

VAIL SKI & SNOWBOARD ACADEMY

Handbook and Guidelines 2026-2027



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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for VSSA student-athletes and their parent(s)/guardian(s). It outlines key policies, services, and activities at the Vail Ski & Snowboard Academy. For questions regarding its contents, please contact the main office at 970-328-2830. This handbook supplements the general Eagle County Schools policies provided at enrollment.

VAIL SKI & SNOWBOARD ACADEMY MISSION

Vail Ski & Snowboard Academy (VSSA) is a 6th - 12th grade public school that provides a rigorous secondary and college preparatory academic program while supporting the athletic and personal goals of our students. In partnership with our sports partners - Ski & Snowboard Club Vail (SSCV), Junior Yeti Developmental Hockey, Vail Gymnastics & Ice Skating, Avon Narwhals Swim Team, and Eagle County Schools - VSSA facilitates the attainment of our students' dreams by offering challenging academics, flexible scheduling, and individualized attention.

VAIL SKI & SNOWBOARD ACADEMY HISTORY

VSSA was born from a vision shared by Aldo Radamus (SSCV) and Michael Gass (Eagle County Schools), aiming to integrate elite athletic training with public education. In 2007, VSSA launched as a "school within a school" for grades 9–12, operating out of Minturn Middle School with just 31 students and two staff.

Despite a modest beginning, VSSA grew quickly—reaching 90 students by 2010 and earning its own school code from the Colorado Department of Education. In 2011, a dedicated campus opened, expanding to include grades 5–8 and giving younger athletes access to world-class training facilities.

Olympians like Faye Gulini (2010), Heidi Kloser, Adam Crook, Aaron Blunck (2014), Tess Johnson (2018), and Kai Owens (2022) reflect the powerful combination of opportunity and commitment that defines VSSA.

The campus now features a Nordic trail system, trampolines, pump track, skateboard half pipe, rail garden, climbing wall, and a hockey rink. The Minturn Fitness Center, built in partnership with the Town of Minturn and SSCV, enhances on-site training with expert strength and conditioning coaches.

In 2019, VSSA expanded its model to include partnerships with Vail Gymnastics, Junior Yeti Developmental Hockey, and the Avon Narwhals Swim Team—growing enrollment to over 250 students.

Today, VSSA continues to balance rigor and flexibility, developing well-rounded student-athletes and compassionate citizens. In both 2024 and 2025, U.S. News & World Report ranked VSSA the 7th highest-performing public high school in Colorado. Our community remains committed to excellence in both academics and athletics.

Vail Ski & Snowboard Academy Policies

Academic Concerns

Excused participation in athletics is a privilege contingent on the student-athlete maintaining a minimum passing score at all times in each class. All student-athletes with scores lower than “2” in any class will be listed on the “VSSA Academic Concerns List,” updated weekly. In weeks 1-3, the student, parent, teacher, and contact coach will receive an automated email from the school notifying them of the student's status on the AC list. If the student has not rectified the grade by the beginning of the third week, “red week,” then the student is not eligible to train in the mornings or miss school for athletic training or competitions until they are off the AC list.

Academic Concerns Progression		
Week 1 “Green Zone” Student Planning	Week 2 “Yellow Zone” Family Involvement	Week 3 “Red Zone” OFF TRAINING
Student-athletes with a grade lower than a “2” in any class will be placed in the “Week 1 Academic Concerns Green Zone”.	At the start of the second week, student-athletes with a grade that remains lower than a “2” will be placed in the “Week 2 Academic Concerns Yellow Zone.”	At the start of the third week, Student-athletes with a grade that remains lower than a “2” in any class will be placed in the “Week 3 Academic Suspension Red Zone.”
The student and Advisor will discuss the low grade, and the student will create a remediation plan (This includes the course teacher).	1. The student and Advisor will discuss the low grade, and the student will create a remediation plan which should include the teacher for the class with the low grade. 2. The student will be responsible for emailing their parent, teacher, and advisor their plan to remove themselves from the Academic Concerns list and improve their grade.	The student is required to attend morning study hall and will not attend training. The student MUST meet with a VSSA faculty member during AC study hall to review the students plan for improving their academic performance. The student is to remain off training until the teacher has removed them from the AC list. Students on the RED Academic Concerns List who have upcoming sports travel must meet with their teachers and the principal to create an academic plan. Failure to schedule and complete this meeting prior to departure will result in the trip being marked as an Unexcused Absence. *See below for additional supports based on season
Release from Academic Concerns Restrictions		
As soon as the student-athlete grade has reached a 2, the teacher of the course in question will: 1. Email the primary coach to release the student-athlete to train or compete and update the “VSSA Academic Concerns” tracker. 2. Email student-athletes if they have been released from “Academic Concerns” in their class. 3. Students must remain eligible in that class for AT LEAST 1 additional week before they are formally released from the list.		

Additional Seasonal “Red Zone” Expectations/Supports			
	Fall (August-October)	Winter (November-April)	Spring (April-June)
Lower School	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. No early release for sports practice for secondary sport 3. Report to Lunch/Recess Academic Support in room 103 at lunch until off red	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. Not be provided excused absences from school for training. 3. Must report to VSSA for a proctored study period from 10:30 am - 12:30 Tuesday through Friday.	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. No early release for sports practice for secondary sport 3. Report to Lunch/Recess Academic Support in room 103 at lunch until off red
Upper School	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. Must report to all your study halls scheduled in PowerSchool AND lunchtime study hall. 3. No leaving campus for lunch (11th and 12th grade) 4. No early release for sports practice for secondary sport	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. Not be provided excused absences from school for training.. 3. Must report to VSSA for a proctored study period from 10:30 am - 12:30 Tuesday through Friday.	1. Not be allowed to participate in on-snow training during school days. 2. Must report to all your study halls scheduled in PowerSchool AND lunchtime study hall. 3. No leaving campus for lunch (11th and 12th grade) 4. No early release for sports practice for secondary sport
All Students	***If a student is in “The Red Zone” for two consecutive weeks, regardless of the season, a meeting is required between the Principal, teacher, and parent. Additional “Academic Concerns Red Zone” Details - The student-athlete must maintain a grade above “2” for a minimum of a week following the release from “Academic Suspension” before their academic notice status is reset to “Week 1 Academic Concerns.” - While away from VSSA on excused athletic absences for three days or more a week, a student’s academic status will not change once they get to yellow (week 2). - Any student who skips one Academic Concerns Study Hall day must make up the time with two days. - If a student is 15 minutes late or more for study hall, they must make up the time with an additional day of study hall.		

