



# ELEMENTARY

## 2025-2026 HANDBOOK

### Office Hours

Monday - Friday  
7AM – 3:00PM

### School Day

Monday - Friday  
7:25AM – 2:15PM

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[vcsohio.org](http://vcsohio.org)

# Elementary Handbook

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## HANDBOOK STATEMENT

The purpose of the VCS Student-Parent Handbook is to communicate information essential for student success in every aspect of the school day. However, this handbook is not indicative of all of the philosophy and policies necessary to operate Valley Christian Schools. The VCS System-Wide Philosophy and Procedure Handbook is the document for all philosophy, policies, and procedures approved by the VCS school board.

## 1.0 FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

### 1.1 Statement of Faith

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).
3. We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4: 15, 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His Resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4), His Ascension to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11).

4. We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ, and that only by God's grace and through faith alone are we saved (John 3:16–19, 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8–9; Ephesians 2:8–10; Titus 3:5).
5. 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 condemnation (John 5:28–29).
6. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12–13, Galatians 3:26–28).
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13–14; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19–20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).
8. We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 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 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2–5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God's command is that there be no sexual intimacy outside of or apart from marriage between a man and a woman.
9. We believe that God wonderfully foreordained and immutably created each person as either male or female in conformity with their biological sex. These two distinct yet complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26–27).

Our Statement of Faith is not exhaustive of all of our beliefs. The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with absolute authority about the proper conduct of mankind and is the unchanging foundation for all beliefs and behavior. The ACSI Board of Directors holds final interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application about faith, doctrine, policy, practice, and discipline.

## 1.2 Mission Statement

Valley Christian School exists as a flourishing, Christ-centered education system to transform lives by loving more, expecting more, and being more.

## 1.3 Vision Statement

Valley Christian School will be the premier provider of education in Mahoning Valley.

## 1.4 Core Values

**Love More** through Christ-centered relationships.

**Expect More** through accountability and personal growth.

**Be More** through life transformation and service to others.

## 1.5 Expected Student Outcomes

At VCS students will demonstrate the following Expected Student Outcomes:

### Spiritual Growth

At Valley Christian Schools students will LOVE MORE by utilizing their VCS experience with God's transformational love to exert positive spiritual influence with others in their peer groups, families, churches, and communities.

- Students will know Jesus as their Lord and Savior by having clear opportunities to receive Christ annually.
- Students will grow spiritually through bible classes, chapels, and at least one spiritual development event annually.
- Students will demonstrate service to others by participating in school-wide service learning projects annually.

### Academic Growth

At Valley Christian Schools, students will EXPECT MORE from themselves by successfully navigating a rigorous, high-quality, standards-aligned, faith-integrated academic curriculum focused on achievement and readiness for college, career, and life calling.

- Students will graduate at a 4-year rate of 100% (excluding students exempt from meeting graduation requirements because of an IEP).
- Students will show a minimum of one-year annual growth in core subject areas through formative assessments, summative assessments, standardized assessments, and individual student goals.
- Students will be equipped to make wise, life-defining choices regarding their individual college, career, and life calling.

### Personal Growth

At Valley Christian Schools students will BE MORE by demonstrating respect for God, others, and themselves, demonstrating empathy for the needs of others, and demonstrating social-emotional skills necessary to mature into men and women conformed to Christ's image.

- Students will grow socially and emotionally by participating in social-emotional growth activities annually.
- Students will appreciate and thrive in culturally and racially diverse environments.
- Students will be considerate of others with different viewpoints and perspectives on life.

## 1.6 Conflict Resolution

It is inevitable that conflicts will arise from time to time among employees, students, parents, and any combination of the above. While each case is unique, and not all cases can be handled the exact

same way, listed below are some general guidelines for handling conflict in a way that is constructive and satisfying to the parties involved. (Matt. 18, Matt. 5)

#### Student-Parent/Teacher Conflicts

Students or parents who have a concern over what they believe a teacher has said or done should always contact the teacher directly for an appointment at a time when sufficient time is available to adequately discuss the matter.

Should a one-on-one conference with the teacher fail to resolve an issue, a parent or student may request that the building Principal become involved.

#### Parent/Administrator Conflicts

All efforts to resolve conflicts should be handled first at the teacher level or if needed at the principal level. Should a parent not be satisfied with the outcome of a meeting with the building principal, the building principal will arrange a meeting for the President to meet with the parent and building principal.

### **1.7 Non-Discrimination Policy**

#### Non-Discrimination Policy

Valley Christian School does not exclude, deny services to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sex, color, disability, age or ancestry in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services and benefits under any of its programs and activities, whether carried out by Valley Christian School directly or through a contractor or any other entity with which Valley Christian School arranges to carry out its programs and activities.

#### Racial Non-Discrimination Policy

The governing board of Valley Christian School located at 3919 Southern Blvd. in Youngstown, Ohio 44512 has adopted the following racial nondiscriminatory policies. Valley Christian School recruits and admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Valley Christian School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

### **1.8 VCS School and Family Covenant**

By enrolling your child in Valley Christian School you are choosing to enter into a Covenant Relationship with the school and its administration in fulfilling our mission to "Love More, Expect

More, and Be More". This covenant between you and the school is built on trust and open communication to ensure your child is getting the full educational and discipleship experience offered by Valley Christian School. A covenant requires a full understanding and commitment by both the school and the family (parent, guardian and student) of and to the following:

Valley Christian School Promises to:

- Provide an environment of Christ-centered unconditional love, healthy and biblically based expectations, and setting ambitious goals academically and personally that are consistent with our school mission.
- Disciple students to:
  - Apply a Christian worldview that helps them confidently share their faith and guide future decisions through the application of God's truth.
  - Develop a relationship with God through Jesus Christ that leads to a Biblically based, purpose filled life that is rooted in their identity in Christ.
  - Exhibit the Fruit of the Spirit in the discipleship process by emphasizing the value of Godly character.
  - Demonstrate the love of Christ for all people in all areas through biblical honor.
- Provide the highest quality academic experience possible by employing cutting edge technology, rigorous curriculum and qualified, caring educators.
- Communicate as effectively as possible in matters related to your child and the school.

Parent/Guardian Promises to:

- Partner with VCS in the mission of "Love More, Expect More, Be More" through love, healthy expectations, and goals in home life.
- Value the;
  - Foundation of God's Word (the Bible) in the education and growth of my child.
  - Essential decision for my child to find their identity in Christ and grow as a Christian.
  - Importance of Godly character as a result of our faith in God and the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - Consistent demonstration of love for others in all areas in accordance with God's command to "honor all people".
- Read, support and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Support your child's growth through supporting your child's teachers, attending appropriate conferences and extra/co-curricular activities, and consistently praying for your child and VCS.
- Keep open lines of communication with your child's teacher and school administration.
- Meet all financial obligations with the school.
- Support the premise that your child will be taught from the perspective provided in our statements of belief. (Refer to the Statement of Faith located in Section 1.0)



#### Student Promises to:

- Learn and apply God's Word to my life. ("Truth leads")
- Be open to a relationship with God through His grace that defines my value and worth and results in salvation and eternal identity. ("Identity in Christ")
- Recognize that Godly character as defined by the Bible is a result of imitating Christ and should result in giving my best in every area. ("Character Matters")
- Respect others based on God's Word in loving my peers, friends, family, and authority and should result in showing mercy and grace to one another. ("Honor lifts")

This covenant does not list all of the policies, procedures and expectations of Valley Christian School, therefore Parents, Guardians and Students are expected to review the Student/Parent Handbook on an annual basis.

