve reasonable suspicion, i.e., smell of alcohol or marijuana, vape, or a witness the student will be called into the office immediately and given a saliva test.
7. Saliva tests will be administered by an administrator in the presence of one other staff member (i.e....school counselor or nurse).
8. Students will stay in the office until they can witness the results, generally 5-10 min.
9. For a negative result, students are sent back to class and documentation completed. Email notice will be sent home to parents regarding the test given.
10. For a positive result, one more saliva test will be given. If positive again parents will be contacted. The student will be given a Sonic Test Lab form and must go to the lab of our choice to request a hair follicle test be taken within 24 hours. A parent or legal guardian is required to be present for this test.
11. Students/parents must pay the fee up front for the hair follicle test. If the test returns negative, the student will be reimbursed by the school upon turning in the receipt.
12. For positive hair follicle test results, administration will determine follow up consequences on a case-by-case basis and the student/parent will not be reimbursed



for the hair follicle test. Consequences for a positive hair follicle test results will range from suspensions to expulsions.

### **Sonic Test Labs**

2330 S McClintock Dr.

Tempe, AZ 85282

(602) 753-2901

Hours 8:00 AM to 10:45 AM & 11:30- 4:30 PM (no appointment needed).

Cost: \$350

### Banned Drugs/Substances (Non-Comprehensive List)

Banned drugs/substances include, but are not limited to, any drugs/substances that are legally prohibited for consumption, inhalation, injection, or other use by minors. Specifically, though this list is not intended to be comprehensive, it includes nicotine (in any form), alcohol, and controlled drugs/substances, which include scheduled drugs/substances, both prescription and non-prescription. Additionally, at the school's discretion-, mind- or mood-altering substances (that may even be homemade) are considered banned drugs/substances at VCS, even if they are not formally identified by government entities as banned substances. Additionally, included is the consumption, inhalation, injection, or other use of drugs/substances intended for purposes other than what the student uses it for.

Finally, the misuse or abuse of any common household items (e.g., glue, lacquer, paint thinner, etc.) that is mind or mood altering is also considered a banned substance at VCS.

- Nicotine

Nicotine is a drug. It is harmful to the bodies that God has given us. Nicotine consumption is illegal for minors. Students will be disciplined for positive nicotine tests. Societally, nicotine usage by minors is seen by many as "not that big of a deal." For VCS students, nicotine usage by minors is a big deal, even if consumed in the presence of parents/family members. This applies January – December and during all holidays/special events.

- Alcohol

Alcoholic consumption by minors is illegal in Arizona. And it is prohibited for VCS students. For VCS students, alcoholic consumption is a big deal, even if consumed in the presence of parents/family members. This applies January – December and during all holidays/special events.

**Defacing or Damaging School or Staff Property**

Malicious or careless acts which result in damage to, or destruction of school, students' or staff members' property will result in both appropriate disciplinary action and the replacement or repair of such property by the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s).

## GENERAL POLICIES (HIGH SCHOOL)

### Parking and Transportation

#### Student Vehicles on Campus

- Student vehicles must have a permit clearly displayed, visible at all times, when on VCS property.
- VCS will conduct routine patrols of the student parking lots and inspections of the exterior of student vehicles on school property.
- VCS may inspect the interiors of the student vehicles whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside the vehicles. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.
- A student who fails to provide access to the interior of the vehicle upon request by an administrator will be subject to school disciplinary action.
- The speed in the parking lot is 5 mph; on Galveston, it is 25 mph.
- Students are not permitted to go to their vehicle during the school day without permission from the administration.
- Students must utilize the crosswalk to and from campus when parking in the south softball lot.
- The school is not responsible for accidents or damage to cars that occur on school property.
- Music must not be heard outside of the vehicle.
- If the student fails to follow school policy and procedures related to use of the vehicle, the vehicle may be towed away and stored, at the owner's expense. The use of a vehicle/parking at VCS is a privilege, not a right, and requires responsible behavior and may be revoked at any time.
- Driving to or from a school-sponsored activity at any VCS campus is limited to VCS staff, faculty, coaches, and other approved adults, 21 years of age or older. A student is allowed to leave their home to a school-sponsored activity once they have received express permission both from the sponsor of the activity and their parents. The school maintains no liability for students driving to or from a school-sponsored activity outside of regular school hours.

