

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary

Parent/Student Handbook
2025 -2026



Janolyn Driver, Principal
Monica Valcarcel, Assistant Principal

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All medication, including inhalers, cough syrup/drops, etc. must be left in the Health Office. Students who need to take any kind of medication must have a form signed by a physician before the medication can be brought to school.	
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Introduction

Greetings Wildcat Family,

My name is Mrs. Janolyn Driver, and it is my pleasure to welcome you to Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary for the 2025–2026 school year! I am truly honored to serve this remarkable community and am excited for all the possibilities this new year holds. We are absolutely thrilled to welcome our scholars back as we begin another year of learning, growth, and achievement.

At Mary McLeod Bethune, we deeply value the role of our families and community partners. Your ongoing support is essential in helping us fulfill our mission of ensuring high levels of learning for every scholar. Thank you for walking alongside us in this journey.

This year, our school wide mantra is Wildcats Elevate, a reflection of our belief that when we rise together, we lift each other higher. Whether it's in academics, relationships, or personal growth, we are committed to helping every scholar reach new heights.

Proud to be a Wildcat,
Janolyn W. Driver
Principal

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- Unless otherwise specified, the term “parent” means a natural or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian.
 - Only gender-neutral pronouns are used.

District Information



VVUSD Mission Statement

The mission of Val Verde Unified School District is to create a positive environment that produces life-long learners who will become responsible, contributing citizens able to function in a culturally diverse society.

Val Verde Board Members

President, Marla Kirkland
Vice President, Melinda Young
Member, Daniel Aquino
Member, Dolores Holmes
Member, Erika Zamora

Cabinet Members

Superintendent, Dr. Gordon Amerson
Deputy Superintendent, K-12 Instruction, Mr. Mark Lenoir
Assistant Superintendent, Fiscal, Mr. Garrick Owen
Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, Mrs. Nicky Fuller

Nondiscriminatory Statement

The Val Verde Unified School District prohibits discrimination, intimidation, harassment (including sexual harassment) or bullying based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification, ethnicity, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other legally protected status or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. For questions or complaints, contact Equity Compliance Officer: Daniel Whitfield, Director of Risk Management, 951-940-6100 x10672, awhitfield@valverde.edu; Title IX Coordinator: Diana M. Hernandez, Title IX Compliance and Resolution Officer, 951-940-6100 x10225, dhernandez@valverde.edu; and Section 504 Coordinator: Steve Coelho, Director of Child Welfare & Attendance, 951-940-6100 x10468, scoelho@valverde.edu. The offices of the compliance officers are located at Val Verde Unified School District, 975 W. Morgan Street, Perris, CA 92571.

School Information

Mission:

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School promotes a culture that inspires a passion for learning and empowers all students to succeed through rigorous and equitable practices in a safe, supportive learning environment.



Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary

Bell Schedule 2025-2026

Supervised Campus opens- 7:45am All Gates Close- 8:00am	Breakfast Served- 7:30-7:50am	Class Bell- 7:55am Tardy Bell- 8:00am
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<i>Regular Day Schedule</i>		
Grade	Start Time	Dismissal
TK/K Early Bird	8:00	12:15
TK/K Later Gator	9:45	2:00
ISP	8:00	12:00
1st - 3rd	8:00	2:15
4th - 5th	8:00	2:20

<i>Minimum Day Schedule</i>		
Grade	Start Time	Dismissal
TK/K Early Bird	8:00	12:30
TK/K Later Gator	8:00	12:30
ISP	8:00	12:00
1st - 3rd	8:00	12:30
4th - 5th	8:00	12:40

<i>Regular Day Lunch Schedule</i>	
TK Lunch & TK/K LC	10:20 - 10:50
1st grade Lunch	10:40 - 11:10
2nd grade Lunch	11:00 - 11:30
3rd grade Lunch	11:20 - 11:50
ISP Lunch	11:30 - 12:00
Kinder grade Lunch	11:40 - 12:10
4th grade Lunch	12:00 - 12:30
5th grade Lunch	12:20 - 12:50

<i>Minimum Day Lunch Schedule</i>	
TK Lunch	10:00 - 10:30
1st grade Lunch	10:20 - 10:50
2nd grade Lunch	10:40 - 11:10
3rd grade Lunch	11:00 - 11:30
Kinder grade Lunch	11:20 - 11:50
4th grade Lunch & ISP	11:40 - 12:10
5th grade Lunch	12:00 - 12:30

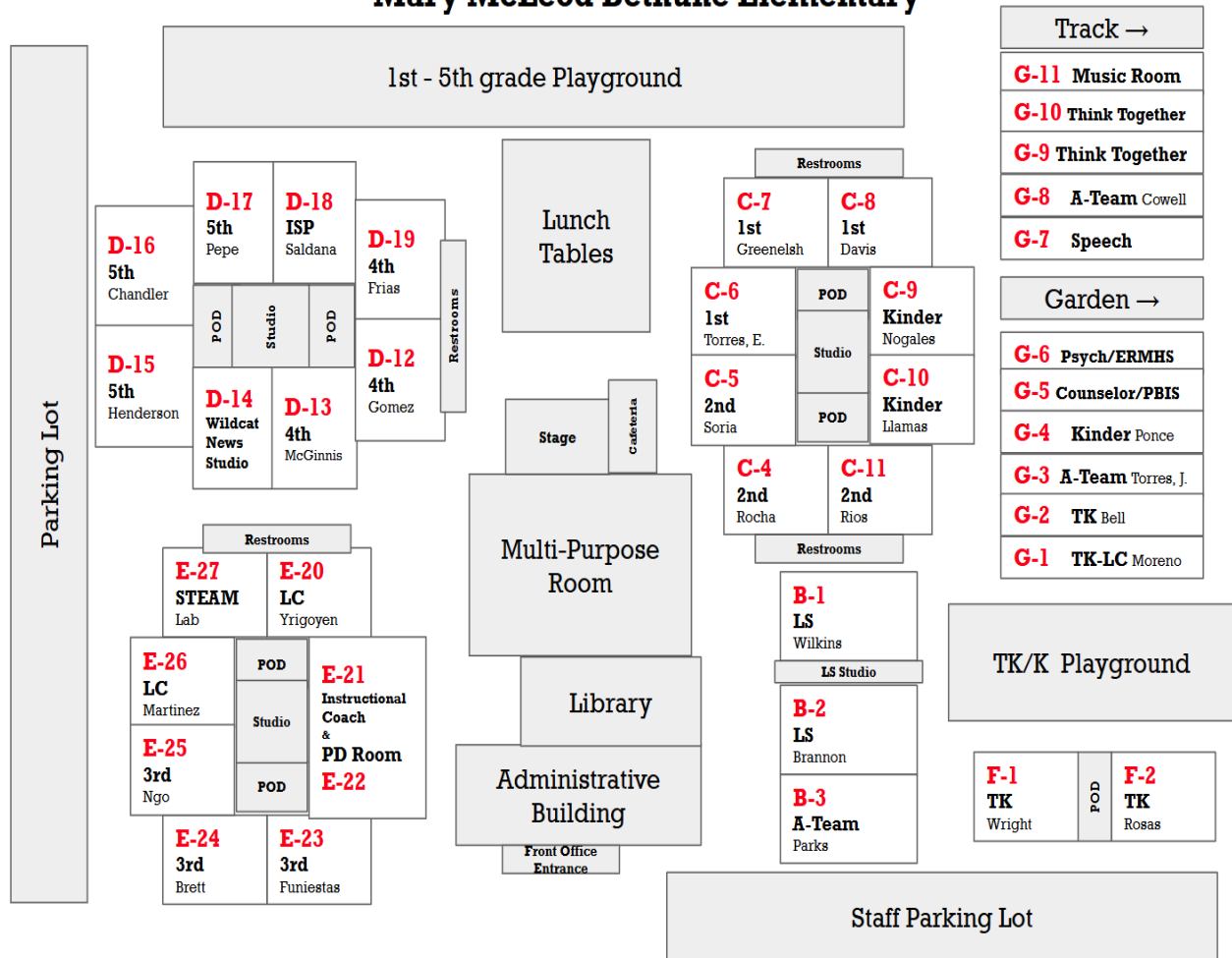
<i>Recess Schedule (regular days only)</i>	
2nd grade recess	9:35 - 9:50
3rd grade recess	9:50 - 10:05
Kinder Instructional Play	9:50 - 10:05
4th grade recess	10:05 - 10:20
5th grade recess	10:20 - 10:35
1st grade recess	12:50 - 1:05

