

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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**VAN ALSTYNE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**



Student Handbook

2009-2010

201 Newport
Van Alstyne, Texas 75495
(903) 482-8805

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STUDENT HANDBOOK

2009-2010

201 Newport Drive

Van Alstyne, Texas 75495

(903) 482-8805

Dear Students and Parents:

A primary goal of Van Alstyne Elementary School is to prepare students for success by providing the highest quality of education to your children. Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership of communication between home and school. The *Van Alstyne Elementary School Student Handbook* contains information for students and parents to promote effective instruction and school safety while promoting the dignity of each child. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic.

The *Student Handbook* is designed to correlate with Board policy and the **Student Code of Conduct** approved by the Board. Please read this handbook carefully with your child and discuss it with him/her. After sharing this handbook with your child, please sign, date, and return the acknowledgement sheet to your child's homeroom teacher.

Be aware that the **Student Code of Conduct** is published annually, while policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Periodically, changes will be made and communicated by letter or newsletter to parents and students. These changes will supersede student handbook provisions.

If we can assist you in any way, please give us that opportunity.

Sincerely,

Terry Billups

Principal

The Van Alstyne Independent School District operates under the philosophy that the quality of a student's education depends upon communication and understanding between the student, parent, and school. The primary goal of the school is to give every student the very best educational opportunities possible. This handbook of school policies and activities is presented for this purpose and is in keeping with current school board policies.

Van Alstyne I.S.D. does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Any inquiries regarding this should be directed to Mr. DeMasters, the Assistant Superintendent, 504 Compliance Officer, Title IX Officer (903)-482-8800.

Van Alstyne I.S.D. will take steps to assure that the lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

REQUIRED FORMS
Acknowledgment Form

My child and I have received a copy of the Van Alstyne Elementary School Student Handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct* for 2009-2010. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Code.

Printed name of student: _____

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

“Please sign and date this page, remove it from the handbook, and return it to the student’s school.”

**Acknowledgment of Electronic Distribution of
Student Handbook**

My child and I have been offered the option to receive a paper copy or to electronically access at <http://www.vanalstyneisd.org>, the Van Alstyne Elementary Student Handbook and the Van Alstyne Student Code of Conduct for 2009–2010.

I have chosen to:

- Receive a paper copy of the Student Handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct*.
- Accept responsibility for accessing the Student Handbook by visiting the Web address listed above.

I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year and that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the Code, I should direct those questions to the principal at 903-4982-8805 or tbillups@ednet10.net.

Printed name of student: _____

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information

State law requires the district to give you the following information:

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows the procedures for requesting the information unless the parent or guardian objects to the release of the directory information about the student. If you do not want Van Alstyne ISD to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by September 8th /within ten school days of child's first day of instruction for this school year.

This means that the district must give certain personal information (called "directory information") about your child to any person who requests it, unless you have told the district in writing not to do so. In addition, you have the right to tell the district that it may, or may not, use certain personal information about your child for specific school-sponsored purposes. The district is providing you this form so you can communicate your wishes about these issues. [See **Directory Information** on page 8 for more information.]

Student Name (please print) _____

For the following school-sponsored purposes: all District publications and announcements, Van Alstyne ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name/Parent's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team

Directory information identified only for limited school-sponsored purposes remains otherwise confidential and will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of _____ (*student's name*), **(do give) (do not give)** the district permission to use the information in the above list for the specified school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature _____

Date _____

Student Name (please print) _____

For all other purposes, Van Alstyne ISD has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

Parent: Please circle one of the choices below:

I, parent of _____ (*student's name*), **(do give) (do not give)** the district permission to release the information in this list in response to a request unrelated to school-sponsored purposes.

Parent signature _____

Date _____

Consent/Opt-Out Form

Dear Parent:

The district is required by federal law to notify you and obtain your consent for or denial of (opt-out) for your child's participation in certain school activities. The activities include any student survey, analysis, or evaluation, known as "protected information survey" that concerns one or more of the following eight areas:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom the student has a close family relationship;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

This notice and consent/opt-out requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and to certain physical exams and screenings.

NOTICES TO PARENTS

Statement of Nondiscrimination

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Van Alstyne ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Mr. Rick DeMasters, Asst. Superintendent, 549 Miller rd., 903-482-8802.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Mr. Rick DeMasters, Asst. Superintendent, 549 Miller Rd., 903-482-8802.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the superintendent Dr. Alan Seay, 903-482-8802.

[See FB(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL)]

Asbestos Management Plan

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations addressing asbestos, is available in the Administrative Office. If you have any questions, please contact 903-482-8802.

Pest Management Plan

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact 903-482-8802.

Additional Notices

Other important notices in the Student Handbook cover the following topics:

- Student participation in a survey, analysis, or evaluation;
- Opting out of surveys and data collection activities;
- Requesting the professional qualifications of teachers and staff;
- Requesting a transfer of your child to a safe public school;
- Assistance to students who have learning difficulties;
- Student records;
- Bacterial meningitis;
- Career and technology programs;
- Homeless students; and
- School lunch programs.

Please take some time to review these notices and other important information contained in the Student Handbook.

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PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

The Van Alstyne Elementary School Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I—REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with notices that the district must provide to all parents, as well as other information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook; and

Section II—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS —organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Van Alstyne *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as an attachment to this handbook.

The student handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

In case of conflict between board policy or the *Student Code of Conduct* and any provisions of the student handbook, the provisions of board policy or the *Student Code of Conduct* that were most recently adopted by the board are to be followed.

After reading through the entire handbook with your child, keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact your child’s teacher, the counselor, or the principal.

Also, please complete and return to your child’s campus the following required forms that are provided in the forms packet.

