



# VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

## Parent & Student Handbook

GRADES 5-8

EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO BE  
CULTURE CHANGERS FOR CHRIST.

**2026-2027**

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# WELCOME TO VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Dear VCS Parents and Students,

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

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

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

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

On behalf of your campus principal and our entire staff, we are looking forward to a wonderful 2026-27 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.

### Respect for Country, Flag, and National Anthem

At VCS, we hold a foundational belief in showing respect for our country, its flag, and the national anthem. These symbols represent the freedoms and opportunities we are privileged to enjoy in the United States of America. We believe that demonstrating respect for these symbols honors the countless sacrifices made by the men and women who have served and continue to serve to protect those freedoms.

Therefore, at events where the national anthem is played, we ask all in attendance to stand in recognition of the liberties and values our flag represents. This act of unity is a visible expression of gratitude and respect for our nation and those who defend it.

We also acknowledge that our country is not without its challenges and injustices. We recognize that members of our community may feel compelled to draw attention to these issues. In light of this, we humbly and respectfully ask that our community stand together during the anthem to honor the freedoms it symbolizes – including the freedom of speech and the right to peaceful protest – and that any expressions of those freedoms take place following the conclusion of the anthem.

# ADMISSIONS/WITHDRAWALS

## 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.

## Human Diversity Statement

At VCS we recognize and celebrate "Human Diversity." This is to say that we recognize and celebrate the beauty and truth that all people are created in the image of God and because of that have inherent equal value.

A person's ethnic and cultural heritage is part of God's gift of individuality and a testimony of how much God values diversity within His creation. At VCS, we celebrate God's creativity and the diversity of His creation within the student body and school community.

Any display of bigotry or racism will not be tolerated at VCS. School discipline and consequences should be expected for any student who is responsible for any inappropriate racist behavior.

## Application Criteria

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

- Students 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.

### **Withdrawal Process**

If your intent is to not return the following academic year, you must submit this notification through the online *Intent to Withdraw Form*. If this form is submitted through the 30-day Opt-out period, a Continuous Enrollment fee will not be charged to your account per child(ren).

Each year, parents will have a 30-day opt-out period that begins when tuition is released and announced. If you decide you do not want your child to remain enrolled for the next school year, simply complete the online *Intent to Withdraw Form* during the opt-out period.

Please note that this form notifies Valley Christian Schools that your child will not be returning for the next school year. This is not the official withdrawal that initiates records requests and the closing of accounts. This must go through the registrar's office. Please contact the registrar's office at your campus to initiate this transfer of records at the appropriate time. Also, this form is not to be used for current-year withdrawals.

## GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### Behavior Response and Communication Protocol

This protocol outlines general guidance for the progressive steps taken by teachers and administration to address student behavior concerns. Each step includes example misbehaviors, the responsible party, and guidance on parent communication. As a school, we work hard to be as consistent as possible when addressing behavior, while also understanding that each student and each situation include different context, frequency, and circumstances. This protocol is not intended to be fully exhaustive or descriptive. VCS Administration reserves the right to determine, at their sole discretion, how behaviors are logged in accordance with this protocol.

**Restorative discipline:** At Valley Christian, our aim is to walk alongside students in establishing appropriate, Christ-honoring behavior. At times, that means an immediate consequence, and other times, that requires reaching the heart issue behind the infraction. When we speak with students and plan interventions and consequences, we are considering which will most effectively disciple the student in their walk with Jesus. Our goal is always restorative through repentance, prayer and, if necessary, mediation and consequences.

| Type of Behavior Infraction                                                 | Example Behaviors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | School Response/Consequences | Parent Notification                    | Responsible Party |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Minor Behaviors<br>(Classroom Managed)                                      | Class disruption, minor disrespect, roughhousing, off task behavior, minor rule infraction (chewing gum, misuse of tech, classroom expectations, etc.), unkind words or behavior, minor physical aggression (pushing, grabbing, etc.), inappropriate language, etc.                 | Low-Level                    | As appropriate                         | Teacher           |
| Moderate Behaviors or Repeated Minor Behaviors<br>(Office-Managed)          | Significant disrespect, act of aggression, unsafe behavior, minor threats, insults, damage to school property, minor theft, dishonesty, PDA, etc.                                                                                                                                   | Low to Mid-Level             | Email or phone call (Possible meeting) | Teacher/Admin     |
| Major Behaviors or Repeated Minor or Moderate Behaviors<br>(Office-Managed) | Significant threats, possession of drugs/paraphernalia, racial/ sexual/ disability/ other insults or slurs (considered by age and maturity), sexual harassment, fighting or harm to others, damaging school property, lewd or sexual behavior, repeated and targeted bullying, etc. | Mid to High-Level            | Call home / Parent meeting             | Admin             |

### School Consequences

| Low-level Consequences                                                                                                                                                                                          | Mid-Level Consequences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | High-Level Consequences                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| In-class Intervention<br>Temporarily moved outside door/hallway<br>Item Confiscation<br>Student Conference<br>Student Apology<br>Community Service<br>Lunch Detention Assigned by Teacher<br>Loss of Privileges | After School Detention<br>Removal from Classroom (Office)<br>Behavior Support Plan<br>Parent Conference<br>Restitution<br>Restorative Practice such as Special Assignment<br>Lunch Detention/Service Assigned by Administration<br>In School Suspension | Out of School Suspension<br>Academic Contract<br>Behavior Contract<br>Expulsion/Request for Withdrawal |

### Additional Notes:

- "Moderate Behaviors," "Major Behaviors," and repeated "Minor Behaviors" are typically documented in the behavior section of our school's Student Information System (RenWeb).
- Specific disciplinary procedures are in place for violations related to, but not limited to, academic honesty, dress code, iPad and personal device usage, and substance abuse policies.

### 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.

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

We recognize that we live in a broken world and that abuse and neglect also could occur within a school. 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. Appropriate steps will be taken to prevent abuse, and if it occurs, appropriate action will be taken. 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.