Valley Christian School is a Chartered (Ohio Department of Education) Non Public (private school) accredited with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Enrollment is not a right but a choice by your family and the school to enter into relationship. By enrolling your child in Valley Christian School you expressly waive your right to FAPE (Free Access to Public Education). Valley Christian School agrees to maintain compliance with the Operating Standards for Ohio Department of Education and the accreditation standards of ACSI.

Trust is an essential element of any relationship and although all parties may strive to meet their expectations and obligations (as outlined in this covenant and the Parent/Student Handbook) even the best human efforts fail. Therefore, we must strive always to trust each other and assume good intentions when dealing with missed expectations.

## **2.0 ARRIVAL AND PICKUP**

The school day begins at 7:24 a.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. All elementary school students (including bus riders) will enter the building through the south entrance. Car riders will be able to be picked up at the south entrance after school lets out.

Students should be picked up on time after school, or after extracurricular activities. Students may not remain in the school building outside of school hours unless they are participating in a school related activity immediately following the school day (i.e., sports or ACDEC). Students are not permitted to stay after school if they have a practice or game that will be happening later that evening. Valley Christian will not be held responsible for supervising students in the building outside of the previously mentioned situations.

### 3.0 ATTENDANCE POLICY

At Valley Christian, we believe that attendance and learning are directly related. Therefore, we emphasize student attendance to foster success in their educational endeavors. We believe student attendance is the parent's/guardian's responsibility, and student absences should be minimal. It is the student's responsibility to contact teachers for missing assignments, tests, and other information when they are absent. Valley Christian Schools may utilize the Mahoning County Juvenile Court's Early Warning System for attendance referrals.

The following interventions will occur as students accumulate excused and unexcused absence hours.

- After 32.5 hours (5 Days) of absences, the Dean of Students or other administrator will contact the parent
- After 65 hours (10 Days) of absences, the parent must meet with building administrators.
- If the school's efforts do not result in improved attendance, a student may be required to withdraw from school after 65 hours (10 days) of absences in a semester or 130 hours (20 days) of absences in a school year

The administration reserves the right to request a meeting about attendance at thresholds not listed above. If a parent does not attend an attendance intervention meeting, the student will be withdrawn from VCS.

A student's excessive absence may warrant loss of privileges to make up work for full credit, denial of promotion, loss of academic credit, intervention plans, restricted privilege, and/or court action

Students are not permitted to attend after school extracurricular activities if they were absent during the day.

#### 3.1 Reporting an Absence or Tardy

If a student is absent or tardy it is expected that the parent/guardian of the student will contact the school office and inform them of the reason for the absence or tardy by 8:00am.

If you leave a message, please clearly state the following:

- Parent/Guardian Name
- Child's name and grade
- Date of the absence or tardy
- Reason for the absence or tardy
- Approximate time of return to school

### 3.2 Excused Absences

Students must provide a note to the office from a parent or guardian within 24 hours of returning to school after an absence. Doctors' excuses are required to excuse three or more consecutive absences.

The following situations are examples of excused absences as identified by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE):

- Illness with a doctor's note (must include the physician's name, phone number, and specific dates of illness to be excused from school)
- Illness inside the immediate family with limitations (i.e., stomach flu)
- Family death (3-day period, in certain cases, an extended period of time may be approved).
- Medical appointment with a medical excuse
- College visitation with proper verification
- An emergency or set of circumstances deemed as sufficient cause by the Principal

For all other absences, parents/guardians will be able to write excuses for their child's absence in situations related to those mentioned above. The parent or guardian must provide an explanation for the absence by email, written note, or phone call to the school office and shall include the date and time of the absence. All must turn in written notifications (both medical and familial) for absences into the attendance office **within 1 day of the absence**.

### 3.3 Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence is any absence not defined as excused in section 3.2.

### 3.4 Planned Absences

When a student's absence is known ahead of time, it is the responsibility of the parent and student to complete a "Planned Absence Application Form". Forms must be picked up in the school office and returned at least one week in advance of the planned absence. Any major assignments such as special projects or term papers must be submitted to the teacher before the absence. Tests or examinations due during the period of absence will be administered immediately after the absence.

Planned absences must not exceed five days per school year, except when approved by the Principal. **Students who are designated as Excessively Absent or more will not be approved.** Students must take the initiative in making the necessary arrangements to complete missed assignments or assessments. Teachers are not required to give additional aid or to notify students of assignments or assessments they will miss.

### 3.5 Tardiness

Students are expected to be in their classroom at this time at the start of the school day. Arriving late to school not only deprives the student of classroom instruction, it is a disruption to the class that is already in progress. Students must be sitting in their seat in their homeroom class when the bell rings or they will be considered tardy and must sign in at the appropriate office. Students arriving at the start of 5th period or later will be counted ½ day absent.

The school administration will make the final decision whether a tardy is excused or unexcused. The following situations are examples of excused tardiness:

- Medical appointment accompanied by documentation from the doctor's office
- Inclement weather
- An emergency or set of circumstances, which in the judgment of the principal, constitutes a sufficient cause for tardiness.
- Any situations denoted on the excused absence list

#### Consequences for Unexcused Tardies:

- **Fourth Unexcused Tardy:** Parent or guardian of the student will be notified of the student's tardy status. The importance of school attendance and timely arrival will be communicated.
- **Five or More Unexcused Tardies :** The parent or guardian of the student will be contacted by building administration. Building tardy consequences will be initiated.
- **Ten or More Unexcused Tardies:** The parent or guardian will be required to meet with the building principal. The student will be placed on attendance probation which may affect the student's ability to participate in after-school activities, affect re-enrollment for the following school year, or result in dismissal from the school.

### 3.6 Early Release

VCS strongly discourages early dismissal of students from class. If at all possible, doctor's appointments should be made before or after school hours to minimize disruptions in the student's school day. Parents who permit students to leave school prior to the end of the school day must send a note to the appropriate school office before the start of school. The note should indicate the date, time of departure, time of expected return (if applicable), destination, and the reason for leaving school. Students must sign out at the appropriate office, and students will only be released to individuals listed as an emergency contact.

If a parent or guardian calls to have a student released early, the student will not be released from class until the parent or guardian arrives at school. Early dismissals will be tracked and building administrators may initiate student consequences for frequent incidences of early dismissal.

Students will not be released during the 30 minutes preceding dismissal. If students need early dismissal, they must be picked up at least 30 minutes prior to dismissal

### 3.7 EdChoice Scholarship Attendance Requirements

If a student exceeds more than 20 days (130 hours) of unexcused absences, they will forfeit their EdChoice Scholarship.

## 4.0 SCHOOL HEALTH POLICY

VCS employs adequate nursing staff to meet the needs of each campus. Their primary responsibility is to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all students and staff. They do not serve as a replacement for a family physician, but are available to you as a resource for direction involving medical issues affecting a student.

