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# **West Valley Middle School Student & Parent Handbook**

2023/2024

**West Valley School**  
**2290 Farm to Market Road**  
Kalispell, Montana 59901  
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## **To Students and Parents:**

The West Valley Middle School Student Handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the school year. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic. Throughout the handbook, the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that this document is updated annually, while policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Therefore, any changes in policy that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications. These changes will generally supersede provisions found in this handbook that have been made obsolete by newly adopted policy.

Please note that references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm current policy.

The West Valley School District’s policies can be found on the district website at: [westvalleyschool.com](http://westvalleyschool.com)

## **Parental Rights**

West Valley School collaborates with parents and guardians to promote the mutual goal of student achievement. To ensure parents are aware of their rights and the opportunity to engage with the School District, specific policies and procedures are available on the School District’s website and are available to be printed upon request. Please consult the following policies to learn more about methods to be an active part of your student’s education:

Parent/Family Engagement and Involvement in Education – Policy 2158

School Activities and Clubs – Policy 3233 and Policy 3510

Student and Family Privacy Rights – Policy 2132

Student Health – Policy 3410

Student Health Instruction – Policy 2335

Student Immunization – Policy 3413

Student Records and Confidentiality – Policy 3600

## **Equal Education, NonDiscrimination**

The District will make equal educational opportunities available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious belief, physical or mental handicap or disability, economic or social condition, actual or potential marital or parental status. No student will be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, or advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

## **Release of “Directory Information”**

“Regarding student records, federal law requires that ‘directory information’ on my child be released by the District to anyone who requests it unless I object in writing to the release of this information. This includes release of directory information to military recruiters and post-secondary institutions. This objection must be filed [within ten school days] of the time this handbook was given to my child. Directory information ordinarily includes the student’s [name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended]. This information needs to be consistent with Policy 3600P, 3600F1, and 3600F2. In exercising my right to limit release of this information, I have completed the Student Directory Information Notification and returned it to the school.

### **Rights concerning a Student’s School Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students over eighteen (18) years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and copy the student’s education records, within a reasonable time from the day the District receives a request for access.
2. The right to request amendment of the student’s education records which the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, irrelevant, or improper.
3. The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA or state law authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.
5. The right to prohibit the release of directory information concerning the parent’s/ guardian’s child.
6. The right to request that information not be released to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education.
7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Articles Prohibited In School**

Many articles, which are deemed safe, or O.K. outside the school setting become dangerous or unduly distracting in a school setting. Items such as laser lights, knives, guns, toy guns, chains (wallet, etc.) matches, slingshots, fireworks, pea shooters, skateboards, roller skates/blades, bats, baseballs, squirt guns, etc. will NOT be permitted in or on school grounds. Any such items will be impounded and released only to a parent. Any items that may be used to endanger and/or intimidate other students and/or staff fall under this policy. The staff and/or administration will define the nature of the item. Appropriate disciplinary action will follow. If you are questioning any particular item please call the school administration.

Other items such as stereos, electronic items or other fragile or expensive items should not be brought to school unless the teacher requests such an item for educational purposes. The parent is under no obligation to send such items. \*Personal property is not covered by the school's insurance.

## **Assemblies**

- Be on time; enter quietly and orderly; students will sit with their classroom teachers.
- Give courteous attention to the speaker or student leader throughout the entire program.
- Know when to give a polite clap or an enthusiastic holler.
- Students failing to be courteous and attentive at an assembly may be assigned to an alternative setting.
- Access and leave the bleachers by using the stairs, do not walk on the seats.

## **Attendance**

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education — to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual.

State law requires:

- a. A student between the ages of 7 and 16 must attend school unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her sixteenth birthday is required to attend each school day.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission, from any class or from required special programs, will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of a penalty by a court of law against the student and his or her parents. See Policy 3122, and 3123.

\*Please note it is important that phone contact and/or a written note by a parent/guardian must be received no later than the day of their return. If after 3 days, the secretary has received no note or phone call, the absence becomes unexcused. A student with accumulated unexcused absences may be detained from field trips and other activities in order for work to be completed.

## **Excused Absences**

When a student must be absent for illness or other unforeseeable emergencies, parents must inform the school of the student's absence by 9:00 A.M. If a student is not present and the parent has not notified the school of the absence; the school has a state mandated responsibility to make phone contact with the home to determine the student's status.

Absences whereby a student returns to school after being absent and the student is accompanied by a WRITTEN EXCUSE, SIGNED AND DATED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN, OR A PHONE CALL within (2) two days upon

return to school. The written excuse or phone call must contain the days absent and the reason(s) for being absent. The school secretary will issue an admittance slip for the time missed.

Excused absences are categorized as follows:

- illness
- participation in school activities
- bereavement
- verifiable family emergencies
- necessary absences approved by the parent
- medical appointments which absolutely cannot be scheduled outside of the school day.

Disciplinary Action may ensue for continuous unexcused absences or tardiness.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Absences where a student does not have a note from the parent/guardian and/or a legitimate reason for being absent. In the event the administration determines an absence unnecessary, the absence will be considered unexcused. An unexcused absence is considered skipping school and may be dealt with through the West Valley Discipline System.

### **Excessive/Chronic Absences**

Excessive absences (Federally Truant) will be investigated by the administration and may result in loss of credit, referral to the SST (Student Support Team), or referred out to the Truancy Officer. (Truancy, MCA 20-5-1060). Excessive tardies and absences may also result in lost field trips, extracurricular opportunities, and other important functions that require a responsible and present student.