<i>Inclement Weather</i>	
Mornings	If it is raining, teachers open classroom doors to students at 7:45am. Students will go to their classroom. TK, Kinder, and the Learning Center stay in the MPR.
Dismissal	If it rains heavily, parents will pick up students from the classroom.

revised 6/13/25

School Map

2025 - 2026 School Map Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary



Revised 6/12/25

Social Media Handles:



@vvusdbethune



@BethuneVVUSD

School Calendar: [CLICK HERE](#)

Goal #1: College and Career Readiness

Academics

Specialized Programs - Elementary School

AVID – “Advancement via Individual Determination”

Val Verde is an AVID school district. AVID Elementary is a foundational component of the [AVID College Readiness System](#) and supports AVID’s mission to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. Based on the same learning foundation that underlies AVID Secondary, AVID Elementary is designed to be embedded into the daily instruction of all elementary classrooms across entire grade levels to maintain school wide structures. AVID Elementary's implementation resources, trainings, and philosophy are all grounded in the idea that the growth mindset can be taught to students, and it is through the growth mindset that AVID students succeed in following their dreams and fulfilling their aspirations. AVID Elementary takes a systemic approach through the use of WICOR and an explicit focus on high expectations, rigor, and developing a college readiness culture.

English Language Development (ELD)

ELD instruction refers to the development of English language concepts and skills using methodologies appropriate to second language learners. Scholars designated as English Language Learners are exposed to multiple teaching strategies in a structured environment receiving both integrated and designated support to ensure access to the district core curriculum.

Gifted and Talented (GATE)

Val Verde USD offers a Gifted and Talented Education program for students who have been identified as gifted learners/high-achievers through district assessment.

Two main categories for a student to be placed in the GATE program:

- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAt) (Grades 2-8)
- CAASPP (Grades 3-8)

Informational data considered for nomination but not part of formal entrance criteria:

- Student Achievement Records (grades)
- Teacher Observations and Survey
- Parent Observations and Survey

Parent consent for testing is necessary after a name has been referred. If eligible, students will be placed in a GATE cluster classroom and receive special differentiated instruction. Testing occurs in the Spring.

Home & Hospital Instruction

Home and hospital Instruction is provided to students who are unable to attend regular school due to health impairments as diagnosed by a medical doctor. Students must have a doctor's note to be placed on Home & Hospital for a minimum of 20 days to qualify.

Dual Language Immersion (Triple Crown, Mead Valley, Sierra Vista Only)

The Val Verde USD Dual Immersion Program is a choice program that develops bilingualism and bi-literacy in English and a second language by integrating English Learners with English speakers. The target language of the VVUSD Dual Immersion Program is Spanish. It is an additive program for all students; both languages are developed to the highest capacity. For more information on our Dual Immersion Program, contact the school site or visit <https://sites.google.com/valverde.edu/vvusddli>.

Special Education

Special education programs and services are provided to students with identified disabilities which adversely impact the students' educational program. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines "children with disabilities" to mean children with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments or specific learning disabilities, and who by reason thereof, need special education and related services. Eligible students are provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the "least restrictive environment" (LRE).

Val Verde Unified School District actively seeks out and evaluates District residents from birth through the age of 21 who have disabilities in order to provide them with appropriate educational opportunities in accordance with state and federal law. All sites within the district have a response to intervention process that fully supports students who are struggling academically or behaviorally. Parents that have concerns regarding student progress should reach out to their child's teacher and inquire about interventions/supports.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability. The VVUSD provides FAPE to all students regardless of the nature or severity of their disability. In addition, qualified students with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to participate in programs and activities that are integral components of the District's basic education program, including, but not limited to, extracurricular athletics, interscholastic sports, and/or other nonacademic activities.

To qualify for Section 504 protections, the student must have a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Some students may be eligible for educational services under both Section 504 and IDEA.

The District has a responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if eligible, provide students with disabilities the same opportunity to benefit from education programs, services, or activities as provided to their non-disabled peers. A parent, teacher, other school employee, student success team, or community agency may refer a student to the principal or 504 Coordinator for identification as a student with a disability under Section 504.

Technology

Val Verde Unified School District is committed to Information Technology. The District believes that computers play a major role in aiding students' education and enhancing their learning. In order to ensure equity and access for all of our students, each student is assigned a Chromebook. Students in grades 1-12 are expected to take this home each day, and Chromebooks must be returned to school daily fully charged. Students are to follow electronic usage policies. Fines may be applied for any damage or loss of Chromebooks. Insurance can be purchased through a third party vendor.

USE OF DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT! You must have a Network Use Agreement on file before being allowed to use a computer. Students are held responsible for their district-issued Chromebooks. Please report any concerns or issues to the school librarian. A loaner computer may be available until the unit can be repaired.

Students must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. District technology is to be used only to work on assigned class work and projects.
2. Making changes to the computer desktop, attempting to or accessing someone else's files, putting anything in the trash that isn't one's own, etc., is considered a form of vandalism. Any suspected vandalism must be reported to school personnel immediately.
3. Loading of unauthorized software on a computer is a violation of licensing laws and is forbidden.
4. Students must have teacher permission before going onto the Internet.

Failure to follow these rules may be grounds for denying computer privileges at school and/or lead to appropriate disciplinary action.

Homework

Meaningful homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning time and assist students in developing good study habits. Homework will be assigned when necessary to support classroom lessons, enable students to complete unfinished assignments, or review and apply academic content for better understanding. The homework policy will be shared by individual teachers at Back to School, and communicated to parents at the beginning of the school year via the class syllabus and other modes of communication.

Homework assignments will be reasonable in length and appropriate to the grade level and course. The number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments will increase with the grade level and the maturity of students. Although it is the student's responsibility to undertake assignments independently, parents may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child's homework assignments are completed. When a student repeatedly fails to complete homework, the teacher will notify the student's parents as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.

Homework will not be given for disciplinary measures. However, the teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. When a parent of a student who has been suspended for two or more school days requests homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned, the student's teacher must provide such homework. If a homework assignment is requested and is turned in to the teacher by the student either upon the student's return from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, and is not graded before the end of the academic term, the homework assignment may not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

Students who miss school work because of an excused absence will be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the

teacher, the assignments and tests will be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students will receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.

Field Trips

Academic field trips are meant to supplement and enrich the classroom learning experience, lead to increased student achievement, and foster student engagement. They are to be conducted in connection with the adopted course of study or school-related social, educational, cultural, athletic, school band, or other extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

Field trips may also be intentionally planned to incentivize appropriate behavior and academic progress during the school year. For these trips, students that do not meet the established criteria (e.g., grades, behavior, attendance) will not be eligible to attend.

Participation Guidelines

Before a student can participate in a school-sponsored trip, parent permission must be obtained. All school rules apply on school-sponsored field trips. Violations of any school rules will be dealt with the same way as if the infraction had occurred on campus. Administration may exclude from the trip any student whose presence on the trip would pose a safety or disciplinary risk. Siblings or other family members may not join field trips.

Parent Chaperones

When necessary, a limited number of parents may be invited to assist as chaperones on a field trip. In order to serve as a chaperone, the parent must have completed the volunteer application process and have fingerprint clearance from the district office. Chaperones will be assigned a group of students and will be responsible for the continuous monitoring of these students' activities throughout the trip, including on the way to and from the field trip site on school-provided transportation. Chaperones are not permitted to take their own vehicle. Other siblings and/or family members are not permitted to accompany the chaperone.