### 4.1 Clinic

Students who become ill at school are sent to the clinic with a pass. If an emergency medical authorization form with signed permission to treat is not completed, VCS is not permitted to offer treatment to the student. The student can rest in the clinic for only a brief period. If the student cannot return to class, the school nurse or the office will be requested to call the parent or emergency number so the student can go home. **A student may not make arrangements to go home.** The office will dismiss the student and they must sign out of the office before leaving.

No student shall knowingly be sent to school suffering from a communicable disease. Any infectious student shall be immediately removed from class, and arrangements shall be made for his return home. The student must be fever and vomit-free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medications) before coming back to school.

### 4.2 Immunizations and Exemptions

By Ohio Department of Health and Title XXXIII [33] Education Chapter 3313.367 and 3701.13 Boards of Education, all children entering school are required to have up-to date immunizations. Kindergarten entrance requires a hearing and vision screen. A physician's certificate or school health record, with actual dates of immunization, is the only acceptable document of identification.

According to Section 3313.671, **Students who are not current with their immunizations will not be allowed to begin classes on the first day of the new school year until this document is provided or a waiver is obtained.**

### 4.3 Policies

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school nurse of any changes in their child's health status, especially allergic reactions, medication, asthma, etc. Refer to the health policy in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete health policies.

## 4.4 Contagious Conditions

Refer to the health policy in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete list of contagious conditions policies.

### Cold/Cough Symptoms

If a student is experiencing discomfort that would interfere with his/her school performance, it is requested that the student be kept at home until he/she is able to resume normal activity. If there is a prolonged cough with or without a fever a physician should be consulted. A student also may be sent home or asked to remain at home if there is a purulent or discolored nasal discharge. The student is permitted to return after the nasal discharge becomes clear.

### Conjunctivitis (Pink-Eye)

This condition is easily spread by direct contact with discharge from the affected eye(s). Students should be kept home when eyes are inflamed and draining. Prescribed treatment is normally antibiotics. A physician will indicate when it is appropriate for the student to return to school. A physician's note is required for readmission as proof of treatment.

### Fever

If a student's temperature is 100 degrees or higher, it is Valley Christian School's policy the student remains at home until he/she is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The student must be accompanied with a signed note from the parent/guardian stating that the student has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. If the student's temperature is 100 degrees or higher while at school, it is school policy that someone MUST come to pick up the student. This is a safety measure for the student with the fever and the other students as well. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, it is of the utmost importance that no child is sent to school with a fever.

### Head Lice (Pediculosis)

Head lice continues to be one of the most prevalent communicable childhood conditions among school age children. Once detected the student may not return to school until after treatment and the nit removal. It is recommended that the school nurse be contacted for advice on treatment. The student must be checked by the school nurse prior to readmission.

### Bed Bugs

If a student is found to have bed bugs on their person, they will discretely be removed from class and taken to the school clinic. The school nurse will follow the protocol listed below with complete discretion:

- Check student's clothing and belongings
- Non-essential items should be stored in a sealed plastic container for the day and overnight if possible.
- Contact the student's parents

- Ask the parents to send a clean set of clothes in a sealed plastic bag for the school to keep in case another bug is found on them.
- Send bed bug information home
- Student will not be excluded from school
- School custodian will clean and sanitize the classroom and locker

#### Sore Throat/ Strep Throat

A sore throat in conjunction with swollen glands may indicate strep throat. A fever is not always present with strep throat. Other symptoms may include a headache and/or upset stomach. A student with strep throat must be under the care of a physician and may return to school after twenty-four hours of antibiotic therapy.

#### Vomiting/ Diarrhea

A child with vomiting and/or diarrhea should be kept at home until symptoms have subsided, and the child is able to keep down food or liquid. If the child throws up during the night or in the morning prior to school, the student should NOT come to school.

### **4.5 Missing School for Illness**

If a student is sent home from school due to fever, vomiting/diarrhea, they MAY NOT be in school the next day. Please contact the school office the day after the student was sent home to record his/her absence.

### **4.6 Student Illness while in School**

The nurse will determine if a student is too ill to remain at school. If this happens, a parent or guardian will be contacted and arrangements to pick up his/her child should occur **within one hour**. If the student is not picked up within a reasonable amount of time or the parent fails to make arrangements with the nurse, the student will not be able to return to school until the parent has a meeting with the Principal to discuss the situation.

### **4.7 Returning to School after Illness**

A note must accompany the student when returning to school after an illness. Please contact the office if there are any questions concerning illness days.

## **5.0 ACADEMICS**

### **5.1 Elementary Grading Scale**

#### Grading Scale Key

- **4 = Exceeding Grade Level Standard:** Demonstrates advanced level of knowledge and understanding.
- **3 = Meeting Standard:** Demonstrates solid knowledge and understanding,

- **2 = Approaching Standard:** Demonstrates progress toward grade level standard, but not yet at standard. Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding.
- **1 = Well Below Standard:** Not meeting grade level Standard
- **Blank** = Not Yet Introduced

## 5.2 Conferences

Parent/teacher conference days are arranged twice per year. Appointments must be made with the teacher for appointments held outside of the two scheduled days. Parents may also communicate with their child's teacher via email.

Questions regarding discipline, homework, other assignments, grades, and other student/teacher activities should first be shared with the teacher. If the issue is not resolved, the teacher, parent, or student may request a meeting with the building Principal.

## 5.3 Notification of Unsatisfactory Progress

Teachers may notify families at any time regarding unsatisfactory progress in the areas of academics, behavior, and attendance.

## 5.4 Philosophy of Retention

The only students who are considered for retention are those who have not had access to the curriculum because of:

- Excessive absence (more than 10% of the required attendance days)
- Achievement well below grade level expectations in the majority of the assessed standards in reading and math unless the building principal and the teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level
- Performance that is consistently well below grade level expectations on systemwide standardized assessments in reading and math.

## 5.5 Experimental Programs

It is the position of VCS not to engage in experimental or research programs which require deviation from the prescribed courses of study, the usual operation of the school, or which tend to deviate from the purpose, philosophy, and objectives of the school.

## 5.6 Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is any type of cheating that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise. It can include plagiarism, fabrication, deception, cheating, or sabotage. Using a person's work or ideas without giving credit is academically dishonest. Lying, cheating, or using unauthorized materials to prepare or use during a test also constitute academic dishonesty.



Teachers at Valley Christian Schools set and maintain high expectations for Academic Honesty in the classroom. The classroom teacher is also responsible for using his/her professional judgment to determine whether a student has acted Academically Dishonest. Academic Dishonesty (See 9.2 Progressive Discipline Policy)

## **5.7 Homework**

Valley Christian adheres to the 10 minutes per grade level guideline when assigning homework for grade bands. For example, students in grade 3 may be assigned up to 30 minutes of homework. Students at the high school campus can expect three to four days per week, not to exceed 90 total minutes a day. Students who fail to submit homework assignments will be required to complete the assignment during a designated time during the school day. This could include completing assignments during a working lunch period.

## **5.8 Books and Supplies**

The school provides textbooks and workbooks. Students are required to return these items in good condition. A list of school supplies is provided and is available on the VCS website, at both school offices, and in various stores throughout the valley.

# **6.0 SPECIAL AND GIFTED EDUCATION**

Please refer to the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete special and gifted education philosophy and policy.