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating occurs when you gain an unfair advantage over others on an assignment or test. Such an advantage might come from looking at another student's paper; looking at your notes while a test or quiz is still out; sharing answers in written or spoken form before, during, or after a test, and using technology without permission to find answers, copying or requesting/granting an answer to a homework question is also a violation unless explicit permission to work together is granted by your teacher(s). **Unauthorized or uncited use of AI is considered academic dishonesty.** Collaboration is when multiple students submit one product. If the assignment dictates one outcome per student, collaboration is not permitted unless dictated by the teacher in writing.

Any of these cheating infractions will be ground for disciplinary action. Consequences are based on a tiered approach that encourages learning from mistakes:

First Offense: All participants will receive a zero on the assessment, and the assignment CANNOT be made up. Student-athletes will be responsible for explaining to their parents the situation. The student will document the event with an email to parents, teachers, and the Principal. The student will serve one day of lunch detention.

Second Offense: The above protocol will occur. Additional disciplinary action will occur with the Principal, including a loss of athletic training. This event will be recorded as academic dishonesty in the PowerSchool incident report, and colleges may request this information for enrollment decisions.

Third Offense: The above protocol will occur. This could result in a week's removal from training.

Fourth Offense: This will result in the above disciplinary action, and the student will be required to re-apply to the program with no guarantee of acceptance.

Please note that these tiers are not confined to a specific class. For example, if a student had a previous infraction using AI on math class assignment and then used AI on a Language Arts assignment, the offense would be considered a second offense.

Additionally, Dual Enrollment Courses offered through CMC may have additional consequences for academic dishonesty. This can include the filing of CMC Care Reports and the loss of CMC credits.

Academic Accelerations

To be eligible for single subject academic accelerations at the middle school level, multiple criteria must be met.

- Students must be performing above grade level in the subject for two years as evidenced by:
 - CMAS scores above grade level (Exceeds Expectations)
 - STAR scores above grade level
- STAR scores in the top percentile of the current class
- Teacher recommendation
- Scheduling must work with VSSA current master schedule and class sizes

If a student is accelerated in a single subject it could cause scheduling conflicts in their future career at VSSA resulting in the need to take online courses. The cost of these online courses is the responsibility of the family. A full grade level acceleration must be applied for through the Eagle County School District Gifted and Talented Program led by Marjorie Oyler marjorie.oyler@eagleschools.net

Addressing Faculty

All students are requested to address VSSA faculty members by their surnames (Example: Mr., Ms., Mrs.). This request supports an environment of respect and an attitude of academic success.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

The College Board has developed a national program of college-level courses and exams for high school students. VSSA offers preparation in various AP courses. Student-athletes are responsible for the cost of the exams. Vouchers may be available for students with financial needs. The exams are given on national test dates in May. Each college establishes a level it will accept for college credit, which can be viewed by visiting individual college websites. Students are required to take the AP exam in order to get the weighted AP credit on their transcript. Contact our Counselor for more information on AP courses.

Attendance and Concurrent Enrollment Courses

- Students may lose CE/AP credit for unexcused absences, especially if traveling while on Red Week.
- A coach-teacher-student plan is required if students on Red status wish to travel.
- Academic Coaches will monitor plans and attendance.
- Students on Red Status must attend Study Hall.

Grades and AP Courses

- Students must get a score of 2 or higher on the AP exam to retain their weighted GPA. Students who score a 1 on an AP exam will lose their weighted GPA.
- If a 9th-11th grader gets a higher score on their AP exam than their current course grade, their course grade will be raised ONE level. For example, if a student had a grade of 2 in an AP course and got a score of 5 on that AP exam, their course grade would be raised to a 3. 12th graders are not eligible for this grade change, as transcripts have to be sent before AP scores are released.

Athletics outside of VSSA/SSCV

Student-Athletes can participate in athletic sports at other schools if the student-athlete Program Director approves. Please contact the other school you are interested in having your student-athlete participate for information regarding their athletic programs. Student-athletes must complete the full school day at VSSA before attending practices elsewhere unless permission is granted by VSSA administration.

Note: All Student-athletes also must uphold the VSSA Academic Concerns policy for playing sports outside of VSSA/SSCV. Students are not excused to leave early for practice if they are on week 2 or 3 (yellow/red) on the Academic Concerns List.

Athletic Eligibility for Colorado High School Athletic Association (Not SSCV Programs)

The student-athlete must be enrolled in at least five classes each semester before and during participation, with no failing grades. Colorado High School Athletic Association (CHSAA) guidelines are as follows.

1. The student-athlete may not fail more than one class per semester, given five or more classes to participate. Eligibility is based on the grades of the previous semester of attendance until CHSAA has determined when eligibility can be regained with successful schoolwork.
2. The student-athlete may not participate in the upcoming year if they reach the age of 19 before August 1st. Students may not participate for more than four years.

3. Any student-athletes who have attended more than four years of high school are ineligible for high school athletics.

4. Student-athletes interested in playing NCAA  college sports need to contact their college counselor for eligibility information or visit www.ncaaeligibility.com

Attendance & Absences

VSSA student-athletes are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless they have an excused absence. Because our academic calendar is highly condensed, families are strongly encouraged to schedule vacations during designated school breaks.