For the health and safety of all students and to minimize disruption, parents who are not selected as chaperones may not join the students in their activities during the field trip.

Goal # 2: Family Engagement

Parent & Family Engagement

Parent Committees - Elementary/Secondary

School Site Council

The School Site Council allows parents and teachers to work together at the elementary level, and parents, teachers, and students at the secondary level, for the School Improvement Program. Parents and students are encouraged to participate in the Council. Representatives are elected each fall.

All interested parents and students are invited to attend meetings. Participation is a valuable means of both receiving information about the school and sharing ideas for the educational program. Dates of meetings will be published via the school site's communication platforms.

English Language Advisory Committee

Each school with 21 or more students of English learners (ELs) enrolled, regardless of language, must form a functioning English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC). The purpose of the ELAC is to advise the Principal and staff on bilingual programs and services to EL students. Dates of meetings will be published via the school site's communication platforms.

African American Community Circle

The Val Verde African American Community Circle is a Parent Advisory Committee made up of parents and guardians who come together to address the priorities of African American families. The purpose of this committee is to provide a platform for ideas and provide solutions to increase African American students' academic achievement and wellbeing. It aims to inform parents of district resources, policies, and programs to empower parents and guardians with knowledge and information to advocate for a high quality educational experience for our African American students. In addition, it strives to engage families in a collaborative decision-making process within the district, at the school level, and within the community to improve the academic experience and wellbeing of our African American students. All interested parents are encouraged to attend scheduled meetings. Meeting notices will be shared via the district's communication platform.

Parent Teacher Organization (Elementary)

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) volunteer is an adult, mother, father, grandparent, or member of our school community, who is willing to give **TIME** and **TALENT** to support our instructional program and school goals. PTO volunteers have a close relationship with the classroom and school. By helping in the classroom or with special events and programs, Val Verde students reap the benefits. All interested volunteers are invited to attend meetings. Dates of meetings will be communicated via the school site's communication platforms.

Volunteers

We welcome and encourage parents, guardians and other adult family members as well as community members to share their time and talents with our students as classroom volunteers. Volunteer assistance in schools can enrich the educational program and contribute to school safety while strengthening the schools' relationships with the community. Parents and other

members of the community are encouraged to share their time, knowledge, and abilities with students. Volunteers must act in accordance with District policies, regulations, and school rules. Volunteers are not permitted to bring younger, non-school age children with them when coming to assist in the classroom. Volunteer times and placement are pre-arranged and approved by teachers and administration. Volunteers must be at least eighteen (18) years old, with the exception of students who attend Val Verde schools involved in approved community service projects. Students may not bring relatives or friends to school as visitors.

In order to volunteer at school, a volunteer must have on file with the school the district's certificate of clearance. The certificate must be completed every year. If a volunteer is to work directly with students while not under the direct supervision of a credentialed employee, they must obtain fingerprint clearance through the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation. The volunteer must also show evidence of a negative TB test. The District's Human Resource Division provides fingerprinting services when the parent or volunteer completes an application via the district website or district office (applications can be found at www.valverde.edu). Volunteers must follow the rules and procedures for visiting the school campus, including signing in at the front office on the Volunteer Log, providing proof of identification, and wearing a tag from our Raptor system. All visitor badges will be collected as individuals leave.

Parent Teacher Observations

Parents wishing to visit classrooms need prior approval from administration/counselor and then make arrangements with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance. To minimize interruptions and distractions during instructional time, and to ensure the health and safety of students, classroom observations may not last longer than 20 minutes per visit unless prior agreement has been made with site administration. During a classroom observation, the parent may not interact with any student or the teacher unless the interaction is initiated by the teacher. The principal or designee may be present in the observed setting in order to accommodate follow-up discussion or clarify questions that may arise. A follow-up meeting with the teacher or principal may be scheduled as needed to address any questions or concerns.

On the day of the observation, the parent must follow the rules and procedures for visiting the school campus, including signing in at the front office and providing proof of identification. The use of any electronic listening or recording device in the classroom without the prior consent of the teacher and the principal is prohibited as it disrupts and impairs the teaching process and discipline in the schools. Any person, other than the student, willfully in violation is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Parent Requests for Meeting (ES)

To minimize interruptions to classroom instruction, parents requiring teacher contact are asked to reach out to their child's teacher before or after school, send a note with their child to the teacher, or leave a message with the front office. Teachers will be happy to return a parent's call as soon as they are able.

Parents who wish to send a message to their child, should call the office at least 30 minutes before dismissal.

Home-School Communication

Our goal is to engage parents in meaningful interactions with our school. This supports a partnership among staff, parents, and the community to improve student academic

achievement. We strive to keep parents informed through conferences, phone calls, emails, APPs such as Class Dojo or Remind, and/or letters home. Parent Portal is an excellent resource for checking grades and attendance.

We encourage parents to contact their child's teacher with questions or concerns. Please respect the times and guidelines each student's teacher has shared regarding responses to emails, texts, and phone calls. In order to maximize instructional time, teachers have a 24-hour window to respond to any correspondence.

Parent Account Management System (PAMS):

As part of our continuing efforts to provide information regarding student's progress, parents will be able to view information for their students from our school database using the VVUSD Parent Access portal. Through our secure server, parents may view student's demographic data, grades, attendance records, standardized test scores and emergency contact information. Please contact the school to obtain the codes necessary to create a portal account.

Custody

Custody issues must be handled by the courts. The school has no legal jurisdiction to refuse a biological parent access to their child and/or school records. The only exception is when signed, court stamped, up to date restraining orders or proper court papers, specifically stating visitation limitations are on file in the school office. It is the responsibility of the parent to deliver accurate, up to date, court papers to the school. Any student release situation which leaves the student's welfare in question will be handled at the discretion of the site principal or designee. Should any such situation become a disruption to the school, law enforcement will be contacted, and an officer requested to intervene. The school will make every attempt to reach the custodial parent when a parent or any other person not listed on the emergency card attempts to pick up a child.

Uniform Complaint Procedures

The Val Verde Unified School District has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including those related to unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group, and all programs and activities that are subject to the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP). Specifically, the UCP will be used to investigate and resolve complaints, requiring a more formal process, to address the following programs and activities:

1. Accommodations for pregnant and parenting students
2. Adult education programs
3. After School Education and Safety programs
4. Agricultural career technical education
5. Bilingual Education
6. Career technical and technical education and career technical and technical training programs
7. Childcare and development programs
8. Compensatory education
9. Consolidated categorical aid programs
10. Course periods without educational content
11. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group as identified under EC 200 and 220 and GC 11135, including any actual or perceived characteristic as set forth in PC 422.55, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any

program or activity conducted by an educational institution, as defined in EC 210.3, that is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from, any state financial assistance

12. Educational and graduation requirements for students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, students from military families, students formerly in Juvenile Court now enrolled in a school district, students who are migratory, and newcomer students
13. Every Student Succeeds Act
14. Local control and accountability plan
15. Migrant education
16. Physical education instructional minutes
17. Reasonable accommodations to a lactating student
18. Regional occupational centers and programs
19. School plans for student achievement
20. School site councils
21. State preschool programs
22. State preschool health and safety issues in license-exempt programs
23. Student fees
24. Any complaint alleging retaliation against a complainant or other participant in the complaint process or anyone who has acted to uncover or report a violation subject to this policy
25. Any other state or federal educational program the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee deems appropriate

Notifications. The District's UCP policy and regulations are posted in all schools and offices, including staff lounges and student government meeting rooms. Written notification of the District's UCP is provided annually to students, employees, parents of District students, District and school advisory committee members, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties.

The District also posts the standardized notice of the educational rights of students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, students from military families, students formerly in Juvenile Court now enrolled in a school district, students who are migratory, and newcomer students, as specified in EC 48645.7, 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1 and 51225.2. The notice includes complaint process information, as applicable.

The District has a notice posted to identify appropriate subjects of state preschool health and safety issues in each California state preschool program classroom in each school notifying parents, guardians, students, and teachers of (1) the health and safety requirements under Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations that apply to California state preschool programs pursuant to HSC 1596.7925, and (2) where to get to a form for a state preschool health and safety issues complaint.

