

2019-2020

Family Handbook

Brian Vannest, Principal

**Table of contents**

VALLEY WEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

10707 SOUTH GESSNER

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77071

713-773-6151

**Parent Acknowledgement page 2**

**School Overview page 3**

**Student Safety page 3**

**Attendance Policies page 4**

**Student Uniform Policy page 6**

**Arrival and Dismissal page 12**

**Academic Information page 15**

**Getting Involved at Valley West page 17**

**Staying Healthy page 19**

**Miscellaneous Student Information page 20**

**Main Office Policies page 21**

For the most up to date version of this handbook please visit [**www.houstonisd.org/valleywestES**](http://www.houstonisd.org/valleywestES)

**Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

Hello and welcome to Valley West!

This family handbook is composed of the most important expectations that students and parents/guardians will need to know to experience success while attending Valley West Elementary School.

Our staff will make every effort to keep students informed about their responsibilities as students. The faculty and staff of our school are dedicated to providing the best possible education for your children. It is our desire that communication between home and school is open and effective. We ask for your support as we look forward to a new and exciting school year.

Please take the time to go over this handbook with your child to verify that both of you have read through the handbook and that you both understand the expectations and regulations established at Valley West Elementary School.

The parent AND the student must sign and date the confirmation form below and return it to your child’s teacher.

We appreciate your efforts to be informed of the policies and expectations we have for our students.

Thank you,

Brian Vannest

Principal

**Return this page to school by August 30, 2019.**

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**School Overview**

**SCHOOL HOURS/OFFICE HOURS**

7:20AM-3:05PM Teachers

7:30AM-2:50PM Students

|  |
| --- |
| **Magnet Information**  Valley West Elementary is considered a School-Wide Magnet Program (SWP). The Valley West Elementary Magnet Program is STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). All students that attend Valley West automatically participate in the magnet program. Students that attend Valley West on a magnet transfer must abide by all program expectations.  If you have questions or concerns about the magnet program, please contact Ms. Rudolph at one of the following listed below.  *Erica R. Rudolph*  *Magnet Coordinator*  *(713) 773-6151*  [***erudolph@houstonisd.org***](mailto:erudolph@houstonisd.org)  Students will have the opportunity to participate in several STEM experiences that are integrated into the campus ancillary rotation. The ancillary rotation consists of the following classes:  **Art, Science Lab, Engineering, Technology, Robotics, Library, and Physical Education** |

**Student Safety**

**Safety is a priority**

Valley West places high priority on safety and on the prevention of student injury. Principals and staff are responsible for the conduct and safety of students from the time they come under school supervision until they leave school supervision. The following visitor regulations will be in place at Valley West Elementary: All visitors, including parents, must sign in at the office and show photo I.D.to receive a visitors pass. Picture identification badges will be used throughout the district. Picture identification badges will also be used by District employees who visit campuses (i.e. superintendents, maintenance, and transportation/cafeteria supervisors).

**Student Information Sheets**

Student emergency contact sheets must be kept current. All parents must complete a new student information sheet every year for *each* child. If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, we must have a current functioning phone number where we can reach the parent, guardian, or a designated individual. Your child will not be released to an adult unless the adult is on the emergency sheet.

**Accidents**

If a serious injury occurs on the school grounds or on the bus, parents will be notified and asked to pick up the child for their own observation or examination by their family physician. Parents will be promptly notified of all injuries not considered minor. It is critical that parents/guardians keep the emergency contact sheet up to date. If the accident is serious the school will call 911 and notify the parents immediately.

**Office Telephone**

The office telephone is for ***emergency*** use only. Please make after school arrangements with your child in advance. Office staff is not permitted to interrupt classroom instruction to relay messages to students. Emergency situations should be communicated to the principal and necessary actions will be taken to ensure appropriate communication occurs.

**Safety Drills**

In accordance with state law, an emergency evacuation is conducted every month. Students are expected to respond quickly and safely as directed by their teacher. If you are in your child’s classroom during a fire drill or a lock-down drill, please stay with your child until the drill is over. If you are outside during a drill, remain outside the building until the doors are re-opened. No student will be permitted to be checked out during safety drills.

