



Valley Lutheran High School

2024-2025 HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Learning, Serving, and Sharing
Christ

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Table of Contents

Who We Are	4
Mission Statement.....	4
Commitment to Students and Families	4
History of Valley Lutheran High School	5
School Theme for 2024-2025 ~ No Limits!.....	5
Valley Lutheran High School Flames	5
<i>School Colors</i>	5
<i>School Mascot</i>	5
<i>Fight Song</i>	5
Academic Information.....	6
Academic Honor Roll	6
Academic Honesty	6
Academic Watch.....	6
Add/Drop	6
Concurrent High School and College Credit	7
Advanced Placement Courses	7
Credit for Transfer Students.....	7
<i>Acceptance of Honors Transfer Credit</i>	7
<i>Credit for Online Advanced Placement Classes</i>	8
<i>Special Exception: Graduation Requirements</i>	8
Course Load	8
Course Selection	8
Final Exams	9
Graduation Requirements	10
Grade Reports	10
Grading Policy	11
Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)	11
Incompletes	11
Interim Courses	11
Makeup Assignments.....	12
Standardized Testing.....	13
Withdrawing from School.....	13
Campus Technology Policy	13

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) 1:1 Initiative.....	14
Policies and Procedures.....	15
Attendance Policy	15
<i>Absence Policy</i>	15
Late to School Policy	16
Tardy Policy	16
Leaving School Early.....	17
Release from Study Hall	17
Truancy/Skipping Classes.....	17
AM/PM Campus Guidelines and Responsibilities.....	17
Automobile Restrictions	18
Behavior and Conduct.....	18
Bullying Policy	19
Disciplinary Procedures	19
Discipline	20
Definitions.....	21
Dress Code – Dress and Personal Appearance	22
Electronic Items	23
Food and Drinks.....	24
Illegal Substances/Weapons.....	24
Vaping Devices	25
Medications.....	25
Off Campus Conduct	25
Lifestyle Behaviors	25
School Locks/Lockers.....	26
Skateboards and Scooters.....	26
Student Use of Office Copier.....	26
Trespassing	26
Vandalism	27
Visitor Policy	27
Support Services.....	27
The Computer Lab	27
Guidance and Counseling	27
Health Information.....	27

Insurance	28
Lost and Found	28
Student Identification	28
Stolen Items	28
Telephone.....	28
Transportation	28
Worship Services	29
Photo Release.....	29
Student Activities	30
Eligibility	30
Athletics	30
Drama Presentations	30
Music Ensembles	30
National Honor Society.....	31
Social Events.....	31
<i>Guest Policy for Social Events</i>	31
Student Council.....	32
Yearbook.....	32
Special Recognition.....	33
Honors and Awards.....	33
AIA Awards	33
Fine Arts Awards	33
Christi Lux	33
Valedictorian and Salutatorian.....	33
Vitae Scholae	33

Who We Are

Mission Statement

Valley Lutheran High School (hereinafter referred to as VLHS) provides a foundation for a life of faith, learning and service through biblical, Christ-centered, college preparatory education and Christian relationships.

Learning, Serving and Sharing Christ.

Commitment to Students and Families

Our commitment to Students and Families revolves around the following 5 core values.

Christ Centered – Christ is at the heart of who we are and what we do at VLHS. Students are encouraged and guided in learning to love and follow Jesus Christ with their whole hearts and minds through classes, groups, and activities that model discipleship.

Relationships – Relational community is a primary component of VLHS. Students, teachers, and staff alike have opportunities to take part in relationships that are supportive and restorative. At VLHS, we strive to treat and see each other as Jesus would in the relationships on our campus.

Service – A commitment to service calls us to follow Jesus in actively looking to help, support, and empower those in our community. At VLHS, we strive to serve those within our school and out in our community to be good neighbors. Students are challenged at VLHS to grow in their heart of service and awareness of community needs.

Learning – At VLHS, teachers are committed to the academic success and well-being of every student. Through challenging and relevant curriculum, instruction, and learning opportunities, students receive support in their knowledge and ability to apply what they learn in the classroom.

Leadership – At VLHS, students are empowered through leadership opportunities that foster skills in discipleship and compassion. Through student groups and intentional guidance by teachers and staff, students grow in their ability to lead others responsibly and with care to prepare them for leadership beyond their education at VLHS.

VLHS does not exclude students on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin.

VLHS supports the scriptural position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, which says that God created man in His own image, and He created them male and female. Based on this, VLHS defines males and females according to their biological sex at birth.

History of Valley Lutheran High School

VLHS is one of approximately 100 Lutheran high schools throughout the U.S. offering quality Christ-centered education in a loving, nurturing environment. The educational program at VLHS is rooted in the 450-year Lutheran tradition of preparing young people for active roles as God's people. VLHS was established in 1981 by a consortium of Lutheran congregations. The school is operated under the auspices of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod by an association of Lutheran churches.

School Theme for 2024-2025 ~ No Limits!

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." – Philippians 4:13

Valley Lutheran High School Flames

School Colors

Red and Gray

School Mascot

"Sparky"

Fight Song

We're Lutheran High, strong and fearless, shouting so all can hear us Fight, fight, fight to victory!

With honor and pride let's say. We'll conquer with red and gray, and Fight, fight, fight to victory.

Onward, Onward, on you mighty Flames! Shouting out the praises of His Name!

We're Lutheran High, strong and fearless, shouting so all can hear us, Fight, fight, fight on to victory.