Investigation and Response. These uniform procedures require the complainant to submit a written no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred. In the case of a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, a UCP complaint must be filed no later than six months from the date of the alleged conduct or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged conduct. A student enrolled in a public school must not be required to pay a fee for participation in an educational activity that constitutes an integral fundamental part of the District's educational program, including curricular and extracurricular activities. A complaint regarding student fees or the LCAP may be filed anonymously if the complainant provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support the complaint.

Once a complaint is received, the compliance officer, who is knowledgeable about the laws and programs subject to the complaint, will initiate the investigation within 10 business days, and will prepare and send to the complainant the investigation report within 60 calendar days of receipt of the written complaint, unless the complainant agrees in writing to extend the timeline. If the

District finds merit in a complaint, the District will adopt any appropriate corrective action permitted by law and/or provide the appropriate remedies to all affected students and parents, where applicable.

A complainant may appeal the District's investigation report to the California Department of Education (CDE) by filing a written appeal within 30 calendar days after receiving the District's decision. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the originally filed complaint and a copy of the investigation report for that complaint. A complainant may also pursue civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders that may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying laws, if applicable. Additional information can be obtained from the CDE webpage at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/>.

To obtain a copy of the complaint form and review additional UCP-related information at no cost, go to www.valverde.edu. The following personnel has been designated as the primary compliance officer to receive and investigate complaints and to ensure District compliance with law: Daniel Whitfield, Director of Risk Management, 975 West Morgan Street, Perris, CA 92571, (951) 940-6100 Ext. 10672, awhitfield@valverde.edu.

Goal #3: Climate and Culture

Attendance

Excused Absences

Once verified by a parent, a student's absence will be excused for any of the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer
3. Medical, dental, or chiropractic appointment
4. Attendance at funeral services for or grieving the death of a member of the student's immediate family or, as determined by the student's parent/guardian, a person so closely associated with the student as to be considered the student's immediate family (up to five days for each incident)
5. Jury duty
6. Illness or medical appointment of the student's child
7. Upon advance written request by the parent and the approval of the principal or designee, justifiable personal reasons including, but not limited to:
 - a. Attendance or appearance in court
 - b. Attendance at a funeral service
 - c. Observance of a religious holiday or ceremony
 - d. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than one school day each semester
 - e. Attendance at an employment conference
 - f. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization
8. Service as a member of a precinct board for an election
9. To spend time with an immediate family member who is an active-duty member of the uniformed services, and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat support position or is on leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment (limited to three days)
10. Attendance at the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen
11. Participation in a cultural ceremony or event which relates to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people
12. For a middle school or high school student, engagement in a civic or political event, provided that the student notifies the school ahead of the absence (unless otherwise permitted by the Superintendent or designee, limited to one school day-long absence each school year)
13. When a student's immediate family member or, as determined by the student's parent, a person so closely associated with the student as to be considered the student's immediate family has died: (limited to three days for each incident)
 - a. To access services from a victim services organization or agency
 - b. To access grief support services
 - c. To participate in safety planning or take other actions, including, but not limited to, temporary or permanent relocation, to increase the safety of the student, an immediate family member of the student, or a person determined by the student's parent/guardian to be in such close association with the student as to be considered immediate family
14. Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction at the student's place of worship or other suitable place away from school property as designated by the religious group, church, or denomination

For the purpose of the absences described above, “immediate” family means the student’s parent, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the student’s household.

Absence Verification

Absences must be verified by the student’s parent or the student if age 18 or older. To verify an absence, parents may call, provide a written note, or send a fax or email to the school, or use the e-verification function through Parent Square (when available). Information provided by the parent must include the student’s name, date(s) of absence and the reason for absence. A doctor’s note may be requested by the principal or designee when a student has had more than 10 absences in the school year due to illness. Absences not cleared will remain unverified.

It is important for parents and students to understand that writing a note verifying an absence or a tardy does not excuse an absence. Absences are excused only if they meet the criteria listed under EC 48205 (reasons are listed under the notification for “Excused Absences”). Absences that are not excused are marked unexcused in the student’s records and can potentially lead to a SARB referral.

Tardies

Every minute counts! We have established that all of our students will learn at high levels. In order for students to learn, they need to be present for all instruction and instructional activities. When students are late they are missing instruction or instructional activities that could prevent them from learning. In addition, when a student arrives to class late it can be distracting to the other students and the teacher. Therefore, students are expected to be on time for each of their class periods every day.

Passing periods should be used responsibly to ensure students arrive on time for class. Administrators and campus security are out on campus during passing periods to prompt students to get to class in a timely manner. Teachers will stand at their classroom doors to solicit students to enter the class.

We don’t want anything to get in the way of our students learning, thus the importance of students getting to class on time. Should the case arise where students intentionally choose not to arrive to class on time, the sequential tardy policy is described below. Let’s all work together to ensure our students are on time and present for all instructional activities so high levels of learning for all can occur.

Early Release - Elementary School

Students will not be released early within 20 minutes of dismissal. Parents must enter the front office with a valid ID in order to pick-up a student prior to dismissal. Only verified individuals on the contact list will be permitted to pick-up a student prior to dismissal.

Make-Up Work

Teachers are not required to give make-up work for unexcused absences or truancy. Teachers will give make-up work for absences that are excused, due to participation in a school activity, for suspension, or OCI assignment. State law defines each category.

Short-term Independent Study

If a student needs to be absent from school for an extended period of time due to unforeseen events such as family traveling or a student living away from home for a period of time, parents may request a Short-Term Independent Study Program for their student. Parents are expected to supervise the completion of the Independent Study Agreement.

A Short-Term Independent Study Agreement is a specific, written, legal, contract between the parent and the school that is subject to the following conditions:

1. Must be requested 5 school days prior to the beginning of the agreement; any exceptions must be approved by the principal, for good cause in an emergency situation, at least 72 hours prior to beginning the agreement.
2. Must have a maximum duration of 15 school days per year.
3. Must be written and signed during the school year in which the Short-Term Independent Study takes place by the student, the student's parent or caregiver, if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the student, as applicable.
4. Student's work must be received or be postmarked by the due date identified in the Agreement. The due date for completion of the work cannot be extended beyond the last date of the Agreement.

For a student participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for less than 15 school days, each written agreement must be signed within 10 school days of the commencement of the first day of the student's enrollment in independent study, by the student, the student's parent (if the student is less than 18 years of age), the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the student, as applicable.

Independent Study: Individuals with Exceptional Needs

An individual with exceptional needs may participate in independent study if the student's IEP specifically provides for that participation. If a parent of an individual with exceptional needs requests independent study, the student's IEP team must make an individualized determination as to whether the student can receive a free appropriate public education in an independent study placement. A student's inability to work independently, the student's need for adult support, or the student's need for special education or related services does not preclude the IEP team from determining that the student can receive a free appropriate education in an independent study placement.

For a student participating in an independent study program, each written agreement must be signed by the student, the student's parent or caregiver, if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the student, as applicable, within the following time frame.

- If scheduled for more than 15 school days, the agreement must be signed before the commencement of independent study.
- If scheduled for 15 school days or fewer, the agreement may be signed at any time during the school year in which the independent study program takes place, with the

intent that the agreement is provided to the parent at or before the beginning of the school year.

Withdrawal from School (ES)

To withdraw from school, parents are to notify the Attendance Office in person or through a phone call or email. Parents should state the reason for withdrawal and the city and school moving to so that records transfer will be completed properly. All school property must be returned prior to withdrawal being finalized.

The school may withhold grades, diploma, or transcript from the student and parent if the student willfully damages any district property, or willfully does not return district property loaned to the student upon demand, until restitution is paid.