- **Accountability:** Students are expected to be in class whenever they are not traveling for school-sponsored athletic events.
- **Responsibility:** Students are fully responsible for completing all coursework missed during any absence.

Missing School?

1. **Communicate with the office.** [Absence accountability Form](#) Please notify the main office anytime your child will be missing school, regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Accountability and safety are our top priorities. Prompt communication ensures we know your student is safe, helps us accurately track attendance, and prevents unexcused class skipping.

For any NON Sports Partner Absence - complete the [VSSA Absence Accountability form](#) or Call the front office

2. **Academic Travel Plan:** Every time a student misses school, they are **encouraged** to complete a travel plan. To best support our students this plan is accessible in multiple avenues:
 - [Digital Travel Plan](#) - on VSSA Website
 - [Printed travel plan](#) - Available in the front office
 - [Supported \(more detailed\) Travel Plan](#) - Available online or in the front office

For State Reporting, VSSA adheres to ECSD attendance policy and Colorado State Statute.

Attendance Code	Description
E: Excused	An absence will be considered excused if it falls under one of the following categories. Students are responsible for all learning and work they missed while absent. ● Athletic Competitions or Training (must be communicated by the primary sport coach will be coded ST for Sports Travel) ● Illness or Injury (Doctor's note <i>may</i> be required if more than 3 days are missed. Doctor's note required for all medical/PT appointments) ● Medical/Dental Appointments (Doctor's note required) ● Family Emergencies (with prior or immediate notice when possible) ● College Visits (VSSA Absence Accountability form) Note: Primary sport coaches are responsible for reporting all athletic-related absences. Parents do not need to notify the school for those

ST: Sports Travel	Sports Travel applies to students traveling for sports, athletic competitions, or training with their official VSSA Sport's partner. Because athletic travel is the foundation of VSSA, this code functions like a field trip: students are marked present under the strict condition that they complete their schoolwork asynchronously while away.  Important: If a student fails to complete their academic work, or completes minimal work while traveling, the school reserves the right to change the attendance code to an Unexcused Absence.
U: Unexcused	All other absences are considered unexcused. This includes Personal/Family travel Consequences for Unexcused Absences: State statute defines a student as habitually truant if they accumulate unexcused absences at or above either of the following thresholds: ● Monthly: 4 days (or 28 class periods) in any single month. ● Annually: 10 days (or 70 class periods) within a school year.  Required Action: The student and their family must meet with the Principal to create an official attendance intervention plan which can include time off of training and may include losing the ability to retake any assessments missed during that class.

Communication while Absent:

If you are absent (excused, unexcused, sports travel) you are required to make contact with your teacher or their online course at a minimum one a week. Not doing so can result in your sports travel absence being marked as unexcused for the duration of no contact. According to the state, 4 unexcused absences in a month and 10 absences a year could be considered truancy. Contact can include but is not limited to: A Google meet session, checking into Schoology, clarifying emails, and email with a plan or summary of what you have done that week, submitting an assignment that is ok to do on the road. If you will not be able to contact the class once a week, a very specific plan of when you will contact me or the class must be communicated before travel.

Eligibility

Our goal is to keep students in class when they are not traveling for their sport. If a student is skipping class or has walked out of class, they will be ineligible for 1 day of training. In addition, any assessments they miss during the class they skipped or walked out of will not be allowed to be made up or revised.

Attendance is reviewed **every Monday** for the previous week.

- Students with any **unresolved walk outs or unexplained unexcused absences (skipping a class)** will be ineligible for 1 day training the following week.
- Students may submit documentation to clear absences by **Friday at noon** to restore eligibility.

Students must provide:

- A doctor's/PT note for medical absences
- A teacher note if they were working elsewhere during class time.

SKIPPING CLASS / WALKOUTS	HABITUAL TARDIES
Any absence not properly documented or approved in advance will be marked unexcused. Examples include: • Skipped class = Missing class without notifying the school, regardless of excused or unexcused • Arriving more than 20 minutes late to class • Leaving class without permission or for over 10 minutes ("Walkout") • Leaving class with permission under false pretenses (i.e. asking to use the bathroom and then going to play in the gym) Consequences: • 1 Walk out or 1 Skipped class =1 day of ineligibility for sport, including non SSCV sports. • If you skip a class or walk out, you cannot retake any assessments missed during that class.	• Students who arrive up to 20 minutes late will be marked Tardy (Unexcused). • Arriving more than 20 minutes late results in an unexcused absence. • After 3 tardies, the student meets with the Principal. • Continued tardiness will result in parent notification. • 3 unexcused tardies in a Week =1 day of ineligibility for sport, including non SSCV sports.

Academic Ineligibility:

- Students on the **RED Academic Concerns List** who have upcoming sports travel must meet with their teachers and the principal to create an academic plan.
- ⚠ Failure to schedule and complete this meeting prior to departure will result in the trip being marked as an **Unexcused Absence**.

LATE ARRIVALS & EARLY DEPARTURES	CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT / AP COURSES
- Student-athletes must sign in/out at the main office. - Parents must email the Attendance Secretary in advance.	- Students may lose CE/AP credit for unexcused absences, especially if traveling during a Red Week. - A coach-teacher-student plan is required if students on Red status wish to travel. - Academic Coaches will monitor plans and attendance. - Students on Yellow Status must attend Study Hall.

ACADEMIC INELIGIBILITY	CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT / AP COURSES
- Students on the RED Academic Concerns List who have upcoming sports travel must meet with their teachers and the principal to create an academic plan.  Failure to schedule and complete this meeting prior to departure will result in the trip being marked as an Unexcused Absence.	- Students may lose CE/AP credit for unexcused absences, especially if traveling during a Red Week. - A coach-teacher-student plan is required if students on Red status wish to travel. - Academic Coaches will monitor plans and attendance. - Students on Yellow Status must attend Study Hall.

Community Code of Conduct and Honor:

“As a contributing member of the VSSA community, I will make choices that demonstrate the values of character, courage, commitment, and compassion in everything that I do.”