1. Parental Acknowledgment Form
2. Student Directory Information Form
3. Free and Reduced Lunch Forms

[See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 2 and **Directory Information** on page 8 for more information.]

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review in the school office or online at <http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/091908>.

SECTION I: REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This section of the Van Alstyne Elementary School Student Handbook includes several notices that the district is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Van Alstyne ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: VAISD Assistant Superintendent, Rick DeMasters, at (903) 482-8802.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: VAISD Assistant Superintendent, Rick DeMasters, at (903) 482-8802.
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See VAISD Superintendent Dr. Alan Seay, at (903) 482-8802.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

WORKING TOGETHER

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at (903) 482-8805 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference

period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 37]

- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policies at GKG and contact Dina Awe or your child’s teacher at (903) 482-8805.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. The parent organization at the elementary is the PTA.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the principal.
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council** on pages 29 and 41]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information.]

PARENTAL RIGHTS

OBTAINING INFORMATION AND PROTECTING STUDENT RIGHTS

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

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

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. [For further information, see policy EF(LEGAL).]

“OPTING OUT” OF SURVEYS AND ACTIVITIES

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA.]

LIMITING THE DISPLAY OF A STUDENT’S ARTWORK AND PROJECTS

As a parent, if you do not want your child’s artwork, special projects, photographs, and the like to be displayed on the district’s Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication, you must notify the principal in writing.

REQUESTING PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND STAFF

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

REVIEWING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.

INSPECTING SURVEYS

As a parent, you may inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

ACCESSING STUDENT RECORDS

You may review your child’s student records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,

- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,
- Teacher and counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns, and
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records** on page 6]

GRANTING PERMISSION TO VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORD A STUDENT

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety;
- When it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity;
or
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

REMOVING A STUDENT TEMPORARILY FROM THE CLASSROOM

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.

EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM RECITING THE PLEDGES TO THE U.S. AND TEXAS FLAGS

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** on page 35 and policy EC(LEGAL).]

EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM RECITING A PORTION OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK(LEGAL).]

REQUESTING NOTICES OF CERTAIN STUDENT MISCONDUCT

A non-custodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to your child's misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO(LEGAL) and the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

REQUESTING TRANSFERS FOR YOUR CHILD

As a parent, you have a right:

- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the board or its designee to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. See the superintendent or designee for information. [See policy FDB.]

See Bullying on page 14 , and policy FFI(LOCAL).

- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See the district's (LOCAL) policy on School Safety Transfers.]
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus or a neighboring district if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See the district's (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) policies on School Safety Transfers.]

REQUESTING CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT FOR MULTIPLE BIRTH SIBLINGS

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See FDB(LEGAL).]

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

PARENTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Special Programs** on page 43 and contact Terry Billups (principal) at (903) 482-8805.

Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular

classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other support services that are available to all students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is VAE principal at (903) 482-8805.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. [See policy FDB(LOCAL).]

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.
- Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district.

SERVICES FOR TITLE I PARTICIPANTS

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs is VAISD assistant Superintendent, Mr. Rick DeMasters, and may be contacted at (903) 482-8802.

STUDENT RECORDS

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records. Release is restricted to:

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- District staff members who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, and principals), school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, and diagnosticians), or an agent of the district (such as a medical consultant).
- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

Release to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be inspected by a parent or an eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Copies of student records are available at a cost of ten cents per page, payable in advance. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge upon written request of the parent. The address of the superintendent’s office:

549 Miller Lane

Van Alstyne, TX 75495.

The address of the principal’s office:

201 Newport

Van Alstyne, TX 75495

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student 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, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy. [See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 37, and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 17 for an overview of the process.]

The district's policy regarding student records found at FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL) is available from the principal's or superintendent's office, or www.vanalstyneisd.org.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Please note:

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as "directory information." This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year or another date established by the district. [See the "Notice Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" included in this handbook.]

DIRECTORY INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED PURPOSES

The district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: All district publications and announcements.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child's name, parent name, address, phone number, photograph, grade level, honors and awards received, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. This information will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

Unless you object to the use of your child's information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed.

BACTERIAL MENINGITIS

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside

the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>.

SECTION II: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact VAE principal at (903) 482-8805.

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day’s learning on the previous day’s, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws, one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit, are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, however, the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.[See FEA]

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of the reading diagnosis test.

A student in grades 3–8 will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and applicable subject area.

EXEMPTIONS TO COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;

- Service as an election clerk; and
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

In addition, a junior or senior student’s absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university may be considered an exemption, provided the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction termed “accelerated instruction” by the state or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

If the student is over age 18, the student’s parents shall not be subject to penalties as a result of their child’s violation of state compulsory attendance law. [See FEA(LEGAL)]

ATTENDANCE FOR CREDIT

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements for the class. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the approval of the judge presiding over the case will also be required before the student receives credit for the class.

If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit, if appropriate. [See policies at FEC]

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.

- In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee’s decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL).

The actual number of days that a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

PARENT’S NOTE AFTER AN ABSENCE

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent’s permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

DOCTOR’S NOTE AFTER AN ABSENCE FOR ILLNESS

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than five (5) consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student’s extended absence from school. [See FEC(LOCAL).] **MAKE UP WORK, see pg 32**

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Pre-Kindergarten: Pre-K will be housed at the elementary school this year. The doors open at 7:30 AM, and all pre-k students will go to the cafeteria for breakfast or to wait for their teacher to come get them. At 7:55 A.M., students will clean up the breakfast room and will journey into class. Students should not arrive prior to 7:30 A.M. as there will be no supervision before that time and the building will be locked. Students arriving after 8:00 A.M. will be considered tardy.

The Pre-K school day will go from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM. At 11:00 AM, students will be dismissed and picked up in front of the school building (201 Newport).