#### Parking Permits

- The parking permit entitles students the privilege to park on campus in their assigned parking spot only! Do NOT Park in Visitor or Handicapped spots.
- Do not allow another student to park in your assigned spot.
- A student must have a Valid Drivers License to obtain a parking permit.

- Registration of the vehicle to obtain a parking permit is completed online through the school website (valleychristianaz.org/Transportation).
- It is the student's responsibility to make changes needed to the registration of the vehicle. Not updating vehicle information with the school may result in a loss of the parking permit.
- Permits may only be used in the registered vehicle(s). Permits may not be sold, borrowed, duplicated, or traded.
- Permits are the property of the school and must be surrendered when requested. Damaged or lost permits will require the student to purchase a new parking permit (\$5.00).

#### Discipline for Failure to Follow Parking and Transportation Guidelines

- First offence of any nature – Verbal warning (Documented in RenWeb)
- Second offence of any nature – Written warning (Documented in RenWeb / email to parent or guardian)
- Third offence of any nature – 1 week suspension of parking privilege (Documented in RenWeb / email to parent or guardian)
- Fourth offence of any nature – 2-week suspension of parking privilege (Documented in RenWeb / email to parent or guardian)
- Fifth offence of any nature – Revocation of parking privilege for the rest of the school year (Documented in RenWeb / email to parent or guardian)

### **ENGAGE/Christian Service**

#### Spring Service Break

While VCS has enjoyed several years of sending students around the world, we believe that was just the beginning. Under the leadership of our Spiritual Life Director and Engage Director, Dr. Greg Tonkinson, the ENGAGE program has expanded to include all of Arizona (ENGAGE AZ), the United States (ENGAGE US), and new locations around the world (ENGAGE GLOBAL). Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, and moving forward every year after, all high school students participate in a school-wide, two-week Spring Service Break. The vision is to create more opportunities for unforgettable experiences for VCS students and families. We believe the two-week Spring Service Break will fulfill this vision and have a deep, lasting, positive impact on our community both near and far.

- ENGAGE Arizona (EAZ) will occur during the first week of Spring Service Break. Students will be able to partner with local schools, non-profits, and churches to serve those in need.
- ENGAGE U.S. (EUS) and ENGAGE Global (EGL) will continue to take students on Spirit-filled adventures. Our hope is to build lasting relationships with missions groups and churches all over the world that VCS students can partner with even after they graduate.

- What may be most exciting is that this program perfectly aligns with our school mission – providing opportunities for our students to be culture changers for Christ – in very tangible ways. Over the course of two weeks, we will send out more than 500 VCS students to represent Christ via acts of service.

### ENGAGE Program

The ENGAGE program at Valley Christian Schools began in the Spring of 2016 when an adventuresome Bible teacher joined with 20 willing staff and students and traveled to Draganesti-Olt, Romania. There, they partnered with Pastor Raul and Hope Church to bring the Gospel to orphans, widows, and the disenfranchised. Upon returning to the States, the small band of believers knew God was creating a desire in the people of VCS to make short-term missions part of the VCS experience.

Since 2016, VCS has sent more than 550 staff and students to 15 locations around the world to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. People in America, Central America, South America, Europe, and Africa have been exposed to the Gospel because of God working through the VCS ENGAGE program. ENGAGE has seen more than \$1 million dollars raised over the past eight years to support these efforts, and we are excited for what is to come.

### Christian Service

Due to our concerted efforts in the Fall (Spiritual Emphasis Conference) and Spring (Spring Service Break), VCS no longer requires additional Christian Service hours. Please note, we always love to hear when our VCS families are serving the Lord, whether locally, nationally, or international.

### **Student Union**

1. HOURS: 7:30am-3:30pm, M-F
2. RULES:
  - Treat materials and furniture with respect.
  - A teacher pass is required during class hours unless accompanied by a teacher.
  - The copy machine is for staff use.
  - Failure to adhere to these rules can result in the loss of Student Union privileges.