PBIS

Behavior/Expectations: Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School

Each school site and each classroom teacher has established behavior expectations for their students. It is the responsibility of the teachers and administrators to see that rules are carried out in a fair and reasonable manner. Every teacher, administrator and other designated employee will hold students to a strict account for their conduct on the way to and from school, in the classroom and other school buildings, on school grounds, and on the school bus. Rules of conduct also pertain to students who pick up siblings on campuses other than their own. Students must conform to school regulations, obey all directions, be diligent in study and respectful to teachers and others in authority, and refrain from the use of profane and vulgar language.

Positive Behavior Incentive Program:

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School has the PBIS motto, "Extend Your Claws", which means that every student should demonstrate outstanding character and citizenship by doing the following:



When students exhibit the expectations that we want them to do they are given a CLAWS Card which is used as currency for our student store. Students can purchase fun items as a reward for their hard work.

EXTEND YOUR CLAWS						
	CLASSROOM	PLAYGROUND	LIBRARY	NPA/ASSEMBLIES	RESTROOM	OFFICE
C Care about everyone	Be kind to your teachers and peers.	Show good sportsmanship.	Be kind to the Librarian.	Show respect and courtesy to the presenters.	Keep the restrooms clean for all of our scholars.	Be kind to our Office Staff and School Nurse.
L Lead the way	Allow others the best opportunity to learn	Actively participate in extracurricular activities.	Maintain your "Inside voice" in the library.	Represent your class in a positive way.	Discard trash in the receptacle.	Respect the office by using "inside voices".
A Attitude is everything	Have a growth mindset.	Have positive interactions.	Be a confident and creative thinker.	Exhibit a positive attitude and representation of the school.	Be thankful for a clean restroom.	Model a winning attitude.
W Work hard	Do your best work and give 100% effort.	Show your best effort.	Take pride in maintaining and protecting library materials.	Participate at appropriate times using appropriate voices.	Take care of personal needs at appropriate times.	Use "walking feet" when entering the office.
S Stay Safe	Be a good classroom citizen.	Do what is right and encourage others to do the same.	Show respect for peers.	Enjoy the assemblies safely.	Be responsible inside the restroom.	Use walking feet when coming into the office.

Intervention

Prohibited Items

The following are items that may not be brought onto campus or to a school-related or school-sponsored activity: drugs, drug paraphernalia (including wax pens), tobacco, alcohol, weapons (including guns and knives), clothing that advocates violence or hatred of any group, fireworks, explosives, laser pointers, permanent markers, white out pens, carving tools, spray paint, or other item that can be deemed offensive or dangerous by school administration based on the circumstances.

Consequences

Our site will follow our progressive discipline flowchart and students may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Alternatives to Suspension

1. Teachers will instruct students on school-wide rules and expectations. Teachers will also instruct students on classroom rules, expectations, and procedures. Students and parents sign and return the acknowledgement that they have read and understand the Orange Vista High School, Val Verde Unified School District's rules.
2. Teacher/Student classroom progression including low level referrals which include parent contact. If infraction is an education code violation then immediate office referral will be written.
3. Office referral with parent notification. Discipline office progression includes but is not limited to; OCI, administrative conference, parent conference, Lunch Detention, Out of school suspension, transfer to alternative education, social skills intervention.

Teacher Suspension

After other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct, a teacher may suspend a student from their class for the remainder of the day and the following day for any act listed in "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion" above. Additionally, a teacher may suspend a student from class for EC 48900(k), disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid authority of the teacher or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties. A teacher also may refer a student to the principal or designee for consideration of suspension from school.

As soon as possible, the teacher will ask the student's parent(s) to attend a parent-teacher conference regarding the removal. A counselor or psychologist may attend the conference if it is practicable, and a school administrator will attend if either the parent or teacher so requests.

A student suspended from class may not be returned to class during the period of suspension without approval of the teacher of the class and the principal. During this period of suspension, the student may not be placed in another regular class; however, if the student is assigned to more than one class per day, they may be placed in any other regular classes except those held at the same time as the class from which the student was suspended. The teacher may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension means the removal of a student from ongoing instruction for adjustment purposes. Expulsion means removal of a student from the immediate supervision and control, or the general supervision, of school personnel. Students may be suspended or recommended for expulsion whenever the principal/designee of the school determines the student has committed an act in violation of Education Code 48900 in any of the schools of the district or in another district, and the act is related to a school activity or school attendance which occurs at any time including, but not limited to, any of the following:

1. While on school grounds.
2. While going to or returning from school.
3. During lunch period whether on or off campus.
4. During or while going to or coming from a school sponsored activity.

The following are grounds for which a student may be suspended or expelled:

- (a)(1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- (a)(2) Willfully used force or violence upon another person, except in self-defense.
- (b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
- (c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- (d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the same as such controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- (e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- (f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- (g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- (h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products.
- (i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- (j) Unlawfully possessed, offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.
- (k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties. (Only suspended from class by a teacher. Cannot be used solely as grounds for recommendation for expulsion for students at any grade level.)
- (l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- (m) Possessed an imitation firearm. Imitation firearm means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- (n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault or committed a sexual battery.
- (o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- (p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- (q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. Hazing means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or

personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective student.

(r) Engaged in an act of bullying. Bullying means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, directed toward one or more students that has or can reasonably be predicted to have the effect of placing a reasonable student in fear of harm to themselves or their property; cause the student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on their physical or mental health; or cause the student to experience substantial interferences with their academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. Bullying also includes an act of cyber sexual bullying by a student through the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording that depicts a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of an identifiable minor, when such dissemination is to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act and has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects of bullying described above. Cyber sexual bullying does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

(t) Aided or abetted the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury on another person.

EC 48900.2. Committed sexual harassment. Sexual harassment means conduct which, when considered from the perspective of a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim, is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to have a negative impact upon the victim's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. (Grades 4-12 only)

EC 48900.3. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence. Hate violence includes injuring or intimidating a victim, interfering with the exercise of a victim's civil rights, or damaging a victim's property because of the victim's race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation; a perception of the presence of any of those characteristics in the victim; or the victim's association with a person or group with one or more of those actual or perceived characteristics. (Grades 4-12 only)

EC 48900.4. Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation against district personnel or students that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of school personnel or students by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. (Grades 4-12 only)

EC 48900.7. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. A terrorist threat includes any written or oral statement by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death or great bodily injury to another person or property damage in excess of \$1,000, with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out.

Assignments and Tests during Suspension

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the suspended student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. However, a teacher must provide a student that has been suspended from school for two or more days the homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned if the student or the student's parent or other person holding educational rights makes a request to the teacher. Whenever homework assignment that is requested and turned into the teacher either upon the student's return to

school from suspension or by the deadline prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before the end of the academic term, that assignment cannot be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in class.

Bullying

The Board of Education recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student well-being, student learning, and school attendance and desires to provide a safe school environment that protects students from physical and emotional harm. Accordingly, the Board prohibits bullying at any location, whether on or off campus that affects students or school activity under the jurisdiction of the VVUSD. Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee who permits or engages in bullying or retaliation related to bullying will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Students and staff are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee. Any complaint of bullying will be investigated and, if determined to be discriminatory, resolved in accordance with law and the District's Uniform Complaint Procedures specified in AR 1312.3. If, during the investigation, it is determined that a complaint is about nondiscriminatory bullying, the principal or designee will inform the complainant and take all necessary actions to resolve the complaint.

Generally, bullying is an aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power between individuals with the intent to cause emotion or physical harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social/relational and may involve a single severe act or repetition or potential repetition of a deliberate act. However, acts of bullying that constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion, and the right for a victim of an act of bullying to transfer to another school through the intradistrict or interdistrict process, must meet the criteria specified under EC 48900(r).