VAE:

***** To help alleviate traffic congestion in the morning, please go west on Village Parkway and circle around on Amherst Dr. to the west end of Newport. Follow the**

flow eastward on Newport Dr. to the front of the school. We encourage the traffic flow to go from west to east on Newport.

The north doors of the school building will be open at 7:30 A.M. each day. Students arriving before 7:55 A.M should report to the cafeteria or gymnasium upon arrival at the elementary campus and sit in the designated area for their grade level. Supervision is provided at that time by teachers and teacher aides. **Students should not arrive at school before 7:30 A.M. because there is no adult supervision before this time and the building will be locked.** Students may purchase breakfast from 7:30 to 7:50 A.M. **The cafeteria will stop serving food at 7:50 AM.** The first morning bell, which signals that students and patrons may be in the hallways, will ring at 7:55 A.M. Teachers will pick up their students in the cafeteria/gymnasium at 7:55 A.M. **For safety and security reasons, only staff members will be allowed in the hallways by the classrooms before 7:55 A.M.** Children who arrive after 7:55 A.M. need to go directly to their classrooms. The instructional school day begins at 8:05 A.M. **The tardy bell will ring at 8:05 A.M.** Students who are not in their classrooms or with their homeroom teacher for supervision at 8:05 A.M. will be counted tardy and must check in at the office. Also refer to the section on “Tardiness” of this handbook.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The instructional day ends at **3:05 P.M.** for students in kindergarten through grade 4. Pre-kindergarten dismisses at **11:00 A.M.**

All students are to leave the school grounds promptly upon dismissal from school. If a family or carpool has children in different grades, **the children will be picked up at the location designated for the youngest child in the family or carpool.** Please note that you may be asked to circle back around or park if you are waiting for an older child and are blocking others from picking up children.

If parents know they will be running late, they should notify the school office. If a student is not to follow the customary routine, the parent is requested to notify the teacher in writing of any change for a certain day. Otherwise, the student and teacher will follow the customary routine. In the case of an emergency, please phone the school office to communicate a necessary change in routine (903- 482-8805). The office staff will inform the teacher of the change in routine.

Please do not park your car on the side of the road and signal your children to cross the road in the traffic to come to your parked car. Parents should line up in the designated lane and wait until their students are signaled to load. Teachers will direct students to load. Police will be monitoring traffic flow and parked cars. The safety of all students is our top priority. Please follow the directions for traffic flow and student pick-up procedures given to you at the beginning of school.

BULLYING

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student’s property, places a student in fear of harm to himself or his property, or is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying. [See FFI(LOCAL).]

CAFETERIA AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

Breakfast and lunch are available on a paid, free, and reduced basis. Students must pay for lunches in the cafetorium before 7:55 A.M. Several lunches and/or breakfasts may be paid for in advance. The school board determines prices for lunch and breakfast annually. Students and their families will be notified of these prices at the beginning of school.

For free or reduced meals, an application must be filed and approved. Application forms are available upon entry or registration, or from the office at any time. All information requested on the forms must be given. The forms are then sent to the V.A.I.S.D. Central office for approval. Parents will be notified of the results of eligibility. Please note that this information stays confidential.

The following cafeteria conduct is expected from all students:

- Students will go to the lunchroom accompanied by their teacher.
- Anyone bringing a lunch will be escorted to his or her assigned table. Those purchasing a lunch or milk will follow teacher directions. *Do not send glass containers.
- Trays are to be returned and students dismissed when the teacher or teacher aide on duty grants permission.
- Food and drinks must be kept in the lunchroom.
- Cafeteria rules will be followed by all students, which include good table manners and students quietly visiting with the students closest to them at their table.
- Students are asked to clear their area before leaving the cafeteria.
- Students may not charge breakfast or lunch. (Emergency situations must be cleared through the office.)
- Students will remain seated during lunch and will raise their hand if they need assistance. An aide or a cafeteria helper will assist them.

**** For the health of your child, we encourage that you limit the amount of soft drinks and sweets that are sent to school in your child's lunch.**

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Parents or guardians shall be responsible for damage to the school building, furniture, grounds, textbooks, or other property of the school. Any damage should be reported promptly to the office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Any change of address, telephone number, persons to notify in case of emergency, should be made to the office in writing as soon as the parent or guardian is aware of the change. The office will notify the nurse and teachers of any changes.

CHECK ACCEPTANCE POLICY

Our school district has established the following policy for accepting checks and collecting bad checks: for a check to be an acceptable form of payment it must include your current, full and accurate name, address, telephone number, driver's license number and state. In the event your check is returned for non-payment, the face value may be recovered electronically along with a state allowed recovery fee. In the event your check is returned for non-payment, checks will no longer be an acceptable form of payment for the remainder of the school year. Alternative forms of payment may be used instead of a check payment (cash, credit card, money order).

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, which may be accessed at <http://www.vanalstyneisd.org>. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp.

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>

CLASS SCHEDULES

Teachers will send class schedules home during the first week of school. Please note that changes may be made during the school year to meet the needs of the students.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's or superintendent's office or online at:

<http://www.tasb.org/policy/pol/private/091908>

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Internet safety is instructed at the start of the school year and is frequently referred back to throughout the school year.

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mails using district computers are not private and will be monitored by district staff. [For additional information, see policies at CQ.]

CONDUCT

APPLICABILITY OF SCHOOL RULES

As required by law, the board has adopted a *Student Code of Conduct* that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as campus and classroom rules.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the *Student Code of Conduct* and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, whether on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct* and policy FO(LOCAL) in the district’s policy manual.

DISRUPTIONS

As identified by law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in district vehicles.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES, INCLUDING MOBILE TELEPHONES

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, these devices must remain turned off during the instructional day, including during all testing. The use of mobile telephones in locker rooms or restroom areas at any time while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event is strictly prohibited.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day shall have the device confiscated. The student or parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal’s office for a fee of \$15.

Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student or student’s parents will be disposed of after the notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.]

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. The district will not be responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

SOCIAL EVENTS

School rules apply to all school social events. **Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest.**

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

CONFERENCES/COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Parents and teachers are encouraged to establish and maintain frequent communication about student progress. A student or parent who wants information, has a question or concern, is encouraged to talk with the appropriate teacher, counselor, or principal. A parent who wants to meet with a teacher may call the office (903-482-8805) for an appointment during the teacher's conference period. The teacher may also be requested to call the parent during a teacher conference time, or at another mutually convenient time.

Students and parents may expect teachers to request a conference (1) if the student is not maintaining passing grades or achieving the expected level of performance, (2) if the student presents any other problem to the teacher, or (3) in other cases that the teacher or parent considers necessary.

TX Connect is a computerized parent-accessed program where parents can go online to see current grades and completed assignments.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted. **Students with temperatures at 100 or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea must remain out of school until symptom free for 24 hours without symptom reducing medications.**

The school nurse or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

COUNSELING

PERSONAL COUNSELING

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. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should contact his/her teacher to arrange time for him/her to see the counselor. Otherwise parents may request the counselor to visit with their children.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMS, TESTS, OR TREATMENT

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

[For more information, refer to FFE(LEGAL) and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

CREDIT BY EXAM—IF A STUDENT HAS TAKEN THE COURSE

A student who has previously taken a course or subject—but did not receive credit for it—may, in circumstances determined by the teacher, counselor, principal, or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit by passing an exam on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject. Prior instruction may include, for example, incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, home schooling, correspondence courses, or independent study supervised by a teacher.

The counselor or principal would determine if the student could take an exam for this purpose. If approval is granted, the student must score at least 70 on the exam to receive credit for the course or subject.

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an exam.

A student may not use this exam, however, to regain eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

[For further information, see the counselor and policies EEJA.]

CREDIT BY EXAM—IF A STUDENT HAS NOT TAKEN THE COURSE

A student will be permitted to take an exam to earn credit for an academic year for which the student has had no prior instruction. The dates on which exams are scheduled during the 2009-2010 school year include:

Dates Scheduled:

Fall: August 20 and 21, 2009, and November 5, 2009

Spring: February 4, 2010, and June 1 and 2, 2010

A student will earn credit with a passing score of at least 90 on the exam.

If a student plans to take an exam, the student (or parent) must register with the principal no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. The district will not honor a request by a parent to administer a test purchased from a State Board approved university by the parent. EEJB(LOCAL).

DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH]

DATING VIOLENCE

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

HARASSMENT

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or at www.vanalstyneisd.org.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

RETALIATION

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Retaliation against a student might occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. See policy FFH(LOCAL) for the appropriate districts officials to whom to make a report.

INVESTIGATION OF REPORT

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district.

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

DISCRIMINATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 21.]

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

SCHOOL MATERIALS

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc.

The school newspaper and the yearbook are available to students.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 8.]

NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS...FROM STUDENTS

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made in two school days.

The principal has designated the information table in the entry foyer as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who posts non-school material without prior approval will be subject to

disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

NON-SCHOOL MATERIALS...FROM OTHERS

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policies at GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the principal for prior review. The principal will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a non-curriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB(LOCAL).
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The elementary level dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

Campus administrators exercise final judgment on garments and styles that are a distraction. A student may be required to change into appropriate dress if his/her appearance is determined to be distracting or disruptive to the instructional process of the school. Examples of clothing that may be considered disruptive are:

- hats, caps, bandanas (boys and girls) in the building
- short shorts
- open mesh or fishnet or any see-through blouses or shirts
- cut-off or halter tops
- sundresses or tops, shirts, or dresses resembling sundresses in design (i.e. no "spaghetti straps") unless a shirt with sleeves is worn under or over the item of clothing

[For clarification: Sleeveless attire is allowed but shoulders MUST be covered. "Spaghetti straps" or "tanks tops" are NOT allowed.]

- large and/or loose fitting sleeveless shirts (i.e. tank tops)
- slide-type, flip-flop type, or any other shoe or sandal without a heel strap (for safety reasons)
- heellies
- baggy or sagging trousers
- clothing with provocative pictures, slogans, or suggestive language
- clothing with drug related themes
- clothing with alcoholic or tobacco products
- mini- skirts
- shiny tight-fitting leggings worn as slacks
- shiny tight-fitting shorts
- garments that are torn, cut, or have large holes
- no make up

Other guidelines:

- no earrings or studs to be worn by males; girls should not wear large dangle earrings or fake or sculptured nails (for safety reasons at play)
- no chains dangling from clothing
- Baseball/soccer/basketball/football uniforms, karate/ dance/ tumbling/ gymnastic/ cheerleading attire should not be worn to class. (The elementary school does not sponsor any team or group.) Special exceptions will be made for school-wide theme days. **School colors and spirit wear are strongly encouraged to be worn on Fridays to promote and support school spirit.**
- Hair should be clean, neatly groomed, out of the face/eyes and of **natural** color. Boy's hair **must** be worn above the shirt collar.

Please call the school before wearing an article of clothing if there is a question concerning the appropriateness of the clothing. (903)482-8805

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills such as fire drills and tornado drills will be held throughout the school year. All other drills will be practiced early in the school year. The homeroom teacher will give special instructions as to the manner of behavior and proper procedure for both of these drills.

ESL - ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a second language instruction is provided for those students who qualify for the program.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in school-related activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives, at the end of a grading period, a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than an advanced placement or international baccalaureate course; or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a foreign language—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to 10 absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of 5 absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of 2 absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

Please note: Sponsors of 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 *Student Code of Conduct* or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization’s standards of behavior.