**Attendance Policies**

**Absences**

Daily school attendance is essential for student success. By law, parents are required to send their child to school daily. Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours. Any student who is not present by 9:30 a.m. will be counted absent for the day.

**Types of Absences**

Compulsory Attendance and Instructional (Period) Attendance are take into consideration whether a particular absence is “excused” or “unexcused.”

**“Excusable” vs. “Excused”** While certain types of absences may be excusable, the procedures defined by the campus must be followed in order for excusable absences to be “excused”. If campus guidelines are not met, the absence may be deemedunexcused.

**Excuse Notes**

Parental notes do not excuse absences; they provide a reason forcampus consideration of excuse. BP FEB (Local) Excuse notes are explanations of the reason behind an absence, the campus determines if the absence is excused according to policy or decides to excuse the absence according to circumstance. Pre-notification of an absence does not automatically excuse an absence, nor does the successful completion of make-up work, either before or after the absence.

All students who are absent and are seeking to have it excused must provide an official note such as, doctor’s note, funeral program, and or court papers/documentation. The absence will be marked unexcused if the excuse note is not received within 3 days.

Students lose learning time AND the school does lose funding for every individual absence. Please help us help your student. Our attendance goal as a school is 98% average daily attendance.

**Campus Policy on Unexcused Absences**

Students will be assigned after-school detention after three (3) unexcused absences. After school detention is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:50pm-3:50pm.

(Please see after-school detention policy)

**Missed Work**

A student absent from school shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence. The teacher of any class from which a student is absent shall determine what assignments the student must make up. Typical classwork should be made up within two school days. If a project deadline school day is missed, the student should submit the project upon return or late penalties can arise.

**Request for Homework**

If your child is ill two days or more, parents may request homework. Call the office at least one day before the day you wish to pick up the assignments. The teacher(s) will have the work ready to pick up in the office after school or the next day.

**Appointments**

If your child needs to leave school for an appointment, please send a note with the student in the morning. We do not sign out students from the main office between 2:00pm and 2:50pm due to student safety issues during dismissal.

Sign your child out at the school office before taking him/her out of class. In the event the appointment must be scheduled during school hours please make an effort to do so after 9:30am. Children who are present for the first two hours of the school day (7:30am– 9:30am) are counted present.

**Valley West Uniform and Dress Code Policies**

HISD Board Policy states that “each individual school shall adopt specific standards concerning dress and personal grooming.” Experience has taught us that type of dress affects attitudes toward academic progress and the conduct of students. There is a definite relationship between dress and behavior. An appropriate appearance will help keep the children’s attention on learning and promote health and safety.

The school uniforms offer a selection of pieces. Students may choose from the following:

1. Royal blue, Kelly green or white Polo shirts (with or without school logo) and white blouse or oxford type shirt.
2. Khaki, black or navy pants, dresses, skirts or shorts and blue jean pants or skirts.
3. Friday: School Spirit or College Shirt Day ONLY**.**

**Parents who do not buy official uniforms are asked to choose plain uniform shirts in the school colors which meet the Valley West Dress Code.**

1. Clean clothes must be worn to school. No holes or tears permitted in clothing.
2. Shorts and skirts **must be knee length** and loose fitting. **Leggings and biking shorts are not considered substitutes for pants.**
3. Waist-fitted pants and shorts are appropriate. Shirts must be tucked in.
4. No clothing which leaves the shoulders, midriff or back bare will be permitted. Blouses, shirts, or tops must be long enough that student’s midriff is covered when student is working in desk. **No muscle shirts are allowed.**
5. Closed toe and heel shoes must be worn at all times. No hard-sole boots allowed.
6. No shoes or boots with metal soles, metal taps, or cleats will be worn to school.
7. Dangling earrings are dangerous and, therefore, may not be worn to school. Appropriate stud earrings are permitted.
8. Expensive jewelry should not be worn to school. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen jewelry.
9. Clothing with obscene language or pictures or which encourages substance abuse is not permitted. **Gang-related dress is not acceptable (including bandanas)**
10. Hair must be clean and worn neatly out of the eyes. We strongly encourage students not to have unnatural hair coloring during the school year.