### 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.

### **Homework Expectations Policy**

Valley Christian Schools partners with parents and the local church to accomplish our mission of equipping students to be culture changers for Christ. We have intentionally established homework guidelines and expectations to provide a framework for what students and parents can expect from VCS and vice versa. Like our entire academic program, the use of homework is most effective alongside partnership between the student, parents, teachers, and administration.

Our homework expectations policy seeks to:

- Clearly set out and communicate homework expectations and guidelines for students, parents, and teachers by grade level
- Ensure a consistent approach and shared understanding between all members of the learning community

### **Research and Training**

Our own research, and our understanding of global research, on homework indicates the following:

- High quality homework assignments, especially those assigned purposefully and clearly linked to learning objectives, foster high academic achievement
- Competence and confidence are established best when tasks are appropriately challenging without generating undue frustration
- Rigor is not equal to workload
- Low quality homework assignments do not foster high academic achievement

Not surprisingly, the value of homework is most closely tied with the quality of the homework. VCS spends intentional time throughout the year training teachers on best practices to create high quality homework assignments. Outside of major projects with long lead times over multiple weeks, homework is generally not given on weekends or over school holidays.

### **Rationale of VCS Homework Policy**

1. We value the importance of homework as an intentional element of learning, seeking to:
  - Revisit recently taught materials to facilitate retention
  - Further develop students' independent learning skills
  - Extend and enrich the learning from the classroom
  - Pave the way for students to synthesize information and become independent, autonomous, and effective learners
2. Student learning is enhanced when homework is:
  - Purposefully designed to meet specific learning goals
  - Able to reinforce knowledge, skills, and understanding developed in class

- Appropriately challenging, engaging, and relevant
3. We also value our partnership with parents and the local church, so we encourage:
- Family time
  - Church and youth involvement
  - Involvement in sports, performing arts, other extracurricular activities, volunteering, and – at the HS level or when appropriate – part-time work

### **Expectations for Students**

A student's responsibilities for homework, as developmentally appropriate:

- Copy all assignments carefully, asking for help if the assignment or due date is not clear.
- Set aside a time and space each day to complete homework.
- Maintain the highest quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all necessary resources, such as packets, textbooks, notes, and study guides.
- Submit homework 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.
- Take initiative to get work from teachers and complete assignments that were missed due to extracurricular activities like athletics, fine arts, student council, etc.

### **Expectations for Parents/Caregivers**

Parents have access to all assigned homework through RenWeb. The time allocation noted in this policy is our best effort to estimate approximate homework times and *will not be representative of every student*. If your student regularly exceeds these timeframes, we highly encourage you to share this with your student's teacher(s), so you can discuss what solutions may help your student manage his/her homework better.

A VCS 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 clean and focused area, and tools needed to help your child organize and complete homework.
- Be available to provide supervision and support while allowing your child to do the bulk of the thinking and work.
- Communicate regularly with your child and his/her teacher, providing feedback to the teacher with any homework concerns.

### **Notes for High School students**

Homework at the high school level varies significantly based on the classes each student is taking. Our grade-level teachers meet regularly to discuss major tests and projects and do their best not to overlap. Despite these efforts, given that students take 6-8 classes at a time and every student's class schedule is

unique, there will be times when major tests and projects overlap. At the end of each semester, 3-5 days are set aside for high school students to take their semester finals.

### Notes for VINE students

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

### Time Allocation

Families should anticipate 5-10 minutes per grade level on nightly homework (not including special circumstances like projects, make-up work, etc).

A synthesis of the decades of research on homework indicates a bell curve of achievement and learning for students. In other words, either a lack of any time or an overabundance of time spent on homework typically results in lower achievement. The "sweet spot" for maximum academic growth is a modest amount of time on homework.

| Grade Level                      | Approx. Time/Night | Regular Homework Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| K                                | 10-15 min          | Weekly Bible verse memorization (oral recitation)<br>Weekly math practice packets (typically sent home on Mondays)<br>Minimal family projects w/ extended due dates<br><br><i>Additionally, 40 min of reading per week, inc. work on sight words and phonograms</i>                                                                                |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> | 10-20 min          | Weekly Bible verse memorization (oral recitation)<br>Daily math practice<br>Some long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. book reports, quarterly social studies or science projects)<br><br><i>Additionally, 45-90 min of reading/week, inc. weekly spelling and phonogram practice</i>                                                   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> | 25-40 min          | Weekly Bible verse memorization (written)<br>Weekly spelling practice<br>Daily math practice<br>Completing any assignments not finished in class<br>Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. quarterly book reports, science and social studies projects)<br><br><i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i> |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> | 40-60 min          | Weekly Bible verse memorization (written)<br>Daily math practice<br>Weekly reading practice for novel studies<br>Completing any assignments not finished in class                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                  |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  |             | Studying for assessments in each class<br>Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. extended writing projects, science and social studies projects, Bible class projects)<br><br><i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> | 45-75 min   | Weekly Bible verse memorization (written)<br>Daily math review and practice<br>Weekly reading practice for novel studies<br>Completing any assignments not finished in class<br>Studying for assessments in each class<br>Long-term projects with extended due dates (e.g. extended writing projects, science and social studies projects, Bible class projects)<br><br><i>Additionally, 1-2 hours of reading/week (to complete book reports)</i> |
| HS                               | 1.0-2.0 hrs | Approximately 10-20 minutes per subject per day, with more homework typically assigned for core subjects and Advanced Placement (AP) classes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

*This table provides an estimate of a student's homework each week, but times will vary by student and throughout the year.*

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

The normal school days at VCS are as follows:

| <b>Grade Level</b>        | <b>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri.</b> | <b>Wed.</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Lower Elementary K-4      | 8:30 – 3:10                   | 8:30 – 1:30 |
| Middle School/Junior High | 8:20 – 3:30                   | 8:20 – 1:30 |
| High School               | 8:00 – 3:10                   | 8:00 – 2:10 |

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

### **Lunch Ordering**

Families can 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 the 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.
- Lunch Questions: Contact our Lunch Operations Coordinator.