Examples of the types of conduct that may constitute bullying and are prohibited by the District include, but are not limited to:

1. *Physical bullying*: An act that inflicts harm upon a person's body or possessions, such as hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's possessions, or making cruel or rude hand gestures
2. *Verbal bullying*: An act that includes saying or writing hurtful things, such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats to cause harm
3. *Social/relational bullying*: An act that harms a person's reputation or relationships, such as leaving a person out of an activity on purpose, influencing others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public
4. *Cyberbullying*: An act such as sending demeaning or hateful text messages or emails, spreading rumors by email or by posting on social networking sites, or posting or sharing embarrassing photos, videos, web site, or fake profiles

Any student who feels that they (or another student) is being bullied, is responsible for telling an adult. Parents who feel that their student may be a victim of bullying, should inform the teacher or the school administrators. Some ways to report bullying:

- ❖ Tell an adult; report and ask for help from a parent, a teacher, school counselor, security, supervision aides, school administrators, staff member, etc.
- ❖ Parents may contact administration by calling or emailing the school.
- ❖ Parents may contact administration through the VVUSD App.

When reporting, give all relevant information (e.g., name of the person(s) being bullied, name of person(s) exhibiting bullying behavior, names of other witnesses, details of what was said

Safety

Emergency Preparedness Drills

In order to familiarize students and staff with proper procedures, fire drills are held monthly in elementary schools, four times every school year at the middle schools, and at least twice every school year at the high schools. Earthquake drop procedure practices are held at least once each school quarter in elementary schools and at least once a semester in middle and high schools. Lockdown drills are held at least once a year in elementary, middle, and high school. Emergency plans and maps are displayed in each classroom, as well as the proper classroom evacuation route.

Visitors on Campus

The District's highest priority is keeping all students and faculty safe, and part of that is quickly identifying those that may present a danger to all persons and knowing who is in District buildings at all times. All visitors who wish to gain access to a school, including parents, contractors, and volunteers, must report to the main office to register and receive a visitor's badge. The District has implemented the Raptor Visitor Management System in all its schools to facilitate the school visiting procedures. Upon entering a District building, visitors will be asked to present a photo ID and their purpose for entering school grounds. Raptor will scan the photo ID and log the name of the visitor as well as the date, time and purpose of the visit. Visitors without a photo ID will have their information manually inputted into the system by a staff member. Raptor will screen the visitor's name and date of birth against the national database of registered sex offenders. No other data from the photo ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency.

Once a visitor has been approved, a visitor's badge will be printed for them to wear for the duration of the visit. Unless otherwise directed by the principal or designee, a staff member will accompany visitors while they are on school grounds. Anyone on school grounds without permission is in violation of the law and may be reported to law enforcement. All visitor badges will be collected as individuals leave.

Emergency Contacts

Parents can update their emergency contact information through their parent portal or they must present identification to update their contact information in person. Phone requests to update contact information will not be permitted.

Drop-off/Pick-up

Campus opens at 7:45 a.m. for all students. Breakfast begins at 7:30am. All students entering campus may arrive no earlier than 7:30a.m., and must enter to have breakfast. If students do not want breakfast they may not arrive earlier than 7:45am. It is imperative that the parent/guardian does not leave a student unattended at any time before 7:30 a.m. Any students arriving earlier than 7:30 a.m. may/will be subject to any/all of the following actions by site administration/personnel: Phone call to the parent/guardian, contact the Police, contact Child Protective Services (CPS).

Please drop off students in designated drop off areas/lanes. Drive in your vehicle and drop off your child(ren) off in designated gate locations of the school. Students will exit their vehicle and enter the school by walking through the gates. Please do so quickly to ensure that traffic flows smoothly. Parents/guardians wishing to escort their child(ren) directly to the gate must park their vehicle, escort their child(ren) using the designated crosswalks. Please do not leave your vehicle unattended at any time. No students will be allowed to enter through the front office entrance. Once gates close at 8am, students may enter through the front office and will be marked tardy.

Arrival Gates



To ease congestion after school grade levels are dismissed at different times and through different gates. Students will be walked to the gates by teachers/staff. Students will wait at their designated dismissal location with their teacher. Teachers will wait 10 minutes with students. Students will then be escorted to the front office. Students picked up from the front office will be marked as a late pick-up. It is very important that parents/guardians make arrangements to have their children picked up immediately every day after school. We cannot “babysit” children in the front office. We certainly want to work with you, not against you, but we may call the police and/or Child Protective Services (CPS) for excessive late pickups. Parents/guardians/persons listed on the emergency contacts in AERIES who pick up late students must be 18 and over, and provide valid identification, and sign the students out in order to ensure student safety and document late pickups. Please understand that we will not release

a minor to a minor.

Dismissal Gates



Parking/Parking Lot:

- Be a courteous, safe, and respectful driver
- Please do not speed in the parking lot
- Do not leave vehicle unattended at any time
- Do not block traffic at any time
- Do not use your cell phone while driving
- No Illegal parking (e.g., handicapped spaces, red zones)

Electronic Devices

Kindergarten through 8th grade students may use such devices only before and after the instructional day. Students enrolled in grades 9-12 may use such devices only during non instructional hours, that is, before and after school and during lunch or other breaks. Passing time is considered to be instructional time, and use of electronic signaling devices during passing time is prohibited.

An electronic signaling device may be confiscated if determined that the device was used during unauthorized times or for improper use, including, but not limited to, use which causes

disruption, invades another student's privacy, compromises the confidentiality of school records, infringes on copyrights, enables students to cheat on tests, facilitates activities in violation of the code of student conduct, or is illegal.

No student will be prohibited from possessing or using a smartphone or other electronic signaling device under the following circumstances:

- In case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When a teacher or administrator grants permission to the student, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that teacher or administrator.
- When a licensed physician and surgeon determines it is necessary for the student's health or well-being.
- When it is required in a student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan.

The District assumes no liability for personal technology, including computers, cell phones, smartphones, network access devices, or other electronic signaling devices, if such devices are damaged, lost or stolen.

Electronic Listening or Recording Device

The use by any person, including a student, of any electronic listening or recording device in any classroom without the prior consent of the teacher and the principal is prohibited as it disrupts and impairs the teaching process and discipline in the schools. Any person, other than the student, willfully in violation is guilty of a misdemeanor. Any student in violation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of students at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities is prohibited. Retaliatory behavior or action against any person who reports, files a complaint or testifies about, or otherwise supports a complainant in alleging sexual harassment is also prohibited. Any student who engages in sexual harassment or sexual violence at school or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity will be subject to disciplinary action. For students in grades 4 through 12, disciplinary action may include suspension and/or expulsion, provided that in imposing such discipline the entire circumstances of the incident(s) are considered. Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence toward any student will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in accordance with law and the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Instructional/Information

As a preventative measure, students will receive age-appropriate instruction and information on sexual harassment, including, but not limited to:

1. The acts and behavior that constitute sexual harassment, including the fact that sexual harassment could occur between people of the same sex and could involve sexual violence.
2. A clear message that students do not have to endure sexual harassment under any circumstance.
3. Encouragement to report observed instances of sexual harassment even when the victim of the harassment has not complained.
4. A clear message that student safety is the District's primary concern, and that any separate rule violation involving an alleged victim or any other person reporting a sexual harassment incident will be addressed separately and will not affect the manner in which the sexual harassment complaint will be received, investigated, or resolved.

5. A clear message that, regardless of a complainant's noncompliance with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements, every sexual harassment allegation that involves a student, whether as the complainant, respondent, or victim of the harassment, will be investigated and action will be taken to respond to harassment, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effect on students.
6. Information about the District's procedure for investigating complaints and the person(s) to whom a report of sexual harassment should be made.
7. Information about the rights of students and parents to file a criminal complaint, as applicable, including the right to file a civil or criminal complaint while the investigation of a sexual harassment complaint continues to be conducted by the District.
8. A clear message that, when needed, the District will implement supportive measures to ensure a safe school environment for a student who is the complainant or victim of sexual harassment and/or other students during an investigation.

Defining Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favors or other unwanted verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature made against another person of the same or opposite sex, in the educational setting, under any of the following conditions:

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's academic status or progress.
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting the student.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the student's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
4. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the student is used as the basis for any decision affecting the student regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through any program or activity of the District.

Any prohibited conduct that occurs off campus or outside of school-related or school-sponsored programs or activities will be regarded as sexual harassment in violation of district policy if it has a continuing effect on or creates a hostile school environment for the complainant or victim of the conduct.