### **Leaving School During School Hours**

**If your child leaves the school during the school day, a parent must come to the office to pick up the student and sign him/her out of the building or call from the lot.** We cannot release a child to a person other than the legal guardian without prior communication from the parent.

### **Tardies**

All students who arrive late to school must report to the office to receive a pass to their classroom. Communication from the parent to the office will be required for your tardiness to be excused.

Class period tardies are also noted in the school data system by the teacher. All students are expected to be in class on time.

- Students are considered to be tardy when they enter the classroom after the tardy bell rings. Students receiving their third tardy in a class may be given a consequence, as per teacher policy.
- Students are considered unexcused upon entering their class late unless they present a pass signed by a staff member.
- The continually tardy student will be referred to the administration for resolution and may necessitate a meeting of the parent(s) with the administration and/or Student Support Team.
- Disciplinary action may occur and may result in lost field trips, extracurricular opportunities, and other important functions that require a responsible and present student.

### **Make - Up Work**

For an excused absence :

1) Students have ONE (1) day for each day absent to turn in assignments. Not to exceed 5 school days.

2) It is the responsibility of the student to obtain the assignments that were missed.

## Bicycles

Students are encouraged to ride bicycles to school. All safety precautions should be reviewed and followed. Students who ride their bikes to school are encouraged to lock them. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen bikes. Bikes are not to be ridden on the school grounds and must be parked in the designated area. Bike riders are to leave the school grounds immediately upon dismissal.

## Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated.

"Bullying" means any harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication ("cyberbullying") or threat directed against a student that is persistent, severe, or repeated, and that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, at any official school bus stop, or anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student or staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated.

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry.

[See Policy 3226]

## Cafeteria Services

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunches daily. The office staff collects funds (cash/check) or parents may deposit funds online with a card. **Checks should be made to West Valley School.** Please make sure your family has money on their account or you have filled out our online free/reduced application before having your student(s) use our food service. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See the Food Services Clerk in the office or apply using the online free/reduced application before having your student(s) use our food service. **All payment methods result in the same procedures in the lunch line, there is no difference related to funding source.** As each student goes through the food service line, they will give their full name and will be charged through our new barcode system at the end of the line.

### Meal Prices:

Breakfast is served before school with a cost per meal of \$1.75/full pay, \$0.30/reduced and free for those that qualify. A prepared lunch including milk is available at midday with a cost per meal of \$3.00/full pay, \$0.40/reduced and free for those that qualify. Student's will order lunch in their first period class for that day's meal. Milk is included with each meal but if you choose milk only, or want more than one milk, there is a \$0.35 charge. A student is allowed to charge no more than three meals. [Refer to Policy 8205]

### Dining Expectations

- Students eat in the Commons seated at a table.
- Students are responsible for maintaining a clean and healthy environment.
- For safety, students do not share food from home.
- When students have finished eating, they wipe the table area, remove trash or recyclables, and return trays and utensils.
- If students need to work with a teacher, they obtain a pass from that teacher *before* lunch.

### **Lunch Recess Activities**

*All students are expected to go outside during recess unless there is a designated indoor activity offered.* During lunch recess there may be indoor activities or study space available to students. Staff will supervise games/sports and open gym times. Occasionally, the library is open during lunch. Access to these activities may be limited by the host teacher and is a privilege that can be revoked.

### **Lunch Recess Detention**

Students may be assigned to a lunch detention as a consequence for repeated level one behaviors or a single higher level infraction. This time is to be served in a supervised room. Students who are assigned to lunch detention will be required to bring their lunch with them and will remain in detention for the combined lunch/recess. The assigning teacher will notify parents.

### **Communicable Diseases / Conditions**

To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal so that other students who may have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. These diseases include, but are not limited to:

Amebiasis	Hepatitis	Rubella (German Measles),
Campylobacteriosis	Influenza	including congenital
Chickenpox	Lyme disease	Salmonellosis
Chlamydia	Malaria	Syphilis
Colorado Tick Fever	Measles (Rubeola)	Scabies
Diphtheria	Meningitis	Shigellosis
Gastroenteritis	Mumps	Streptococcal disease, invasive
Giardiasis	Pinkeye	Tuberculosis
Hansen's disease	Ringworm of the scalp	Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

The District shall manage common communicable diseases in accordance with DPHHS guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. If a student develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness as defined while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

- (a) isolate the student immediately from other students or staff; and
- (b) inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request him or her to pick up the student.; and
- (c) consult with a physician, other qualified medical professional, or the local county health authority to determine if the case should be reported to the local health officer.

Students who express feelings of illness at school may be referred to a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board and may be sent home as soon as a parent or person designated on a student's emergency medical authorization form has been notified. The District may temporarily exclude from onsite school attendance a student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease that is readily transmitted in a school setting. Offsite instruction may be

provided during the period of absence in accordance with Policy 2050. The District reserves the right to require a statement from a student's primary care provider authorizing a student's return to onsite instruction.

When information is received by a staff member or a volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer shall promptly notify a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board to determine appropriate measures to be taken to protect student and staff health and safety. A school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, after consultation with and on advice of public health officials, shall determine which additional staff members, if any, need to know of the affected student's condition.