Academic Information

Academic Honor Roll

The academic honor roll is determined at the end of each quarter. Students must be enrolled in at least six classes to be named to one of the lists.

Jean Hodgson Principal's Commendation – All A's
Academic Distinction - All A's and B's

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an expected virtue at VLHS. Any compromise of academic honesty, including unauthorized assistance with class work, copying or sharing homework assignments, cheating on tests, or plagiarizing research papers will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter by the faculty and administration.

Academic Watch

Students who are not able to maintain a 2.0 semester GPA or who have received a grade of "F" during any grading period will participate in the Academic Watch Program. Students who enter VLHS with a marginal academic performance record may also be placed on Academic Watch.

The purpose of this program is to facilitate communication with the parent, teacher and guidance counselor, support the student's efforts to achieve academic excellence, and increase student responsibility and accountability.

Parent contact will be made by the guidance counselor.

Students who do not show improvement may be asked to withdraw from VLHS. This decision will be made by the administration of VLHS.

Add/Drop

Courses may be dropped or added only up to the end of the first full week of each semester as long as the student has written approval of the teacher, parents, and guidance counselor.

Students may only withdraw from a class after the first week with the approval of the Principal and the teacher. If the student is failing at the time they withdraw, they will receive a grade of "WF," which for all purposes counts the same as and "F." If the student is passing at the time they withdraw, they will receive a grade of "W" which has no impact on a student's GPA.

Concurrent High School and College Credit

While enrolled at VLHS, a student has the option of taking additional courses by independent study, during summer school, or at colleges/universities. If a student seeks to receive VLHS credit for these courses, student must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The course must be taken through an accredited high school, college or other educational institution.
- By state law, students who have received any Arizona School Tuition Organization scholarship(s) or Universal ESA, may NOT attend a free charter school for an off-campus class. You must pay tuition for your class. If planning to attend a free charter school, VLHS business office approval is required in advance.
- The student and/or parent should consult with the guidance counselor to confirm that the course will fulfill VLHS graduation requirements.
- A form to request approval for an off-campus class is available from the PlusPortals website.
- No credit is awarded for 000 level college classes.
- Honors level concurrent credit may be earned for 200 level and above college classes.
- Classes taken may replace existing high school grades if approved in advance by the guidance counselor.
- Students may choose which concurrent classes they receive transfer credit for.

Advanced Placement Courses

Students enrolled in an Advanced Placement course who are not enrolled in Dual Credit are required to take the Advanced Placement exam, and pay the applicable fee, in order to receive AP/Honors credit for that course.

Credit for Transfer Students

Transfer credit is accepted from high schools that are accredited by a regional accrediting agency. When a student transfers to VLHS, the student's transcript will be evaluated by the registrar or guidance counselor to determine which graduation requirements have been met.

Acceptance of Honors Transfer Credit

When receiving transfer credit from other schools, VLHS awards honors credit, with enhanced grade points, when all of the following criteria are true:

- The course is indicated on the transcript as an honors course
- The course was available as an honors course at VLHS the year it was taken by the student
- The student did not earn a grade lower than a "B-" in the course
- The student was awarded enhanced grade points for the honors course at the school where the course was taken

Credit for Online Advanced Placement Classes

Students who enroll in Advanced Placement classes at other schools while enrolled at VLHS (i.e. through an online course) can earn enhanced GPA points if:

- The class is not offered at VLHS the year a student enrolls in course
- The class is listed on the AP Course Ledger as an approved course
- The school offering the course offers enhanced G.P.A. points on their transcript
- The student completes the entire course
- The student earns a grade no lower than a “B-” in the course
- The student completes the AP exam at the conclusion of the course (additional fees apply)

Special Exception: Graduation Requirements

While VLHS seeks to have all transfer students fulfill all of its graduation requirements, individual requirements may be waived on a case-by-case basis if they are not a part of the graduation requirements for the State of Arizona.

Course Load

Students are expected to carry a minimum of seven classes in their schedule. If a student is enrolled in three AP classes the student may have a load of 6 classes.

Course Selection

Each spring, students are given an opportunity to request classes for the following year. The request form must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Students are required to rank several electives in order of preference, and to select core academic classes. Some classes require teacher approval prior to enrollment.

Final Exams

All classes will include a final exam, which is given on the designated final exam days:

First semester: December 17-19, 2024

Second semester: May 20-22, 2025

All students are expected to take their final exams on these dates, and exceptions will only be made in emergency situations. Families should keep these dates in mind when making vacation travel plans so that finals are not missed.

Seniors can opt out of a second semester final exam if they meet the following criteria:

1. Received an 85% or higher in both 3rd and 4th quarter in the class.
2. Have 3 or fewer unexcused absences for the second semester in the class.

* AP and honors classes may still require a final exam at teacher discretion. All Seniors will be required to complete the Final Senior Theology interview.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from VLHS, a student must have completed a minimum of 28 units of course work. The requirements for incoming freshmen are as follows:

Theology	4 units
English	4 units
Social Studies	4 units
Math *	4 units
Science (Biology required)	3 units
Foreign Language	2 units
Physical Education	1 unit
Health	½ unit
Computers	1 unit
Fine Arts	1 unit
Electives	3 ½ units

* Must complete classes through Algebra II.