## **6.1 Services Provided**

Valley Christian Schools provides the following direct special education services:

- Intervention Services in reading, writing, and mathematics
- Intervention Services for minor behaviors
- Transition Services

Valley Christian Schools also subcontracts with various service providers to facilitate the following school-based special education therapies/services:

- Occupational Therapy
- Speech screening, consultation, and therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Orientation and Mobility Services
- Teacher of the Visually Impaired

Valley Christian Schools provides the following direct gifted and gifted potential education services:

- Pull out and push in gifted intervention services in reading and math (grades K-8)
- Accelerated classes (grades 6-8)

- Honors, CCP, and AP classes (grades 9-12)

## **6.2 Termination of Services**

VCS will terminate a student's services under the following two circumstances.

### **Inability of VCS to Provide Appropriate Services**

While it is the goal of VCS to collaborate to provide all necessary services, if the special education team does not believe that VCS has the resources to serve a student, the team will recommend placement to meet the student needs. The decision of VCS in these matters is final. VCS will work collaboratively with the student's parent or guardian to facilitate a successful transition to the school or provider chosen by the parent.

### **Non-Compliance with VCS Discipline Expectations**

A student's services may be terminated if they fail to comply with the VCS expectations for appropriate behavior as indicated in the School Wide Discipline system. While VCS makes every effort to take a student's disability into consideration when applying disciplinary measures, the school reserves the right to determine whether a student's disability impacts their behavior. Note that parents and guardians voluntarily waive FAPE by participating in the Jon Peterson scholarship and enrolling in a non-public school.

## **7.0 SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE & DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

### **7.1 Student Code of Conduct**

The Kingdom culture of VCS aims to create an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. We accomplish this through two of our four Spiritual Values: "Character Matters" and "Honor Lifts". The Staff will seek to teach and reinforce these values through behavior expectations individually and as a school community.

#### Character Matters

- Be responsible and ready to learn
- Be prepared and arrive to class on time
- Give your best effort and work hard
- Grow in the "Fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23)

#### Honor Lifts

- Respect teachers and other adults
- Respect fellow classmates
- Follow rules with a good attitude
- Speak with kind words

## 7.2 School-Wide Discipline

School-wide discipline seeks to ensure that the school culture and environment are safe and conducive to learning for all students. School-wide discipline will be applied consistently to all students.

Those students who do not demonstrate progress after a sustained period of intervention may be asked to withdraw from Valley Christian Schools.

## 7.3 Progressive Discipline Policy

Student misbehaviors are categorized into levels that progress from minor to severe. Each level increases the consequence and support provided.

Consequences will be confidential and only discussed with appropriate VCS staff, the custodial parent/guardian, and student. Additionally, VCS cannot disclose or discuss consequences for other students. Administrators have the right to exercise appropriate consequences on a case-by-case basis according to their discretion.

Attending VCS is a privilege and not a right. Therefore, matters that come to the attention of VCS from outside of school may be dealt with at the discretion of the administration and impact a student's enrollment status at VCS. Students not adhering to the Student Code of Conduct may be asked to leave if progress is not made through development and support.

## 7.4 Elementary Disciplinary Levels and Consequences

### **Level 1**

These minor behaviors are when a student fails to meet classroom expectations and/or the school's cultural expectations. These behaviors do not cause significant disruption to themselves or others yet are still a distraction or an act of defiance in some fashion.

**Examples may include** but are not limited to:

- Dress code violation
- Classroom rules violation
- Misuse of cell phone
- Horseplay, minor shoving/pushing
- Minor disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate cursing or foul language
- Lying/cheating
- Inappropriate use of school property or material
- Non-compliance

**Level 2**

These are moderately severe or minor chronic behaviors that persist despite receiving warnings or appropriate consequences.

**Examples may include** but are not limited to:

- Repeated level 1 behaviors
- Major pushing/shoving (physical injury)
- Disrespect/insubordination
- Theft
- Major classroom disruption

**Level 3**

These are behaviors that may result in a greater level of defiance or threat of safety to the student body or staff in a way that disrupts the learning environment.

**Examples may include** but are not limited to:

- Repeated level 2 behaviors
- Threat
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Damaging school property
- Immoral conduct
- Weapons on school property
- Other severe/destructive behaviors

Consequences for behaviors may include demerits, lunch detention, Saturday school, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion.

**7.5 Possible Behavior Consequence Definitions**

Refer to the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete list of possible behavior consequences and definitions

**Any student placed on suspension, whether in-school or out, relinquishes his/her right to participate in or be a spectator at any school event for the duration of the suspension.**

Coaches and school administration reserve the right to impose further disciplinary consequences beyond the period of suspension.

Students who are no longer eligible for enrollment at VCS may be restricted from attending VCS events for a period of time.

## 7.6 VCS School-wide Development Supports

VCS school administration, support personnel, and faculty will use the tiered support system to work with students, both in small groups and one-on-one, to increase positive behaviors and attitudes toward school and learning and to help students develop positive relationships with peers, teachers, and staff. Refer to the VCS School-wide Development Supports section in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the tiered chart of supports.

## 7.7 Anti-Bullying Policy

Valley Christian Schools is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. This policy aims to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) behavior, ensuring the well-being and academic success of our students. Refer to the District-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete Anti-Bullying Policy

### Definition:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in accordance with ORC 3313.666, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts (i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device), either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward another student(s) with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include the following:

- An imbalance of Power: those who bully use their power; such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically, attacking someone verbally, and excluding someone on purpose with intent to harm emotions.

There are three types of bullying:

1. Verbal Bullying: saying or writing harmful things. This includes but not limited to:
  - Teasing
  - Name Calling
  - Inappropriate sexual comments
  - Taunting
  - Threatening to cause harm

2. Social/Cyber Bullying: Sometimes referred to as relational bullying, social bullying involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships on campus and off. This includes but not limited to:
  - Leaving someone out on purpose
  - Telling other peers false statements regarding a person or persons
  - Spreading rumors
  - Using social media platforms to attack, spread rumors, induce fear or panic, and or intent to cause someone to self-harm via peer pressure. Social media platforms are not limited to the following: SnapChat, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Messenger, WeChat, QQ, telegram, Douyin, Reddit, Discord, LINE, Stack Exchange, Twitch, Likee, Picsart, and Tieba.
3. Physical Bullying: Involved hurting a person's body or possessions. This includes but not limited to:
  - Hitting/Kicking/Pinching
  - Spitting
  - Tripping/Pushing
  - Taking or breaking someone's personal belongings
  - Making mean or rude hand gestures
  - Intimidating someone by purposefully following them around and or making someone feel fearful.

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, all outside threats will be handled in the appropriate fashion

Valley Christian Schools will not tolerate bullying and is committed to working toward a safe place for all people physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.

Procedures for Reporting:

1. Any suspicions and/or evidence of bullying of any kind should be immediately brought to the attention of the administration or the school counselor.
2. Valley Christian Schools promotes two options to anonymously report information. a. Local Tip Line - Youngstown Police Department Non Emergency Number 330-747-7911 b. State Tip Line - Ohio State Tip Line Number 844-723-3764
3. School personnel must promptly report any prohibited incidents they become aware of to the school principal or another administrator designated by the principal.