All students, staff, and others present in the any school building shall engage in hand hygiene at the following times, which include but are not limited to:

- (a) Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- (b) Before and after preparing, eating, or handling food or drinks
- (c) Before and after administering medication or screening temperature
- (d) After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- (e) After recess
- (f) After handling garbage
- (g) After assisting students with handwashing
- (h) After use of the restroom

Hand hygiene includes but is not limited to washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

Staff members shall supervise children when they use hand sanitizer and soap to prevent ingestion. Staff members shall place grade level appropriate posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.

Further information may be found at policy 3417 in the District's Policy Manual.

## **Complaints By Students / Parents**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply — by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a uniform complaint procedure policy at 1700 in the District's policy manual. In general, a parent or student should first discuss the complaint with the individual involved. If unresolved, a written complaint and a request for a conference should be sent to the Principal. If still unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Superintendent. Under some circumstances, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees in the event the matter cannot be resolved at the administrative level.



Some complaints require different procedures. Any building office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for filing complaints. Additional information can also be found in the designated Board policy, 1700, available on the website, and at the district office.

## **Computer Resources**

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook, available through Infinite Campus) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action. Students and parents should be aware that electronic communications — e-mail — using District computers are not private and may be monitored by District staff.

[For additional information, see policy 3612, 3612P]

## **Conduct**

In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our campus community, each student is expected to:

1. Demonstrate courtesy — even when others do not.
2. Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
3. Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
4. Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
5. Meet District or building standards of grooming and dress.
6. Obey all building and classroom rules.
7. Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other District staff.
8. Respect the property of others, including District property and facilities.
9. Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline

## **Dances/Socials**

These activities are open to West Valley 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students only. There will be a maximum of four (4) dances during the course of the school year. All sponsors must turn in a program outline for principal approval one (1) week prior to the scheduled activity. The activity can be no longer than two (2) hours and must be finished by 9:00 PM. All music is to be previewed by the Student Council Coordinator and/or chaperoning staff 2 days in advance of the activity. The following rules apply:

- Students who leave the dance and exit the building will not be allowed back into the dance.
- Students who leave the dance early and/or are asked to leave will call home to notify the parent.
- Students who play unapproved music will be asked to leave and will not participate in the next dance.
- Inappropriate behavior will be handled according to school discipline policies.
- A chaperone may stop any activity at any time he/she deems it necessary to do so.
- All bags and extra clothing will be stored appropriately.
- School activities are open to current West Valley students only.
- There must be daylight between dance partners, with no hand placement below the waist.
- No Public Displays of Affection (PDA) allowed. (kissing, etc.)
- School issued (signed) parental permission slips will be required to attend all dances.
- Student dress must be appropriate and meet dress code requirements.
- All other school rules apply accordingly.

## Disciplinary Action

The Board grants authority to a teacher or principal to hold a student to strict accountability for disorderly conduct in a school building, on property owned or leased by a school district, on a school bus, on the way to or from school, or during intermission or recess.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to instances set forth below:

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco products, and alternative nicotine and vapor products as defined in 16-11-302, MCA.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages, including powdered alcohol. Students who may be under the influence of alcohol will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling drug paraphernalia, illegal drugs, marijuana, controlled substances, or any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind, including such substances that contain chemicals which produce the same effect of illegal substances including but not limited to Spice and K2. Students who may be under the influence of such substances will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had drugs in their possession.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a firearm or other weapon in violation of Policy 3311.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon as referred to in Policy 3311.
- Disobeying directives from staff members or school officials or disobeying rules and regulations governing student conduct.
- Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's property.
- Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
- Unexcused absenteeism. Truancy statutes and Board policy will be utilized for chronic and habitual truants.
- Intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, hazing or bullying; or retaliation against any person who alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226 or participated in an investigation into alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226.
- Defaces or damages any school building, school grounds, furniture, equipment, or book belonging to the district.
- Forging any signature or making any false entry or attempting to authorize any document used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.
- Engaging in academic misconduct which may include but is not limited to: cheating, unauthorized sharing of exam responses or graded assignment work; plagiarism, accessing websites or electronic resources without authorization to complete assigned coursework, and any other act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student.

These grounds stated above for disciplinary action apply whenever a student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to the circumstances set forth below:]

- On school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any other time when school is being used by a school group.
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school.
- Travel to and from school or a school activity, function, or event.
- Anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of bullying of a staff member or student, or an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

Disciplinary measures include but are not limited to:

- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Detention, including Saturday school
- Clean-up duty
- Loss of student privileges
- Loss of bus privileges
- Notification to juvenile authorities and/or police
- Restitution for damages to school property

No District employee or person engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force District personnel are permitted to use as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons or for the purpose of self-defense.

### **Non-Disciplinary Measures**

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to assign a student to non-disciplinary offsite instruction pending the results of an investigation or for reasons related to the safety or well-being of students and staff. During the period of non-disciplinary offsite instruction, the student will be permitted to complete all assigned schoolwork for full credit. The assignment of non-disciplinary offsite instruction does not preclude the Superintendent or designee from disciplining a student who has, after investigation, been found to have violated a School District policy, rule, or handbook provision.

### **Delegation of Authority**

The Board grants authority to any teacher and to any other school personnel to impose on students under their charge any disciplinary measure, other than suspension or expulsion, corporal punishment, or in-school suspension, that is appropriate and in accordance with policies and rules on student discipline. The Board authorizes teachers to temporarily remove students from classrooms for disruptive behavior.

### **Corporal Punishment**

No person who is employed or engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include, and district personnel are permitted to use, reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense.