Students pursuing an academically enriched (college prep) program are encouraged to take the following additional courses:

Science	1 unit
Foreign Language	1 unit
Fine Arts	1 unit

Grade Reports

Report cards and mid-quarter progress reports are mailed to parents whose account(s) with the business office are up to date. Additional reports may be mailed as needed or are available by accessing your account on the VLHS PlusPortals Account. PlusPortals accounts are available to parents and students.

Grading Policy

The grading policy is as follows:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
Below 60%	F

Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)

The calculation of grade points is a cumulative process based on SEMESTER grades. These averages are used for transcripts and class rank determination. Students who earn an “A” or a “B” in honors or A.P. classes receive enhanced grade points for that class.

Incompletes

Any work that has not been completed by the end of a grading period will be given an incomplete standing. Teachers may grant a maximum of ten school days for students to complete and hand in their work before the grade is officially recorded.

Interim Courses

Interim classes are one-week courses offered in the spring semester that allow students to experience a unique out-of-the classroom learning environment. Students are required to enroll in an interim class each year. Classes may be offered in areas related to Fine Arts, Industrial Arts, Physical Education, Sports, Humanities, Science, Math, Computers, and Theology/Service.

THEOLOGY/SERVICE REQUIREMENT:

All graduates of VLHS are required to successfully complete a Theology/Service-related interim course during one of their four years. This requirement must be fulfilled by a school-organized interim course and may not be fulfilled through other off-campus community service activities.

EXCEPTION: Students who transfer to VLHS their senior year are permitted to fulfill this requirement by completing 30 documented community service hours. These community service hours must be approved by the Principal in advance.

COST:

Most courses do have an additional cost which must be paid prior to Interim Week. Course options may include out-of-state or international trips. In order for students to participate in an out-of-state or international trip, the student’s tuition account must be up to date. A deposit for interim classes will be paid by the end of the first semester.

ATTENDANCE and CREDIT:

Students successfully completing an interim course, including fulfilling attendance and other requirements set forth by the teacher, receive ¼ credit of elective academic credit.

Interim Week is a highly valued, and required, part of the academic experience at VLHS. Students are expected to attend class each day. For students who fulfill all other course requirements, credit is granted as follows:

ZERO ABSENCES	Credit is earned.
ONE ABSENCE	No Credit. If the student has only one absence, the student and parent may file a written appeal to request credit in extenuating circumstances, which must be approved by both the teacher and the Principal.
TWO ABSENCES	No Credit.

Makeup Assignments

Valley Lutheran High School values learning and expectations that foster students’ accountability to complete coursework on time and to the best of their God-given ability. We understand that there are circumstances that can prevent students from submitting coursework on time.

In the event that a student has missed coursework due to an absence the following policy includes:

- Students have up to 2 class periods for each day absent to submit missing work without penalty.
- Teachers may set alternative due dates upon mutual agreement/conversation with students, parents, and/or school administration.
- Any assignments not completed by the absent work policy due date will then fall into VLHS’s general late work policy (listed below).
- All preplanned absences still hold expected due dates unless otherwise specified and agreed upon under the discretion of each individual instructor.

In the event that the student does not submit work by the deadline (unrelated to an absence or extenuating circumstances), it is considered incomplete, and the following policy is enforced:

- The grade will reflect an “MW” (missing work) and a value of zero until the work has been submitted to the teacher.
- One class period late, 20% penalty
- 2 or more class periods late, 40% penalty
 - Students have until the end of the marking period (mid-quarter or quarter) to submit any late assignments/coursework obligations.
- Additional deductions may be applied relative to the evaluation of the student’s quality of work on the assignment.
- After deadlines (mid-quarter or quarter) have passed, any remaining missing student coursework will receive a final score of zero.

Standardized Testing

Periodic testing of student progress and achievement is accomplished through a variety of standardized tests. All freshmen will take placement tests prior to the beginning of the school year. Freshmen, sophomores and juniors take the PSAT. Seniors who intend to continue their formal education at universities, colleges, or community colleges are strongly encouraged (and often required) to take the SAT and/or ACT.

Withdrawing from School

Parents wishing to withdraw their student from VLHS must follow these steps:

1. Come into the office and fill out a withdrawal form.
2. Schedule a time and meet with the Principal for an exit interview.
3. Return all school items including textbooks, athletic uniforms, etc.
4. Reconcile outstanding tuition and fees.

Records will not be released until each of these steps are completed.

Campus Technology Policy

These policies are in effect at all times on the VLHS network, including on campus computers, school owned devices, and personally owned iPads and other computers and devices used on the campus Wi-Fi network.

1. Use of computers and Internet is for academic purposes only.

Examples of non-academic purposes include:

- Visiting social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or Twitter is prohibited
 - Using any interactive chat or messaging service
 - Playing streaming audio and video services (including but not limited to iTunes Radio, Pandora, Netflix, and YouTube) during school hours unless specifically required for a school assignment
 - Playing multi-player Internet games
2. Do not submit, publish, display or retrieve/download any inappropriate matter including material that is:
 - Disruptive, Defamatory, Abusive, Obscene, Profane, Gang-related, Sexually threatening, Racially offensive, Illegal

Do not:

- Attempt to harm or modify any computer hardware, software, or configuration
- Install software on any computer without permission of the network administrator
- Attempt to gain unauthorized access to our network system or data
- Attempt to interfere with system security or circumvent internet firewalls or filtering
- Attempt to use Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) on campus

- Illegally copyright software
 - Attempt to use any other user's computer password, even if permission has been granted by that user. Never share your password with anyone
3. Understand that e-mail and other files on networks should not be considered absolutely secure or private
 4. Do not use the network in a way that would disrupt or disturb the learning process of others