Prevention of Retaliation:

Retaliation against individuals who report HIB incidents in good faith is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

#### Disciplinary Procedures:

Any student or school personnel found guilty of harassing, intimidating, or bullying others will face disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to counseling, detention, suspension, or expulsion, in accordance with the VCS disciplinary policies. Disciplinary procedures will be fair and consistent, taking into account the severity and frequency of the behavior, the age and maturity of the student(s) involved, and any applicable legal requirements.

#### False Reports:

Making deliberately false reports of HIB incidents is a serious offense. Valley Christian Schools will respond promptly to such incidents and take appropriate disciplinary action.

### **7.8 Confiscation of Possessions**

Students who bring inappropriate materials or items to school which tend to deviate from the normal course of study may have them confiscated. The parent or guardian will be contacted.

### **7.9 Weapons Policy**

Valley Christian School considers student possession of, use of, or threats of use of weapons as a serious offense and will not tolerate such by anyone enrolled as a student on school property or at school events. Statements made by a student claiming or boasting of a weapon at school or at school events will be dealt with in the same manner as a "threat".

Students who possess a weapon or who carry, exhibit, display, draw or threaten the use of any of these items apparently capable of producing bodily harm in a manner which manifests intent to intimidate another or warrants alarm for the safety of others shall be subject to discipline up to and, including expulsion. At any point, VCS administration may contact local law enforcement authorities.

A 'weapon' includes, but is not limited to: A firearm, which is a weapon or device from which a projectile may be fired by an explosive; An air gun, which includes any air pistol or air rifle, designed to propel a BB or pellet; Any knife, cutting, or stabbing instrument with a sharp blade set in a handle; Stun gun; Slingshot; Any explosive device including fireworks/poppers. These items may not be kept on school property, including but not limited to, lockers, backpacks, bags, and vehicles, etc.

Any suspicions and/or evidence of threats of any kind should be immediately brought to the attention of administration or the school counselor. Refer to the weapons policy section in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete Weapons Policy

### **7.10 Threat Assessment Policy**

The VCS Threat Assessment Policy outlines protocol to maintain the safety of the school community in the event a threat of harm is communicated toward the school, member(s) of the VCS staff, or member(s) of the VCS student body.

If there is a perceived threat of immediate danger, law enforcement should be contacted immediately.

Any staff member or student who receives communication from an individual that is perceived to be a threat of harm toward the school, staff, or students should contact the building Principal. For the purpose of this policy, communication is defined as face-to face communication, communication that occurs on a social media platform, telephone communication (verbal or text), and communication in the form of handwritten notes that is not perceived as immediate danger. If the communication is perceived as an immediate threat, law enforcement should be contacted immediately.

Refer to the threat assessment policy section in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete threat assessment policy

## 8.0 SCHOOL DRESS CODE

All uniform shirts are purchased by visiting the VCS website at [vcsohio.org](http://vcsohio.org) > Parent Resources Tab > School Uniforms Order.

### 8.1 General Guidelines for All Students

The following guidelines describe a set of standards governing general appearance, including grooming, and the uniform dress code. We consider modesty to be a guiding principle for student appearance both during the school day and at all VCS events on or off campus.

Students deemed to be out of compliance with the dress code that cannot be corrected (i.e., removal of hoodie) will be sent to the office to call home. Non-compliance will result in a loss of privileges.

All clothing items must be size appropriate. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of specific clothing, hairstyles, jewelry, etc.

Grades K-2 School Uniform	
Type	Dress Code Stipulations
Personal Grooming	<p><b>Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hair should be neat, clean and out of the student's eyes.</li><li>• Fingernails must be of appropriate length (no artificial nails)</li></ul> <p><b>Not permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hairstyle may not be offensive, radical (i.e., unnatural hair color, mohawks, etc.), designed to be distracting, or draw attention.</li><li>• Body piercings (boys and girls)</li><li>• Vulgar or offensive visible tattoos</li></ul>



<b>Tops</b>	<p><b>Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students must wear VCS polo shirts</li> <li>• Polo shirts must not be longer than 3"past the beltline.</li> <li>• Layering of shirts is permitted if all layers are school permitted colors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Plain dress sweaters that are solid blue, black, white or gray with no designs or patterns.</li> <li>◦ VCS Track jackets worn over top of VCS polo shirt</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Undershirts or turtlenecks may be worn if solid gray, black, blue, yellow, or white</li> <li>• Undergarments must not be visible through the uniform shirt</li> </ul> <p><b>Not permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweatshirts of any type</li> <li>• Hoodies</li> <li>• Other athletic wear (crew neck sweater, warm-ups, hooded jacket, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Bottoms</b>	<p><b>Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid colored, traditional uniform style slacks are required and must be black, navy blue or khaki beige.</li> <li>• Uniform style jumpers, skirts or skorts are permitted (girls only) no higher than 2 inches above the knee</li> </ul> <p><b>Not Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweats are not permitted.</li> <li>• Cargo pants are not permitted.</li> <li>• Jeans or denim material</li> </ul> <p>Uniform shorts may be worn any day that the outside temperature reaches over 70 degrees.</p>
<b>Shoes</b>	<p><b>Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dress shoes must be black, tan, gray, or brown.</li> <li>• Solid colored boots that are mid-calf or below may be worn (black, gray, blue, white, or brown)</li> <li>• Snow boots may be worn to and from school (student must change into dress code appropriate shoes for the entire school day)</li> <li>• Any athletic shoes</li> <li>• Heels should not exceed 1 inch</li> <li>• Shoes must cover all toes</li> <li>• Socks or stockings must be worn with shoes at all times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Not Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heely shoes</li> <li>• Boots above the mid-calf</li> <li>• Moccasins, open sandals, slippers, Uggs, shower shoes,</li> <li>• Crocs, or flip-flops.</li> <li>• Shoes without backs.</li> </ul>

<b>Accessories</b>	<p><b>Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boys must wear black, navy blue or brown belts if pants are not elastic.</li> <li>Cloth belts are permitted.</li> <li>Boys may wear clear or small stud earrings only</li> <li>Backpacks must be kept on hooks in the classroom or hallways.</li> </ul> <p><b>Not Permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All facial piercings (i.e., nose, tongue, cheek, etc.), gauges, hoops, and makeup for boys</li> <li>Backpack or large purses</li> <li>Facial (i.e., nose, tongue, cheek, etc.) piercings for girls</li> <li>Bandanas</li> </ul>
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## 8.2 Theme Wear Days

Theme wear days are specifically assigned days throughout the school year when students are permitted to wear theme related clothing. Each theme wear day will be approved by administration. It is our goal to have spirit days each week during athletic seasons to support our athletic teams. This will be a designated day during the school week determined by the administration to support an athletic team's function. See theme wear guidelines for a list of appropriate attire.

Permitted:

- Jeans (without cuts, or holes)
- Any VCS apparel sold in our team store or given by an athletic department

Not permitted:

- Leggings, jeggings, yoga pants, sweatpants, flip-flops

## 8.3 Attire for Special Events

Formal wear is required for specific events, banquets, and dances on and off campus. The following are examples of appropriate attire for banquets and formals.

Banquet attire (i.e. athletic or academic banquets, concerts)

- Male students can wear dress shirts, collared shirts, dress sweaters, dress pants or uniform pants
- Female students can wear dress shirts/blouses, sweaters, dress pants or dresses. All dresses must be no shorter than 2 inches from the knee.

The following will not be permitted at school or for school-related functions.