### **School Fines and Fees**

1. Lost or damaged textbooks – Each student must check in their textbooks at the end of the year. Any textbook not returned or damaged beyond repair, will result in a lost/damaged book fee. This is the replacement cost of the book. Books returned after that date will not receive a credit.
2. Lost uniforms – Any uniforms not returned to a coach for a various sport at the end of that season will be charged a replacement fee for that uniform.

3. Seniors must have all fines/fees paid prior to graduation. All other students' outstanding fines/fees will be charged to the student's account.

### **Closed Campus**

In general, VCS has a closed campus policy. No student is to leave the campus during school hours without permission from the administration. Exceptions to this policy include:

- Seniors, who have a signed "off campus" form, have obtained a car sticker and are wearing their student ID may leave campus at lunchtime or their open period. The campus may be closed to seniors at lunchtime if the open campus policy is abused.
- Those who have dental, doctor, or other such appointments with prior parent and office approval. Cases of emergency illness where students may leave with permission from the office.
- Students not enrolled in a class the last period of the day may have an early release time. These students are expected to leave campus promptly. Those students with early release time who repeatedly do not leave campus promptly will be required to enroll in study hall.

When arriving/leaving campus during regular operating hours, students must sign in/out in the office.

### **Lost & Found**

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property belonging to students. Books, Bibles, purses, clothing, and any other articles of value will be taken to Barnes Assembly Hall. At the end of each month, any articles still in lost and found will be given to a charitable Christian organization.

## DRESS CODE (HIGH SCHOOL)

Valley Christian Schools endeavors to promote excellence in all areas of education, including dress. To this end, careful consideration was given to the formation of the dress code. The purpose of our dress code is to promote an atmosphere of modesty and neatness without excessive restriction on self-expression. This dress code is designed to be clear and consider the needs of our school community, our students, and our families.

While we feel strongly that our dress should reflect our Christian values, the code outlined here is not designed to condemn any one way of dressing. Rather, it is an agreed upon set of parameters that we, as a community, will commit to, much like dress expectations in a work environment. Therefore, the cooperation of families is necessary to maintain the dress code and parents are expected to cooperate with the school in monitoring their child's daily attire. If parents have questions about whether a specific piece of clothing is acceptable, they should feel free to contact administration before allowing that clothing to be worn to school.

Students will be expected to follow the dress code at all school events, including rehearsals, practices, workouts, athletic events, field trips, banquets, performances, etc., unless otherwise specified by administration. Details for each area are outlined below. Students not in compliance with the dress code will be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined below. Administration will make the final call on issues of dress code and reserves the right to decide what is proper and fitting regarding attire for school and school events.

At Valley Christian Schools, we agree to the following guidelines for how we dress.

Students **may** wear...

- Clothing that expresses your creative style within the boundaries of the dress code
- Individuals, groups, images, or wording that do not conflict with Biblical principles
- College and university t-shirts
- Valley Christian Schools spirit wear

Students **may not** wear...

- Any item that promotes unbiblical values or interferes with student health or safety, or contributes to a hostile environment, including displays of offensive language, symbols, or gestures, images that depict drugs, alcohol, violence, weapons, illegal activity, profanity, pornography, or that demean any person or group, items that pertain to gothic, occult, political affiliations, or other items deemed inappropriate by the administration.
- Costumes during school days, unless specified for a spirit day or special event

Students **must** wear...