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO. For student-organized, student-led groups, see **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups** on page 41.]

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds 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 extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.

- 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.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 46.]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

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 principal. [For further information, see policies at FP.]

FIELD TRIPS

To enrich and extend curriculum objectives, students will go on various field lessons during the year. Permission for these excursions is included on the annual student enrollment forms. Teachers will provide specific information for each trip as it is scheduled.

All students should use school transportation to and from the field lesson activity. Part of the “field trip experience” is riding the bus. If other arrangements must be made, the parent should complete a special release form which is available in the school office, at least 24 hours prior to departure.

We ask that parents, who plan to attend a field trip, remain outside the building until the buses depart.

FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal **at least 14 days before the event**. Except as approved by the principal and the superintendent, fund-raising by school, PTA, and/or booster organizations is not permitted on school property. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.]

The following rules will govern fund raising campaigns sponsored by VAISD:

- A fundraiser form must be filled out prior to the activity by school, booster, or parent teacher organizations.
- Students will sell merchandise on campus only before and after school, and during lunch.
- Students should not be released from class to participate in fund-raising activities.
- No solicitations will be allowed from outside organizations or individuals on campus.

GANG-FREE ZONES

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

GIFTED AND TALENTED (VAULT)

An enrichment program is provided at VAE for eligible students. Definite guidelines and extensive testing are utilized in determining eligibility. Please contact the teacher of the gifted and talented program for additional information about the nomination and screening process and services provided to eligible students.

GRADING GUIDELINES

A sufficient number of grades will be taken in a subject each six week period to support the average grade assigned. Guidelines for grading will be clearly communicated to students and parents in the parent orientation packet given by each teacher, and further clarified as needed throughout the school year.

HARASSMENT

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassments, and Retaliation** on page 21.]

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, and FFA, the district will ensure that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

For additional information on the district's requirements and programs regarding elementary, middle, and junior high school student physical activity requirements, please see the principal.

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

During the preceding school year, the district's School Health Advisory Council held 3 meetings. Additional information regarding the district's School Health Advisory Council is available from Van Alstyne High School nurse, Cynthia Tillett. [See also policies at BDF and EHAA.]

PHYSICAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the elementary school PE coach to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.

OTHER HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

TOBACCO PROHIBITED

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the *Student Code of Conduct* and policies at FNCD and GKA.]

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Alan Seay (903) 482-8802.

PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Lawana Merriman at (903) 482-8802.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, Mr. Rick DeMasters, at (903)482-8802.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the school day. The guidelines determined by the staff were:

- Kindergarten and 1st- no more than 10 minutes nightly
- 2nd grade- no more than 20 minutes nightly
- 3rd grade- no more than 30 minutes nightly
- 4th grade- no more than 45 minutes nightly

On occasion, there will be exception to these guidelines (special projects or incomplete assignments).

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, pertussis, meningitis, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox). The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. [For further information, see policy FFAB(LEGAL) and the Department of State Health Services Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.]

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- 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 at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the 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.

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.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

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 student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

NOTIFICATION OF LAW VIOLATIONS

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

[For further information, see policies FL(LEGAL) and GRA(LEGAL).]

LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

All lost and found items (outside of the classroom) are to be turned in to the office or placed on a hanger and hung on the racks located in the hall outside the cafeteria. These items will be displayed in the "Lost and Found" for a period of time. Small items such as jewelry and barrettes will be held in the office. Glasses will be held by the nurse.

Please check regularly for items that have not made their way home. Also, students will be advised to check periodically to recover items that may have been found.

MAKEUP WORK

ROUTINE AND IN-DEPTH MAKEUP WORK ASSIGNMENTS BECAUSE OF ABSENCE

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within three (3) days of each missed day. [For further information, see policy EIAB(LOCAL).]

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

Teachers are not expected to give the student assignments prior to the absence since the regular direct instruction of the subject matter will be given while the student is absent.

DAEP MAKEUP WORK

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA(LEGAL).]

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION MAKEUP WORK

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss options with the teacher or counselor to ensure the student completes all work required for the course or grade level.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Cough Drops **without DM** may be carried by the student; all other medications must be checked into the Nurse's Clinic.

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:

- Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.
- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
- In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor; and
- When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.

If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL).]

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [For further information, see policies at FFAC.]

All medication must be kept in the nurse's office, not carried on the person of the student or kept in the classroom. Any exception to this requirement (i.e. an inhaler for a severely asthmatic student) must be discussed with the school nurse and a current doctor's note for this exception must be on file in the nurse's office.

The following supplies are kept in the Nurses' Station.

Alcohol	Antibacterial Hand Sanitizer
Anbesol/ Ora-jel	Antibiotic ointment/cream
Benadryl cream or spray	Anti-itch gel/cream
Hydrogen Peroxide	Isotonic Eye Wash Solution
Eye Wash-tap water flushes	Liquid soap
Tums/generic	Vaseline
Cortisone cream	Burn gel
Tinactin/anti-fungal crème	Cough drops
Saline contact lens solutions	Tylenol/Generic
Ibuprophen	Benadryl/Generic

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1. The school requests that medications be provided by the parent/guardian, but in certain non-emergency situations, medication from the nurses' offices' may be administered to student.
 2. Benadryl will not be administered except in emergency situations.
 3. Parent/Guardian will be notified prior to oral administration of medications listed above for all students in grades K-8.

*****Please note the acknowledgement slip in the form packet to be signed and dated.**

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (P.T.A)

The elementary school is proud to have its own charter of the Parent Teacher Association which sponsors our volunteer program and numerous enrichment projects for students in such areas as cultural arts, technology, and environmental awareness. Membership information is available in the school office.