## **Counseling**

### **Personal and Academic Counseling**

Students and parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn about course offerings, and grade level requirements. Schedule questions and change requests should be directed to the counselor (a schedule change request form, including a parent signature, is required for all potential changes to a student's schedule).

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. Students who wish to meet with the counselor should contact Crystal Thurman at [cthurman@westvalleyschool.com](mailto:cthurman@westvalleyschool.com) or 406-755-7239.

## **Distance Learning And Montana Digital Academy**

The District recognizes that the District and students may have a need for greater flexibility in the educational program due to funding, teacher availability, individual learning styles, health conditions, employment responsibilities, lack of success in traditional school environments or a desire for students to accelerate their learning and work at the college level before leaving high school. The District acknowledges that online learning solutions offered by the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) and other remote delivery systems may fulfill these needs.

MTDA is authorized by Montana law to charge fees for students to access offered courses. The District shall pay fees for students enrolled in an MTDA class that is required for graduation as specified in District policy or the student handbook or as determined by the Superintendent or designee. The District may charge students a reasonable fee for an MTDA course or activity not required for graduation. The Board of Trustees authorizes the Superintendent to waive the fee in cases of financial hardship. The Superintendent, and/or designees, shall be responsible for developing procedures for the online learning program that address related topics that may include but are not limited to specification and determination of graduation requirements and fee collection for classes that are not required.

## **Distribution Of Material**

### **School Materials**

School publications distributed to students include: Yearbook and Student Handbook, etc.. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

### **Non-School Materials**

Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus by a student or a non-student without the prior approval of the principal. Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

## Dress And Grooming

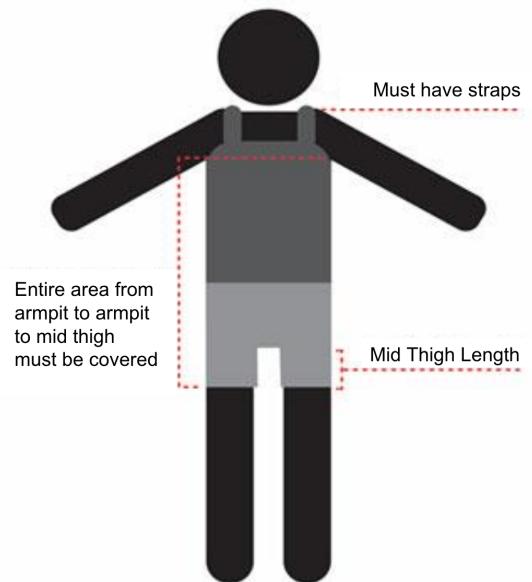
The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards (refer to Policy 3224). Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following guidelines: [Insert dress code guidelines here]

### Required Dress

Student clothing is the responsibility of the parent as well as the student. Appropriate dress is important. West Valley students are expected to dress for their school job.

#### The following rules apply:

- Clothing is free of offensive, profane, drug/alcohol/tobacco/weapon related pictures or sayings.
- Students must wear shoes for sanitation and safety
- Shirts or blouses must touch the top of pants/skirts/shorts
- The stomach/waist area cannot be visible at any time
- Shirts/tops/dresses must have straps
- Undergarments are covered
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses will reach or fall below the student's mid-thigh. No holes in pants above this length.
- Pajamas (tops or bottoms) and costumes are not permitted.
- Hats, caps, hoods are to be removed upon entering the building
- In freezing weather, full length sleeves and pants are necessary for outdoor recess.



To decrease loss of learning time, students deemed inappropriately dressed will be asked to change into a gym uniform. Issues of inappropriate dress will be addressed by staff.

## Cell Phones, Tablets, and Other Electronic Devices

Phone dependency can lead to stress for children and teens. We encourage a “phone-free” school day. **Please do not expect a student to check a phone for texts or messages during the school day. Messages for students may be called into the office. There are phones available at the office for student use. Students may use personal devices after the last bell.** Student possession and use of phones on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of District employees is a privilege which will be permitted only under the following circumstances:

- Students may use cell phones on campus before the first bell and after they are excused for the day.
- **All personal electronic devices, including cell phones, personal laptops, tablets, and smart watches, and ear buds will be turned off and stored in lockers during the school day.**
- On a limited basis, teachers may allow BYOD (bring your own device) for supervised situations.
- When you use your own device, Acceptable Use Policy rules apply.
- Unauthorized devices will be confiscated.

- **At no time will any student operate a cell phone or other electronic device with video or audio recording capabilities in a locker room, bathroom, or other location where such operation may violate the privacy rights of another person.**

Unauthorized use of personal devices may disrupt the learning environment and is grounds for confiscation of the device by school staff. Confiscated items will have their technology taken to the office and parents will be notified. Repeated unauthorized use of such devices will result in disciplinary action.

## **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, And Organizations**

Please note: Student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior — including consequences for misbehavior — that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

All students participating in extracurricular activities must have the following prior to the first practice:

- A required physical documented on the official Montana High School Association (MHSA) Physical Form (at least for all MHSA sanctioned activities).
- An Assumption of Risk statement signed by the parent.
- A Permission to Participate form (sign-off).
- An updated Medical information form.
- A Concussion Education and Compliance form signed by the student athlete and parent.

Details about extracurricular activity participation are outlined in the Student Activity Handbook.