The use of computers and devices is a privilege at VLHS. Any action by a user determined to be inappropriate by a staff or faculty member is subject to consequences.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) 1:1 Initiative

VLHS requires that every student provide his or her own Chromebook/laptop or appropriate educational device for school use on a daily basis. While these will not be utilized every day in every class, the frequent application of 21st century learning experiences will require students to have regular access to this resource. This initiative involves any device that qualifies as a Chromebook or laptop or full tablet device. The unit must have a currently supported operating system, physical keyboard, minimum of a 10 inch screen, and a minimum battery life of 7 hours. Chromebooks are an ideal low-cost option, and they boot quickly for classroom use, have an extended battery life and provide reliable access to the internet and a set of tools that meet our educational expectations. Cell phones are not an approved BYOD device. Students should also have personal earbuds for use in the classroom and a cover to protect the device.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is directly correlated to academic achievement. Attendance is the responsibility of both student and parent. Absenteeism is strongly discouraged, as classroom activity can never be replicated. The benefits of lectures, discussion, and classroom interaction are lost to students who are absent. All absences are recorded as such.

Absence Policy

On the day of an absence

Parents must call the school to report absences prior to 9:00 AM on the day of the absence. To report an absence, call the school at (602)-230-1600, and press option 4 to access the attendance hotline. During the first hour of the day, attendance is compiled, and parents of those students not accounted for will be contacted. A student is marked absent from any class where they miss more than 20 minutes at the beginning or end of the period (including leaving early), or 5 minutes at the beginning of the period not caused by being late to school.

- After fourth and sixth unexcused absences in any class per semester, a written report will be sent home noting the absences.
- On the seventh unexcused absence, the student is denied credit for the course. When the seventh absence is reached, the parents and students have the following options:
- Student and parent may appeal to the Principal for credit. **Students who reach 13 absences may not appeal for credit.**
- Student may remain in class on an audit basis or withdraw from class and be placed in a study hall. If the student is failing at the time of withdrawal, a grade of F will be recorded rather than NC (no credit).

Absences are calculated for block classes as full absences while non-block days are considered one-half absence.

Absences may be excused for the following reasons with proper documentation:

- Illness with a doctor's note
- Medical/dental appointments
- Bereavement
- Legal appointments
- Other circumstances may be excused at the discretion of the Principal.
- Family vacations are **not** considered excused absences.

Late to School Policy

Students are expected to arrive at school on time every day. Students arriving at school after the 8:00 a.m. bell must sign in at the school office to get an “admit to class” slip. Unless excused, the student will be considered “Late to School.”

The “Late to School” will typically be excused if the student presents a note from a doctor’s office stating that the student was at a doctor’s appointment that morning. Additionally, the “Late to School” may be excused if a same-day request from the parent (either written or by telephone) at the discretion of the Principal. Even if the “Late to School” is excused, the student will still earn an absence in each class that 20 or more minutes of class is missed.

The following procedures will be followed for unexcused “Late to School” students, regardless of during which period the student arrived:

- **Third Tardy:** The student will be notified
- **Fourth Tardy:** The student will serve a lunch detention
- **Fifth Tardy:** Student will receive an after school detention
- **Sixth Tardy:** Student will receive a work day detention
- **Seventh Tardy:** Student and parents will meet with Principal and a contract will be put in place

Tardy Policy

Students have a responsibility to be in class on time. Students arriving late to school will not be counted as tardy but will be counted using the “Late to School” procedures listed above. Students arriving after the bell rings will be marked tardy by the instructor. Tardiness of more than 5 minutes after a passing period *without a pass* will be recorded as an absence and treated as truancy.

The following procedures will be followed for tardies **in all classes combined** in one quarter:

- **Third Tardy:** The student will be notified
- **Fourth Tardy:** The student will serve a lunch detention
- **Fifth Tardy:** Student will receive an after school detention
- **Sixth Tardy:** Student will receive a work day detention
- **Seventh Tardy:** Student and parents will meet with Principal and a contract will be put in place

Leaving School Early

If it is necessary for a student to leave during school hours, the parent must contact the school office prior to the student signing out in the front office. No student will be dismissed from the campus without contact from a parent. Students must ALWAYS sign in and out of school in the office when leaving early or arriving late. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should report to the office. The student's parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to give permission for the student to leave school. Students are not to leave school without reporting to the office for permission. Students may dismiss themselves from a class when it is time to leave for an appointment and report to the front office to sign out.

Release from Study Hall

Once a signed parental permission form has been submitted to the office and approved by the lead administrator, juniors or seniors may be released from a first or last period study hall. A new release form must be submitted each semester. Students with a first period release may not arrive more than fifteen minutes prior to the beginning of the second period. Students released from the last period must leave campus. If a student remains on campus, they must report to their assigned study hall. A parent may revoke authorization for study hall release by notifying the school office. Students who have permission to be excused from first period must arrive before chapel/family group time. All students are required to attend chapel every time it is scheduled.

Truancy/Skipping Classes

All truanancies are regarded as a school disciplinary situation. Students who are truant from school will not be allowed to return to school without a parent/student/school administrator conference. Students who are more than 5 minutes late from another class are counted as truant.

AM/PM Campus Guidelines and Responsibilities

VLHS is responsible for its students from the start of the students' school day until the conclusion of the students' last classes.

Prior to the students' first classes, VLHS will...