For purposes of applying the complaint procedures specified in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, sexual harassment is defined as any of the following forms of conduct that occurs in an education program or activity in which a district school exercises substantial control over the context and respondent:

1. A district employee conditioning the provision of a district aid, benefit, or service on the student's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a student equal access to the District's education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in 20 USC 1092 or 34 USC 12291.

Examples of Sexual Harassment

Examples of types of conduct which are prohibited in the District and which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations, or propositions
2. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions

3. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, or overly personal conversation
4. Sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, pictures, or gestures, or computer-generated images of a sexual nature
5. Spreading sexual rumors
6. Teasing or sexual remarks about students enrolled in a predominantly single-sex class
7. Massaging, grabbing, fondling, stroking or brushing the body
8. Touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way
9. Impeding or blocking movements or any physical interference with school activities when directed at an individual on the basis of sex
10. Displaying sexually suggestive objects
11. Sexual assault, sexual battery, or sexual coercion
12. Electronic communications containing comments, words, or images described above

Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Sexual Harassment. Students who feel that they are being or have been sexually harassed on school grounds or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity by another student, an employee, or a third party or who experienced off-campus sexual harassment that has a continuing effect on campus are strongly encouraged to report the incident to their teacher, the principal, the District's Title IX Coordinator, or any other available school employee. Any employee who receives a report or observes an incident of sexual harassment must notify the Title IX Coordinator within one school day. The report must be made whether the alleged victim files a formal complaint or requests confidentiality.

Once notified, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the complaint or allegation is to be addressed through AR 5145.71 – Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures or BP/AR 1323.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures. Because a complaint or allegation that is dismissed or denied under the Title IX complaint procedure may still be subject to consideration under state law, the Title IX Coordinator will ensure that any implementation of AR 5145.71 concurrently meets the requirements of BP/AR 1312.3. The Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures to the complainant and respondent, as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. If, upon the conclusion of an investigation, sexual harassment is determined to have occurred, the Title IX Coordinator, or designee in consultation with the Coordinator, will take prompt action to stop the sexual harassment, prevent recurrence, implement remedies, and address any continuing effects.

All complaints and allegations of sexual harassment are kept confidential except as necessary to carry out the investigation or take other subsequent necessary action. Records of all reported cases of sexual harassment are maintained in accordance with law and District policies and regulations to enable the District to monitor, address and prevent repetitive harassing behavior in its schools.

For a copy of the District's board policy and administrative regulations on sexual harassment, go to "District Information" on the District's website <https://www.valverde.edu/en-US>. The written policy is also displayed in the main office, provided to students as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing students at the beginning of each semester, and provided to each school personnel at the beginning of the school year, or upon hire. For schools serving students in grades 9 through 12, the written policy is displayed in each bathroom and locker room and any public areas on school grounds that are accessible to, and commonly frequented by students – such as, classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, auditoriums, and cafeterias.

Dress & Grooming

The following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities:

1. Shoes must be worn at all times. All footwear must have a back (*i.e.*, strap). Slides and/or flip-flops are not acceptable.
2. Clothing, jewelry and personal items (backpacks, fanny packs, gym bags, water bottles etc.) shall be free of writing, pictures or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco company advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic or religious prejudice.
3. Site Specific - Hats, caps, beanies, and other head coverings are allowed and shall not be worn indoors .
4. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. See-through or fish-net fabrics, halter tops, off-the-shoulder or low-cut tops, bare midriffs and skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.
5. Gym shorts may not be worn in classes other than physical education.
6. Any clothing considered by the administration/law enforcement agencies to be gang related is not to be worn.
7. Students may wear sun-protective clothing, including but not limited to hats, for outdoor use during the school day.
8. Coaches and teachers may impose more stringent dress requirements to accommodate the special needs of certain sports and/or classes.

No grade of a student participating in a physical education class shall be adversely affected if the student does not wear standardized physical education apparel because of circumstances beyond the student's control.

The principal, staff, students and parents at each school may establish reasonable dress and grooming regulations for times when students are engaged in extracurricular or other special school activities.

Pets/Animals

Other than service animals for students with disabilities and animals used for instructional purposes by teachers, pets and animals are prohibited from being on school property during, before, or after school hours. This is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all students and staff.

Bikes/Skateboards

Bicycles, skateboards, and Razor/scooters should be properly locked up in the bicycle rack/cage and not ridden on campus. Schools assume no liability for bicycles, skateboards, and Razor/scooters that are lost, stolen or damaged.

State law requires all persons under the age of 18 to wear properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmets that meet specified standards when riding bicycles, skateboards, and Razor/scooters. When a student violates this law, their parents could also be held liable.

Roller Blades, Shoe Skates, and Motorized Vehicles

Due to the insurance liability, roller blades, skates, and motorized vehicles must be left at home.

Civility

Members of the Val Verde Unified School District staff will treat parents, other district employees and members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. The district is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school/district grounds.

This policy promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among district employees, parents and the public. This policy is not intended to deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff. In the interest of presenting positive role models to the students in this district, the Val Verde Unified School District encourages positive communication, discourages behavior that may appear rude, uncaring, abrupt, or insensitive, and will not tolerate volatile, hostile or aggressive actions. The district seeks public and employee cooperation with this endeavor.

Persons who are found to be in violation of this policy may receive any of the following consequences depending on the severity of the violation: (1) a written warning from Superintendent or designee; (2) withdraw of consent to be on premises for 30 days; (3) withdraw of consent to be on premises for 3 months or (4) withdraw of consent to be on premises for remainder of school year.

Reporting Incidents

All students have the right to a safe, positive learning environment. To report any incidents:

- ❖ Students should tell an adult; report and ask for help from a parent, a teacher, school counselor, security, supervision aides, school administrators, staff member, etc.
- ❖ Parents may contact administration by calling or emailing the school.
- ❖ Parents may contact administration through the AERIES parent portal.
- ❖ Fill out an electronic incident report by clicking the "[Incident Report](#)" button on the School Website. Office staff and Administration will monitor this document regularly and handle any situations reported. This document is not monitored 24 hours a day and should not be used for emergencies.

When reporting, give all relevant information (e.g., name of the person(s) involved, time and date of the incident, description of the incident).

Health & Wellness

Mental Health Services

A child's mental health is essential to their social and cognitive development, and to learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems. Mentally healthy children have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities. Mental health problems that are not recognized and treated in childhood can lead to severe consequences, including exhibiting serious behavior problems, at higher risk of dropping out of school, and increased risk of engaging in substance abuse, criminal behavior, and other risk-taking behaviors. As such, the Val Verde Unified School District is committed to promoting the well-being of its students by ensuring that, at least twice a year, students and parents are provided with information on how to initiate access to available student mental health services at

school and/or in the community. Mental Health referrals can be made through school nurses, school counselors which in turn would then refer to district counseling therapists for immediate response.

Counseling Services

Counseling therapists will be available for referral in order to offer tiered support when considering social and emotional health. For 6-12 students, students can self-refer via the district website www.valverde.edu.

School Meals

All students are provided breakfast and lunch each school day at **no charge**. Although meals are free of charge, families are encouraged to submit an Alternate Income Form (AIF). The information collected on the AIF ensures VVUSD schools receive adequate funding and can offer families additional benefits like discounted utilities, CalFresh, and reduced fees for advanced placement testing.

- For discount utilities, please check out the California Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program by visiting www.benefits.gov/benefit/1540.
- For information about CalFresh eligibility and/or to apply, please visit <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfresh>.
- For Advanced Placement testing discount information please visit: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/>.

The AIF can be filled out annually as a part of the Aeries Student Registration process, and may also be submitted at any time during the school year. Even if a household is not eligible at the beginning of the school year, a new AIF may be submitted at the time when the household income decreases, household size increases, someone in the household becomes unemployed, or the household qualifies for CalFresh, CalWORKs, or Medi-Cal.