### **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).

### **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.

### **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.

### **Pregnancy and the Sanctity of Human Life**

VCS holds firmly to the biblical teaching that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image; human life is, therefore, of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:3-6; Job 31:15; Psalm 139:13-16). While premarital sex is wrong, the pregnancy is a gift from God. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. A student who facilitates, actively supports, and/or participates in terminating a pregnancy while enrolled at VCS may be subject to withdrawal or expulsion at the discretion of the administration.

Our hope and prayer for each of our students is that they choose to honor the Lord by remaining sexually abstinent until marriage. Scripture is clear that sexual immorality is a sin (Hebrews 13:4). Scripture is also clear that all have sinned (Romans 3:23). Although we strive and desire to be Christ-like, we sometimes act in sinful and self-serving ways; such is the case with sexual immorality.

If a pregnancy results from the sexual activity of a VCS student, it is of utmost importance that the sanctity of human life is honored. VCS does not condone sex outside the confines of marriage, nor does it condone abortion. Life is a gift from God and should be treasured as such. Life should always be celebrated, preserved, and protected.

When a student makes VCS aware that they have become pregnant or caused a pregnancy (with a VCS or non-VCS student), it is the policy of the school to intervene and to make resulting decisions prayerfully on a case-by-case basis. The school's intervention, designed to be restorative in nature, is intended to encourage an atmosphere of compassion and support so that a student is strengthened in the decision to preserve the pregnancy and protect the unborn.

For a pregnant student wishing to continue at VCS, the process is as follows:

1. Notification: School administration must be notified of the pregnancy as soon as possible. The student(s), parents, and appropriate school administration will arrange a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is for the administration and the families involved to work cooperatively to come to an agreement regarding what is the healthiest and best education option moving forward. Ultimately, school administration holds the right to make the final decision.
2. Establish paternity: The female must identify the father of her child (unless circumstances do not allow it). If he is also a student at VCS, or if a male student causes a pregnancy with a non-VCS student, this policy and any resulting intervention governs both male and female students in a similar manner.
3. Repentance and forgiveness: The student must express authentic repentance for the sexual sin and seek reconciliation with God and others impacted. The student must display a positive, wholesome Christian attitude and must strive to maintain sexual purity as defined by the Bible from this point forward, knowing that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)
4. Continued education: The school's administration will work with the student and the student's parents to establish guidelines for student participation in school activities, including ongoing education. Options for continued education may include:
  - a. Continued instruction at VCS.
  - b. "At home" instruction whereby the student continues coursework provided by VCS, with limited VCS teacher supervision.
  - c. Some combination of continued instruction and coursework taken at home or another institution.
  - d. Withdrawal from VCS and recommended enrollment elsewhere.

In all cases, VCS will work with the family to make a successful transition to resume or continue the student's education during the pregnancy period. The school administration reserves the right to make the decision about continued current enrollment, reenrollment for the following semester, or for any future semesters.

## 5. Expectations

- a. If the student remains at VCS in any capacity, academic excellence and attendance, as appropriate, must remain consistent while enrolled.
- b. If the student is allowed to remain a student at VCS, the safety of the mother and the (unborn) child will be acknowledged in all decisions for the school regarding curricular and extracurricular activities.

c. VCS recommends that the student participates in ongoing Christian counseling and mentorship to maintain their physical (prenatal, post-natal), mental, and spiritual health. Counseling should continue until and beyond the birth of the child.

d. VCS will not be held liable to provide an enrolled student with childcare or other similar benefits.

e. In most cases, the student may participate in the graduation ceremony on the same basis as any other student.

Under extenuating or tragic circumstances, including but not limited to non-consensual criminal activity or an extreme health risk to the mother, VCS may adjust these policies accordingly, while remaining consistent with our statement of faith and overall policies.

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

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 romantic 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 romantic affection will not be tolerated. Holding hands will be the limit of body contact. Violations will result in a consequence.

### **Security and Emergencies**

Valley Christian School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all students, faculty, and staff. We continuously evaluate and enhance our safety protocols, implementing additional layers of protection whenever prudent and feasible.

Each of our campuses is equipped with the following security measures:

- Armed Campus Security Officers who are present during school hours and events.
- Security cameras that provide both live and recorded footage to assist in monitoring an incident response.
- Supervised drop-off and pick-up procedures to ensure student safety during high traffic times.
- Standardized visitor check-in process to control and monitor campus access.

We also maintain strong working relationships with local police and fire departments to support our emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Valley Christian Schools has established comprehensive Emergency Management Procedures, which are regularly reviewed and practiced through scheduled drills. These drills help ensure that students, faculty, and staff are familiar with the appropriate protocols in the event of an emergency.

In the event of an actual emergency, parents will be notified via text message through our RenWeb Alert system to ensure timely and accurate communication.

It is imperative that students follow the instructions of faculty or staff members during any drill or emergency to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone on campus.

### **Student Property Search Policy (K–12)**

To maintain a safe, orderly, and Christ-centered learning environment, Valley Christian Schools (the School) reserves the right to conduct searches of student property and School premises in accordance with School policy, applicable law, and the School's mission.

Students and their parents or legal guardians acknowledge that enrollment at the School is voluntary and constitutes acceptance of this Student Property Search Policy. This Policy is incorporated into and forms part of the enrollment agreement and contractual relationship between the School and the student's family. As a condition of enrollment and continued attendance, students, parents, and/or legal guardians consent to the School's authority to conduct reasonable searches as described in this Policy of student property, personal belongings, electronic devices, vehicles, and other items brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities.

Students and their parents or legal guardians further acknowledge that property brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities may be subject to search in accordance with this Policy. As a result, students have a diminished expectation of privacy with respect to such property while on School property or participating in School-sponsored activities.