- Permit students opportunities to socialize in designated areas of the campus
- Restrict/prohibit loitering in or around cars

Parents are asked to...

- Understand that no official campus supervision will be provided before 7:30 a.m.

- Support VLHS by instructing their children that it is against school policy to leave campus after arrival
- Inform/remind students of options available (see above)

After students' last classes of the day, VLHS will...

- Provide access to a classroom or secure area for those students who need a place to wait until 3:30 p.m.
- Supervise all co-curricular activities and athletic practices

Parents are asked to...

- Instruct their children to leave campus following their last classes of the day if they are not participating in after-school activities
- Make appropriate arrangements for transportation to and from school
- Understand that after 3:30 p.m. there is no official campus supervision provided

Students are expected to...

- Respond positively to the above guidelines

Automobile Restrictions

Once students drive onto campus with their vehicle, they cannot leave until the end of their class day. They are not to return to their vehicle without permission.

All student drivers must register their vehicle(s) showing proof of a valid driver's license in exchange for a VLHS parking permit for each vehicle.

Behavior and Conduct

VLHS is a school community centered on God and His redemptive action through His Son Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit, God calls us into a personal relationship, makes us His own in baptism and nurtures us through His Word and the Sacraments. Our life together is marked by prayer, worship, study and mutual support, and grows out of thankfulness for what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

The guidelines for behavior and conduct ensure that each student will have access to a well-rounded education. Students are held accountable for behavior during the school day and at school-sponsored activities.

The VLHS philosophy reflects our pride in our students and an expectation that their behavior will exhibit responsibility, concern for others, and a servant spirit. It is expected that students will respond in a positive manner if counseled about nonacceptable conduct.

Bullying Policy

VLHS believes it is necessary for all students to be in a safe learning environment. **John 13:34 tells us, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."** Bullying behavior causes students to feel unsafe which in turn prevents students from having the optimal chance to learn and grow. John 13:34 is the expectation Christ set for us, and it is the expectation we have for our faculty, students and parents. At times people do not live up to this level of expectation. As a result, VLHS has set this policy against bullying.

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students and may involve: (1) Teasing; (2) Social exclusion; (3) Threat; (4) Intimidation; (5) Stalking; (6) Physical violence; (7) Theft; (8) Sexual, religious, or racial harassment; (9) Public humiliation; and/or (10) Destruction of property. The definitions of 'bullying' and 'harassment' also include: (1) Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment and/or (2) Perpetuation of [bullying or harassment] conduct by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause physical harm to a student.

Included in this definition of bullying is cyberbullying. "Cyberbullying" means bullying by use of any electronic communication device through means including, but not limited to, e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, social media, online games and websites.

Students, parents and school personnel must report instances of bullying to the Principal or School Counselor.

Upon receipt of such a report, the Principal or School Counselor shall promptly conduct an investigation and document the process. If the Principal or a designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Principal or designee shall (1) take appropriate disciplinary action; (2) notify the parents or guardians of a perpetrator; (3) notify the parents or guardians of the victim, to the extent consistent with school policy, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation, and (4) notify the local law enforcement agency if the Principal or School Counselor believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator. A student who is found to be in violation of the bullying policy will be subject to Tier 3 or 4 of the discipline policy.

A student who knowingly brings a false accusation of bullying against another student is subject to school disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Procedures

Because:

- VLHS is centered on the message of God's love and forgiveness for all people in Jesus Christ;

- Learning occurs most effectively in an environment of mutual trust and respect;
- VLHS is a community of people who are responsible for and accountable to one another;
- The teachers and school leadership of VLHS value each student and desire success for them;
- God has gifted every member of this community with unique talents and abilities;
- Christ has forgiven us and shown us that we are to serve one another in love;

Therefore, we are called upon, individually and as a school family, to love God and one another in everything we think, say and do.

Students accepted for enrollment and their families have chosen to be part of the VLHS community. It is essential that students and their families think carefully about the statement above. The principle of loving God and one another extends into every aspect of high school life and is a particular emphasis of life at VLHS.

Rules, guidelines and procedures for daily life at VLHS are intended to enable the school community to work in a way that enables and encourages life and learning to happen in a safe, respectful, open and caring environment. The faculty and staff at VLHS have set a standard for discipline based on the Word of God and on commonly accepted social behaviors. It is our intent to consistently provide a strong balance of Law and Gospel when dealing with issues that occur within the student body. This principle will guide us steadfastly as we seek to honor our school, our families and ultimately our Lord.

Discipline

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:11

Stimulating a culture of spiritual, academic, social, physical, and emotional growth lies at the heart of VLHS's mission. To do so requires fostering a school community that prides itself on self-respect, mutual respect for others, self-discipline, and Christian character. As a means of ensuring this, VLHS discipline philosophy observes a balance of Law and Gospel based principles.

Discipline Philosophy: Admonition, Confession, Forgiveness, Restoration

Possible Consequences: (a) Verbal warning, (b) Written referral, (c) Detention, (d) Meet with Principal or designee, (e) In-school suspension, (f) Out-of-school suspension, (g) Disciplinary Contract, (h) Expulsion

VLHS places a premium on ensuring that the campus enjoys a healthy and productive environment at all times. Behavior that breaches this value will be addressed swiftly and firmly. It is at all times and all places inappropriate to use, or be a party to the use of, profanity, obscene gestures, vulgarity, inappropriate sexual conduct, and/or any other act or attitude that is contrary

to the purpose, values, mission, and standards of VLHS while on campus or while associated with a VLHS school-sponsored activity. Evidence of any of the aforementioned will be subject to the cycle of discipline, with the possibility of student-parent contracting or withdrawal from VLHS.