The District recognizes that student clubs are a helpful resource for schools and supports their formation. Student clubs must complete an application process. The Superintendent or designee is delegated the authority to approve or deny club applications. The Administration shall approve and recognize curricular student clubs or organizations in a manner consistent with this Policy 3550 and any administrative procedure. Student-led and initiated groups of similar interests that do not meet the requirements to be an approved curricular student club shall be designated as non curricular student groups. Students are permitted to informally gather at the school in accordance with Policy 3233.

## **Fees**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra-curricular activities
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, yearbooks, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance
- Participation fees for extracurricular activities
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the District
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books
- Summer school courses that are offered tuition free during the regular school year
- Participation in Montana Digital Academy courses not required for graduation
- Students or parents will be charged for chromebook or device damage that is a result of misuse or abusive handling by the student.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the superintendent.

A school district may withhold the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a current or former pupil who is responsible for the cost of school materials, unpaid lunch fees, or the loss or damage of school property until the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian satisfies the obligation. The district may not refuse to transfer files to another district because a student owes fines or fees. (Refer to Policy 3520)

## **Firearms And Weapons**

It is the policy of the West Valley School District to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law 20-5-202 (2), MCA, pertaining to students who bring a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with 20-5-202 (3), MCA, a teacher, superintendent, or a principal shall suspend immediately for good cause a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with Montana law, a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district must be expelled from school for a period of not less than 1 year unless modified in accordance with District policy. Any disciplinary hearing conducted under this section will honor due process rights outlined in state law and Policy 3311.

For the purposes of the firearms, the term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (4).

## **Possession of Weapons other than Firearms**

The District does not allow weapons on school property. Any student found to have possessed, used or transferred a weapon on school property will be subject to discipline in accordance with the District’s discipline policy. For purposes of this section, “weapon” means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury, including but not limited to air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; fake (facsimile) weapons; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nunchucks (also known as nunchucks); throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace or other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. (Refer to Policy 3311)

## **Fund-Raising**

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the superintendent. Fund-raising by non-school groups is not permitted on school property.

[For further information, see policies 3530, 3535]

## Grading, Curriculum, and Assessments

Following state law, the curriculum is the state adopted standards. Grade reports are posted three (3) times per year. Printed midterms or progress reports may be sent home to inform parent(s) of their student's progress. Parents can also access their student's course information online throughout the school year by logging into the Infinite Campus portal. Grades are based on proficiency/mastery of a task, skill or standard:

Letter Grade	Descriptor
P	Proficient (Mastery)
NP	Nearing Proficient
N	Novice
Ad	Advanced (Beyond grade level)
Pa/F	Pass/Fail
IE	Insufficient Evidence

A history of IE (Insufficient Evidence) in a course, resulting in the inability of staff to determine proficiency, may result in a final grade of F (Fail) for the course.

### Curriculum

Curricular content is guided by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Information on academic standards, benchmarks, and performance indicators is available at <http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/Index.html>

### Assessments, State and Benchmark

Per the Administrative Rules of Montana *all* students shall participate in benchmark and state-level assessments. Montana does not have an "opt out" provision. Administrative Rule has the force of law.

Test	Window	Type	Approximate Length (minutes)	Purpose
STAR (Math and Reading)	Each Trimester	Benchmark 5th-8th grades	Math 20-40 Reading 20-40	*monitors growth or lack of, and guides current instruction
SBAC (Math and Reading)	Spring Trimester	Summative 5th-8th grades	Math 120 Reading 90-120	*State-level, grade-level assessment. Provides information on student and schoolwide success and areas needing improvement.
MSA (Science)	Spring Trimester	Summative 5th & 8th grades	Science 60-120	*Statewide grade-band assessment



## **Hallway Behavior**

Middle Schoolers will enter and exit through the West Doors in the locker area or the front door. Gyms will not be used for walkthroughs. The hallways of West Valley will be a safe and quiet environment where people interact with courtesy and respect. What it looks and sounds like:

- Face the direction you are walking.
- Walk on the right hand side and follow directional arrows.
- Hands to yourself.
- Students will put all belongings that are not carried inside lockers or cubbies.
- Voice level at a level “1” or lowered.
- Lockers are closed quietly.

## **Homework and Daily Assignments**

Classwork and homework are constructive tools in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. Parents should contact teachers with questions regarding assignments and learning expectations.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student’s educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

Students who are absent are responsible for contacting their teachers regarding missed work. Homework may be requested by parents from the office after an extended absence of two or more days. Most coursework is available within the Google classroom; it’s best to contact the assigning teacher regarding format and availability.

If you are planning an extended absence, please contact teachers ahead of time. Some assignments may be prepared in advance with adequate notice.

## **IDEA (Public Law 94-142)**

This directs all public schools to provide an appropriate education for students who are handicapped or are otherwise learning disabled. Questions related to West Valley’s modified educational plans for handicapped and/or learning disabled students may be directed to Richard Gross (Interim Superintendent), Alesia Hamill (Interim K-4 Principal), Tina Blair (Middle School Principal) or any SPED teacher.

\*\* Specialized services are contracted through the Flathead IDEA Cooperative. Many students are screened to detect problems. Staff includes a school psychologist, an early childhood teacher, and a speech therapist.

## **Immunization**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, pertussis, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, poliomyelitis and tetanus. Haemophilus influenza type B is required for students under age five (5).