The VSSA community code of conduct and honor is guided by the 4 C's. These codes help instill integrity in all that we do and support the development of solid and upstanding community members.

The 4C's as defined by the VSSA Community:

- **Character:** to be an individual who contributes to the integrity of my school, community, and sport by being honest, engaged, and speaking out against bullying, cheating, and disrespect of individuals and property.
- **Courage:** To stand up for all members of my community, speak out against bullying, and do my part to ensure all community members of VSSA feel safe and valued both in school and on the hill.
- **Commitment:** Dedication to academics through perseverance and integrity. Dedication to my community through advocacy for others and the common good and commitment to excellence in my sport through discipline and passion.

- **Compassion:** to choose kindness first, to set an example of helping others without being asked, and to set a standard of acceptance, inclusion, and gratitude for others in our community, both in school and on my team.

We expect our students to uphold the 4C's, which include not engaging in the following behaviors:

- **Bullying** can include but is not limited to pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name-calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable. Everybody should enjoy our school equally and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender identification, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, nationality, or sexual orientation.
- **Lying** involves intentionally misleading a classmate, teacher, or staff member with false statements, actions, or objects.
- **Cheating** occurs when you gain an unfair advantage over others on an assignment or test. Such an advantage might come from looking at another student's paper; looking at your notes while a test or quiz is still out; sharing answers in written or spoken form before, during, or after a test, and using technology without permission to find answers, copying or requesting/granting an answer to a homework question is also a violation unless explicit permission to work together is granted by your teacher(s). Collaboration is when multiple students submit one product. If the assignment dictates one outcome per student, collaboration is not permitted unless dictated by the teacher in writing.
- **Stealing** involves the intention to take and keep property belonging to someone else without permission or payment.
- **Plagiarism** is when someone takes credit for another's words or ideas, intentionally or unintentionally using direct work from another source without placing material in quotes and citing it.
- **Vandalism** includes not respecting others' property. It is also the deliberate damage of an individual or property. Some acts are very clear (drawing or writing on a desk or wall, throwing a classmate's calculator on the floor, and others may not be, such as those resulting from horseplay.).

Behavioral Support

Philosophy

As an educational institution, we believe that behavior interventions should be aligned to the development of the whole person. While it is essential that we maintain a safe school environment that promotes learning for all, we must also honor the fact that we are forming future citizens. In this way, we acknowledge that we must balance safety, citizenship, and learning in the formation of our young adults. Therefore, it is the responsibility as a school and staff to work together to:

- Establish positive relationships & connections with students
- Establish clear, consistent & attainable expectations and procedures
- Utilize multiple strategies to proactively promote positive student behavior
- Individualize rewards and consequences
- Ensure that consequences are fair and proportional
- Ensure that, whenever possible, we provide students the opportunity to grow from their choices

We believe that students' behavior strongly relates to their sense of belonging to the school community and the quality of the relationships with adults within that community. We believe that it is essential that staff foster positive relationships and a sense of belonging for all students.

Discipline

Respectful behavior is essential to a safe environment conducive to learning. When students make choices that go against our community values, our goal is to make sure we address that behavior and repair any harm done to the community. To achieve this goal students, families, teachers, counselors, and administrators must work together. We believe in consistent and equitable practices.

The Restorative Approach

The restorative approach provides a highly supportive environment that combines both opportunities for reflection and addresses the harm that was caused. The restorative approach is characterized by growing with people, rather than simply determining a consequence for an action. This means we focus on:

- Repairing harm rather than punishing the offender
- Including the student voice in the process
- Integrating a whole-school community approach
- Incorporating practices and strategies to build students' social/emotional skills
- Creating a Sense of Belonging & Culture of Care

Administration follows a progressive discipline process and utilizes Restorative Practice techniques when applicable.

Restorative Practices is not a replacement for school discipline. If a student's misconduct is repeated, or significantly egregious, disciplinary consequences will increase. Additionally, school administration has the responsibility to enforce the ECSD discipline code and apply appropriate consequences as deemed necessary for the infraction. There may be times when, due to severity of the infraction, starting with restorative practices is not possible. In these situations, school administration will always strive to respect the dignity and humanity of the student while determining the appropriate disciplinary action. In these situations, rather than starting with a restorative approach, school leadership will engage in a restorative re-entry process to help integrate the student back into their normal school routines.

Level 1 Green Behaviors (Initially Handled in the Classroom)			
● Disruptive Behavior ● Disrespect to others ● Refusal to Obey Instructions ● Swearing		● Off-task with technology ○ Mis-use of technology ○ Gaming	
Level 1 Green Behavior Consequences			
1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th + Offense
Verbal warning/quick redirect removal of cell phone	Teacher has a quick talk with the student to make a plan to be successful. This may include moving seats, shutting computer etc...	Teacher enters the incident into “ Educator Handbook ” and student serves lunch detention the next detention session. *Admin manages detention	If student is not disrupting class: Schedule a meeting with the Teacher and AP within 2 days. If student is disrupting the whole class: Call Admin Send student to AP’s Office

Level 2 Yellow Behaviors

• Aggressively disrespecting others including property • Disrespecting school property	<i>Frequent violations</i> Managed by Teacher /Administration and entered into “Educator Handbook” • <i>Dress Code Violation</i> • <i>Eating in Unauthorized Area</i> • Habitual Tardiness
Level 2 Yellow Behavior Consequence	
Teacher/Admin enters into “ Educator Handbook ” and student serves lunch detention the next detention period. ❖ Frequent referrals can result in conference with Parent, Admin, Coaches and removal from practice	

Level 3 Red Behaviors	
• Threatening behavior • Physical Altercations • Bullying • Stealing	• Cheating • Plagiarism • Vandalism
Level 3 Red Behavior Consequences	
Incident submitted in “ Educator Handbook ” If threatening, student is removed from class. Red behaviors can result in conference with Parent, Admin, Coaches and removal from practice. Depending on severity, consequences may include in or out of school suspension.	