***Consequences:*** 

*If a student comes to school out of uniform, the school will do the following:*

1. *We will call parents to inform them of the uniform violation and request the parent bring suitable clothes for the student.*
2. *When possible, the student will be given a school-owned uniform shirt until the parent brings suitable attire.*
3. *The front office team will record the uniform violation in Kickboard.*
4. *After 3 uniform offenses, the student must attend an after-school detention.*

*Note: If after-school detention is not possible, the student must make arrangements with the school counselor.*

1. *All students will be held responsible for their uniforms after 1 week of attendance at Valley West. For students starting on the first day of the school year, they will be held accountable starting 9/3.*

**Correct Valley West Uniform**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ROYAL Blue polo | KELLY Green polo | WHITE Polo |
|  |  |  |
| **School Logo Polos** (Not Required but Very Professional) On Sale in Main Office  Available in White, Blue and Green | | |
| School logo in full color – **$15** | School Logo in 2 color-**$15** | SMART Academy Polo- **$15** |
|  |  |  |

On Cold Weather Days

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A Blank/Plain Heather Gray Crew Neck Sweatshirt is OK over the uniform. | Valley West Offers A Logo Verison For Sale in Main Office **$15** | Long Sleeve Polos (Royal Blue, Kelly Green, or White) are OK | A long sleve shirt under the polo is OK.  If it is blue, green or a netural color(white, black, gray) |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| On Fridays ONLY ($10)  Any College Shirt or “Spirt Shirt” sold at Valley West (past or present) can be worn | Shorts, Pants, and Skirts |
|  | Blue, black and tan pants, shorts, or skirts can be worn.  Jeans, pants, skirts, and shorts should be appropriate length and have no tears or rips.  Girls may wear uniform skirts and jumpers in tan or blue. |

**Rationale**

Student dress code is about **safety first**. We can easily identify our students whether on campus, on a field trip, or at an event.

Student dress code is about **equal opportunity, pride, and focus**. Our scholars don’t have to stress about their clothing choices. They can be proud manatees and turn their attention to what really matters: their academics.

**What Not To Wear**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Light/Sky Blue | Yellow | Red |
|  |  |  |

Zip Up, Pull Over, and Hooded Shifts and Coats can be worn **outside only.** As shown on the last page, students can wear a gray crew neck sweatshirt, a long sleeve polo, or a long sleeve shirt under their polo if they are cold in class. They will not be able to wear anything below inside the classroom.







**Uniforme correcto de vestir para Valley West**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Camisa con Cuello Azul Rey | Camisa con cuello Verde Kelly | Camisa con cuello Blanco |
|  |  |  |
| **Logo de la escuela Polos** (no requerido pero muy profesional) en venta en la oficina principal  Disponible en blanco, azul y verde. | | |
| Logo a todo color **($15)** | Logo en dos colores **($15)** | Logo con SMART Academy **($15)** |
|  |  |  |

En días de clima frio, estas son las formas y colores para vestir.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Una sudadera con cuello redondo en gris o gris claro es aceptable con el uniforme.** | **Valley West ofrece un logotipo de venta en la oficina principal ($15)** | **Polos de manga larga (Royal Blue, Kelly Green o Blanco) está bien.** | **Una camisa de manga larga debajo del polo está bien.** |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| En viernes Se puede usar cualquier "camisa de espíritu" que se venden en Valley West (con el logo pasado o presente). $10 | | Pantalones cortos y pantalones |
|  | Pueden usar pantalones, shorts o faldas azules, negros y café bajito.  Pantalones de mezclilla es permitido siempre y cuando usen el tamaño correcto y sin rompidas. |

**Razón fundamental**

El código de vestimenta del estudiante es sobre la seguridad primero. Podemos identificar fácilmente a nuestros estudiantes, ya sea en la escuela, en una excursión o en un evento.

