



VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

GRADES 5-8

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) 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

Each day a student is absent represents lost time in the classroom and lost opportunity to learn.

The privilege of attending Valley Christian Schools carries with it certain responsibilities on the part of the parents and students. 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.

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).
- 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 unexcused and late work policies apply.
- Personal illness with a note (do count towards limit).
- Doctor or dental appointments with a note (do count towards limit).

Excessive Absences

Classroom lectures, discussion, and interaction are important to the learning process and part of our accrediting process of granting credit. Therefore, a student must attend classes regularly. Completing work assignments and passing grades are not a replacement for attendance in school.

- On the 5th and 8th absence (per class per semester) an automated awareness email is sent to students and parents or legal guardians.
- On the 10th absence per class per semester, excused or unexcused, 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.
- On the 15th absence, excused or unexcused, the student may lose credit for the class, with the exception being if a student is on a chronic health plan or other extenuating circumstances as determined by the school's administration.
- Additionally, students with chronic and excessive absences and/or tardies may be dismissed from VCHS.

Maximum Number of Absences

To comply with Arizona State Statute 15-802 the number of allowed absences (excused or unexcused) per class per semester is 9. If a student should receive 10 or more absences in a class during one semester, their record will be reviewed as to whether credit will be given for

that semester or grade-level retention is warranted. The maximum of 9 absences should only be reached under unusual circumstances. Please keep in mind that it would be wise to vary doctors' appointments throughout the day, so they do not always fall in the same class period. As a rule, any absence other than school activities count towards the maximum number of absences. Please keep in mind that absences with parent permission still count toward the maximum of 9. Following are some examples of circumstances that would apply to the maximum number of absences:

- Personal illness
- Doctor appointments
- Suspensions from school
- Truancy
- Extenuating circumstances resulting in more than three consecutive days of absence may require documentation

Reporting Absences

Parents should notify the school office via the VCS website (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: Students who accumulate 20 tardies will receive a three-day out-of-school suspension requiring a meeting with the principal, family, and in some cases, the student to establish a course of action before returning to school.

- 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 1st 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 1st 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.

	O	S	N	U
Respect for God, Others, & Yourself 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.
Respect God's Facilities 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.
Encourage Others 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.
Do When Asked 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 have a reasonable opportunity to walk away or avoid confrontation but choose 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). 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. VCJH 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:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.</u>	<u>Wed.</u>
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, 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.

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 identity 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.

GRADES 5-8

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS & GETTING STARTED

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.

For 2023-24, VCS will provide mechanical pencils, extra lead, erasers, colored pencils, yellow highlighters, pencil pouch, protractor, ruler, graph paper, tab dividers and notebook paper.

Parents are responsible for the following items:

- 1 scientific calculator [Junior High Required Calculator](#)
- 1 water bottle
- 1 backpack for use throughout the day

Notes:

- Students must have a filled water bottle to utilize throughout the school day.
- Teachers may request additional supplies for special projects or elective classes.

ACADEMICS (5-8)

Schedule Changes (5-8)

All schedule changes must be coordinated through and approved in writing by Administration. Teachers and/or administrators may initiate a student schedule change to improve student placement. Withdrawal from a course must be approved in writing by the teacher, parent, and Principal.

Elective Changes (5-8)

Students who enroll in specials or extracurricular classes (i.e., band, orchestra, theater) may not withdraw from such classes until the end of the semester. The teacher must receive notice by December 1st if the student wishes to withdraw from an elective class. There may be some instances whereas schedule changes will not be granted due to missing the deadline or a particular class is already at capacity.

Assessments and Weights (5-8)

The following represent general guidelines for grading:

- Homework may not count for more than 20% of a student's quarterly grade.
- Summative Assessments (tests) may not count for more than 50% of a student's quarterly grade.
- Formative Assessments (quizzes, projects) may not count for more than 30% of a student's quarterly grade.
- Extra credit work may not count for more than 3% of a student's quarterly grade for either junior high or high school students.
- Participation grades (if applicable) may not count for more than 5% of a student's quarterly grade.
- Technical errors in junior high and high school (such as forgetting a name on a paper, spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) may not deduct more than 10% from a test, unless it is a language test.
- Semester exams for students will count 10% of the semester grade.
- Remain cognizant not only of the overall weight assigned to each category in a grading plan, but also be aware of the actual weight of each individual assignment. No single assignment (test, project, etc.) should count more than 20% of a quarterly grade for any subject thus requiring multiple assessments throughout the quarter.
- Individual teachers' grading policies for special unit plans will be approved by the principal and announced to students by teachers with notice given to parents through written correspondence and posted RenWeb/Canvas.
- Teachers will evenly distribute graded assignments to prevent the bulk of them from falling in the latter half of any quarter, so that mid-term reports will reflect an accurate depiction of a student's academic standing in the class.
- All tests should be graded by the teacher within one week of the time they were administered. Homework and quizzes should be used to provide immediate feedback