Level 4 Purple Behaviors	
• Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or nicotine products. • Possession of a weapon, or object resembling a weapon.	• Vandalism causing substantial damage. • Repeated occurrences of plagiarism or intentional violations of the artificial intelligence policy. • Habitually disruptive behavior.
Level 3 Red Behavior Consequences	
Incident submitted in “ Educator Handbook ” Student is removed from class. Mandatory conference with Parent and Admin. Purple behaviors can result in consequences outside of VSSA including suspension, expulsion, or referral to law enforcement.	

Concurrent Enrollment (CE) Courses (Previously Dual Enrollment)

Concurrent Enrollment courses are specific courses at VSSA that earn high school and college credit. VSSA covers the cost of tuition for all students, and Colorado Mountain College generates a college transcript and grades for the student. Parents are required to purchase books, and parents must reimburse Eagle County Schools for any grade lower than a 2. Additionally, a grade lower than a 2 in a CE class means that students lose the additional GPA weighting that is given to CE classes. Each year we strive to offer several CE courses for students. With successful course completion, many of our CE courses are guaranteed transfer courses, and the credit will transfer to any in-state public (CO) institution. Contact the College Counselor for more information on CE courses.

Attendance and Eligibility for CE courses

- Students may lose CE/AP credit for unexcused absences, especially if traveling during a Red Week.
- A coach-teacher-student plan is required if students on Red status wish to travel.
- Academic Coaches will monitor plans and attendance.
- Students on Yellow Status must attend Study Hall.

Dress Code

Vail Ski & Snowboard Academy is an academic community that subscribes to a dress code. VSSA expects that clothing fits appropriately and is neat, clean, and modest. The Principal and the faculty will determine what is considered appropriate. Noncompliance will result in disciplinary consequences.

All Student's everyday expectations:

- No undergarments showing, and no wearing undergarments as outerwear.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be at least a 3" inseam.
- Shirts and tops must have sleeves or wide straps that secure the garment over the shoulders. Tube tops, spaghetti straps, "no-back" or backless shirts are not permitted.
- Garments with inappropriate graphics or texts, including but not limited to sexual connotations, violence, swearing, or drugs/alcohol/tobacco, are not allowed. This includes logos based on recognizable alcohol/marijuana/tobacco brands (e.g. a beer logo with different words).

NONCOMPLIANCE

1. First offense: A warning will be given, and the student-athlete will be asked to report to the main office to change immediately. The Principal will be available to meet with the student-athlete to discuss the code and questions they may have.
2. Second offense: The student-athlete will be asked to report to the main office to change immediately. Parents will be notified, and expectations will be conveyed.
3. Third offense: Parents will be notified, and students will be sent home and marked unexcused.

***VSSA supports & accepts a gender-neutral dress code. All students should be permitted to wear the clothing they choose, regardless of whether it conforms to traditional gender stereotypes, provided that such clothing does not violate the school's dress code. Students may dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression.

Driving/Parking Lot

All student-athletes with licenses must adhere to posted speed limits and Colorado law, and drive with care on campus. Faculty parking is in the west parking lot. **Student-athletes should park in the east lot, always on the pavement, and never drive over the grass.** Student-athletes must have insurance and registration for the vehicle they bring to VSSA.

Student drivers must display a VSSA parking pass at all times (obtained from the Main Office) and have it registered to the car they are driving with the office.

Students who park in the fire lanes or in handicap accessible spots (without the appropriate pass) will be ticketed and/or towed by the Eagle County Sheriff's Office.

Students who commit other parking offences (on the grass, in the wrong spaces, in the staff lot, not displaying a parking tag) will receive one written warning and then be fined \$50/per offense. These fees will automatically be added to PowerSchool.

Early Graduation

Seniors who will have completed their graduation requirements before the spring term of their senior year and wish to graduate early must complete the following.

1. A written request and accompanying letter to the principal stating the reasons for wanting to graduate early, signed by the student-athlete and their parent(s). This form must be presented to the principal two weeks before the beginning of the term they wish to finish.
2. Upon receipt of the written request, the principal will review the student's academic standing with a college counselor and respond accordingly. If approved, diplomas will be awarded during commencement ceremonies that spring. Only those students who have earned their required credits may participate in the graduation exercise. All outside credits must be submitted and approved ten days before graduation.

Enrollment at VSSA

Enrollment at VSSA requires full-time participation with one of our approved sports partners and enrollment in at least five classes per semester. Enrollment must be confirmed with your sport partner at the beginning of the year. If a student stops participating in their sport full time, they must transfer to another school at the end of the academic year. Please notify the office promptly if you discontinue your sport and share your academic plans for the following school year.

Fees at VSSA

VSSA requires a fee of \$575 for every student. This fee goes towards the following: transportation, books and curriculum materials, field trips and wilderness, social events/dances, classroom supplies, and lab renewables. The fees are bundled and can be paid in full, or a payment plan may be arranged with the Office Manager. **Transcripts and diplomas will be held until fees are paid.**

Academic Coach Fee: All families are asked to pay an Academic Coach fee to Ski and Snowboard Club Vail. This fee covers the additional cost of having 4 Academic Coaches for all our students. This fee is \$1000 for middle school students and \$1,200 for high school students.

Find Your Track: VSSA Online and Hybrid Programs

VSSA offers high traveling students the option to take supplemental online courses as a part of their full time enrollment at VSSA. There is an [application](#) process including teacher and coach recommendations in order to qualify for this program.

Supplemental Online Courses -

- **Any full time VSSA student** (taking 5 classes) **can opt to take an enrichment course online.** The course must be approved by the principal and school counselor to be added to your transcript.
- **Scheduling Conflict:** If there is a schedule conflict for a required course, a student can take an online course and VSSA will cover the cost. The principal and school counselor must approve any student choosing an online class.