El código de vestimenta del estudiante es sobre igualdad de oportunidades, orgullo y enfoque. Nuestros estudiantes no tienen que estresarse con sus elecciones de ropa. Pueden ser manatíes orgullosos y dirigir su atención a lo que realmente importa: sus académicos.

**Colores no permitidos**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Azul Bajo | Amarillo | Rojo |
|  |  | ‘ |

Chaqueta con cierre, suéter sin cierre, chaqueta con gorra y chaqueta **solo se pueden usar en el exterior de la escuela**.

Como se muestra en el reverso, los estudiantes pueden usar una sudadera gris con cuello redondo, un polo de manga larga o una camisa de manga larga debajo de su polo si están fríos en clase. No podrán usar nada de los que se les ensena abajo en el aula.





**Arrival and Dismissal**

**Safe Arrival and Departures**

Our school officials work closely to plan for the safe arrival and departure of students. We are asking for your support and help in the safe loading and unloading of children. Assist us in teaching your child to use the crosswalks when coming to school and leaving school.

Do not stop your vehicle in the crosswalk or in front of the driveway to deliver or pick up your child. Make sure the children exit the car close to the building. Teach your child to walk, not run, in the drop off area.

Be aware of staff/personal assisting with student loading and unloading.

Do not leave your vehicle unattended in the loading and unloading zones.

Do not park in the fire zone.

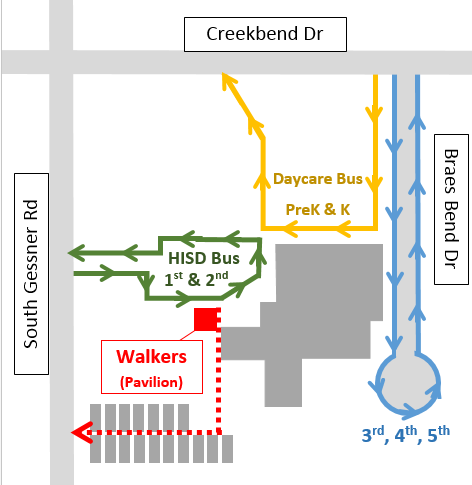
**Inclement Weather Plan**

Please remain in your vehicle while students are dismissed to their respective dismissal areas. We will work to limit the time that students are outside during inclement weather.

**Tardiness**

An emphasis is placed on students arriving to school on time. Late students often miss the focus/lesson of the day and disrupt the flow of the lesson for other students. Students need to be in the classroom by 7:30am and will be counted tardy at 7:40am. When students are late for school, they must check into the office before going to class to get a tardy slip. Parents will be notified if a student has three tardy arrivals and the student will be assigned to after school detention. After school detention is served on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:50pm-3:50pm. If a student is unable to attend an after-school detention, alternate arrangements must be made with the school counselor. Repeated tardiness will result in a referral to the truancy officer.

**The 4 dismissal Locations (Based on Youngest Sibling in Family):**



**Sibling groups**

* Must drop off/pick-up at the location of the youngest sibling

1. **Walkers**

Students who walk home will be released from the covered pavilion in the front of the school. If you wish to walk with your child, meet them at the pavilion gate.

1. **HISD Bus Riders**

Students are dismissed to their buses from the front of the building.

1. **Daycare Bus Riders**

Students are dismissed to their buses from the front of the building.

1. **Car Riders**

To ensure a safe, smooth, and orderly dismissal all parents must have their assigned dismissal tag that clearly displays their child’s number. In the event a parent does not have their assigned number he or she will have to park and come into the main office to present proper identification.

Dismissal tags will be issued on the first day of school during morning drop-off or your child’s teacher will send the tag home on the first day.

As stated above, parents are not permitted to pick up students after 2:00pm unless approved by an administrator.

Please advise any driver who may transport your child of these regulations.

**Academic Information**

**STAAR**

The STAAR program includes annual assessments for grades 3-5 in reading and mathematics, in writing at grades 4, and in science at grade 5.