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## **I. General Authority to Search (All Grades K–12)**

### **A. Scope of Search**

The School may search, at its discretion:

- Lockers, desks, and School-owned storage areas
- Backpacks, purses, bags, and other personal containers
- Student vehicles located on School property (High School only where applicable)
- Electronic devices brought onto School property or to School-sponsored activities, including cellular telephones, tablets, laptops, and similar devices
- Any personal property brought onto School campus or School-sponsored events
- The contents of a student's outer-clothing pockets by directing the student to empty the pockets and display their contents

### **B. Electronic Devices**

The School may temporarily take possession of electronic devices and search such devices when reasonably necessary to investigate misconduct, enforce School policies, protect health and safety, maintain order and discipline, protect School property, or further the School's educational mission.

When reasonably related to the purpose of a search, searches may include review of content stored locally on an electronic device, including photographs, videos, documents, call logs, or other information reasonably believed to

be relevant to the matter under investigation. Any review shall be limited in scope to information reasonably related to the purpose of the search.

Absent separate consent, legal process, or other authority recognized by law, the School will not require students to provide passwords for, or access to, personal email accounts, social media accounts, cloud-storage accounts, or other third-party electronic communication services that are not owned, operated, or provided by the School.

The School may require a student to present an electronic device for inspection and may request reasonable cooperation in connection with a search conducted pursuant to this Policy. Failure to cooperate may result in disciplinary action.

Except in emergency circumstances involving a threat to health, safety, or security, any search of the contents of a student's electronic device must be approved in advance by the Head of School, Principal, Dean of Students, or another administrator designated by the School. The approving administrator shall determine that the search is authorized under this Policy and reasonably related to a legitimate School purpose before the search is conducted.

### **C. Basis of Search**

Searches may be conducted when the School reasonably determines that a search is necessary to:

- Protect student and staff safety
- Enforce School rules and behavioral expectations
- Investigate suspected misconduct or policy violations
- Maintain order and discipline
- Protect School property and the property of others
- Support the School's Christian mission and learning environment

### **Individual Searches**

The School may conduct a search directed at a particular student or the student's property when the School has reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence relevant to a purpose identified above.

### **Safety and Administrative Searches**

In appropriate circumstances, the School may conduct broader administrative or safety-based searches without reasonable suspicion as to a particular student when reasonably necessary to address one or more of the purposes identified above.

### **D. Confiscation of Items**

The School may confiscate items that are:

- Prohibited under School rules
- Illegal or unsafe
- Evidence of misconduct
- Disruptive to the learning environment

Confiscated items may be retained, returned to the student or parent/guardian, transferred to law enforcement when appropriate, or otherwise disposed of in accordance with applicable law and School policy.

#### E. Searches conducted under this Policy will be carried out with attention to:

- Student dignity and respect
- Safety and appropriate supervision
- Limiting the scope of the search to what is reasonably necessary under the circumstances

Searches will not be conducted in a manner intended to embarrass, harass, intimidate, or improperly single out a student.

#### F. Law Enforcement Involvement

The School may involve law enforcement when:

- Required by law
- There is suspected criminal activity
- There is an immediate threat to safety

The School will comply with lawful court orders, warrants, subpoenas, and other legal process as required by law.

#### G. Refusal to Cooperate

A student's refusal to comply with an authorized search directive, including a direction to empty the student's pockets, may result in discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with School policy. The School may temporarily separate and supervise the student while contacting the student's parent or guardian and determining the appropriate response. The School may contact law enforcement when there is a reasonable basis to believe that the student possesses illegal drugs, a weapon, or other dangerous contraband.

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## II. Developmental Application by Grade Level

### A. Elementary School (Grades K–5)

Because younger students require greater structure, supervision, and adult guidance, searches in K through 5 are typically **administrative and safety-based rather than investigative**.

The School may conduct searches when:

- Items are visible or the School has reasonable suspicion that items violate School rules
- There is a safety concern (e.g., weapons, unsafe objects, prohibited items)
- There is a need to locate missing or misappropriated property
- A student's behavior or other circumstances create a reasonable concern for student welfare, safety, or compliance with School rules

#### K–5 Search Approach:

- Searches will be handled primarily by School administration or designee
- Searches will be conducted in a calm, age-appropriate manner
- When reasonably feasible, another staff member will be present during the search
- Efforts will be made to minimize disruption and emotional distress

The School will make reasonable efforts to notify parents or guardians when a search relates to a significant safety concern, alleged misconduct, disciplinary matter, or other matter warranting parental involvement. Routine administrative searches and minor incidents may not require separate parental notification. The timing and manner of any notification will be determined by the School based on the circumstances presented.

Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal.

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## **B. Middle School and High School (Grades 6–12)**

Students in grades 6 through 12 are afforded increasing independence and personal responsibility but remain subject to School rules, supervision, and the search authority set forth in this Policy.

- Consistent with the search standards set forth elsewhere in this Policy, searches involving students in grades 6 through 12 may be conducted when reasonably necessary to investigate misconduct, address safety concerns, enforce school rules, protect school property, or maintain discipline and order.

### **Grades 6–12 Search Approach:**

- Searches may be conducted based on reasonable suspicion or, in appropriate circumstances, without reasonable suspicion as to a particular student consistent with this Policy
- School administrators will determine the scope and timing of searches based on the circumstances presented
- Searches may be conducted with or without student presence if appropriate
- Searches should be limited to areas reasonably related to the concern
- When reasonably feasible, another staff member will be present during the search
- Students who choose to bring electronic devices onto School property or to School sponsored events do so subject to the School's authority to search such devices in accordance with this Policy
- Students who choose to bring vehicles onto School property or to School sponsored events do so subject to the School's authority to search such vehicles in accordance with this Policy

Refusal to comply may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal.