PARTIES

To protect instructional time, class parties are limited to two per year, one for Christmas, and one for Valentine's Day. Birthday celebrations for students are discouraged, and are limited to serving birthday dessert in the cafeteria at the end of the class's lunch period, either to the individual or the student's entire class, if prior approval is obtained from the student's teacher. Invitations to parties held outside of school should not be brought to school.

PESTICIDE APPLICATION

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact Lawana Merriman at central office at (903) 482-8802.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.)

Students will participate in physical education classes at Van Alstyne Elementary. Students will be taught only exercises and physical activities appropriate for their age group and which reflect the essential knowledge and skills required by state law in the area of physical fitness. All students will participate unless the office receives a written release from the student's physician after a prolonged illness or a short-term excuse from the parent. Van Alstyne students are informed about the P.E. schedule and need to dress in attire and shoes suitable for exercising and physical activities (jeans, slacks, or shorts under dresses for girls). Changing clothes will not be necessary for gym classes. Additional information from the P.E. teachers is given at the beginning of every school year.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. [See **Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags** on page 4.]

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. [See policy EC(LEGAL) for more information.]

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 encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

The pre-kindergarten program is available to students whose gross family income would qualify them for the free or reduced lunch program. Students who have limited proficiency of the English language are also eligible.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 1-4, promotion is based on an overall academic achievement average of 70 on a scale of 100 based upon course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) in reading, language arts, and math, and attendance. (See Board policy EIE for more information)

In addition, at certain grade levels, a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and April 15 and is a Texas resident during the week that the TAKS is administered the first time.

Parents of a student in grades 3-8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

Because class time is important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

A student who will need to leave school during the day **must** bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards with each student's grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period parents will be given a written progress report. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. Parents are asked to monitor progress notices and report cards closely and to keep in contact with the teacher.

[See **Working Together** on page 1 for how to schedule a conference.]

Report cards are self-explanatory and will be issued on Thursday following the end of each six-weeks grading period. Any questions concerning a report card should be directed to the teacher. Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the principal that have been designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District's grading policy. [See policy EIA.] Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).

Education Code 28.0212 provides for a teacher's grade to be final unless it is arbitrary, erroneous, or not consistent with the District grading policy applicable to the grade, as determined by the Board. A determination by the Board is not subject to appeal.

Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL).]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 3 days. Parents are asked to read the card in its entirety, then sign and return the card. Requests and comments made by teachers on cards are most important and should be responded to as soon as possible

TUTORIALS

Van Alstyne ISD provides tutoring services for those students whose grades are lower than 70 or by teacher recommendation. The tutorials will be held during the following six-week period, before or after school. A district is not required to provide

transportation for students attending tutorials. Parent or teacher request for tutoring for a child not failing will be considered. Attendance at these classes is the responsibility of student and parent.

TX Connect is updated at least weekly to allow parents to view student progress and grades.

RESTROOM BEHAVIOR

Quiet, orderly conduct is required in the restrooms at all times. If a restroom is full, students are asked to wait quietly in the hallway until the restroom is clear. Respect for school property and other persons are considered part of appropriate restroom behavior.

RETALIATION

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** on page 21.]

SAFETY

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 ensuring 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 and the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- 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.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

DRILLS: FIRE, TORNADO, 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.

Fire Drill

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Shrill alarm | leave the building to go to designated area |
| Motion by principal | return to the classroom |

Tornado/ Emergency Drill

Announcement on intercom move quietly but quickly to the designated locations
2nd announcement return to instruction

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 would need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, 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 school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know. (903) 482-8826

EMERGENCY SCHOOL-CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event of any incident including severe weather which could cause the closing or the delayed opening of school, the superintendent will notify the following radio and TV stations:

RADIO:

KLAK (97.5 FM), KKAJ (95.7 FM/1240 AM);

TV:

Channels 10, & 12

In addition district residents can sign up for “Flash Alert”, an online program that will notify persons of closings from their selected organizations. Access to the system is free to subscribers. You may sign up for this service by going to <http://flashalert.net/>. Once there follow the appropriate links to select Van Alstyne ISD as the organization you wish to receive information from. In the event of an emergency or school closing the district contacts Flash Alert who then sends an e-mail to the subscribers e-mail address, a text message to the subscribers cell phone, or both. If no announcement is heard by 6:30 A.M. then it can be assumed that school will be open as usual.

Check the VAISD web site for the most current and “official” information regarding any emergency school closing at www.vanalstyneisd.org.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

USE BY STUDENTS BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

The following areas are open to students before school, beginning at 7:30 A.M..

- Cafeteria – Pre-K, kindergarten, and 1st grade waiting the start of the school day and those requiring breakfast in the morning
- Gym- for 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders waiting for the start of the school day.

Unless the teacher or aide supervising gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

CONDUCT BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the *Student Code of Conduct* or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

USE OF HALLWAYS DURING CLASS TIME

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See the Van Alstyne Elementary School secretary to apply.

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO(LEGAL).]

CAFETERIA CHARGES AND PAYMENTS

No VAISD child will be denied the opportunity to receive a meal at our cafeterias.

In situations where students have outstanding charges, we have two levels of responsibility: (1) appropriate communication with the student and parent and (2) procedures for providing a lunch and/or breakfast for the student. The following chart details our policy in both levels:

Account Status	Expectations for Communication	Procedures for Student Meals
\$5 - \$0	Cafeteria staff will verbally communicate status of account with student.	Student will receive regular student meal.
\$0	Cafeteria staff will prepare written documentation of student's account status with instruction for student to inform	Student will receive regular student meals, but will not be allowed to purchase or charge "extra" items (i.e., extra servings, snack bar items, tea).

	parents.	
-\$5	Cafeteria staff will prepare written documentation of student's account status to be mailed to the student's home.	Student will receive a sandwich, fruit, and drink. The student will not be allowed to purchase or charge any "extra" items.
-\$20	Campus principal will prepare written documentation of student's account status to be mailed to the student's home.	Student will receive a sandwich, fruit, and drink. The student will not be allowed to purchase or charge any "extra" items.