A student who transfers into the District may photocopy immunization records in the possession of the school of origin. The District will accept the photocopy as evidence of the immunization. Within thirty (30) days after a transferring student ceases attendance at the school of origin, the District must receive the original immunization records for the student who transfers into the District.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the student must present a statement signed by the student (or by the parent, if the student is a minor) stating that immunization conflicts with the beliefs and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member. This statement must be renewed yearly.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a Montana licensed or certified health care provider stating the immunization required would not be considered safe. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. The statement for an exemption shall be maintained as part of the student's immunization record in accordance with FERPA as specified in Policy 3600P. [For further information, see policy 3413]

## **Law Enforcement**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

### **Students Taken into Custody**

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Montana Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Montana Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact. [refer to Policies 4410-4411]

## **Lockers/Storage**

6th through 8th graders are issued a locker. It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker orderly and clean.

**The door of the locker must be completely closed and locked when student is not present.**

- WMVS will not be responsible or liable for lost or stolen property.
- Lockers are school property and school administrators may search lockers at any time.
- Only school issued locks will be used on the lockers. *Any others will be removed and discarded.*
- Some short term decorations are acceptable but should be appropriate for school. No stickers or tape.
- Band instruments that do not fit in a locker must be stored in the music room.
- For safety reasons, do not place anything on top of the lockers or cubbies.
- The only area for student items in the hallways is IN a locker. **Books, backpacks, and other items will not be placed on the floor outside classrooms, between lockers or on the stairs.**
- Tampering with another student's lock or locker will be cause for discipline.
- Students will only use the locker that is assigned to them. No trading!
- Backpacks are not allowed in the classrooms.

Athletic Lockers: Locker room is for day use only. No items will be left in the locker room. No locks allowed.

Students are encouraged to get study materials each morning and materials needed for afternoon classes during the lunch period. No student will leave class without permission.

The best policy is to leave valuables at home. Coats and other personal belongings should be marked with identification.

## **Lost and Found**

There is a lost and found area located near the lunchroom. This is the first place to check for or bring a lost item. Textbooks may be brought to the office and/or the library.

Unclaimed items may be sent to a charity on the day of our monthly Board meeting. The school cannot assume responsibility for student losses. Please mark all items such as jackets, coats, lunch boxes, etc.

## **Medicine At School**

A school employee who has successfully completed specific training in administration of medication, pursuant to written authorization of a physician or dentist and that of a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian, may administer medication to any student in the school or may delegate this task pursuant to Montana law.

A student who has authorization to possess and self-administer medication must have completed and filed, with the office, either a Montana Authorization to Carry and Self-Administer Medication or a Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication form. Details regarding self-administration of medication are available at the office as outlined in Policy 3416, 3416F, 3416F1]

## **Multi-Tiered System of Support: MTSS**

MTSS is an integrated multi-tiered system of Instruction, assessment and intervention designed to meet the academic achievement and behavioral needs of all students.

An Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) meets regularly to make data-based decisions to aid students academically and/or behaviorally so that all students may learn at a high level. The team may include administration, coaches, teachers, parents, and the school guidance counselor.

The team goals are to:

- Utilizing collaborative efforts, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) ensure all students master essential academic and social behaviors in addition to essential grade-level standards.
- Provide structural support and assistance to teachers in identifying and meeting student needs within the classroom.
- Collaborate and consider alternatives for addressing student needs.
- Advise the implementation of modified educational plans.
- Assist in implementing the discipline policy of West Valley School.
- Review data (including grades, universal screening levels, progress monitoring, and state assessments) to determine if accommodations, intervention courses, or further testing would benefit the student.
- Notify parents of students who participate in intervention or Title Programs of instructional strategies and general education services that will be provided.

## **Parent Involvement, Responsibilities, And Rights**

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parent, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Review the information in the student handbook with his or her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s) and the directory information notice. A parent with questions is encouraged to contact the school.
- Become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, and the options available to the child. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.

- Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at 406-755-3129 for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.
- Exercise the right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other aids, and to examine tests that have been administered to his or her child. [See Protection of Student Rights on page 21]
- Become a school volunteer. For further information, contact the school office.
- Participate in campus parent organizations. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles. Parent organizations include the Parent Teacher Organization.
- Offer to serve as a parent representative on the District-level or campus-level planning committees formulating educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, contact the superintendent.

## **PE- Dressing Out**

5th graders will NOT dress out. 6th, 7th, and 8th graders will be expected to dress out in uniform for PE.

### **Locker Room Norms**

During Change Out, PE teachers will be regularly positioned outside of locker rooms, within earshot of students and may also walk through to monitor behavior.

- Students are required to bring a small gym bag (string bag purchased through school or similar) to class. These gym bags will be stored in an assigned gym locker during class only, and stored in the students' assigned academic locker during the rest of the day.
- Assigned gym lockers are for class time use only. Items may not be left for the entire day or overnight. Each locker will be assigned to multiple students in different classes, and should not be treated as a personal locker. No locks will be used on PE lockers.
- Students will only bring required PE clothing, shoes, and personal hygiene items into the locker room. No valuables, phones, cash, or other items will be allowed in the locker rooms. West Valley School is not responsible for lost or stolen possessions that result from bringing unapproved items into the locker room.
- Elementary students are not allowed in the middle school locker rooms. Elementary students who are using the Big Gym for PE will use the nearest bathrooms (middle school bathrooms or 5th grade wing bathrooms).
- Permission to use the restroom does NOT imply permission to access your locker. Permission to access gym lockers outside of assigned change out times must be explicitly given by a PE teacher.