Grading Policy - VSSA and Eagle County Schools

Vision

Grading in Eagle County School District dignifies our students by telling them exactly where they are academically and what they need to be successful. Our practices promote the most aspirational thinking of what our students are capable of as learners, regardless of their race, first language, family income, or previous educational experiences.

Core Beliefs

Traditional grading practices perpetuate our achievement and opportunity gaps. In contrast, equitable grading practices promote the objective assessment of academic mastery, transparent expectations, growth mindsets, a focus on learning instead of points, and student agency - all key ingredients to serve diverse learners and create culturally responsive classrooms.

1. Equitable grading and assessment practices strengthen student-teacher relationships through building trust and shared understanding. In this environment, all students know where they are academically and what they need to be successful.
2. Students are active collaborators in their learning, partnering with teachers to ensure understanding of learning standards transparently and responsively.
3. By fostering a culture of revision, grades inspire a growth mindset, where achievement is not fixed but rather a learning process through a consistent recalibration of perceived ability.
4. Gradebooks communicate essential and valid information for students, families, and future teachers. Grades represent a student's proficiency at the end of the learning period and honor the principles of a growth mindset.

Grades Based on Academic Proficiency: Grades reflect proficiency in knowledge, understanding, and skills (standards) as measured by summative assessments or a body of evidence. Formative assessment of academic skills will be recorded in the grade book to monitor progress but will not be included in the course's final score.

A Culture of Revision

All students can succeed in achieving proficiency in academic content. Building a culture of revision in our schools challenges students to continue learning until they exceed proficiency. All staff will complete their grading of student assessments within 72 hours (maximum) of receiving them.

Due Date Extensions

When student-athletes recognize that they cannot meet assignment dates, they may request an extension. The student-athlete request may not always result in an extension. Extensions are reserved for extenuating circumstances and typically involve athletic competitions of an extraordinary nature or medical situation. Each quarter the Upper School teachers have an established make-up testing date. This is not negotiable.

Revision Wrap-Up Dates

All courses have revision wrap-up dates, after which previously assigned work cannot be submitted or revised. Due to the unique nature of our upper school classes, teachers have autonomy to set these dates when it makes logical sense to do so. Teachers are expected to communicate these dates with students and admin. It is

the responsibility of the student to know and meet these deadlines.

Course Retakes (“Replacement Grade” Policy)

Student-athletes who earn a low grade in a course may seek approval from the Counselor to retake the course. The new grade will be binding, and the previous grade **will remain on the transcript to indicate that the course was repeated but will not count towards GPA or credit when the new course and grade are added.** Students need pre-approval when retaking a course.

Graduation Requirements (Upper School)

The Eagle County School Board sets VSSA Academic Graduation Requirements. Close attention is given to NCAA requirements when a VSSA student-athlete is interested in competing athletically at the college level. Please note that 25 credits are required to graduate. Guidelines for the standard diploma and College Prep Diploma requirements/types are listed in the following table.

Diploma Types			
Standard Diploma		College Prep Diploma	
<u>Credits</u>	<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Subject Area</u>
4.0	English	4.0	English
3.0	Mathematics	4.0	Mathematics
3.0	Science	4.0	Science
3.5	Social Studies	4.0	Social Studies
	(0.5 must be Civics/Government and 0.5 must be Economics)		(0.5 must be Government and 0.5 must be Economics)
1.5	Physical Education (SSCV)	1.5	Physical Education (SSCV)
0.5	Health	0.5	Health
1.0	Practical Skills (CTE, Arts, Internship, Community Service, Sr. Project)	2.0	Foreign Language
8.5	Electives (0.5 Credit must be Senior Project to graduate at VSSA).	1.0	Practical Skills (CTE, Arts, Internship, Community Service, Sr. Project)
		4.0	Electives (0.5 Credit must be Senior Project to graduate at VSSA).
STANDARD TOTAL: 25 Credits		COLLEGE PREP TOTAL: 25 Credits	

Hallways

No bags are allowed to be stored in the hallways to keep the community space clear. Students need a hall pass if in the hallways during class periods- including study halls.

Internet Use

Student-athletes are expected to use the Internet for educational purposes related to classroom activities. Users are expected to abide by the ECS Technology Agreement. These include but are not limited to avoiding web pages or emails containing abusive, bullying, obscene, vulgar, defamatory, confidential, or threatening information. Under no circumstances may a student use a proxy server to gain access to blacked content, even for a “valid” academic purpose. Students in violation of this will receive a consequence proportional to the

severity of the infraction.

Lunch

Lower school students (6-8) are required to be in the cafeteria for lunch.

High school students can eat lunch at the outside table and in the think tank. Parents understand there will not always be supervision at these times should they choose to be outside the cafeteria and Think Tank.

Off-Campus Lunch

Juniors and seniors may leave campus for lunch. They are not allowed to bring younger grade students with them. Juniors and seniors transporting 6th - 10th graders during school hours will lose their off-campus privileges for lunch & study halls for two weeks. Students in 6th-10th who leave campus without a parent will receive lunch detention, and parents will be notified.

Food in the Classroom

Given the unique nutritional needs of our student-athletes, we understand that students may need snacks throughout their day. Please be mindful that snacks can be the source of classroom disruptions and we want to minimize this as much as possible. Students should take full advantage of their lunch periods, and not forgo lunch for extra recess time, expecting to eat their lunch in class. Students are not permitted to leave class to obtain food or heat up food, and will be listed as a “walk-out” if they leave for that purpose. Snacks should be for personal consumption and not shared amongst the class. Large bags of food, chips, candy, etc. are not allowed. Teachers always have the autonomy to restrict the consumption of food in their classrooms for any reason.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences allow parents and teachers to share information about students' progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Parents and teachers are also encouraged to meet periodically throughout the year as needed. Parents and teachers are strongly encouraged to view themselves as teammates with common objectives; the education and growth of their child.