Students will put all cafeteria money and/or checks in an envelope with the information requested on the outside of the envelope completed. The envelope will be dropped in the metal box in the cafeteria before school. No money or checks will be accepted through the line unless they are in the appropriate money envelope. If students forget to turn in their money before school, they will be expected to get an envelope at lunch time, complete it, and get at the end of the line.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PRICES

The Student breakfast price is \$1.00 and student lunch price is \$2.00. Reduced price breakfast is \$0.30 and the reduced price for lunch is \$0.40.

LIBRARY

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. Students are expected to observe library rules and procedures in order for everyone to receive maximum benefit from the learning center. Students may not check out new items if fees and/or fines are owed.

The library is open for independent student use during the following times with a teacher permit:

- Monday through Friday 8:15 AM to 2:55 PM

MEETINGS OF NON-CURRICULUM-RELATED GROUPS

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

The board of trustees has established and adopted a local School Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the district and to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the operation of each center and in the provision of health education. A majority of the members of the council are parents of students

enrolled in the district. Others appointed are licensed health care professionals; clergy; law enforcement; school administration, teachers, business community; and students.

The SHAC meets 3-4 times a year. Anyone interested in joining should contact the school nurse, Marnie Norris, for details.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

Students may use the school telephone only in the case of an emergency. Students must have permission to use the telephone from the secretary, principal, and/or a note from the teacher. Students will not be allowed to use the phone to set up social engagements after school. Phone lines need to be kept open for official school business. **Every teacher has a telephone and access to voice mail in her classroom.**

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 CUBBIES

Students' desks and cubbies 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 their assigned desks and cubbies.

Searches of desks or cubbies may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or cubby.

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 permission of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

TRAINED DOGS

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used around lockers and the areas around vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not present. An item in a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are provided as directed by Federal Law and District policy. If your child is receiving any type of Special Education Services, please ensure the school is made aware of them so we can continue providing for your child's special needs. If you feel your child might need to be referred for testing for emotional or learning problems, please contact your child's teacher or our school counselor. Office personnel will be glad to direct any questions you might have in this area to the person most qualified to answer them.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the school principal.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A student code of conduct containing policies and regulations on the rights and responsibilities of students, and student discipline is accessible on the Van Alstyne Elementary School website. If a hard copy of the Van Alstyne I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct is desired, it is available in the Van Alstyne Elementary office. Parents and students will be required to sign the acknowledgement form in the code of conduct stating that they were knowledgeable of the rules and consequences for that campus (annual verification).

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is in the child's best interest that school and parents work together in relationship to his/her education. To ensure that a quality educational program is available to all, students will be expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Students will be held accountable for their own behavior. Parents will be contacted as deemed necessary by school officials. Standards and rules set forth in the Van Alstyne I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct must be followed.

Students are informed the first day of school of conduct expectations. Students perform better academically and socially when expectations are clearly defined, and they have an understanding of what is and is not acceptable. Some examples of non-instructional items which are not allowed on campus are toys, pocket knives, make-up, nail polish, jam boxes, tape players, walkmans, head sets, magazines, laser pointers, etc. are not acceptable for school. Questions concerning these may be addressed to the office. **Any item that disrupts or distracts from instruction or learning will not be allowed at school.**

Each student and parent annually shall sign a statement that they have received and read the student handbook and code of conduct and acknowledge the responsibilities outlined in each document.

****We encourage cell phones to be left at home. In the event that a cell phone is at school, it must be turned off and left in a backpack until the student is off the school site.**

SUMMER SCHOOL

Currently, Van Alstyne Elementary School only offers summer school to its ESL students in grades prekindergarten going into kindergarten and kindergarteners going into 1st grade.

TAKS (TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated tests (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–11
- Reading, annually in grades 3–9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grades 10 and 11
- Social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

TARDINESS

Students who are tardy to school will be directed to the front office to obtain an admit slip before being allowed to continue to class. Tardy slips are given to any student who comes to school after the 8:05 AM bell. Parents will be contacted if tardiness persists. Nearly all tardiness is avoidable, and is only excusable in the case of illness or emergency when accompanied by a note signed by the parent/guardian. Students may be required to serve detentions, ISS, and/or may be referred to court. FDD (Legal) FDD(Local) Habitual tardiness is considered [See **Attendance for Credit** on page 11].

TESTING FOR SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Students, whose performance demonstrate that additional programs may enhance their learning, must be tested.

Reading Reinforcement	start of year	1 st grade only
Language Science (dyslexia)	start of year/ as needed	2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th grades
Talented and Gifted (VAULT)	in the spring	students referred

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. **Books must be covered** by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks and equipment for use at school during the school day.

TRANSPORTATION (FIRST TUDENT TRANSPORTATION)

BUS RIDERS/TRANSPORTATION/RULES AND REGULATIONS

As soon as school is dismissed, bus riders will follow the direction of their teacher and go directly to the gym. The instructional assistants will then dismiss the students from the gym as the buses arrive. Students riding buses will find bus rules included in this handbook. Signing of the handbook signature page acknowledges your familiarity with these rules. Students are also held responsible for updated rules and procedures from the bus company with which the district contracts services. Riding the school bus is a privilege, which can be revoked because of misbehavior. Students are not allowed to ride any bus to which they are not regularly assigned. Van Alstyne I.S.D. currently contracts with **First Student** for bus transportation.

Bus transportation is furnished as a service to students, and must be regarded as a privilege rather than a right.