- Clothing that is in conformity with their genetic code

**ACADEMIC ATTIRE (Everyday wear)**

<b>SHIRTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shirts should be appropriately sized and completely cover abdomen, back, cleavage, and undergarment, even when arms are fully extended.</li> <li>• <u>Girls</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are allowed; straps must be 2”.</li> <li>• <u>Boys</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are not allowed.</li> <li>• Sheer shirts must have a dress code appropriate shirt underneath.</li> <li>• Tube tops, crops, bathing suit tops, racer-back shirts, or low-cut necklines are not allowed.</li> <li>• Sweaters, jackets, etc. may not be used to cover non-dress code shirts.</li> </ul>
<b>PANTS &amp; SHORTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pants and shorts must be appropriately sized and completely cover undergarments, even while sitting.</li> <li>• No rips or holes</li> <li>• Frayed hems are allowed.</li> <li>• No pajama pants</li> <li>• All shorts must fall under these guidelines:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Girls</u> – Shorts must have a 5” inseam or longer.</li> <li>○ <u>Boys</u> – Shorts must have a 7” inseam or longer.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No biker shorts, yoga pants, leggings, flare leggings, or jeggings</li> <li>• No words or messages written across the bottom or crotch area</li> </ul>
<b>DRESSES &amp; SKIRTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Boys</u> may not wear dresses or skirts.</li> <li>• All dresses and skirts (including slits) must be no more than 4” above the knee.</li> <li>• No excessively tight dresses/skirts</li> <li>• The top of dresses must comply with shirt dress code requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must wear shoes always.</li> <li>• No slippers/house shoes</li> </ul>
<b>HEADWEAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hats (including beanies) and sunglasses may be worn outdoors.</li> <li>• Hoods may only be worn outdoors.</li> </ul>
<b>HEADPHONES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students <b>may not</b> wear headphones, ear buds, or air pods during class, during passing periods, during chapels, assemblies, or other instructional activities, unless they are required as part of a student’s approved accommodation plan.</li> <li>• Students <b>may</b> wear headphones, ear buds, or air pods before school, during lunch, during study hall, or after school.</li> <li>• Teachers may choose to allow headphones, ear buds, or air pods to be worn in their classroom during specific activities.</li> <li>• If a student chooses to violate these guidelines, the following disciplinary actions will be taken.</li> <li>• <b>1<sup>st</sup> VIOLATION:</b> Student will receive a warning from a faculty or staff member to put headphones, ear buds, or air pods away and out of sight.</li> <li>• <b>2<sup>nd</sup> VIOLATION:</b> Headphones, ear buds, and air pods will be confiscated by the faculty or staff member and stored at the front office for the rest of the school day. Students will need to pick up their headphones, ear buds, or air pods from the front office at the end of the school day. Parents will be notified by administration.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3<sup>rd</sup> VIOLATION:</b> If this is a repeated behavior, administration will work with the family to determine appropriate consequences and establish a restriction plan (i.e. headphones left at home, headphones checked in before going to class, etc.) Students will work with administration to develop an action plan prior to lifting the restriction plan.</li> </ul>
<b>HAIR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neat and clean</li> <li>• Natural colors only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students may dye their hair natural colors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hair must be kept out of eyes.</li> <li>• Facial hair must be neat and well-trimmed.</li> <li>• VCS reserves the right to require a student to get a haircut, change a style, or change a color if, in the judgement of administration, the student's choice has created a distraction.</li> </ul>
<b>TATTOOS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VCS encourages students to cover tattoos while on campus.</li> </ul>
<b>ACCESSORIES &amp; MAKEUP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Boys</u> may not wear earrings or makeup.</li> <li>• <u>Girls</u> may wear ear piercings only.</li> <li>• Clear spacers are acceptable.</li> <li>• Makeup and accessories should not be distracting.</li> <li>• No animal accessories (i.e. cat ears, tails, gloves, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>NAIL POLISH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Boys</u> may not wear nail polish.</li> </ul>

### DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

- Faculty or staff will report dress code violations to administration or designated staff member, who will then address the incident and record it in RenWeb. The principal, vice principal, lead teacher, or designated support staff may determine and respond to any dress code violations involving students and notify families for follow up. This includes the right to send students home or request parents to bring an immediate change of attire as deemed necessary.

<b>1<sup>ST</sup> VIOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warning</li> <li>• Documented in RenWeb</li> <li>• Parents notified</li> <li>• Student may be required to change.</li> </ul>
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> VIOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After school detention</li> <li>• Documented in RenWeb</li> <li>• Parents notified</li> <li>• Parents are required to bring a change of clothes before the student can continue in school day.</li> </ul>
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> VIOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/student meeting with administration</li> <li>• In-school suspension</li> </ul>
<b>4<sup>TH</sup> VIOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/student meeting with administration</li> <li>• Behavior contract issued</li> </ul>
<b>5<sup>TH</sup> VIOLATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consequences outlined in behavior contract carried out – up to suspension/dismissal</li> </ul>