**Homework**

Homework is a teacher-planned learning activity which takes place largely outside of a student's regular school hours. As such, homework reinforces classroom learning and expands on a student's school experiences. If you ever feel that your child is spending extremely long amounts of time on completing homework, set up a teacher conference.

Homework is not graded for correct/incorrect answers but instead is used as part of the participation grade. The goal here is the practice.

**Standards-Based Grading**

Instruction is focused around the standards identified for each subject in each grade level. Students are provided with information about how their work will be evaluated and how their level of proficiency will be determined. Teachers modify instruction to meet a wide variety of learning styles and levels of ability. The grading scale is listed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100 | A |
| 80-89 | B |
| 75-79 | C |
| 70-74 | D |
| 0-69 | F |

**Conduct Grades**

Conduct grades are given to each student at the end of each grading cycle. The conduct grade must be recorded on the report card for each grading cycle. A student’s conduct grade is based on the teacher’s evaluation of the student’s overall behavior during each of the grading cycle. Teachers must have detailed documentation and completed conduct forms for any student receiving a **P=Poor or a U=Unsatisfactory**. **Any child who receives a “P” or “U” in conduct should be referred to IAT for behavior intervention.**

Student conduct grades will be reviewed by an administrator and teacher at each progress reporting period.

**Honor Roll**

At the elementary level, the determination of the criteria for eligibility for the Honor Roll is a building-level decision. The school determines the parameters for the Honor Roll and then enters the information into the SIS. Once the standards are established, the school can print an Honor Roll.

* All “A’s” – A Honor Roll
* All “A’s” & Two (2) “B’s” - A/B Honor Roll
* Honor roll is a reflection of the whole child and a student with a P in conduct may not receive on Honor Roll.

**Promotion/Retention Information**

The purpose of retaining students is to provide additional opportunities for a student to learn grade level skills. Students are required to demonstrate that they have mastered grade level expectations in order to be promoted to the next grade. For more information on guidelines visit the [www.houstonisd.org](http://www.houstonisd.org) website and search “school guidelines.”

**Special Education/Speech Language Services**

Valley West provides special education and speech language services to qualified students. If you have questions about the services for your student contact the main office. If you have questions about your student’s need for intervention, tutoring, or for special education/language services, contact the school counselor, Ms. Edwards.

**Gifted and Talented Education**

Valley West provide the structure, support, training and resources necessary to ensure that students receive the highest quality education to become happy, healthy, productive members of society. Parents may fill out applications to have their child tested for the gifted and talented program. Otherwise, students are assessed for G/T eligibility in Kindergarten and 5th grade.

**Field Trips**

Field trips are designed to advance the standard academic program at Valley West. Most grade levels will take two field trips per year. Students must have written parental permission in order to participate in trips requiring transportation. Students who do not have written permission may not be allowed to participate in a particular field trip. Only students who are members of the class may attend the field trip activity. Parents that would like to accompany their children on field trips must be VIPS approved at least three (3) weeks prior to the event. Parents are not allowed to meet classes at the field trip location without being VIPS approved.

**Getting Involved at Valley West**

**Volunteering/School Visits**

We encourage parents/guardians and interested members of the community to visit our school and view the educational program. To ensure the safety of the students and staff all regular school visitors and parent volunteers must complete the *Volunteers in Public Schools* (VIPS) background check and be cleared. You can complete the VIPS application at the website <https://www.houstonisd.org/Page/126421>. The background check usually takes between two to three weeks to complete. Parents will not be allowed to attend field trips or repeatedly visit classrooms without VIPS approval.

To ensure the safety of the students and staff and avoid potential disruptions, all visitors should register in the school’s front office immediately upon entering the school building or grounds when school is in session and receive a visitors’ pass. Visitors’ passes much be visible at ALL TIMES. Please return the pass when leaving the school. No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in a classroom without the teacher and principal’s permission.

We strongly ENCOURAGE and WELOME parents at our School!

Following is a list of various programs in which you can help:

* Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
* Classroom Volunteers Teacher Appreciation Day
* Room Volunteers (Room Mothers/Dads)
* Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC)

**School Website/Newsletter**

Please visit our website to learn about our school as well as our upcoming events. [www.houstonisd.org/valleywestES](http://www.houstonisd.org/valleywestES).