### **PE Attire**

- 6th-8th grade students will wear a blue West Valley PE t-shirt and black West Valley PE athletic shorts, purchased through Universal Athletics.
- Long Sleeve Option: Students will have the option of purchasing a long sleeve t-shirt if they prefer, OR wearing a long sleeve "compression" style shirt underneath their PE shirt.
- Students have the option of bringing their own black athletic pants or joggers. Tights or spandex are NOT allowed.
- Students may wear sweatshirts, gloves, and hats for outdoor activities as needed. All attire worn outside must be appropriate for athletic activity and must adhere to the standard West Valley dress code for the current school year.
- Contact Mrs. Measure ([tmeasure@westvalleyschool.com](mailto:tmeasure@westvalleyschool.com)) or Mr. Lake ([clake@westvalleyschool.com](mailto:clake@westvalleyschool.com)) if your student has unique physical/emotional needs so we can work to create an individualized change-out plan for them.

## **Pets**

Students and Parents should not bring pets of any type to school unless approved in advance by the classroom teacher. The pet must be contained in an appropriate cage or container. The County animal warden will be called to remove stray animals from school property.

## **Positive Behavior Support - Merit System**

All students begin with full privileges and no demerits. Privileges include assembly attendance, off campus field trips, incentive activities, etc.. Students may be awarded Warrior Tickets (merits) to acknowledge positive behaviors.

Students who are engaged in misconduct will earn demerits and potential loss of privilege activities, Demerits will happen at and above level 2 behaviors. Demerits are assigned by administration.

- Level 2 behaviors will result in 1 demerit
- Level 3 behaviors will result in 4 demerits

Privilege activities will be withheld from a student who has a record of 4 demerits within a trimester.

## **Prayer**

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## **Protection Of Student Rights [Policies 3200, And 2132]**

The District recognizes fully that all students are entitled to enjoy the rights protected under federal and state constitutions and law for persons of their age and maturity in a school setting. The District expects students to exercise these rights reasonably and to avoid violating the rights of others. The District may impose disciplinary measures whenever students violate the rights of others or violate District policies or rules.

## **Surveys**

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation.

## **Instructional Materials**

Parents have the right to inspect instructional materials used as a part of their child's educational curriculum, within a reasonable time. This does not include academic tests or assessments.

## **Collection of Personal Information from Students for Marketing**

The district will not administer or distribute to students any survey or other instrument for the purposes of collecting or compiling personal information for marketing or selling such information, with the exception of the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products/services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

Pursuant to federal law, the district will not request, nor disclose, the identity of a student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the district) containing one or more of the following:

- Political affiliations.
- Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family.
- Sexual behavior and attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or the student's parent/guardian.
- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

## **Release Of Students From School**

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the office or school nurse. The administrator or nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

## **Safety**

### **Accident Prevention**

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students

If injured while at school or at a school sponsored activity, contact your teacher, advisor, or coach and have them fill out the district's injury report form as soon as possible. This form can be obtained at the district office. Form 3431F

Students **MUST** tell the coach/sponsor of the injury so that the coach/sponsor can file an accident report.

### **Accident Insurance**

The school district does not provide accident or medical insurance coverage for students. Insurance coverage may be purchased by parents through a private company for a minimum fee. Insurance information is distributed at the beginning of the school year and available throughout the year. Please review the information carefully, consider the benefits of such coverage, and complete the application as per instructions. Please contact the office for additional information. This insurance covers while your child is at school or participating in activities. A parent seeking coverage must make sure the insurance coverage is in place prior to the first day of practice and/or school.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the office to update any information.

### **Disaster Drills and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. [Policy 8301]

### **Emergency School-Closing Information:**

Emergency School Closure procedures are available on the school website under District.  
westvalleyschool.com

### **Searches**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, District officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

### **Students' Desks and Lockers**

- Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.
- Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that the locker is locked, and that the combination is not available to others.
- Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present. Searches may also be conducted at random, in accordance with law and District policy. See policy 3231.
- The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

### **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others.

### **Drug Detection Dogs**

The Superintendent may request the assistance of law enforcement personnel or private individuals to conduct inspections and searches through the use of specially trained dogs.



## **Section 504 Of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973 (“Section 504”)**

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students’ identification, evaluation, and educational placement. This system shall include: notice, an opportunity for the student’s parent or legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student’s parent or legal guardian, and a review procedure. Parents who feel their child may qualify for 504 should contact the building principal to initiate an evaluation. Refer to Board Policy 2162 & 2162P.

## **Sexual Harassment / Sexual Discrimination**

The District encourages staff, parental, and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in the public schools. Students and/or parents will discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the Superintendent who serves as the District Title IX coordinator.

For purposes of this section and the grievance process, “sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual’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 person equal access to the District’s education program or activity or;
3. “Sexual assault” as defined in 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), “dating violence” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(10), “domestic violence” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(8) or “stalking” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(30).

All students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop. A substantiated complaint against a student or staff member will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense. Supportive measures are available to parties involved in Title IX investigations.

The District will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual discrimination by an employee. To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by another student or sexual harassment or sexual discrimination by a staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the Title IX coordinator.

The parent or other advisor may accompany the student throughout the complaint process.

The conference will be scheduled and held as soon as possible. The principal coordinator District will conduct an appropriate investigation in accordance with Policy 3225 and 3225P. The student will not be required to present a complaint to a person who is the subject of the complaint.

If the resolution of the complaint is not satisfactory to the decision may appeal in accordance with Policy 3225P. For more information about the District’s complaint procedure, see Policy 3225, 3225P, 3225F

## **Special Education**

The District will provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the District, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provisions of Montana law, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District will follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of service to children with disabilities, as provided in the current Montana State Plan under Part B of IDEA. Refer to Policy 2161 & 2161P.