**HIGH SCHOOL SEMI-FORMAL ATTIRE (Specific Dances, Performances, Banquets, Graduation)**

- We encourage our students to dress up for the occasion, and we would like them to enjoy elevating their attire from that of a normal school day.
- The semi-formal dress code for high school students is outlined below and should be followed when required at specific semi-formal dances, performances, banquets, and graduations.
- If a student doubts that their semi-formal attire meets these guidelines, they are encouraged to bring the item to administration for approval.
- School administration reserves the right to determine what is considered proper attire for school events and may refuse admittance to functions for any student who is not adhering to the following guidelines.

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
A dress shirt with dress slacks is required.	A nice dress, skirt/pants and blouse, or jumpsuit is required.
Dress shoes are highly encouraged.	Strapless, sweetheart, and straight across necklines are acceptable. Heels or dress shoes are highly encouraged. If sneakers are worn, they must be neat.
Ties or bow ties are encouraged but not required.	Hems of dresses/skirts must be no shorter than 5" above the knee. Slits must not be higher than 5" above the knee.
Vests and suit jackets are optional.	Backs of dresses cannot go lower than 2" below the natural bra line. Cutouts on back of dress cannot go lower than 2" below the natural bra line.
Hair must be neat and clean.	Dresses should not expose excessive cleavage or the midriff. No plunging V-necks are allowed. Keyholes on the front of dress must be above cleavage level.
No earrings	No two-piece dresses or excessively tight dresses, requiring lots of fixing to stay in place
Shirts must always remain buttoned.	Students may not use lace, netting, flesh-colored fabrics, or other see-through materials to cover or fix one of the issues above (i.e. slits, keyholes, length, midriff, etc.).
Tattoos are permitted to be visible.	Tattoos are permitted to be visible.

**HIGH SCHOOL FORMAL ATTIRE (Prom, Specific Performances)**

- We encourage our students to dress up for the occasion, and we would like them to enjoy elevating their attire from that of a normal school day.
- The formal dress code for high school students is outlined below and should be followed when required at specific formal dances or performances.
- If a student doubts that their semi-formal attire meets these guidelines, they are encouraged to bring the item to administration for approval.

- School administration reserves the right to determine what is considered proper attire for school events and may refuse admittance to functions for any student who is not adhering to the following guidelines.

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
A tux or suit with a long-sleeved dress shirt is required.	Long, formal dresses are expected. A formal jumpsuit is also acceptable.
Dress shoes are highly encouraged. If sneakers are worn, they must be neat.	Strapless, sweetheart, and straight across necklines are acceptable. Heels or dress shoes are highly encouraged. If sneakers are worn, they must be neat.
Ties or bow ties are required with a collared shirt. Formal turtlenecks or shirts with a band/mandarin collar do not require a tie or bow tie.	Slits must not go higher than 7" above the knee.
Vests are optional.	Backs of dresses cannot go lower than 4" below the natural bra line. Cutouts on back of dress cannot go lower than 4" below the natural bra line.
Hair must be neat and clean.	Dresses should not expose excessive cleavage, sides of breasts, or the midriff. No plunging V-necks are allowed. Keyholes on the front of dress must be above cleavage level.
No earrings	No two-piece dresses or excessively tight dresses, requiring lots of fixing to stay in place.
Shirts must always remain buttoned.	Students may not use lace, netting, flesh-colored fabrics, or other see-through materials to cover or fix one of the issues above (i.e. slits, keyholes, length, midriff, etc.).
Tattoos are permitted to be visible.	Tattoos are permitted to be visible.

**SPIRIT WEEK ATTIRE**

- Academic attire dress code is enforced during all spirit weeks with the following exceptions.

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
May wear hats	May wear hats
May wear costumes on designated days	May wear costumes on designated days
	May wear leggings with a top that reaches the thigh in the front and back

**EXTRACURRICULAR EVENT ATTIRE (Athletic Events, School Trips, Casual Dances)**

- Academic attire dress code is enforced for all games and activities HOME & AWAY (unless specified otherwise) with the following exceptions.
- If the student's attire does not meet these standards, the student will not be admitted into the function.