While we have formal days set aside for such conferences, we acknowledge that often a matter is pressing and cannot wait until the scheduled dates. Parents should always feel free to contact teachers or administrators to set up a time to discuss situations or needs.

Phones: ECSD Electronic Device Policy

ECSD recognizes the importance of communication and collaboration, and provides devices for students to be productive in the classroom. To keep the focus on academics and to reduce unnecessary distractions, the District has a no cell phone policy with all electronic devices other than the student's Chromebook. Starting in the 26-27 school year, students may ONLY use ECSD provided devices at school. The use of any personal device (cell phone, laptops, smart glasses, etc) is prohibited by District policy.

Academic Settings:

- Cell phones and electronic devices, including smart watches and tablets, shall be TURNED OFF when class begins and phones will be stored in the classroom phone caddies during class time.
- If a student needs to make an emergency call during the day, they are to go to the office or use a classroom phone with teacher permission.

- Students may not use AirPods or headphones during class unless approved by the teacher.
- Students may not use Smart Watches to message or communicate with others during the day.
- While on school transportation students may use their cell phones and other electronic devices in “silent mode” provided the use of the device, as determined by the supervising staff member or bus driver, in no way disrupts, poses a safety concern or otherwise violates the School District’s Code of Conduct for Students or other parts of this policy.

Action steps for violation of the above policy:

1st Offense: Teacher confiscates device, gives it to the office as soon as possible and the student can retrieve it at the end of the day. The teacher and the student have a conversation to help prevent further violations.

2nd Offense: Teacher confiscates device, gives it to the office as soon as possible and a parent must retrieve the phone/give verbal permission to release the phone. Students will be required to have a restorative conversation about their device usage with administration.

3rd Offense: Administrator will contact parents and inform them that the student is no longer allowed to have the phone on school property.

*Parents may call the school office during school hours if they need to get a message to their child. If a parent needs to speak with their child, we will arrange for the student to call the parent back using an office phone. ECSD is not responsible for any lost or stolen electronic devices. Students are encouraged to leave these items at home, but if a student chooses to bring these items to school they are responsible for storing them in the designated location.

Physical Education

All student-athletes participating at SSCV in their discipline’s full-time program will receive 1.0 credits of PE per year towards their required credits for graduation.

PowerSchool (PS)

PowerSchool is the database system that ECS uses to allow parents and student-athletes to access grades and attendance online. PowerSchool can be accessed from the Eagle County Schools website.

PTO: Parent Teacher Organization

VSSA has an active PTO in which all parents, teachers, and staff are invited to participate. Our goals are:

1. To develop and maintain open communication between parents, teachers, student/athletes, school administration, and coaches
2. To promote a cooperative effort in educating and providing athletic opportunities for the student/athletes
3. To provide support for each entity to create a positive environment among the VSSA community

Re-application to VSSA

Any VSSA student-athlete who is repeatedly on the *Academic Concerns List* or cannot adhere to athlete expectations or Codes of Conduct at VSSA or our participating sports clubs may be asked to reapply for the upcoming school year.

School Color and Mascot

School colors are royal blue, white, and black. The school mascot is Lloyd the Yeti.

Seminar and Your Advisor

Seminar provides the student-athletes with a faculty advisor who is a conduit between the student, parents, teachers, and coaches. It gives advisors a designated time to check in with each student-athlete by monitoring their academic and athletic progress through weekly goal setting, grade checks, and individual support. The seminar is also used to explore careers & post-secondary options, host speakers, host events, administer district surveys, and other programming. It provides supervised access to teachers for upper school students, where students can request extra help from a teacher. Social and community issues address students' responsibilities to be involved and active in our community through community service projects and awareness of issues that affect our local communities.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unacceptable, whether between students and students or adults and students. Any behavior that is unwanted or that makes another person uncomfortable can constitute harassment. Student-athletes should immediately report this type of behavior to the Principal or Counselor.

Student Printing

Students' Chromebooks are not set to print. All printing should be done outside of VSSA, or all assignments can be emailed and/or uploaded to Schoology. The teacher has the discretion to specify the format of all assignments.

Study Hall

Upper School Student-athletes will be assigned a designated classroom while scheduled in a Study Hall. Study Halls are an opportunity to avoid extra homework by completing assignments. Study Halls will be run with an expectation of **"library-like quiet."** Students cannot leave a class without a hall pass during Study Halls. Study Halls are not gym time.

Junior Senior Open Campus:

- **Juniors & Seniors** MUST attend study hall on Monday's.
- **Juniors & Seniors** may leave campus during study hall, provided they are in good academic standing. This privilege will be revoked if they are placed on the Academic Concerns List (Yellow or Red) or if they have been assigned consequences for poor behavior.
- **If 6th - 10th students leave the property with a Junior or Senior, they will receive lunch detention and a parent call home. The Junior or Senior taking underclassmen off campus will lose their privilege to leave school for lunch for two weeks. A second offense may result in a loss of on-campus driving privileges.**

Student Recourse Communication Model

When a student-athlete does not understand or disagrees with an assignment, a grade, or a teacher's decision or policy, the following steps should be taken.

Step 1: Direct Communication

- **Student:** The student should first discuss the issue directly with the teacher.
- **Parent:** If the concern is not resolved, or if the student isn't comfortable speaking directly with the teacher, the parent should initiate a discussion with the teacher. This direct communication is the most

effective way to address most issues.

Step 2: Involving an Advisor

- If the issue remains unresolved after a direct discussion with the teacher, the student and/or parent should initiate a discussion with the student's advisor. The advisor will act as a coach or mediator to help facilitate a solution with the teacher.

Step 3: Escalation to School Leadership

- If the concern is not resolved at the advisor level, the student and/or parent should schedule a meeting with the Principal. The Principal's decision is considered final at the school level.

Step 4: Final Appeal

- If a parent disagrees with the Principal's final decision, they may file a formal appeal. The appeal should be submitted in writing to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services for Eagle County Schools, whose contact information can be found on the district's website. The decision of the Assistant Superintendent is final.