Disruption of Instruction and Insubordination

Class time is to be treated respectfully with an attitude that is at all times dedicated to the learning process. Students are expected to come to class prepared with the assigned materials, readings, writings, and homework. Students are not allowed to return to their vehicle once class has started or interrupt the learning period for other non-urgent reasons, such as retrieving food and drink. Any student who demonstrates that they are not adhering to this expectation and/or behaves in a distracting manner that interferes with a teacher's lesson plan and/or causes another student to be distracted will be disciplined accordingly. Students performing actions that disrupt or distract from instruction in the classroom will be subject to the cycle of discipline.

Definitions

Dangerous Behavior: Any behavior that might endanger the student or others. Examples might include, but are not limited to, mishandling substances or tools in a classroom, inappropriate use of weight room equipment or throwing objects.

Defiant Behavior: Refusal to comply with a request from teacher or staff member. Continuing to engage in any behavior that is considered inappropriate after being asked to stop. Any behavior that could be considered belligerent or bullying.

Detention: One-hour increments to be served before or after school or as determined by the Principal. Detention may include service projects or may be a mandatory study hall.

Dishonesty: Lying, cheating, plagiarism. Academic dishonesty may result in the loss of credit for the assignment or test.

Disrespectful Behavior: Includes, but is not limited to, talking back, ignoring direct requests of teachers, disrupting class by talking or creating a disturbance, using inappropriate language, denigrating another individual.

Dress Code Violation: See Dress Code for further definitions and consequences. Coming to school in clothing that does not meet the standards of dress for VLHS.

Harassment: Slurs, slander, gossip, jokes, unwanted touching or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to a person's sex, race, religion, age, abilities or physical appearance.

Inappropriate Use of Motor Vehicle: Speeding, reckless driving, loud music from car stereo, in and around the school campus or at school-sponsored events. Students may not go to their vehicles between classes without permission from the school office. Once students park on

campus they may not sit in their parked cars. They must leave the parking area. Violations may result in the loss of vehicle on campus privileges.

Off-task in Classroom: Students are to follow the expected behavior in class. They are to pay attention and participate in all classroom activities. Sleeping in class, doing homework for another class, and writing personal notes are examples of being off-task.

Plagiarism: Copying another author's work or taking another person's ideas and passing them off as your own.

Public Display of Affection (PDA): While some forms of public display of affection may be acceptable in a Christian high school setting (such as a friendly hug), other forms and situations may be embarrassing and offensive. In order to maintain an inoffensive and business-like academic atmosphere, students are asked to be aware and considerate of the feelings of teachers, fellow students, and visitors and refrain from public display of affection at school and at school functions at home and away. Whether an action is appropriate or not is at the discretion of the staff of VLHS.

Probation: A contract with prescribed expectations for student behavior; to be signed by the student, parent(s) and the Principal. The probationary period will be determined by the Principal.

Suspension: Student will not be allowed to attend classes. Student will not be allowed to attend or participate in any extra-curricular school events while suspended. Student will be considered absent on the day(s) of suspension. Missed schoolwork may be made up at the discretion of the individual teacher. A parent conference with the Principal and a probationary contract will be required before a suspended student may return to school.

Truancy: Any absence from school or a class without permission from parent or guardian. All school absences must be with the knowledge and permission of the parent or guardian.

Vandalism: The destruction of school or personal property.

Workday: Students will help with general clean-up and maintenance of the VLHS and Mt. Calvary Campus. Students may be scheduled for more than one workday. In some cases, parents may be asked to accompany the student for workday.

Dress Code – Dress and Personal Appearance

Dress at VLHS should reflect Christian standards of respect for one's body. Student appearance should be modest, clean and well groomed. Exceptions to the dress code are allowable only on special dress days, e.g. Spirit Week. Attire for sports practice must mirror the dress code for that sport or be school-issued practice gear.

All-school dress code checks may be conducted. Students out of dress code may be asked to call home for more appropriate clothing. They will remain in the office until other clothing is brought

to school. Students will be responsible for any work missed while waiting for their parent to arrive.

The following guidelines should be adhered to when selecting clothing to wear to school and school related activities:

Shirts – Shirts must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Must have sleeves
- Must be long enough to completely cover torso
- Must have modest neckline
- Graphics or writing must be smaller than 5”x7” index card unless it is VLHS or Christian apparel/messaging.

Pants/Shorts – Pants and shorts must be clean and without holes, tears, or rips. Pants and shorts must be jeans, khakis or slacks of non-athletic material (must have belt loops). Shorts must cover down to the knee.

Skirts/Dresses – Skirts and dresses must cover down to the knee.

Hats & Hoods – Hats and hoods of any kind may not be worn in the building during the school day.

Footwear – Shoes must be worn at all times. For health and safety, closed toed shoes must be worn. Slides, bedroom slippers, and sandals may not be worn to school.

Misc. – Hair should be clean, well-groomed and a natural hair color or not be cause for a distraction or being undue attention to oneself. Visible tattoos and body-piercings should not be cause for distraction or bring undue attention to oneself. Sunglasses may not be worn inside. Students may not wear bandanas or sweatbands on their head.

P.E. and Sports Practice – Attire for sports practice must mirror the athletic uniform or be school-issued practice gear. P.E. apparel is to be worn only during P.E. class or practice (shorts or sweatpants with VLHS shirt).