- Clothing with explicit content on it
- Revealing clothing
  - Low cut dresses, cleavage showing

- Back more than half uncovered
- Hemline or slit more than two inches higher than top of kneecap
- Inappropriately tight dresses
- Midriff showing

## **9.0 PERSONAL ELECTRONICS POLICY**

VCS will strictly enforce the following electronic device policies.

If a parent needs to reach a student while school is in session, they must call the main office. We ask that parents only call students in emergency situations. The school assumes no responsibility or liability if personal electronic devices are broken, lost or stolen, whether in the possession of students or if confiscated by school personnel.

Examples of personal electronic devices include cell phones, tablets, smart watches, bluetooth headphones/earbuds, and other smart devices.

### **9.1 Elementary Procedures**

Devices must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack. The school assumes no responsibility or liability if personal electronic devices are broken, lost or stolen, whether in the possession of students or if confiscated by school personnel.

### **9.2 Refusal to Turn Over Devices When Requested**

Students are required to turn electronic communication devices over to school personnel when requested. Students who refuse to do so shall be subject to disciplinary action for a Level Three offense.

### **9.3 Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to medically-required electronic communication devices such as hearing aids and augmentative speech aids or to any electronic device which is mandated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.

### **9.4 Nuisance and/or Hazardous Items**

Items that disrupt or interfere with learning are prohibited during school. These include but are not limited to lasers, digital recorders, and media players. Students who bring inappropriate materials or items to school may have them confiscated. The parent or guardian will be contacted.

## 10.0 TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND AGREEMENT

Refer to the technology policy and agreement in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete list of technology policies.

### 10.1 Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Activities that are permitted and encouraged include but are not limited to the following:

- Investigation of topics and content assigned in school to provide educational enrichment
- Investigation of topics and opportunities outside of school related to employment, community resources, or further education
- Idea sharing with other VCS students, faculty, and staff.
- File sharing related to class activities and/or assignments (not including cheating or plagiarizing electronic content)

### 10.2 Prohibited Uses

Any attempt to log onto the Internet or the school's network/system as a systems administrator may result in a loss of user privileges at the school. Any user identified as a security risk by the school administration or teacher due to a history of actual or suspected unauthorized access to other computer(s), network(s), or system(s), may be denied access to school's computers, networks, and/or systems.

Activities that are not permitted include but are not limited to the following:

- Going live on social media on any school-issued computer at any time
- Sharing accounts, passwords, or assigned Chromebook with anyone
  - Students will change their passwords at the beginning of each school year and passwords are shared with the teacher
- Sharing of personal information (address, phone number) about family, friends, yourself, or anyone else
- Unauthorized access to other school computers, networks, and information systems
- Downloading, installation, and use of games, audio files, video files, or other applications (including shareware or freeware) without permission or approval of the Building Principal
- Personal gain, commercial solicitation and compensation of any kind
- Hacking, cracking, vandalizing, the introduction of viruses, worms, Trojan horses, time bombs and changes to hardware, software, and monitoring tools
- Support or opposition for ballot measures, candidates or any other political activity
- Cyberbullying, hate mail, defamation, harassment of any kind, discriminatory jokes and remarks which include all social media account
- Any use that violates or encourages others to violate the law
- Information posted, sent, or stored online that could endanger others (e.g. bomb construction, drug manufacture)

- Accessing, uploading, downloading, storage and distribution of obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit material
- Interacting with any student or anyone else in any sexually explicit manner while on the VCS network
- Linking the VCS web page to a student's personal home page
- Attaching unauthorized equipment to the school network. Any such equipment will be confiscated and destroyed

Students are not permitted to use their own devices on the network. The contracted technology company will install any applications or provide VPN on any personal devices. Visitors to any campus may use the VCS guest Wi-Fi when applicable (Wireless@VCS!). Guests on the network are subject to all policies contained herein.

### 10.3 Device Care, Student/Parent Responsibility, and Damage Assessment Information

VCS students are responsible for the Chromebooks they are assigned each school year. Students are to immediately surrender Chromebooks whenever a teacher or administrator asks. Chromebooks are also to be surrendered when a student withdraws, is expelled, and at the end of each school year. Teachers and administrators will decide if a student will retain their Chromebook if suspended. If damage of any kind is sustained to the Chromebook, charger, or case students and parents are responsible for any costs incurred. Damage can be defined as but is not limited to physical damage, water damage, heat damage, cracked screens, damaged keyboards, damaged chargers, and ripped cases.

Whenever there is damage to a device (at any campus), the student or parent should notify the Technology Department within 24 hours of the damage. If a device is damaged in school, the Technology Department will notify parents within 24 hours or after the damage is accessed. Once the device comes back from repair, the Technology Department will inform parents Chromebooks, cases, and chargers that are damaged or are not returned in any mentioned scenario, will incur cost(s) based on the fees listed below:

Item	Fee/Repair Schedule
<b>Total Chromebook Replacement</b> (device is unable to be repaired) Newly Purchased Devices Older Devices	\$270.00 \$150.00
Cracked/Broken screen	\$85.00
Chromebook Keyboard Replacement (this does not include regular wear and tear)	\$45.00

Misc. Chromebook Repairs such as chipped devices, missing hinges, popped keys, and damaged ports	can range anywhere from \$20.00-\$50.00
Chromebook Charger Replacement (All device models)	\$20.00
Chromebook Case Replacement	\$10.00

#### **10.4 No Expectation of Privacy**

No student, faculty, or staff user should have any expectation of privacy when using the school's network. Valley Christian School reserves the right to disclose any electronic message to law enforcement officials or third parties as appropriate. All documents are subject to public records disclosure laws.

#### **10.5 Technology Acknowledgement and Agreement**

Parents are responsible for reviewing the entire VCS Technology Policy with his/her child(ren). Parents understand that Valley Christian School has made all reasonable attempts to provide a safe computing environment for students within the school's network.

Students and parents are responsible and accountable for the appropriate use of the Internet regardless of where they are, or when Internet access occurs.

By signing the signature page of the Valley Christian Parent-Student Handbook, both student(s) and parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are agreeing to follow the rules in the Technology Policy. You are also agreeing to report misuse of any computer or the network to any teacher or administrator. Misuse is described as any violation of this Policy or any other use not included in this Policy, but has the effect of harming another of his or her property.

### **11.0 ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

#### **11.1 Title I Services**

This statement is in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued pursuant to these statutes at Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 80, 84, and 91.

Valley Christian School provides tutoring and remedial services via the Federal Title I program. Students whose public-school district provides Title I services will receive appropriate services at

Valley Christian School. Students are identified based on academic risk, which may include any of the following factors:

- Classroom grades
- Parent or teacher recommendation
- Standardized test scores
- Need to remediate tests or exams

Title I services may be provided in the following forms:

- Remedial reading and mathematics instruction as a push-in or pull-out program
- After school tutoring and support
- Summer School

According to the Parent Right-to-Know (NCLB/ESEA, 1111(h) Act), parents of Title I students may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's Title I teachers.

## **11.2 School Counseling Services**

Valley Christian School employs a school counselor. The school counselor implements a pro-active, Christ centered social emotional program in grades K-8. The school counselor may meet with students for a limited number of times and provide referrals to outside counseling services. The school counselor also consults during the threat assessment process.