Teacher Lounge

Students will not be permitted to enter the teacher's lounge under any circumstance. This is a FERPA violation as sensitive student documents are printed on the machine in that room.

Technology & Computers

All students will be provided a Chromebook and are expected to have their Chromebook charged and ready to go daily. Students **MUST** use the school assigned device during school hours, not a personal device.

Students must abide by the Eagle County Schools Technology Policy. The student is financially responsible for their Chromebook. Sharing of laptops is discouraged unless academically necessary. VSSA is an academic environment; movies and video games are not to be watched on campus unless part of an academic assignment. Virtual private networks (VPNs) and proxy servers give users anonymity when browsing the internet as well as provide a way around firewalls and blocked sites. When students use VPNs or proxies to get around the ECSD network filters, however, they put both themselves and others at risk. Ultimately, this is a behavior situation where students are intentionally skirting district filters, which is in violation of the Student Technology Agreement as well as district policy. Our school will treat this like any other behavioral issue (cheating, vandalism, bullying, etc), which first entails a discussion between the teacher and student. If this does not resolve the issue, then parent contact and escalation to school admin will be the next step. Our aim is to keep students safe in the digital and online world. We look forward to working in partnership with families and students in this continuous effort.

Guiding Principles for AI Use in ECSD

The following principles guide the appropriate and safe use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in Eagle County School District. We commit to adopting processes, procedures, and agreements to uphold each principle.

We use AI as a tool to help all students reach their educational goals.

AI has the potential to help us reach our district's goals, including improving student learning, teacher effectiveness, and school operations. We aim to make AI tools universally accessible.

We value AI Literacy.

Students and staff will build their AI Literacy skills in order to utilize AI tools responsibly and ethically. Critical evaluation of AI responses, paying special attention to inaccuracies, persuasive tone, and bias is essential when using AI tools.

We reaffirm adherence to existing policies and regulations.

AI use will align with policies and procedures around protecting student safety, data privacy, and accessibility.

We maintain human oversight when using AI.

When partnering with AI, we maintain human oversight throughout the entire process (Human In → Human Out). AI tools can serve as a thought partner but do not replace the critical thinking responsibilities of students, teachers, or administrators.

We use AI with integrity and honesty.

Students will be truthful in giving credit to AI sources and tools when submitting work that reflects their learning.

We strive to monitor, review, and evaluate our district's use of AI.

Understanding that AI and technologies are evolving rapidly, we strive to monitor, review, and evaluate our district's use of AI to adjust our procedures, practices, and agreements accordingly.

ECSD Student AI Agreements

The agreement statements below align with Guiding Principles of AI Use in ECSD and provide guidelines of acceptable use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) by students in ECSD.

1. Students will use AI tools responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with school rules and district policies. Creating or sharing harmful, misleading, or inappropriate content violates district policies.
2. Students will not enter personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI tool, including any student identifiable data related to education records.
3. Students will critically evaluate AI-generated content for potential inaccuracies, persuasive tone, and bias. It is vital to understand the limitations of AI and the importance of cross-referencing with factual sources.

4. Students will follow staff instructions on when and how to use AI on an assignment and will check with the instructor when unsure.
5. Students will follow staff instructions for appropriately disclosing and/or citing AI-generated content. AI is not a substitute for original thought, and students will not claim AI-generated content as their own work.

Student infractions involving artificial intelligence are handled as Academic Dishonesty and consequences are explained in that section.

ECSD Staff AI Agreements

The agreement statements below align with Guiding Principles of AI Use in ECSD and provide guidelines of acceptable use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) by staff members of ECSD.

1. Staff will use AI tools responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with school rules and district policies. Creating or sharing harmful, misleading, or inappropriate content violates district policies.
2. Staff will not enter personal, sensitive, or confidential data into any AI tool, including any student identifiable data related to education records.
3. Staff will critically evaluate AI-generated content for potential inaccuracies, persuasive tone, and bias. It is vital to understand the limitations of AI and the importance of cross-referencing with factual sources.
4. Technologies that claim to detect AI-generated content are not sufficiently reliable in determining cheating and plagiarism. While some staff may use such tools, it is required that they also have a dialogue with the student in cases where plagiarism is suspected.

Think Tank

The Think Tank is what VSSA has dubbed the library. One Academic Coach is available each hour of the day in the Think Tank, and students are encouraged to make appointments with available coaches and must be approved by the teacher of the class to go see an Academic Coach.

Website

Our main page can be found at <http://www.eagleschools.net/schools/vail-ski-and-snowboard-academy>

Withdraw/Fail Upper School

Student-athletes can withdraw from a course with the College Counselor. Please refer to the calendar for drop dates. After those dates, any changes need to be teacher-initiated. Otherwise, a W/F (withdraw/fail) will be placed on the permanent transcript. Exceptions are made only with the Head of School.

Yeti Times Newsletter

A regular email newsletter outlining events, issues, and upcoming calendar activities is available by sending an email request to the Office Manager. Please email pictures from competitions, news about athletic and academic events, and information that would be helpful for our school community to know. In addition to being an information resource, we want it to be a place to celebrate and highlight our student-athletes.



Acknowledgment of VSSA Handbook

Please turn it in to your Seminar teacher or complete the Digital Acknowledgement.

Student-Athlete Name: _____ **Date:** _____
Grade: _____ **Sport:** _____

- _____ Academic Concerns Policy
- _____ Academic Dishonesty
- _____ Attendance & Eligibility
- _____ On and Off Campus Lunch
- _____ Cell Phones
- _____ Code of Conduct
- _____ Dress Code
- _____ Standards Based Grading
- _____ Re-application to VSSA
- _____ Student Recourse Communication Model
- _____ AI Policy
- _____ Chromebook Responsibility

I have read, understand, and agree to uphold the policies listed above.

Student-Athlete Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____