Electronic Items

1. If a teacher allows a student to use headphones during a class period, it is the responsibility of the student to put the headphones/Air Pods away before leaving the class in which they were granted permission.
2. The use of “personal” electronics is permitted before and after school and during lunch as long as no one else can hear it. If it causes offense to a staff or faculty member, it may be confiscated. These devices must be put away before the start of the school day.

3. **Personal Devices must be put away during school hours except during the lunch period.** Emergency calls may be made in the school office with permission of the school staff.
4. **Cell phones and/or smart watches that ring during school hours or are used for any reason, will be confiscated. Batteries must remain in confiscated phones. Confiscated cell phones may be subject to search. Smart watches can be used to tell time only.**
5. **Cell Phones are not classified as educational devices for VLHS's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy.**

If a student uses a cell phone and/or smart watch in any way during the school day, the phone and/or watch will be confiscated until the end of the school day. The second offense will result in confiscation at the beginning of the school day and returned at the end of the day for (2) consecutive school days. The third offense is confiscation before school for (5) consecutive school days. Subsequent offenses will require a meeting between the Principal, parents and student. If a cell phone is out but not in use it will be taken by the teacher and turned into the office. The student can receive their phone back at the end of the day with no disciplinary consequence.

Food and Drinks

In order to maintain clean classrooms, eating and drinking are not permitted inside classrooms without teacher permission. Water bottles are allowed.

Students may not have food delivered to school for lunch by a restaurant, food service organization or food delivery group. Students must bring their lunch or purchase lunch from the lunch service on campus.

Illegal Substances/Weapons

VLHS has a zero-tolerance policy relating to alcohol, tobacco, illegal/unauthorized drugs (including prescription medication for which a student does not have a valid prescription) and dangerous weapons. Use or possession, on campus or at school related events, is prohibited. Violation will result in immediate suspension pending a hearing.

All students and staff members may be subject to random drug screening and/or personal property search. If a student is subject to a drug test the student's parents/guardians will be notified before the test is administered.

If chemical substance abuse is suspected, referral for testing may be required to determine continued enrollment.

Vaping Devices

VLHS students are prohibited from the use of vaping devices. Students are not to bring any vaping devices on campus or to school events. If a student brings a vaping device, is in possession of a device at school or a school event or uses a device, the student will fall under the same discipline as drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Medications

If a student is required to take prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, the medication, with dosage information, must be brought to the school office to be dispensed as necessary by the front office manager or administration.

Off Campus Conduct

School rules and other reasonable expectations for acceptable student behavior are extended to include student conduct while off campus during the normal school day, at school-sponsored events, or any public venue where the student is directly identified as a student of VLHS (for example: websites on the internet). This includes the student's conduct while going to and from school. A student may be disciplined by the school for any misconduct while off campus at any school-sponsored event. Parents are responsible for making sure their student is appropriately dressed at all school functions outside of the regularly scheduled school day. Teachers and staff of VLHS will use their discretion if they feel a student is inappropriately dressed. A violation of this may result in a teacher talking with a student about his/her attire, a student receiving a referral from a teacher, or in extreme cases, a student being asked to change his/her clothes or leave the school function.

Lifestyle Behaviors

Since the school bears the name of Jesus Christ through our Lutheran, Christian faith, a high standard of conduct is expected of staff and students. Public conduct is to be consistent with our basic concept of life, and since we profess to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves, we are expected to reflect that love in all our actions, as well as in our attitudes toward each other and our work.

Sexuality – We believe that God has prohibited intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (e.g., adultery, fornication, homosexual acts, bestiality, incest, pornography, and attempts to change one's biological sex) or advocacy of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God. If a student advocates or practices lifestyles outlined in this paragraph, they risk suspension and even expulsion.

Transgenderism – VLHS supports the scriptural position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, which says that God created man in His own image, and He created them male and female.

Based on this, VLHS defines males and females according to their biological sex at birth. Student restrooms, locker rooms, and showers that are designated for one biological sex shall only be used by members of that biological sex.

Public Displays of Affection (PDA) – While some forms of public display of affection may be acceptable in a Christian high school setting (such as a friendly hug), other forms and situations may be embarrassing and offensive. In order to maintain an inoffensive and business-like academic atmosphere, students are asked to be aware and considerate of the feelings of teachers, fellow students, and visitors and refrain from public display of affection at school and at school functions at home and away. Whether an action is appropriate or not is at the discretion of the staff of VLHS.

School Locks/Lockers

Students will be issued a locker upon request. It is the responsibility of the student to use the locker properly, and to keep lockers clean. School locks are available from the school office, and we expect the use of locks to those whom lockers are issued. Since our lockers are located outside and are easily accessible, it is very important that each student keeps their locker locked and the combination confidential. Personal locks may not be used. Lockers are the property of the school; periodic locker inspections may be made. VLHS is not responsible for school or personal property that is lost or stolen. Athletic lockers are accessible for athletes or PE classes only during assigned class or before and after athletic practices/games.

Skateboards and Scooters

In order to protect the safety and well-being of students and faculty, students may not use skateboards or scooters on campus.

Student Use of Office Copier

Students may use the office photocopier:

- When working as a teacher aide
- As directed by a teacher as part of an assignment Students may NOT print to the office copier

Personal copies may be made with the permission of the office staff (Mrs. Gosse).