on student learning and should be graded and returned as soon as possible, but certainly within a week. Teachers may take additional time to grade major essays/projects but regular communication concerning this progress should be made to the principal.

- All assignments, projects, and tests should be posted in Renweb for all students.
- Projects should be accompanied by written instructions. If a project requires students to use a specific skill, make sure that skill has been taught to them. Any group projects resulting in group grades should not constitute major grades in the class but have a balance.
- Make up work: generally, students will have at least one day for each day absent to make up work; however, special circumstances (consistent absences or extended illness) may require a different time schedule. This schedule should be worked out with each individual teacher.

Definitions

Formative: An assessment for learning that occurs during the learning process and provides information to both teachers and students to adjust/increase learning/pacing. This happens primarily in the classroom setting. Examples may include class work, bell ringers, exit tickets, quizzes, labs, draft essays, etc.

Summative: An assessment of learning that occurs after instruction to determine what students know, understand, and can do at one point in time. Examples may include unit exams, major projects (short/long term), essays, and lab practicum.

Homework: Represents all work completed by student outside the classroom (i.e. at home). This would exclude short- or long-term projects given such work would be classified as a summative assessment. Teachers will rely primarily on formative and summative assessments within the classroom to monitor and/or assess student mastery of content and/or growth.

Semester Exams

Students will take semester exams in their core classes (Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Bible and Spanish 1). Other classes will have a culminating project. These exams will count as 10% of the semester grade. Exams reflect the learning over 18 weeks and they help determine content mastery and future placement for high school courses. Planned absences are not allowed. Students missing an exam due to illness will be required to take the exam the day of their return to school.

Grade Inquires

We expect parents and students to routinely monitor grades in Renweb. Questions about a grade must be initially addressed to the teacher within one week of the grade being posted or released.

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.

Make Up Assignments

Generally, students will have at least one day for each day absent to make up work; however, special circumstances (consistent absences or extended illness) may require a different time schedule. This schedule should be worked out with the student and each individual teacher.

All work must be turned in as assigned for all courses. Students may be asked to miss breaks or be assigned detention to make up late or missing assignments. Students will receive a reduction of 20% (Homework) and reduction of 10% (Projects) per day for missing or late work with a maximum number of 5 school days allowed to submit the assignment. Afterwards, the student will receive a zero on the assignment. Assignments must be submitted by the student at the start of the assigned class period and not at the end of the day or via email from parents. It should be noted that students are not allowed to take a zero on late or missing assignments. Teacher will require the student to complete the work, regardless of whether or not the grace period of point reduction has expired. Therefore, students who may receive a zero on any given assignment will still be required to complete it. Excessively late or missing assignments will be addressed with parents and a conference scheduled of which the student must be present. Continual submission of late or missing assignments may also result in a temporary suspension from after school activities/clubs/athletics to attend any assigned detention as determined by the principal.

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.
- Use Student Planners to 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 V.I.N.E. 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, it is necessary for us to teach and train the students in this process. 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.

Grade Retention

If a student is in danger of failing, parents will be notified in advance so that tutoring or modifications can be put in place, as grade retention is not our desire as a school. Teachers must submit a written notice of any potential retention for collaboration to the respective Principal by the start of the second semester. There may be instances where the administration will collaborate regarding retention. The Principal reserves the right to retain or pass a student after reviewing options, and it is deemed in the best interest of the student. All staff will respectfully support and carry out decisions regarding retention or placement once finalized. The focus should then shift to continue implementing additional support for the student, keeping close communication with parents, assessing various classroom strategies, assisting, and encouraging the student with grace and love, all of which may lead to future collaborative opportunities.

The final decision regarding student retention or placement rests with the Principal. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student by the parent, or their required retaking of a course, a conference between the parents/guardians, Principal, and other pertinent personnel shall be held to consider the request for review. The school shall document participation or nonparticipation in this required conference. If the conference

attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision will rest with the Principal.