- Price of meals, not part of free meal program
- Time when breakfast is served: 7:30 - 7:55am

Water Consumption

Students have the right and are encouraged to bring a reusable bottle to fill and refill water to consume while at school. Drinking water plays an important role in maintaining a child's overall health in the following ways:

- Supports muscles, joints, and tissues
- Improves digestive system
- Keeps growing bodies hydrated
- Positively impacts cognitive performance, particularly short-term memory
- Improves visual attention and fine motor skills
- Can prevent excess weight gain when substituting sugary drinks

Water bottle filling stations are located in the office and playground/blacktop area. Water bottles may be prohibited in areas such as the library, STEAM lab, and music room. Water bottles must be plastic or aluminum. No glass water bottles. To promote healthy habits and minimize spills, students may bring a water bottle filled with plain water only. Other beverages are not permitted.

Health Services

A full-time health technician or licensed vocational nurse is on staff to provide for the health and welfare of all students. A District Nurse is at the school one day per week, and is always available for emergencies.

Automated External Defibrillators (for schools with AEDs)

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a life-threatening emergency that occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating. It strikes people of all ages who may seem to be healthy, even children and teens. When SCA happens, the person collapses and doesn't respond or breathe normally. They may gasp or shake as if having a seizure, but their heart has stopped. SCA leads to death in minutes if the person does not get help right away. Survival depends on people nearby calling 911, starting CPR, and using an automated external defibrillator (AED) as soon as possible.

An AED is a portable, easy-to-use medical device that can analyze the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, deliver an electrical shock (or defibrillation) to help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm. AEDs are installed [provide location(s) of each unit on campus]. Instructions on how to use the AED are posted next to each unit so that anyone can render aid with an AED.

Medication

All medication, including inhalers, cough syrup/drops, etc. must be left in the Health Office. Students who need to take any kind of medication must have a form signed by a physician before the medication can be brought to school.

Illness/Staying at Home

It is important to protect the health of all students from risk posed by infectious diseases that can be transmitted within the school setting. A student may be excluded from school in accordance with EC 49451: "whenever there is a good reason to believe that the child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, he or she shall be sent home and shall not be permitted to return until the school authorities are satisfied that any contagious or infectious disease does not exist." The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) further provides that children should stay home (or go home) from school when any new illness or symptom prevents them from being able to participate meaningfully in school activities or results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

The following chart provides guidelines from the CDPH that help parents decide when to keep children at home when they are not feeling well and when children are ready to return to school.

Symptom or Illness	When should children stay home and when can they return to school?
Fever	STAY HOME IF a fever is 100.0 F (38°C) or higher. RETURN WHEN fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications such as Tylenol® , Advil® , or Motrin® (acetaminophen or ibuprofen).

Vomiting	STAY HOME IF vomiting has occurred 2 or more times in 24 hours. RETURN WHEN vomiting has ended for a period of 24 hours, and your child is able to hold down liquids and food. Recommend frequent handwashing.
Diarrhea	STAY HOME IF your child's stool is likely to leak from the diaper, or if they are unlikely to make it to the toilet in time (if potty trained). If the stool looks bloody or black, seek medical attention. RETURN WHEN symptom free for 24 hours without medication. Recommend frequent hand washing.
Sore throat	OK TO ATTEND WITH MILD SYMPTOMS. Please consider wearing a mask if age 2 years or older. STAY HOME AND SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION for difficulty breathing or swallowing, or continuous drooling. RETURN WHEN IMPROVING. If an antibiotic is prescribed, take the first dose at least 12 hours before returning.
Cold symptoms such as cough, stuffy/ runny nose, sneeze	OK TO ATTEND WITH MILD SYMPTOMS. Please consider wearing a mask if age 2 years or older. STAY HOME AND SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION for severe symptoms, including a bad cough, difficulty breathing or trouble catching their breath, or wheezing when not controlled by medication (like albuterol). RETURN WHEN IMPROVING. If your child will need medication after returning, contact the school site to request the authorization form for medication.
Ear or eye irritation, including pink eye	OK TO ATTEND WITH MILD SYMPTOMS. Recommend frequent handwashing. STAY HOME AND SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION for difficulty seeing or hearing, an eye injury, or pain they cannot tolerate.

Rash or itching	OK TO ATTEND WITH MILD SYMPTOMS. STAY HOME AND SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF THE CHILD HAS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: • Oozing, open wound or infection that cannot be covered and is in an area that might come in contact with others. • Skin that looks bruised without a known injury or in an unusual location. • Rapidly spreading dark red or purple rash (may indicate a rare but severe bacterial infection; usually accompanied by fever). • Tender, red area of skin, rapidly increasing in size or tenderness. • Associated symptoms of a serious allergic reaction (rash with throat closing, abdominal pain, vomiting, or wheezing). • Fever (see Fever for return guidance) • There is concern for a disease like chickenpox or measles. If this is the case, the child should see a healthcare provider and the local health department should be contacted. RETURN WHEN IMPROVING or as guided by a health care provider. In general, for conditions such as lice, impetigo, ringworm, scabies, and pinworms, your child may return as soon as they start appropriate treatment.
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Head Lice

Parents should periodically check their children's hair for lice and nits. An early sign of head lice is excessive itching. If discovered at school, parents will be contacted by the school to pick up their child. Treatment and removal of nits should be completed within 1-3 days. After treatment and removal of all nits, students must report to the school's Health Office and be cleared prior to re-admission to classes.

Inclement Weather -

The safety and well being of our students and staff are a top priority. We want to make sure they are as comfortable as possible so that learning can continue. As a result, our schools follow guidelines set forth by our Risk Management Department. These guidelines are not to be considered exhaustive; reason and good judgment will be utilized by administration in determining inclement weather protocols. Parents are encouraged to ensure students are sent to school with appropriate attire based on weather conditions.

Non-School Sponsored

Deliveries

We are committed to ensuring that your child and the other students at school are learning in an environment that is free from disruptions. When students are called out of class to pick up items in the office, they miss valuable class time. Except in emergency situations, we will not call classrooms or deliver items such as Chromebooks, water bottles, food, messages, gifts, supplies, etc., to students during instructional time.

Thank you in advance for your support by helping us to eliminate disruptions in our classrooms.

Food & Beverage

Food and beverage drop offs are not allowed due to health and safety reasons. In addition, students are not allowed to order food or drink to the school site through any food delivery apps such as Uber Eats or GrubHub.

Sales

Students may not sell items (i.e. candy, chips, drinks, food, etc.) at school unless they are participating in a school-approved fundraiser. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action. Food/items will be confiscated and not returned.

Publications

Publications, posters, and announcements may only be distributed or posted with administrative approval (and ASB, if applicable) and only displayed in designated posting areas.

Distributions

Flyers, pamphlets, or any other materials shall not be passed out on any Val Verde School District site without the prior approval of the Superintendent or school designee. (**EC 51520, 51521**)

Parties

Our school understands that birthdays/holiday celebrations are an important time in the lives of each child. In order to adhere to mandated instructional minutes, minimize classroom interruptions, ensure the safety of all students, and not violate food/health guidelines for schools, we will not host birthday celebrations in the classroom. Therefore, we have established guidelines for parents/guardians and students who wish to share birthdays, or other holiday celebrations, with others at school.

Please read and follow these guidelines:

1. Student birthday parties or gift bag distribution will not be held at school during any part of the school day.
2. Birthday students may share a small NON-FOOD gift as students depart from class at the end of a school day.

3. Appropriate non-food items might include items such as pencils, erasers, dry-erase markers, coupons, or other age-appropriate gifts. Students may even hand out invitations to parties they are hosting off campus, but no food.
4. Please do not deliver flowers, balloons, or food items to the office for student birthdays/holiday celebrations.
5. Students may not arrive at school with oversized items or balloons as they cause a significant disruption to the learning day. Any oversized items or balloons will be held in the front office until the end of the instructional day. Students may retrieve the item as they are leaving campus for the day.

Personal/Lost Property

The school will make reasonable effort to protect personal property, but will not assume the responsibility for such items. Students assume the responsibility for loss or damage of their personal belongings. Large sums of money and valuables should not be brought to school.