Parents who feel their child may qualify for Special Education services should contact the building principal to initiate an evaluation.

## **Student Records**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the time the student withdraws or graduates. A copy of this record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours, upon completion of the written request form. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

- Working with the student;
- Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an individual education plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA, or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
- Compiling statistical data; or
- Investigating or evaluating programs.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records.

Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

Students over 18, and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requester has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

Copies of student records are available at nominal cost per page, payable in advance. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the District is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone, including military recruiters and/or post-secondary institutions, who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Should circumstances change, the parent can contact the principal to indicate his or her desire to change the original request. Directory information may include: a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

## **Special Education Record**

Parents of a student with disabilities who has been provided special education services by the District will be notified when any information that specifically identifies the student is no longer needed. If the parent requests destruction of the information and the time established by law for retention has expired, the records will be destroyed. However, if they expired, the material will be deleted from the records but the records will be maintained until the time has expired.

## Student Schedules

### Middle School Hours

Schedule	Start	Release
Regular Day	8:15	3:15
Early Release	8:15	1:00
Late Arrival	9:00	3:15

*\*NOTE: Direct school ground supervision does not begin until 8:00 A.M. and ends at 3:30 P.M. Students should not arrive on campus before supervision is provided.*

### 5-8 Schedule

Period	Time
1	8:15 - 9:20
2	9:23-10:22
3	10:25-11:24
4	11:25-1:23 (super period)
Grade 5 Recess/Lunch	11:10-11:40
Grade 7 Recess/Lunch	11:25-11:55
Grade 6 Recess/Lunch	11:40-12:10
Grade 8 Recess/Lunch	12:43-1:13
5	1:16-2:14
6	2:17-3:15

*\*5th Grade classes do not rotate other than for specials and differentiation*

### Textbooks

Board-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school or damaging a book issued by the school may be charged to replace the book.

### Title I

Title I is a federally funded program that is designed to assist students who are having difficulty in language and/or math. Students receive assistance on a one-to-one or small group basis. This program supplements their regular classroom instruction. Title I may be facilitated through the MTSS process.

## **Transition to High School**

The counselor and principal help with the transition to high school. Kalispell schools often hold welcoming events for students and parents. These meets are scheduled as an orientation to 9th grade at Glacier or Flathead High School. Students have an opportunity to tour the high schools and the Glacier High School counselors will visit our 8th grade in the spring.

## **Transportation**

### **School Sponsored**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or the parent presents — before the scheduled trip — a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent.

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The District makes school bus transportation available to all students living three or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. Further information may be obtained by calling the district office.

Students are expected to assist District staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding school buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, band instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus and before crossing in front of the bus.
- Remain seated while the bus is moving.
- Ride only your assigned bus in your assigned seat.
- Guest riders must have a pass from the office.

When students ride in a District van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

Misconduct will be punished and bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

## **Videotaping/Recording Of Students**

The District uses video cameras [with audio] on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

## Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit District schools. For the safety of those within the school, all visitors must first report to the district office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass.. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

## West Valley School Board

Marilyn Hedstrom, Board Chair; Stefanie Hanson, Vice Chair; Laurel Ekern; Jeff Meredith; Mark Waatti

The School Board holds its regular meetings on the second Monday of every month at 5:30 P.M. We encourage parents and patrons to attend the open School Board meetings. Meetings are held at the school and may also be held in an online format.

## West Valley School Staff

### Administration

Richard Gross  
Tina Blair  
Alesia Hammill

Interim Superintendent  
Middle School Principal, 5-8  
Interim Elementary Principal, K-4

### Student Support

Teri Dierenfield  
KC Iletto  
Tonya Jewett  
Heidi Raab  
Nicky Shepard  
Crystal Thurman

MTSS (Title) Coach/Curriculum Director/Athletic Director  
Speech and Language  
MTSS Coach/Testing & Title  
School Psychologist  
School Psychologist  
Guidance Counselor

### Front Office

Mila Baker  
Brooke Ells

Assistant Secretary/Attendance  
District Secretary/Enrollment/Sub Clerk

### Middle School Certified Teachers

Katie Haas  
Erin Grieco  
Jessica Mielke  
Darecy Harmon  
Claudia Anderson  
Vonnie McDonald  
Mollie Freese  
Matt Honcoop  
Laura Browning  
Kenn Besaw

5 Homeroom/General Education  
5 Homeroom/General Education  
5 Homeroom/General Education  
6 Social Studies/Science/Engineering  
6 Math  
6 English/Literature  
7 English/Literature  
7 Science/Engineering  
7 PreAlgebra/Math  
8 Social Studies

Tana Voeller  
Stacy Rush  
Gena Wilson  
Sheri Hand  
Craig Lake  
Tara Measure  
Jessica Levitt  
Katie Holman  
Melanie Home Gun  
Kris Keller

8th Math/Algebra  
8 Science/Engineering  
8 ELA/ Literature  
Music/Band/Choir/Drama  
Physical Education/ Health  
Physical Education/ Health  
Visual Arts/French  
Special Education  
Special Education  
Library/MS Social Studies/Electives



**Cut and return lower half of page to homeroom teacher.**

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## **Receipt Of Handbook**

*“I have received a copy of the West Valley Student Handbook for 2023-2024. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the handbook.”*

Print name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_