Computer Requirements

We expect students to treat all school-owned tech, including shared iPads and laptops with respect and care. If damage is incurred on a school device due to student action, including neglect, parents will be notified and may be held responsible for repair or replacement costs.

Makeup of Work Missed During Absences

The student is held responsible for obtaining work missed due to absences of any kind and knowing the teacher's make-up policy. All work missed during absences must be made up. Teachers have discretion whether to allow makeup of quizzes.

- Homework assignments/projects assigned before the absence that were due on the day of an absence or on the day the student returns, must be turned in the day the student comes back to school. Students must also be prepared to take any tests assigned before the absence; on the day they return to school.
- Teachers may allow extra time to complete work assigned during an excused absence, but no more than double the number of days absent. Work not turned in during this time frame will be considered late work.
- Homework assignments/tests/projects assigned before an all-day activity absence must be turned in or taken the day the student returns from the activity.
- If the student is at school before an activity absence, they must turn in any work due that day or it will be considered late. Students have the responsibility to check RenWeb for assignments given that day. Any work due the following day must be turned in on time.
- Students who will be out for a day or more due to a school activity must get the work they will miss before they go. The assigned work will be due the day they return unless other arrangements are approved with the teacher.

Detention

Detentions are issued by staff for minor infractions and offenses by the students. Using the detention system allows teachers to alert parents of such infractions. Detentions assigned by the teacher will be served at the teacher's discretion. If your child is assigned detention:

1. Teacher talks to student and assigns detention.
2. The teacher will contact the parent.
3. 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.

4. Further refusals to appear for detention will result in out-of-school suspension.
5. Two (2) detentions for the same infraction or continuation of a pattern of various infractions will result in a referral to the Principal.

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 Principal 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 fall underneath one of two types:

- *In-School:* Suspended students will be assigned to a room in the school for the term of the suspension. Such suspension shall be made when it is judged in the best interest of the student. Suspended students are not to have any contact with other students without the expressed permission of administration.
- *Out-of-School:* Such suspension shall be made when it is in the best interest of the school to have the student off campus.

A student who is in in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension may not participate in any extracurricular practices/activities or athletic functions during that suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a student from school. The administrators of the school may expel a student if, in their opinion(s), it is in the best interest 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.

If at any time VCS determines, at its sole discretion, that a parent's actions do not support the school's mission/vision or reflect a lack of cooperation and commitment to the home and school working together, the school has the right to require the withdrawal of the student(s). Notification, conferencing, and written documentation will occur through this process. The Head of School and Board of Directors will be informed of the Principal's decision prior to the full withdrawal of the student(s) based on inappropriate parental behavior.

Any student whose conduct or attitude in or out of school show him/her to be in opposition to the basic principles and purposes of the school or who maliciously destroys school property will be dismissed or asked to withdraw from school. A student may be expelled from

school for a serious breach of conduct and or repeated problems with behavior or academic performance.

Expulsion may also be recommended for unresolved academic or disciplinary probation. When expulsion is recommended, a date of withdrawal from the school will be set and the withdrawal procedure followed. The expulsion date may be immediate.

After School Clubs

Specific after-school clubs (note, these differ from Kids Club) are conducted throughout the school year. A variety of athletic, academic, and other clubs may be offered to K-8 enrolled students and requires an additional fee for each club session. These seasonal clubs are conducted by outside organizations. It is the sole responsibility of parents to ensure transportation is provided and arrive promptly to pick up their student(s).

Morning Consumption of Food and Beverages

Students should not bring sugary, coffee-based beverages (hot or cold) or soft drinks to consume in the morning prior to the start of their homeroom class.

Water Bottles

Every student is required to have a water bottle at school. This is essential to prevent dehydration. Students should regularly take their water bottle home to be washed but must remember to bring it back to school the next day. All student water bottles should be clearly marked with first and last name. If a bottle is not marked, the teacher is permitted to write the student's name on their water bottle.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings or related items brought to campus are the responsibility of the student. There should be no related items brought unless advised by the teacher and approved by the Principal. Illegal items/substances and weapons will be confiscated and not returned, resulting in an immediate suspension or expulsion. The parent/guardian of the student will be advised, along with the appropriate local authorities, if necessary. This action may prevent a student(s) from returning to school pending any related investigation by authorities or members of the administration. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

Students are not to bring toys, video games, cars, or other related items from home. Sports equipment can be brought to school and used at recess/break (only) as approved by the PE teacher or Principal. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged items brought from home. If there are any questions related to the definition of items that may be brought to school, it should be communicated to the administration (before bringing it to school) for

clarification. Any such items seen or heard because of being brought to school by students will be confiscated and turned into the Principal and will only be returned to the parent. The 2nd time the item is confiscated, it will be held by the Principal for four weeks and then returned to the parent. The 3rd time the item is confiscated, it will be donated to a local charity. Continued violation of this policy will result in the item being confiscated and kept until a parent/guardian retrieves the item from the Principal.