## **Sickness and Medication**

VCS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. A student exhibiting any of the following symptoms should not attend school.

- A fever without medication, in the last 24 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

## **General Notes**

- Head Lice

If the school determines that a student has headlice, he or she will be sent home to be treated. The student will be allowed to return to school once treatment is complete and he or she is cleared by the nurse or other school personnel. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling 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.

- 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 care plan. 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 or medical need that requires treatment. Parents will be phoned for any injury that occurs to the head, as well as receiving a Medical Event Notification by email. VCS has 2 registered nurses on staff on our Tempe campus. If the school nurse is not on campus when an injury occurs, first aid will be provided 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).

- Immunizations

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes §§ 15-871 through 15-874 and Arizona Administrative Code R9-6-701 through R9-6-708, all students attending VCS must have documentation of required immunizations or a valid Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) exemption form on file.

Students who are not compliant with immunization requirements, are not in approved catch-up status, and do not have a valid exemption on file shall be excluded from school attendance until compliance is met, as required by state law.

Acceptable documentation includes:

- Official immunization records meeting Arizona requirements;
- A completed ADHS medical exemption form signed by a licensed healthcare provider;

- A completed ADHS personal belief exemption form signed by a parent or guardian; Verbal assurances or incomplete documentation do not meet state requirements. The school is required to review immunization status at enrollment and annually thereafter.

## Medications

- Prescription Medications

The school will follow legal guidelines when dispensing prescription medication during school hours. 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.
- Any student bringing prescribed medication to school is to leave the medication in the nurse's office with the appropriate instructions for administering the medication. Any prescription medication or drug found with a student will be confiscated until proper information can be obtained. Medication will not be administered unless the school office or nurse has been notified appropriately. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) and the student to follow these instructions.

- Non-Prescription Medications

Written permission from the parent for the administration of non-prescription medications will be kept on file in the health office and in RenWeb. 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.

## Student Records

Student records are confidential and are only available to school personnel who are directly involved with the academic affairs of a student. These files are not available to other parents or individuals. In the case of a divorce or separation, a noncustodial parent shall have the right to access school academic records related to his or her student unless prohibited by a legally binding instrument. At the time of

enrollment parents shall provide all relevant documents concerning custody or visitation and have an ongoing duty to provide any documents and information relevant to a change in current rights to custody or visitation. VCS has no responsibility to provide financial records to the non-fiduciary parent. Any other party must present legal verification that they have equal rights.

### **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. The VCS Technology Use Policy can be found in its entirety [here](#).

### **Transportation**

Valley Christian Schools provides some designated routes of transportation to school each year. This is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange with the VCS Transportation department. The applications to participate and more information can be found at [valleychristianaz.org/Transportation](http://valleychristianaz.org/Transportation).

### **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.

### **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.

# PARENT PARTNERSHIP

## Parental Support and Cooperation

At VCS, partnering with parents is one of our core values. The following guidelines help us maintain that healthy partnership.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents are encouraged to attend scheduled parent/teacher conferences. During these meetings, teachers are prepared to discuss student progress using current grades and samples of student work.

In addition to scheduled all school conferences, ad-hoc meetings may be arranged at any time by parents, teachers, or administrators as needed. Teachers are expected to maintain regular communication with parents and should initiate a conference if a student is at risk of failing or facing other academic or behavioral concerns.

## 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, 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.

### **Classroom Management Partnership**

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 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 our students be controlled with self-discipline in their attitudes and actions. To develop such self-discipline, though, it is necessary for us to teach and train the students in this process. VCS teachers are tasked with the primary responsibility of ensuring that their students behave in a proper and fitting way at school.

We expect parents to maintain a supportive attitude with teachers and administrators and generally support the decisions they make. In the event there is a disagreement, we expect parents to follow the protocols outlined above, with discretion. Most of all, we ask parents to communicate support when talking with their student, to convey unity and respect for authority at school.

### **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.

### **Administrative Investigations of Student Behaviors**

To ensure a safe and respectful learning environment, VCS administration may conduct inquiries into student behavior to determine whether school policies have been violated. This process may involve interviewing students and collecting statements. Initial inquiries may be conducted without prior parent notification; however, parents will be contacted at an appropriate time as determined by school leadership. All interactions between staff and students will remain professional and ethical, with the primary goal of maintaining a safe and supportive school community.

### **Communications**

All communications and interaction is expected to be professional and respectful. While we do not want students to suffer the consequences of parent behavior, administration may recommend withdrawal of a student when the 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 making a 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.

### **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 person who exhibits 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 practice, games, time-outs, halftime, and or coaching from the sidelines.

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

We are so grateful for our generous VCS community, especially when it is directed to encouraging and blessing our teachers and staff. To maintain integrity in our generosity, 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.

### **Parent Volunteers**

All volunteers must follow all current VCS requirements to volunteer on campus. VCS has an active volunteer organization known as the Valley Christian Volunteer

Community (VCVC; [valleychristianaz.org/VCVC](http://valleychristianaz.org/VCVC)). Parent volunteers are vital to the healthy development of a school. The standard of conduct for Volunteers is as follows:

- Volunteer work falls under the authority of the activity's coordinator and, subsequently, the authority and direction of the teacher and administration of the school. The teacher, school administration, and likely VCVC must approve all activities.
- Volunteers should respect the time and schedules of the teachers and staff. Volunteers and parents should avoid unannounced visits to the school – and especially classrooms – that are not pre-planned if they desire to support through volunteerism.
- Attire must be appropriate and modest when acting as a parent volunteer.
- 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.

# **5-8 Policies & Procedures**

## **GRADES 5-8**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Attendance

#### Arizona Truancy Laws (ARS 15-802 and 15-803)

- o Children ages 6 to 16 must attend school.
- o A student is considered truant after 5 unexcused absences in a school year.
- o A student is allowed to miss 18 total days of school – excused or unexcused.
- o Violations may result in legal consequences for the parent or guardian, including a Class 3 misdemeanor, which may carry fines or jail time.