- School administration reserves the right to determine what is considered proper attire for school events and may refuse admittance to functions for any student who is not adhering to the following guidelines.

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>
May wear hats	May wear hats
May wear jeans with holes if there is still modesty	May wear jeans with holes if there is still modesty
May wear tank tops	May wear leggings
	May wear shorts with modesty (i.e. no short shorts, meaning no part of the buttocks would be showing)
	May wear biker shorts if they hit mid-thigh (usually 7-9" inseam)
Tattoos are permitted to be visible.	Tattoos are permitted to be visible.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR EVENT ATTIRE NOTES**

- **What is still unacceptable at any Valley Christian Schools games and activities HOME or AWAY:**
  - Crop tops, tube tops, or any clothing that exposes bras, boxers, or underwear.
  - Inappropriate messages on clothing or hats.

### **ATHLETIC TEAMS ATTIRE**

- Appropriate dress is expected for all students participating in athletics. Since some sports practice and game uniforms are outside of normal dress code guidelines, they may not be worn at school, even after school hours unless the student is at or heading directly to a practice or game. Attire for sports practices and games will be monitored by the coaches and athletic directors. More specific information about athletic teams attire dress code will be provided by each head coach at the season's start.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (HIGH SCHOOL)

Participating in extracurricular activities should be considered a privilege. As a participant, you represent Christ and the school. This privilege is extended to students that are in good standing with the school. The administration reserves the right to make that determination.

### **Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities normally require significant amounts of time outside of school which may subtract from time available for academic work. Students must maintain satisfactory progress in their academic studies and display good conduct in order to have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities. Students who fall below the academic standards will be declared ineligible in order to encourage them to spend their extra time on academic efforts. To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (including but not limited to athletics and performing arts), students must meet these standards:

- Maintain a Grade Point Average of 2.00 or better
- Receive no academic grades of "F"
- Receive no conduct grades of "U"
- Make adequate progress towards graduation
- Must follow attendance requirements (no more than 10 absences in any one class per semester – see page 17 for details.)

Any student who does not meet these requirements at the end of each quarter will be considered ineligible until the next grade check. While the student is ineligible, the student may continue to participate in extracurricular activities including practices. However, not able to participate in games, productions, or school outings. If the student meets the eligibility requirements at the next grade check, he/she will be considered ELIGIBLE.

If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria at the next grade check, he/she will continue to be INELIGIBLE. Ineligibility from the fourth quarter carries over to first quarter activities the following year.

Additional notes:

- Extreme, unique, or extenuating circumstances will be evaluated by the administration.
- Coaches and activity sponsors have the prerogative to enforce a stricter eligibility policy with the approval of the administration.

## **AIA (Arizona Interscholastic Association) Policies**

### **Eligibility Rules for Transfer Student**

After enrolling and attending one or more classes, students changing enrollment to/from one school to another school shall be considered a transferring student. If this is the first transfer, a student shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic competition at the school to which he/she transferred for the first 50% of all competitive events. The student will be eligible for the second half of the season and all postseason events. Subsequent transfers will require a period of ineligibility of 1 year prior to being able to participate in interscholastic competitions. This rule is intended to and shall encompass all transfer situations and shall apply to any and all member schools, be they public, private, or parochial.

### **Forms**

All athletes must complete and turn in the following documentation before they will be allowed to practice or compete. Completed forms should be handed in to the athletic trainer's office. This office can be found in the weight room lobby.

- *Health Physical:* This is an annual physical that must be completed by a physician on the proper AIA form. The form can be found on the school website and is titled AIA Form 15.7-B.
- *Health Questionnaire:* This form can be found on the school website.
- *AIA Form 15.7-A:* This should be filled out by the parent and the athlete.
- *Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI) / Concussion Acknowledgement Form:* This form is found on the school website and is titled AIA Form 15.7-C
- *Brain book Training:* This is a one-time webinar that educates athletes on brain injury. This course will be administered at the school, usually by a coach or athletic trainer. After completion of the training, an athlete will print a certificate from the website. This certificate must be handed in to the Athletic Director.