Each month, Valley West sends out a school calendar/newsletter flier.

**Social Media**

Please follow us on Twitter and Facebook for updates, pictures, and celebrations. [](https://www.facebook.com/ValleyWestEs/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)

[](https://twitter.com/ValleyWestEs)

**Parent/ Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are a great way to learn more about the academic and behavior accomplishments of students. Parents and teachers are encouraged to set up conferences as the need arises during the year.

**School Feedback Procedures**

The school follows the procedures outlined below to address parent concerns and complaints. Please use the following steps if you have a concern:

1. Classroom concerns should first be brought to the attention of your child’s teacher. Please call the teacher to explain your concern. Small concerns may be addressed by a phone call; larger concerns are better addressed in a conference.

2. If the classroom concern is not satisfactorily addressed with the teacher or the concern is a school level concern, please call a school administrator (Assistant Principals). Small concerns may be addressed by a phone call; larger concerns are better addressed in a conference.

3. If a concern is not satisfactorily handled, allow the administrator the opportunity to get the school principal or school support officer (district level position) involved. Parents are always welcome to call the district, but if a situation can be handled in the building, the resolution is often faster.

**Classroom Teacher Requests**

Valley West carefully considers multiple variables which determine classroom placement. In general, no parental requests will be honored in the first semester. Only for cases with extenuating circumstances will a request for a teacher change be approved by the principal.

**Staying Healthy**

**School Lunch Program**

A quality, nutritionally balanced hot lunch is available in the cafeteria daily free of charge to all students, regardless of their ability to pay. It is important for families to fill out the Socioeconomic Information Sheet at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment so that the school can be properly funded for the lunches.

We *will not* deliver lunches to the classrooms or cafeteria. If your child forgets his/her lunch, he/she is welcome to enjoy a Valley West lunch tray for free. If parents wish to bring their child lunch, they must sit in the cafeteria and eat lunch with them.

* + Informing students that their lunch has arrived interferes with instruction time.
  + Our front office staff needs to focus on visitors and safety in the main office rather than delivering food.
  + When students travel from class or the lunch room to the main office, they either travel alone (which is not ideal) or travel with a buddy (which takes the buddy away from lunch and/or class time).

**Lunches from Home and Snacks**

We strongly urge parents to incorporate healthy food choices in packed lunches from home. Please save any candy or sodas to be consumed after school at home.

**School Clinic**

The school clinic is staffed by a full-time nurse. The clinic provides care to students who are sick at school, until the parent can be contacted to pick up the student. Students will only be released to persons listed on the Student Information Sheet.

**Medications**

The school clinic also supervises students who are required to take medication during the school day. A written authorization from the student’s physician and medication form from the parent/guardian are required before designated school staff can assist the student in taking any medication, whether prescribed by the physician or over-the-counter (Aspirin, Motrin, cough drops, etc.). These medication forms are available in the school clinic.

All medication must be in the original container and placed under lock and key in the school clinic for the safety of all students. **Students are not allowed to carry any form of medication (prescription or over-the counter) at any time while on campus** except those medications that a physician requests the student be allowed to carry (e.g., inhalant for asthma, Auto-injector Epi-Pen for severe allergies). Regulations for medications accompanying students on field trips must also be followed. Medications shall be in possession of a teacher and in a locked container.

Prior to the beginning of school, please notify the school clinic in writing of any chronic health issues such as heart problems, diabetes, severe allergies, hearing loss, chronic pain, asthma, seizure disorders, or any other health conditions we should be aware of. This enables the school to communicate the necessary accommodations to appropriate staff to ensure that students’ health and safety needs are cared for.

**Miscellaneous School Information**

**Skateboards and Bicycles**

Skateboards are not allowed at school. Bicycles may be ridden to and from school with the understanding that they will be maintained and operated in a safe manner. This includes:

1. Using the crosswalk

2. Locking your bicycle inside the designated bike area

3. After parking your bicycle and locking it, please stay out of the bicycle area

4. Wearing a helmet

5. Parents-make sure your child has capable riding skills and knows the rules of the road before allowing him/her to ride to school.