This law applies to private schools, including Valley Christian Schools, which must provide instruction for at least the same number of days and hours as public schools.

### Excused Absences

Absences for the following reasons will be considered excused:

- School-related absences (do not count towards limit).
- School suspensions are considered excused (do not count towards limit).
- Extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are defined as an unforeseen event or set of circumstances that prevented the student from being present. The School Administration reserves the right to determine what qualifies as extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances include; death in family, family emergencies, extended hospital stays, being involved in a car accident.

### Approved Absence

An approved absence can be defined as an absence in which a parent or legal guardian has notified the school prior to the absence. This includes but is not limited to sick days, medical or other professional appointments, family vacations, club sports or other similar trips.

Approved absences still count towards class absence limits. However, the advantage of approved absences is that they fall under the umbrella of excused absences as it relates to late work submission. Absences in which the school receives no notice or communications from a parent or legal guardian within 24 hours of the absence fall under unexcused absence status which impacts late work submission more stringently.

### Other Absences

- 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 half of the day or four consecutive periods, he/she may observe the practice or event, but may not participate.
- 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:

- Receive Administrative Absence form from the front office two weeks before the planned absence with approval from the Principal or Vice Principal.
- Turn in the completed Administrative Absence form to the front office.
- **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.
- Skipping Class: Any student caught skipping class is subject to immediate consequences ranging from detentions to suspension.

### **Excessive Absences**

Excessive absences are defined as a student missing 10 or more classes per semester (not including excused absences as defined above). Completing work assignments and receiving passing grades are not a replacement for in person attendance in school. Students with chronic and excessive absences and/or tardies may be subject to disciplinary consequences ranging from in-school suspension to withdrawal from VCS.

### **Reporting Absences**

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

### **Tardies**

Tardiness is defined as failing to be in class prepared for class when the tardy bell rings. For students to maximize their classroom learning and to encourage self-discipline and responsibility, VCS expects students to come to class on time and fully prepared with the materials needed. Students who need to use the restroom must check in with the teacher before the bell rings to get permission at that time or after the teacher has given directions for the class.

### **Chapel and Assemblies**

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

### **Classroom Supplies**

VCS provides all basic initial supplies for students in the classroom, including a VCS Student Planner. Students are required to keep and use this planner for the entire school year. If a student misplaces his or her planner, another one can be earned by cleaning the lunchroom for three days during lunch recess. The school/teacher reserves the right to request certain items purchased by families to accommodate specific projects or related activities.

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.

### **Water Bottles**

Water is the only drink allowed outside of morning recess (before school) and lunch. Students will be asked to finish or dispose of any other beverages when heading to homeroom and after lunch. Every student is required to have a water bottle at school. The water bottle 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 brought to campus are the responsibility of the student. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged 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. 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.

### **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**

Special assemblies may also be held on various occasions. Parents are invited to join us for weekly chapels. Parents visiting for chapel will need to show car tag and ID to security outside auditorium.

### 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.

### 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.

## ACADEMICS (5-8)

### Biblical Illumination

Biblical Illumination (BI) 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.

### Schedule Changes (5-8)

Any student requesting a schedule change must have written parent approval and submit requests by the end of the second full week of school. Teachers and/or administrators may initiate a student schedule change to improve student placement. All changes are subject to approval by administration.

### Assessments and Weights (5-8)

The following represent general guidelines for grading:

- Homework will count for 10% of each quarterly grade.
- Summative Assessments will count for 50% of each quarterly grade.
- Formative Assessments (quizzes, projects) will count for 40% of each quarterly grade.
- Participation grades (if applicable) may not count for more than 5% of a student's quarterly grade.
- Technical errors (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, if given, will count 10% of the semester grade.
- Parents can expect assignments to be graded within one week of the due date. If an assignment is handed in late, parents can expect a "P" for "pending" to appear within 24 hours and remain until the assignment is graded. An "M" indicates an assignment is missing.
- All assignments, projects, and tests will be written in student planners and posted in Renweb for all students.
- Projects will be accompanied by written instructions.
- (See below, under "Make Up Assignments")

### Definitions

**Formative:** An assessment for learning that occurs during the learning process and provides information to both teachers and students to adjust instruction. 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 students 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.

## Grading

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

## 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 provides an opportunity to practice skills and revisit content at home and will have a direct effect on learning and performance on assessments.

### A student's responsibilities for homework:

- 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, allowing students to do all the work.
- 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 and parent universities

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. Any student taking a high school course in junior high (Algebra 1, Geometry, or Spanish 1), should expect to take a semester exam in December and a final in May.

Other middle school and junior high classes will have culminating projects and/or exams. Planned absences are not allowed during the last week of each semester. Students missing an exam due to illness will be required to take the exam on 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

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. Students who receive an "incomplete" in a course must complete the work within two weeks of the end of the semester. 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 (extended absences due to illness, etc.) may require a different time schedule. This schedule should be worked out with the student and each individual teacher, with the approval of administration

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. Excessively late or missing assignments will be addressed with parents and may result in restricted privileges and, possibly, an academic contract.

### **Grade Retention**

Teachers must submit a written notice to the principal for any student in danger of being considered for retention by the start of the second semester. If a student is in danger of failing, parents will be notified in advance so that tutoring or modifications can be put in place. If there is not sufficient improvement, the principal, in collaboration with teachers, will make the final determination about whether or not a student will be retained. Retention for any reason other than the student's academic best interests will not be considered.

### **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 (1 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 challenges which impact their learning.

Valley's Individual Needs Enhancement program is for students with documented/diagnosed learning disabilities or who have other learning challenges.

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 cannot service every student 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 student succeed. Your communication to us about your student's needs and submission of records, testing, and evaluation 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 and/or evaluation 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.