# **12.0 STUDENT LIFE**

## **12.1 Extra-Curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular activities are events not directly related to the classroom curriculum. These activities are generally associated with athletic activities, and usually involve competition with students from other schools. Participation in these activities may require an annual physical, as well as meeting attendance and academic grade requirements. If a parent or guardian refuses to permit a pre-participation physical evaluation, a form certifying this objection shall be signed by the parent or guardian and attached to the required parental consent forms. Details about these programs and events will be sent home to the parents throughout the year, or can be viewed at [www.vcsohio.org](http://www.vcsohio.org).

## **12.2 Extracurricular Fundraising Policy**

All coordinators or VCS stakeholders wishing to conduct fundraising activities must receive prior approval for their project/event from the building Principal by completing a Fundraising Planning & Goals Form. Refer to the extracurricular fundraising policy in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete list of fundraising policies.

### 12.3 Co-Curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities are events related to classroom subjects that normally occur outside of the classroom and may be related to competition with students from other schools, such as the Academic Decathlon. Participation requires meeting attendance and academic grade requirements. Students who qualify are encouraged to take part in co curricular activities.

Students in grades 9-12 who wish to seek a leadership position in student council, NHS, class officer, or any other co-curricular activity must meet the Minimum Credit Requirement Policy requirements. Furthermore, students may only hold the office of president for one co-curricular activity.

### 12.4 Sports

Valley Christian School participates in a planned program of sports with other schools through membership in the Ohio High School Athletic Association. The sports program may include football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, cheerleading, swimming, track, bowling, golf, wrestling, tennis and others as student interest dictates.

Eligibility for sports is determined by academic and behavioral standards. Students must meet the academic standards listed in Addendum A to participate, and exhibit conduct that exemplifies the Christian teachings of our school.

Refer to the Athletics Handbook for more information.

### 12.5 Field Trips

Field trips at Valley Christian School extend classroom learning and also reward students' classroom performance. All field trips are a privilege and have criteria students must meet to participate in the field trip.

Field Trip	Criteria that Prohibit Student Attendance
Extension of Classroom Learning	<b>Attendance:</b> 15 days absent <b>Behavior:</b> 20 demerits (10 for K-2) or a level 4 (level 3 for K-2) offense during the quarter of the field trip
Reward	<b>Attendance:</b> 15 days absent <b>Academics:</b> 2 or more F's in the previous quarter <b>Behavior:</b> 20 demerits (10 for K-2) or a level 4 (level 3 for K-2) offense during the quarter of the field trip,



## **13.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **13.1 Birthday Treats**

Parents/Guardians that wish to celebrate their child's birthday at school with a special treat must first seek permission from the building principal. Parents/Guardians must contact the principal, 24 hours ahead of time, via email or in writing, of the date that they would like to bring in the treat and what treat that they would like to bring. A treat can be a cupcake, cookie, or a non-food item. Treats must be approved, by the principal, due to student allergies and dietary restrictions. No other food items are accepted. Party decor, such as balloons and tableware is not permitted.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the principal once approval is given and provided with a time to drop off the birthday treat. Parents/Guardians are not able to stay for the celebration. Students will celebrate with their class at a time designated by the classroom teacher.

### **13.2 Confidentiality of Student Records**

In order to provide appropriate educational services and programming, Valley Christian School must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, Valley Christian School recognizes the need to safeguard students' privacy and restrict access to students' personally identifiable information. Refer to the Confidentiality of Students Records policy in the System-Wide Philosophy and Policy Handbook for the complete policy.

### **13.3 Emergency Closings**

If for any reason it becomes necessary to close VCS on short notice, the details will be sent by automated phone message, as well as the local television stations – WFMJ channel 21, WKBN, channel 27, and WYTV channel 33. Announcements will be made as early as possible during inclement weather. Please do not call the school to see if classes have been cancelled.

If a particular school district in which a student resides is closed for inclement weather conditions on a day when VCS remains open, and the student relies on provided bus transportation from that district, it is the parent's responsibility to make every effort, within reason, to assure that their child arrives at VCS safely. Bus students residing in districts that implement a two-hour delay, will be granted an excused tardy should the situation arise.

### **13.4 Field Trips**

Activities away from the normal classroom make up a vital part of the instructional program. Field trips, which tend to develop growth spiritually or academically, will be scheduled from time to time.

Students must submit the required permission forms from parents or guardians and have an Emergency Medical Authorization form on file to participate in these experiences. Related expenses, dates, times, and appropriate dress information will be given to parents for each activity. Parents may be asked to help with activities, furnish transportation, and serve as chaperones.

### **13.5 Fire and Safety Drills**

During the school year, fire, severe weather, environmental danger, and intruder evacuation drills will be held as required by law or as recommended by local agencies. The goal is for students and staff to be trained with the correct procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

### **13.6 Food Service Programs**

#### Purpose

The Valley Christian Schools Food Services Department provides nourishing meals to our students and helps fuel their learning in the classroom. The department operates as a self-funded entity, like any other business, and unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on the school. The intent of this policy is:

- To be transparent with our families on the school procedures for handling unpaid meal charges
- To establish policies that are age-appropriate for our students
- To encourage parent/guardian responsibility of meal payments and charges
- To outline the actions the school will take to implement and enforce the policy and collect outstanding debts

#### Purchasing and Payments

Every student has a meal account created during the enrollment process. Students use their Student ID number to access their account and make purchases in the cafeteria. Purchase restrictions must be arranged with the Food Services Dept. directly at 330-788-8088 ext. 1113. Money can be applied to a student's account electronically through the school website under student services. Cash or check may be sent in an envelope, marked with the student's name and ID number, to your student's cafeteria. Payments are applied to negative meal debt first, if applicable, and any additional funds will remain as a positive balance for future purchases.

#### Charging Meals (Negative Account Balances)

Meal charges in the cafeteria are to be made in emergency situations when a student has forgotten their lunch or money. Only complete meals can be charged; extras cannot be charged. Extra purchases are prohibited when an account has a negative balance. Charging meals is like using a credit card. Meals can be charged to a meal account with payment made at a later time. Charging occurs when a student does not have enough money in their meal account to cover a purchase, causing a negative account balance (or meal debt). Parents are responsible for paying all meal debt on their student's meal account. Keep in mind that a student's meal account balance can fluctuate multiple times each day due to payments made and/or meal and a la carte purchases.

### Notification and Collection of Meal Debt

Parents are responsible for their student's meal account. The Food Service department frequently attempts to notify families of negative meal account balances. Parents and/or guardians are notified by email or text of their child's lunch account on a monthly basis and are able to check online through the school website.

### Free Status Students

Eligibility for free meal benefits starts the day an application is approved in our system. Until that time, parents are responsible for providing lunch money or a packed lunch and for paying back any meal debt accumulated prior to approval. The debt will remain on the account until the parent pays it off in full. New applications must be filled out each September even if one is already on file.