FIRST STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

BUS RIDERS RULES & REGULATION

Rules defining student conduct are designated to protect the passengers and shall be observed at all times. Bus safety rules shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The bus driver is in charge of students on the bus. Students shall follow the driver's directions at all times.
2. Only authorized personnel and eligible bus students assigned to a specific bus are permitted to ride the bus.
3. Buses will stop at established stops only. Students will not be permitted to leave the bus until the bus arrives at an established bus stop or the appropriate school. Students shall load and unload at their designated bus stop only.
4. Students will wait for a bus by remaining on the sidewalk. If there is not a sidewalk, students will wait next to (but not in) the street. Students must wait until the bus comes to a full stop before boarding or leaving the bus.
5. Students will remain properly seated at all times and not block the center aisle. Any or all students may be assigned seats.

6. Students must keep their hands, head, feet, and personal objects inside the bus at all times.
7. Scuffling, shoving, or fighting is prohibited on the bus and at established bus stops.
8. Littering or throwing items inside or from the bus is prohibited.
9. Students are not allowed to consume food or drink on the bus. The use of all tobacco products is prohibited.
10. Students shall not deface or vandalize the bus or related equipment. Students that violate this rule will be required to pay for damages.
11. Students are not to engage in loud talking, yelling, the use of profanity, inappropriate language or gestures on the bus.
12. Students are not allowed to bring animals or harmful objects on the bus (i.e. weapons, drugs, alcohol, fireworks, etc.).
13. Students are not to engage in any other conduct that disrupts the safe operation of the bus.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR BUS TRANSPORTATION

- First Offense: A verbal and written warning is issued to the student.
- Second Offense: A three-day bus suspension is issued to the student.
- Third Offense: A ten-day bus suspension is issued to the student.
- Fourth Offense: A thirty-day bus suspension is issued to the student.
- Fifth Offense: Student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of school year.
- Severe Clause: If a student's conduct seriously jeopardizes the safety of other students and/or the driver, a suspension will be immediately placed into effect.

All bus related problems should be directed to **First Student** at 972-547-4499.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS

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 makes a written request that the student be released to the parent.

BUSES AND OTHER SCHOOL VEHICLES

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two 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.

A parent may also designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, you may contact (972) 547-4499.

See the *Student Code of Conduct* for provisions regarding transportation to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, 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 or van.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Observe all usual classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Fasten seat belts, if available.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

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

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

VANDALISM

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

VIDEO CAMERAS

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

GENERAL VISITORS

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures.

Raptorware:

This year VAE will have a receptionist to greet parents and visitors as they enter the building. In addition, VAE will be using the Raptor V•soft visitor identification program. Raptor is a web-based software application that helps our school track the visitors, students, and faculty. The Raptor system will help the school office know who is attempting to gain access to the campus. It will also help track visitors and volunteers who routinely visit their campus.

Most notably, this system tracks all Registered Sexual Offenders (RSO) in the United States and alerts law enforcement and district/campus administration when a Registered Sexual Offender signs in at a campus. This system will identify all visitors to our campus. The system also checks for “private alert” information which has been entered by campus administration. This might include information such as issues relating to parental custodial cases.

Visitors to the school will be asked to show photo identification at the reception desk (driver license, state ID card, military photo ID). The ID will be scanned into the V-Soft system and a visitors badge will be issued if there is no alert indicated on the data base. Although the visitor will need to check-in with the receptionist each visit and receive a badge, he/she will only need to present the photo ID on the first visit at each campus.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal’s office.

On the student’s last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student’s permanent record.

GLOSSARY

Accelerated instruction is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level.

ACT refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

ARD is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student's parents are part of the committee.

Attendance Review Committee is sometimes responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit lost because of absences.

DAEP stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the *Student Code of Conduct*.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

IEP is the written record of the Individualized Education Program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; modifications to state or district wide tests, etc.

ISS refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

LAT stands for Linguistically Accommodated Testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

NCLB Act is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

SAT refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), general regular educational with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

State-mandated tests are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and passing the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

Student Code of Conduct is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board; identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAKS is the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the state's standardized achievement test currently given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

TAKS-Accommodated is a state mandated assessment based on the same grade-level academic achievement standards of TAKS available to certain students who receive special education services who need specific accommodations, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

TAKS-Alternate is an alternate state mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

TAKS-Modified is an alternate state mandated assessment based on modified achievement standards and is administered to eligible students receiving special education services, as determined by the student and his or her ARD committee.

TELPAS stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

UIL refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

APPENDIX

Acknowledgment Form—Amendment

My child and I have received a copy of the *Van Alstyne Elementary Student Handbook* Amendment # _____ dated _____.

Print name of student: _____

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

VAN ALSTYNE ISD HEALTH SERVICES

The following supplies are kept in the Nurses' Station.

Alcohol	Antibacterial Hand Sanitizer
Anbesol/Ora-jel	Antibiotic ointment/cream
Benadryl cream or spray	Anti-itch gel/cream
Hydrogen Peroxide	Isotonic Eye Wash Solution
Eye Wash-tap water flushes	Liquid soap
Tums/generic	Vaseline
Cortisone cream	Burn gel
Tinactin/anti-fungal crème	Cough drops
Saline contact lens solutions	Tylenol/Generic
Ibuprophen	Benadryl/Generic

-
1. The school requests that medications be provided by the parent/guardian, but in certain non-emergency situations, medication from the nurses' offices' may be administered to student.
 2. Benadryl will not be administered except in emergency situations.
 3. Parent/Guardian will be notified prior to oral administration of medications listed above for all students in grades K-8.
-

_____ I **DO NOT** want my child to have any medications/supplies listed above.

_____ I **CIRCLED** the medications/supplies listed above that I **DO NOT** want my child to have.

_____ I allow my child to have **ALL** medications/supplies listed above.

Allergies _____

Health Concerns/Special Needs _____

Day time Phone # _____

/ _____
Date

Parent/Guardian