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 as defined by IDEA; however, the goals and recommendations contained in IEPs, 504 plans, 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 accommodation and/or modification 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 academic advising, to discuss documented interventions as well as the results of the first quarter screening document, in order to address additional solutions or accommodations. Efforts to address the concerns should be documented for three additional weeks.
- ✓ If no improvement is observed after the second solution is tried, the teacher and the academic advising team 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 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 students 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 students' ILP.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## BEHAVIOR TRAINING

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. At Valley, we clearly outline expected student behavior in our campus-wide behavior matrices.

### Expected Characteristics of a VCS Student (Culture Changer)

- Possesses a growth mindset and presses on (2 Peter 1:5-8).
- Develops critical thinking, problem solving skills (Proverbs 14:15).
- Diligently works hard and pursues excellence (Proverbs 14:15).
- Arrives on time and prepared (Proverbs 21:5).
- Listens before speaking (James 1:19).
- Disagrees politely, seeking to understand (Romans 14:1).
- Take responsibility for my actions (Matthew 5:37).
- Spends time in the Word and seeks to apply Biblical truth (2 Tim. 2:15).
- Waits patiently, speaks calmly, and acts politely (Luke 6:31).
- Honors God in speech and actions (John 5:23).
- Cares about, dresses, and prioritizes honoring God (Romans 12:1-2).
- Tells the truth and acts with integrity (Proverbs 12:17).
- Acts confidently, but with Christ like humility (Mark 8:36).
- Declares and believes the Biblical Gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10).
- Regards adults with respect, follows directions without complaining (Hebrews 13:17).
- Speaks kindly to others and builds them up (Ephesians 4:32).
- Treats others as children/creation of God (Matthew 5:43-45).
- Offers to help and serve others (Mark 10:45).
- Regularly thinks of others first (Philippians 2: 3-4).
- Encourages and uplifts others (Ephesians 4:29).
- Prioritizes team accomplishments, teamwork, and God's glory (Proverbs 27:17).

### Academic Dishonesty

#### Academic Integrity Policy

One of the character traits we want to emphasize, model, and train VCHS students to incorporate into their lives is integrity. A culture changer for Christ tells the truth and acts with integrity. As a Christian educational institution, we also value the process of student learning. Cheating interferes with both values and encourages achievement without earning it. This is a behavior pattern that can be harmful to a student and their future. Instead of developing these harmful habits, we encourage students to develop honesty, diligence, curiosity, perseverance, study skills, and to embrace the learning process.

The following are forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism- Plagiarism is to steal and pass off the ideas and words of another as one's own. The inappropriate use of AI often falls into this category.
- Common forms of cheating include but are not limited to copying another student's work with their permission or without permission when not allowed. Inappropriate use of personal or school devices to store or obtain information that is required for an assessment or any graded assignment. Looking at another student's work or allowing another student to view your work. Use of cheat sheets without teacher approval.
- Others doing the work for you- This 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. Asking or telling what question, answer, or information was on a test or quiz.
- These forms of academic dishonesty can occur with any graded assignments, classwork, homework, quizzes, tests, final exams, projects, essays, etc.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive list of ways in which students may cheat. School administration has the right to determine if a student's actions were academically dishonest.

#### Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

- 1st instance of academic dishonesty will result in a 0% being given on the assignment and a parent email sent home by the classroom teacher.
- 2nd instance of academic dishonesty will result in a 0% being given on the assignment, parent communication, and an essay to be completed during lunch detentions on this topic.
- 3rd instance of academic dishonesty will result in a 0% being given on assignment, a parent conference, and further consequences applied. Consequences may include a behavior contract, academic probation, ineligibility, and other school privileges revoked.
- 4<sup>th</sup> instance of academic dishonesty will result in immediate withdrawal from VCS.

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

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

##### *AI as a Resource*

You may not submit any data generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any work

submitted using uncited AI content will be considered plagiarism, a form of cheating, and will be dealt with according to relevant school policies.

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

### *AI Deepfakes*

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

### **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.

### **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/Earbuds**

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

### **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.

### **Lifestyle Behaviors**

Since VCS bears the name of Jesus Christ, a high standard of conduct is expected 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. This expectation includes behavior on and off campus and at special events (performances, sporting events, community events, etc.)

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.

### **Substance Abuse**

Any student use or possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol, on or off campus will not be tolerated and will result in an off-campus suspension or expulsion. 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 campus. This includes conduct on social media. . If a student chooses to participate in inappropriate or offensive behavior, 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, etc. Inappropriate or offensive behavior includes but is not limited to:

- 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 include 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, no matter how small. Theft will almost always be punished by suspension from school and police may be notified. 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. When bullying is reported, administration will do an investigation.

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](http://valleychristianaz.org/Reporting)).

### Self-Harm

If a student indicates or has evidence of self-harm without suicidal ideation:

- Student may be removed from class temporarily for a preliminary conversation with administration, nurse, or the Health and Wellness Coordinator.

- 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) may need to seek out a licensed counselor's evaluation and care.

If a student indicates a desire to significantly harm themselves or someone else up to and including 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.
- Depending on the severity and nature of the threat, the school will partner with parents to determine next steps for the student's safety and health.
- Parent(s) may be required to seek outside help and/or an evaluation, possibly before returning to school.
- If the parent desires, VCS will provide a list of crisis help organizations.
- The health/wellness office will also reach out to attendance to ensure the student's absences for immediate treatment, if needed, are excused.
- School administration 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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Student Discipline**

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 struggles to meet these expectations, we will implement consequences designed to help students learn to make better choices in the future.

We ask that parents vocalize support for school expectations and consequences to their children. If a parent would like to discuss consequences further, we ask that they do so discretely with teachers and campus administration.

### **Classroom and Lunch Reflections**

Students may be asked by a teacher to fill out a Classroom Reflection if they struggle with behavior in the classroom. Classroom Reflection sheets will be sent home and must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to school the next day.