### Charge Limits

Students who have a negative balance of more than \$30.00 will be given an alternative meal that consists of a cereal bowl, fruit, two cheese sticks, a grain product, and milk. In addition, students who owe more than \$30.00, which is the equivalent of 2 weeks of charged breakfasts and lunches, will not be allowed to purchase any extra items such as snacks, drinks, or WAMs (extra entrée' purchased with a meal) or be able to order Eagle Eats. Meal debt is a school fee that remains and accumulates with the student throughout their enrollment at Valley Christian Schools. Meal debt must be paid before withdrawing or graduating. As the school continues to make debt collection efforts, certain privileges may be revoked at the district and building principal's discretion, such as:

- Report cards and transcripts held
- Non-academic field trip privileges held
- Fun day privileges held
- Admission into Homecoming/Prom prohibited
- Limiting participation in seasonal sports

This policy is exclusive to meal debt in the cafeteria and does not include academic school fees

### General Food Service Information

- All students will eat in the cafeteria or assigned area
- The menu is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances
- Students may purchase a school lunch or bring a packed lunch from home upon arrival
- Lunch consists of an entree (2 meat, 2 grain), fruit, vegetable, and milk. Students are offered 5 components to a meal. Only three are required, one must be a fruit or vegetable. The other two components are optional.
- Bottled water, 100% fruit juice, milk, and a-la-carte items are available from the cafeteria for all students to purchase
- Meals from outside establishments may not be purchased for delivery by or for students. (No KFC, Subway, etc. deliveries). Please note that VCS is a closed campus, which means that students may not leave the school grounds to purchase lunch elsewhere. No deliveries of

lunches to the school during lunchtime from parents or establishments. This is a time and temperature concern with food-bourne illness.

- Extras, snacks, ice cream, and drinks will be available to purchase. There will be no charging of these items. Students must have money on their account or cash in hand to purchase extras.
- WAM's are offered at all campuses. This is a program that if a child receives a meal then they may buy an extra entree for \$1.00 (With A Meal). Otherwise an entree is \$1.75.
- No microwave use for packed lunches due to temperature cooking guidelines and allergy concerns.
- No child may purchase extras if their account is in the negative.

Applications for free or reduced price meals are in the school office, on the web page, or by calling the food service department at 330-788-8088 ext 1113. Some students may be eligible for participation in the free and reduced lunch program. Eligibility forms require updates yearly and are submitted by October. Otherwise, parents are responsible for any lunch cost that occurs until forms are turned in and processed. Food service department will notify you of your status.

Valley Christian Schools participate in NSLP, CACFP, SSO, AND FFV Federal programs.

- Breakfast price is \$1.50 (\$0.30 reduced) and lunch price is \$3.00 (\$0.40 reduced)
- Dinner is free at central right after school for 30 minutes for all VCS students who stay after school for any reason.
- Menus are located on our school web page and in the cafeterias.  
([www.valleychristianschools.net](http://www.valleychristianschools.net)) Alternate meal options are offered daily. Menus may change due to availability of product.

**All allergies must be submitted with proper documentation from a doctor for the food service department to comply with the request. Paperwork is also required for any food intolerances.**

### **13.7 Lost and Found**

Lost and found items are sent to the designated lost-and-found area outside the office. Items not identified with a name, and not claimed within a reasonable period of time may be donated to a local charity.

### **13.8 Office Hours**

School offices are open from 7:00am - 3:15pm during the regular school year. The offices are open in the summer from 9:00am - 2:00pm.

### **13.9 Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

The Valley Christian Schools Parent Advisory Council's primary purpose is to serve as a liaison among the administration and families to promote and maintain communication, understanding

and a Christian community within the school family. The PAC meets quarterly. Meetings are announced and placed on the school calendar in FACTS - SIS.

### **13.10 Parental Communication**

We make every effort to keep parents informed of upcoming events and schedule changes by use of e-mail, our website <http://www.vcsohio.org/>, automated telephone messages, text messages, and hard copy information. Please inform the school office immediately of any changes to your telephone number, street and/or email address, marital status, custody arrangements, or emergency contact.

All questions, concerns, complaints, or suggestions that you may have should be directed to the teacher or staff member involved. If a question is not answered satisfactorily, or if the situation is not resolved, please feel free to speak to the building Principal. We encourage parents to call, email, or visit when questions arise.

### **13.11 Recess**

VCS believes it is important for children to get exercise and fresh air whenever possible. For this reason, all students in grades Kindergarten – 5 will be assigned to go outside during recess unless:

- The temperature is less than 32 F
- There is rain, mist, or wet snow falling
- The student does not have adequate protection to keep them warm and dry (boots, hats, gloves, warm coats, etc.). Parents should send adequate clothing for the students to wear outside.
- There is a note or phone call from the parent requesting that the student remain inside (this should be done each day that the parent wants the student to remain inside).
- Medical documentation

### **13.12 School Calendar**

A calendar listing all major events, athletics, vacation times, etc., may be viewed on the school webpage at [www.vcsohio.org](http://www.vcsohio.org)

### **13.13 School Pictures**

The date for school pictures is noted on the school calendar. Information and packet prices will be sent home prior to the designated date. Payment for school pictures must be made in advance. Notification of a new date will be provided via the FACTS SIS calendar.

### **13.14 Telephone Calls**

Students are not permitted to use the school phones except in cases of an emergency, and with permission from a faculty or staff member.

### **13.15 Transportation**

Transportation to and from VCS is the responsibility of the parents. All Youngstown City residents are eligible for busing provided by Youngstown City Schools, in accordance with the rules established by YCSD. VCS provides the names of eligible students to the local bus garage. If you do not hear from Youngstown City Bus, please call them prior to the start of school at (330) 744-9505. If bus transportation is not provided to eligible students, you may qualify for reimbursement. VCS will provide transportation to students who are not eligible for busing through YCSD and who are within the two-mile radius of VCS.

Students who qualify to ride the school bus (provided by the students' local school district) to and from school must realize that they are under the authority of the bus driver. Failure to cooperate can lead to denial of bus transportation. Good bus conduct is expected, and a student must follow the rules established by the bus driver. Student behavior on the bus reflects the values of VCS. Any misbehavior will be addressed by the Principal.

### **13.16 Visitors**

For the safety of children and staff, and in compliance with Section 2917.211 of the Ohio Revised Code, all visitors entering the school building must first sign in at the appropriate school office to receive a visitor's badge and must present a valid driver's license or state identification card. The visitors badge must be worn at all times by the visitor.

If there is an alert by the VCS Screening System of a felony criminal background or other potential risk for that particular visitor to enter the building, that visitor will be denied entry. The Principal or building administrator will be notified immediately.

Students who wish to bring guests to school must receive the permission of the building Principal at least one day in advance. Acceptable reasons for requesting permission is to acquaint a potential candidate for enrollment to the school, or in the event that a student has an out-of-town guest.

Alumni who wish to visit may do so at the discretion of the building principal or other administrator. They must be compliant with the rules and regulations stated above.

### **13.17 Volunteer Service**

Valley Christian School provides both students and parents many opportunities to volunteer and are encouraged to do so. Various events, athletics, and classroom assistance are just some of the areas of involvement. Depending on the type of volunteer work, a background check may be required.

### **13.18 Withdrawals**

All withdrawals must be made through the appropriate school office. A parent must fill out a "Withdrawal Form" when withdrawing his/her child from VCS. All pupil records and reports will be

sent to the receiving school upon request and after obtaining a signed release of information from the parent.

In cases of financial indebtedness, or where school-owned materials or equipment have not been returned to the school, transfers will be made and records released only when all debts are paid in full. If a parent has questions regarding their financial indebtedness, he/she is to speak with the Business Office.