Cell Phone Policy

Student cell phones or any other related communication devices (i.e., smart watches) are NOT permitted at any time. Cell phones may remain in the students' backpacks for use once off-campus.

Headphones

Headphones may not be worn around campus at any time. Headphones may not be worn in the classroom or computer room except for classroom activities.

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.

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.

Bullying and Harassment

VCS believes every student should have the privilege to learn in an environment that is free from hurt caused by bullying, intimidation, or harassment. We aim to create a school culture and environment where bullying will not be tolerated. Our framework for this policy is to establish relationships which are grounded in God’s love, compassion, reconciliation, and restitution. We are called by Jesus Christ to provide our students with a wholesome academic environment. Therefore, we do not condone behaviors which harm other students, whether physically or emotionally. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report it and know that the incident will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any student who believes he or she has been the subject of bullying should notify a teacher, staff member, school administrator, or parent/guardian, as applicable. The student(s) who are bullying others must learn to stop their destructive behavior. Reporting incidents in a timely fashion is critical to allow proper follow-up before an extended amount of time has lapsed.

Children do have disagreements with each other, and friendships change from time to time. This may be considered conflict and not bullying and may be dealt with differently as warranted.

CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Occasional	Occasional	Once or Twice	Is REPEATED
Not planned; in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous: unintentional	Intentional	Is planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings; upset	Can hurt others deeply	The target of the bullying is upset
All parties want to work things out	Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism	Based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person accepts responsibility	Behavior often regretted;	The bully blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem			The target wants to stop the bully's behavior, the bully does not
Can be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/ should NOT be ignored	CANNOT be resolved through mediation

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

While behavior at times and other places other than school or school events is an individual and parent responsibility, behavior that impairs the testimony of the school cannot be ignored. Therefore, students who engage in behavior outside of school that brings discredit to themselves and the school will be held accountable by the school and disciplined accordingly. Although the school's intent is not to actively monitor conduct off-campus, VCS students are expected to act in a manner that brings credit to themselves, their families, the school, and our Lord.

If a student or family believes that bullying, harassment, or discrimination has occurred, they are encouraged to file a report directly with their teacher and/or campus administration. An online form may also be used in order to report a concern anonymously (valleychristianaz.org/Reporting). These reports are taken extremely seriously; therefore, it is critical that all information provided is accurate and true to the best of one's knowledge. Note that a situation will be handled differently, but appropriately, if it is reported anonymously. Falsifying information on any report of such nature is grounds for disciplinary action to include immediate expulsion or termination.

Obscene Behavior

Obscene behavior, which includes cursing, lewd, offensive, or vulgar language, gestures, or sounds, 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.

DRESS CODE

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)

SHIRTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shirts should be appropriately sized and completely cover abdomen, back, cleavage, and undergarment, even when arms are fully extended. • <u>Girls</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are allowed; straps must be 2" • <u>Boys</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are not allowed. • Sheer shirts must have a dress code appropriate shirt underneath. • Tube tops, crops, bathing suit tops, racer-back shirts, or low-cut necklines are not allowed. • Sweaters, jackets, etc. may not be used to cover non-dress code shirts.
PANTS & SHORTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pants and shorts must be appropriately sized and completely cover undergarments, even while sitting. • No rips or holes • Frayed hems are allowed. • No pajama pants • All shorts must fall under these guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Youth Sizes:</u> Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer. ○ <u>Adult Sizes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Girls</u> – Shorts must have a 5" inseam or longer. ▪ <u>Boys</u> – Shorts must have a 7" inseam or longer. • No biker shorts, yoga pants, leggings, flare leggings, or jeggings • No words or messages written across the bottom or crotch area
DRESSES & SKIRTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Boys</u> may not wear dresses or skirts. • All dresses and skirts (including slits) must be no more than 4" above the knee. • No excessively tight dresses/skirts • The top of dresses must comply with shirt dress code requirements.
FOOTWEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must wear shoes always. • Sandals must have a heel strap. • Must wear athletic shoes and socks on PE days • No slippers/house shoes (including UGG slippers) • No flip flops, slides, or Classic Crocs
HEADWEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hats (including beanies) and sunglasses may be worn during outdoor recesses and outdoor PE only. • Hoods may only be worn outdoors.