Certain behaviors will result in a Lunch Reflection, which requires a student to eat lunch and spend lunch recess in the lunch reflection room. They may be assigned by teachers for only the following behaviors, which we want to hold students accountable for, but do not require reteaching:

- Tardiness to class
- Wearing a hat in school
- Having phone or smart watch out
- Chewing gum
- Using an iPad or laptop for something other than what is teacher-directed
- Leaving the dismissal room without permission

Teacher assigned lunch reflection do not go into RenWeb as a behavior report, except in the rare situations in which a student gets them repeatedly and further action is needed. Occasionally, administration may assign lunch reflection for an office-managed behavior, which are logged in RenWeb.

### **After School Detention**

When a student receives 3 Reflection Sheets in class or is issued 3 Lunch Reflections, he or she will receive an After School Detention. Parents will be given at least 2 days' notice, and students will be expected to serve their detention from 3:15-4:00. After school detentions will be entered into RenWeb as an office referral. If students ride in a carpool or play after-school sports, they must make the necessary arrangements to serve their detentions as assigned.

### **Suspension**

Administration may suspend any student for egregious or repeated violations of school policy and expectations. 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's behavior will not be tolerated in the Valley community. 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:* If a student receives an off-campus suspension, we ask that parents do their best to re-enforce the gravity of the consequence through suspended privileges and/or restrictions on the days being served.

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

### **Student Contracts**

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

***Behavior Contracts:*** A student may be placed on a behavior contract at the school administration's discretion when they are not meeting the school's behavior expectations in the parent/student handbook. A behavior contract may be issued for consecutive minor violations or for a single major violation. A behavior contract gives the student a final opportunity to stay enrolled at VCS. Should the terms of the contract not be adhered to, the student may be asked to not re-enroll or be expelled. The length of the contract will be determined by the school administration. Once a student completes the expectations of a contract, the contract will be withdrawn. The expectation is that the student will look for ways to be respectful and cooperative for the remainder of their time at VCS. Should that not be the case the school reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw or be expelled.

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

### **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 the result of a single incident or episode that endangers the safety, or environment of the school. 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 immediately.

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 partnership, 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 Valley or who maliciously destroys school property will be dismissed or asked to withdraw from school.

## DRESS CODE (5-8)

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"> <li>• Shirts should be appropriately sized and completely cover abdomen, back, cleavage, and undergarment, even when arms are fully extended.</li> <li>• <u>Girls</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are allowed; straps must be 2"</li> <li>• <u>Boys</u> – Sleeveless and tank tops are not allowed.</li> <li>• Sheer shirts must have a dress code appropriate shirt underneath.</li> <li>• Tube tops, crops, bathing suit tops, racer-back shirts, or low-cut necklines are not allowed.</li> <li>• Sweaters, jackets, etc. may not be used to cover non-dress code shirts.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| PANTS & SHORTS   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pants and shorts must be appropriately sized and completely cover undergarments, even while sitting.</li> <li>• No rips or holes</li> <li>• Frayed hems are allowed.</li> <li>• No pajama pants</li> <li>• All shorts must fall under these guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Youth Sizes:</u> Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer.</li> <li>○ <u>Adult Sizes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Girls</u> – Shorts must have a 5" inseam or longer.</li> <li>▪ <u>Boys</u> – Shorts must have a 7" inseam or longer.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• No biker shorts, yoga pants, leggings, flare leggings, or jeggings</li> <li>• No words or messages written across the bottom or crotch area</li> </ul> |
| DRESSES & SKIRTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Boys</u> may not wear dresses or skirts.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All dresses and skirts (including slits) must be no more than 4" above the knee.</li> <li>• No excessively tight dresses/skirts</li> <li>• The top of dresses must comply with shirt dress code requirements.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| FOOTWEAR    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must wear shoes always.</li> <li>• Sandals must have a heel strap.</li> <li>• Must wear athletic shoes and socks on PE days</li> <li>• No slippers/house shoes (including UGG slippers)</li> <li>• No flip flops, slides, or Classic Crocs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| HEADWEAR    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hats (including beanies) and sunglasses may be worn during outdoor recesses and outdoor PE only.</li> <li>• Hoods may only be worn outdoors.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| HEADPHONE S | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>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.</b></li> <li>○ <b>1<sup>st</sup> VIOLATION:</b> Student will receive a warning from a faculty or staff member to put headphones, ear buds, or air pods away and out of sight.</li> <li>○ <b>2<sup>nd</sup> VIOLATION:</b> Headphones, ear buds, and air pods will be confiscated by the faculty or staff member and stored at the front office for the rest of the school day. Students will need to pick up their headphones, ear buds, or air pods from the front office at the end of the school day. Parents will be notified by administration.</li> <li>○ <b>3<sup>rd</sup> VIOLATION:</b> If this is repeated behavior, administration will work with the family to determine appropriate consequences and establish a restriction plan (i.e. headphones left at home, headphones checked in before going to class, etc.) Students will work with administration to develop an action plan prior to lifting the restriction plan.</li> </ul> |
| HAIR        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neat and clean</li> <li>• Natural colors only</li> <li>○ Students may dye their hair natural colors.</li> <li>• Hair must be kept out of eyes.</li> <li>• Facial hair must be neat and well-trimmed.</li> <li>• VCS reserves the right to require a student to get a haircut, change a style, or change a color if, in the judgement of administration, the student's choice has created a distraction.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| TATTOOS     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No visible tattoos</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACCESSORIES & MAKEUP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boys may not wear earrings or makeup.</li> <li>Girls may wear ear piercings only.</li> <li>Makeup and accessories should not be distracting.</li> <li>No animal accessories (i.e. cat ears, tails, gloves, etc.)</li> </ul> |
| NAIL POLISH          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boys may not wear nail polish.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   |

### DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

- Faculty or staff will report dress code violations to administration or designated staff members, 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.

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

### 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.
- 8<sup>th</sup> 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 team's 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 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 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 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

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.

### **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.