6. The school is not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles

**Birthdays**

If you wish to celebrate your child’s birthday with his/her class, please make arrangements with the teacher prior to bringing in food as some children have food allergies. This celebration should be held during lunch or the last period of the day if the teacher approves. Teachers reserve the right to refuse a party during class based on time constraints or classroom behavior.

**Cell Phones on Campus**

Valley West is not responsible for any damage to cell phones or other personal devices. Grades K-5 students can have cell phones and other electronic signaling devices in their backpack while at school. However, cell phones and other electronic signaling devices must have their ringers or alarms turned to silent during school hours, shall not be visible, and shall not be used during school hours. If you should need to get in contact with your student, for any reason, during school hours you should contact the main office and avoid texting or calling your child.

*Consequences:*

* If the cell phone rings and it is collected by the teacher, parents will be required to pick up the phone in the main office and complete a cell phone return form.
* If a student gets their cell phone out during the day, it will be collected by the teacher and parents will be required to pick up the phone in the main office and complete a cell phone return form.
* If a student violates the cell phone policy a second time, the student may need to submit their phone to the main office before school and have it returned to them at the end of the day.

**Gum**

Gum is not allowed at school.

**Personal Property**

All students should mark personal belongings with first and last name before belongings are brought to school. This includes lunch boxes, backpacks, coats, sweaters, umbrellas, gloves, binders, etc.

Valuables, expensive items, radios, iPods, iPads, laptops, mp3 players, eReaders, and other electronic items other than cell phones should be kept at home and are also **not allowed on field trips**. All toys, including playground equipment such as basketballs, baseballs, bats, and gloves, etc. should be left at home. An item can be specifically approved to be at school by the teacher, but the school or district is not responsible for loss or damage to personal items. If an item is brought to school without permission, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent. Dangerous or illegal items are not allowed at school and in some cases suspension or expulsion of the student can occur if such items are brought to school.

**Lost and Found**

Parents are strongly encouraged to label jackets, sweaters, and lunch boxes with their owner's name. "Found" articles will be kept in the lost and found bins located in the front office. If items are not claimed, they will be donated to a charitable organization.



Main Office Policies

Adopted by SDMC 8/2019

**Safety is the number one priority for our students:**

* **Check-Out:** Students may not be checked out between 2PM and 2:50PM due to its negative effect on student safety during dismissal procedures.
* **Visitors:** All visitors must have their ID scanned into the Raptor system. This is a district policy to ensure we have an accurate record of everyone on campus. All visitors’ badges must be visible at all times.
* **Volunteering:** Family members must be VIPS approved to volunteer.
* **Parties:** Birthday parties should be scheduled with the classroom teacher in advance. Generally, we encourage birthday celebrations to occur during lunch. The teacher has the right to refuse a celebration due to time constraints or general classroom behavior.
* **Appropriate conversation:** Our students need a calm and safe environment to learn. Visitors must refrain from yelling, cursing, or profanity in the main office. If a visitor is unable to maintain this decorum, HISD police will be immediately called and the visitor will be escorted off the property.

**Learning is our core function:**

* Classrooms shall not be interrupted unless safety is an immediate concern. Whenever possible, messages to students will be delivered through the teacher via a handwritten note or an email.
* Students should be in class as much as possible. A serious reason must arise for a student to need to be called from class.

**Breakfast and lunch must not interfere with student safety or learning:**

* We will not deliver lunches to the classrooms or cafeteria.
  + Informing students that their lunch has arrived interferes with instruction time.
  + Our front office staff needs to focus on visitors and safety in the main office rather than delivering food.
  + When students travel from class or the lunch room to the main office, they either travel alone (which is not ideal) or travel with a buddy (which takes the buddy away from lunch and/or class).
* **If your child forgets his/her lunch, he/she is welcome to enjoy a Valley West lunch tray for free.**
* If parents wish to bring their child lunch, they must sit in the cafeteria and eat lunch with them.