<p>HEADPHONE S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may not wear headphones, ear buds, or air pods at any time during the school day. Noise cancelling headphones will be provided by the school if they are required as part of a student’s approved accommodation plan. ○ 1st VIOLATION: Student will receive a warning from a faculty or staff member to put headphones, ear buds, or air pods away and out of sight. ○ 2nd VIOLATION: 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. ○ 3rd VIOLATION: 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.
<p>HAIR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat and clean • Natural colors only ○ Students may dye their hair natural colors. • Hair must be kept out of eyes. • Facial hair must be neat and well-trimmed. • 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.
<p>TATTOOS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No visible tattoos
<p>ACCESSORIES & MAKEUP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Boys</u> may not wear earrings or makeup. • <u>Girls</u> may wear ear piercings only. • Makeup and accessories should not be distracting. • No animal accessories (i.e. cat ears, tails, gloves, etc.)
<p>NAIL POLISH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Boys</u> may not wear nail polish.

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.

<p>1ST VIOLATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning • Documented in RenWeb with a copy to the appropriate Vice Principal • Parents notified • Student may be required to change. • <i>Due to safety concerns, all shoe violations will require a parent to bring a pair of dress code appropriate shoes to the school.</i>
<p>2ND VIOLATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After school detention • Documented in RenWeb with a copy to the appropriate Vice Principal • Parents notified • Parents are required to bring a change of clothes before the student can continue in school day.
<p>3RD VIOLATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/student meeting with administration • In-school suspension
<p>4TH VIOLATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/student meeting with administration • Behavior contract issued
<p>5TH VIOLATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences outlined in behavior contract carried out – up to suspension/dismissal

FORMAL ATTIRE (Performances, Banquets, Promotion, Father-Daughter Dance)

- Attire must follow the regular school dress code for dresses, skirts, and tops with the following exceptions.
 - Spaghetti straps or strapless tops are allowed if covered with a sweater or shawl.
 - Sandals and heels do not need to have a heel strap.
 - K-4 students may wear light, natural makeup.
- 8th Grade Promotion:
 - Boys must wear a button-up shirt with a tie or bow tie and dress pants.
 - Girls must wear dress/skirt or dress slacks
 - Shoes must be dress shoes or lace-up shoes.

SPIRIT WEEK ATTIRE

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

BOYS	GIRLS
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.

BOYS	GIRLS
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)

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 (5-8)

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, he/she will be subject to the discipline listed under the policy. If a student remains at VCS, the following will apply to those involved in extracurricular activities. If a student violates the policy during an 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 2 weeks
 - 2nd violation – removal from extracurricular participation
- Behavior in school must be exemplary. An extracurricular participant involved in any administrative disciplinary action, such as excessive tardiness, 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.
- Once a student has reached 9 absences in a semester, without mitigating circumstances, the student will be placed on probation until the end of the semester.
- 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 about any penalty given. Normally the following action will be taken:
 - 1st violation - Student will be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled event.
 - 2nd violation - Student will be ineligible for the next four regularly scheduled events.
- End of season violation - If the 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 be in attendance at 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 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 on all extra- curricular outings.

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 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” and/or receive no conduct grades of “U”
- Inadequate progress or other variables as determined by the Principal

Any student who does not meet these requirements at a progress report or quarter grade check will be placed on PROBATION. While on probation the student may continue to participate in extracurricular activities including practices. His/her achievement of eligibility requirements will be monitored for improvement by administrators. If the student meets the eligibility requirements at the next grade check, he/she will be considered ELIGIBLE and exit the process.

If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria at the next grade check, he/she will be considered INELIGIBLE. While ineligible the student may not participate in games, productions, or school outings. The student may continue to participate in practices and rehearsals. His/her achievement of eligibility requirements will be monitored for improvement by administrators. If the student meets the eligibility requirements at the next grade check, he/she will be considered ELIGIBLE and exit the process.

If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria at the next grade check, he/she will continue to be ineligible until meeting the eligibility criteria based on a progress report or quarter grade check. Ineligibility from fourth quarter carries over to first quarter activities the following year.

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

Ineligibility Process

Ineligibility Criteria: (after review following Progress Reports & Report Cards)

- Any Unsatisfactory Conduct
- One or more Fs
- Inadequate progress or other variables as determined by Principal.

1. Probation

- Eligibility criteria monitored by Principal and JH Athletic Director for improvement may play/participate in:
 - Athletics, productions, school outings beginning the Monday following the release of grades
- Probation lasts until next grading period, or by Principal directive
- *If student meets the eligibility requirements, then they exit the process.*
- *If student fails to meet eligibility criteria, they remain ineligible.*

2. Ineligible

- Eligibility criteria monitored by Principal for improvement
- Student may NOT participate in games, productions, school outings
- In some instances, students may attend practices if receive approval from the Principal
- Begins the Monday following the release of grades.
- *Ineligibility lasts until next grading period.*

Additional Information:

- Extreme or unique cases will be evaluated by the Principal and coaching staff.
- VCS has full rights to enforce a stricter eligibility policy at any time with the approval of the Principal.
- The Principal reserves the right to remove a student(s) at any point from athletic or related programs.

Athletic Participation Forms and Related Guidelines

All athletes must complete and turn in the following documentation before they will be allowed to practice or compete. Completed forms should be submitted to the JH Athletic Director. The following are parameters for the JH and HS programs:

- *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 turned in to the Athletic Director.

Regular After School Dismissal Process

At the end of the school day, students should promptly go to the designated dismissal area(s). Students must stay in their assigned dismissal area until released (utilizing car rider numbers) by the duty staff. Students are not allowed to go back to any area of the campus (including classrooms) once they arrive at their assigned area. The staff members on duty are responsible for the safety of the students until they have entered their mode of transportation. Those picking up students should avoid long conversations with the person on duty. Students are to be picked up from school no later than 3:45 pm on each regular day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange for the prompt pickup of his/her student.

Chapel and Assemblies

The weekly 5-8 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. Parents are invited to join us for weekly chapels.

Closed Campus

Valley Christian Schools is a closed campus, which means students are always to stay on the school property during the school day. They may not leave without being checked out at the office by an authorized individual. Students are not permitted to leave campus for purposes of lunch except in rare cases of being checked out by a parent.

Special Events

The following is a brief explanation of special days and events that occur throughout the school year. The school reserves the right to add, change, cancel, or modify any school event with notice to the families.

JH School Spirit Days: Students are placed on either blue, green, yellow, or gray teams (Spirit Teams). The teams compete against each other throughout the school year. On Spirit Day, students are invited to wear clothing that corresponds to their team's color.

Back to School Night: This event is a “meet and greet” time with parents, teachers, staff, and guests. During the event teachers present classroom rules, discipline policies, the curriculum covered, and other important information.

Christmas/Spring Programs: Students perform in a special musical that celebrates the true meaning of Christmas. Our Fine Arts Department prepares the program as students sing, dance, and act. Family, friends, and the community are invited to this evening event in December. The spring concert will have a similar event to showcase the talent of our students.

Field Trips

Field trips are an extension and reinforcement of classroom learning. Therefore, each grade level is strongly encouraged to plan at least one field trip each year.

The procedure for planning a field trip is as follows:

- There must be at minimal one staff member for every tenth student along with any volunteers attend each field trip.
- All parent/guardian drivers and chaperones must have a background check on file before attending the field trip. Background checks forms are upon request. Teachers will solicit volunteers and then inform parents who have been chosen to chaperone.
- Teachers will send home permission slips and other related information.
- If parent drivers are needed, each driver must provide a copy of his/her driver’s license and automobile insurance, which will be on file in the school office.
- Each adult driver is responsible for transporting and supervising the students to and from the field trip. Each driver will receive a trip plan, medical forms for each student and a checklist to verify headcounts once arriving and departing the field trip destination. The medical forms are to be kept strictly confidential and must be returned to the teacher upon the return to the school campus.
- If a student has not returned a permission slip, the student may be required to remain at school under the supervision of another staff member.
- Students may be asked to wear a designated shirt must be worn on all field trips.
- Misbehavior by a student on a field trip may result in exclusion from future trips.