Trespassing

The unauthorized presence of individuals on VLHS's campus is considered trespassing. Unless the individual has been cleared by the administrative office, the person is subject to being cited by a law enforcement official.

Vandalism

Students will be held financially accountable for items assigned to them (books, lockers, desks, uniforms, etc.) They are also accountable if they are responsible for damage to school premises.

Visitor Policy

VLHS maintains a “closed campus.” Campus visitors must have prior permission from the administration. Visitors must sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor badge. The “Shadow” program is for prospective students only.

Support Services

The Computer Lab

VLHS has a computer lab which is available for students to use. These computers are accessible to students when a teacher is available to supervise:

- During computer classes
 - During other classes (selected periods), with a pass from their teacher and permission of the computer instructor
 - During lunch and before or after school (by appointment)
-

Guidance and Counseling

As a Christian community, VLHS offers guidance and counseling which reflect its Christian identity. In a general sense, all faculty members are involved as counselors. In addition, a referral list of qualified counselors, with advanced training skills, is available for specific guidance/counseling needs. If the services of a clinical psychologist or other specialist are needed, the School Counselor is prepared to recommend the services of qualified professionals.

Health Information

The following students must submit a completed physical form:

- All students entering ninth grade
- All transfer students
- Students intending to participate in athletics (required annually)

The following documents must be submitted to the school office prior to the first day of class:

- An authenticated copy of birth certificate
- State mandated immunization record

- Emergency card (updated annually)

Insurance

All enrolled students are covered under a supplementary accident insurance policy. The cost of this program is included in the registration fee. The insurance covers only costs not covered by a family's primary insurance company and has a \$5,000.00 maximum.

Lost and Found

Any lost items are placed in the Lost and Found (front office). Any lost item not claimed within a reasonable amount of time will be donated to local community service agencies or otherwise disposed of.

Student Identification

Students will be issued student I.D. cards. These cards are available shortly after student photographs are taken in the fall and may be used for admission to school events and for securing student discounts.

Stolen Items

If a student has an item stolen, they should report this to the office immediately.

Students should put their name in their books and on other valuables, always make sure their **locker is locked**, and keep their combinations to themselves. **VLHS is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.**

Telephone

Classroom telephones are not available for student use. Students may use the office phone for emergency phone calls with permission from the office staff.

Transportation

The central location of VLHS provides an excellent opportunity for students to use the Phoenix Transit System or Light Rail System which stops at 7th Avenue and Camelback.

Parents who are interested in carpooling will be provided with a list of students in their general area.

VLHS provides point to point transportation before and after school from several locations in the Valley. This service is available for an additional fee. Currently service is available from: Christ Church-Lutheran, Trinity Lutheran Church, Shepherd of the Desert Lutheran Church, and Atonement Lutheran.

Worship Services

Worship is at the core of Christian life. Two mornings a week an all-school worship service is held in the sanctuary of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church. These services are organized in conjunction with our Theology instruction, and are led by school staff, local pastors, invited guests, and student groups. **The campus pastor and Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church are in partnership in providing spiritual nurturing to our school community. Friends and family members are invited to these services as well as to special festival worship services.**

Photo Release

By enrolling at VLHS, you grant permission for your child's picture to be used for publicity purposes, including in brochures, school websites, social media, promotional materials, and videos. If you do not wish to grant such permission, please fill out a **Publicity Opt-Out Form**, which is available from the school office.

Student Activities

Eligibility

Students must attain a passing grade in all their classes to maintain eligibility. If a student has a failing grade in any subject after every two-week period (grades checked Friday as of 3pm with eligibility taking effect the following Tuesday at 8am), the student will become ineligible for all extracurricular activities. The student may regain eligibility by achieving a passing grade in all classes at a subsequent marking period (the next two-week academic marking period).

If a student has a grade of Incomplete, and the Incomplete could be resolved to a Failing Grade, that student is ineligible until the grade of Incomplete is resolved. If the Incomplete is resolved to a passing grade the student will regain eligibility immediately. If the grade of Incomplete resolves to a Failing Grade the student will remain ineligible until the next scheduled grade check.

Eligibility is typically based on the quarter grade, except as follows:

- At the end of semester 1, students who earn a failing quarter grade will be ineligible for the duration of Christmas Break. Students who earn a failing semester grade will be ineligible until the first grade check, 2 weeks after second semester begins.
- At the end of semester 2, students who earn a failing semester grade will be ineligible until the first grade check, 2 weeks after the next school year begins. Students who retake the failed course over the summer will be eligible immediately at the start of the school year.

Athletics

VLHS is a full member of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). Seasonal offerings for boys are cross-country, football, basketball, track and field, tennis, and golf. Girls compete in cross-country, volleyball, cheerleading, basketball, golf, baseball, track and field and tennis. All students are encouraged to make the commitment to a sports team to broaden their high school experience. Students must maintain a passing grade in all classes to remain eligible for this participation. **See the Student/Athlete handbook for more information regarding athletics.**

Drama Presentations

Opportunities to participate in dramatic presentations may be offered throughout the year.

Music Ensembles

VLHS offers a choral ensemble and band that receive academic grade points and credit.

National Honor Society

VLHS is a participating Charter member in the National Honor Society (NHS). "The purpose of this organization shall be to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools." More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since its beginning in 1921.

Membership

Membership in this chapter is an honor bestowed upon deserving students by the faculty, and shall be based on the criteria of Scholarship, Service, Leadership and Character.

Eligibility

1. Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be members of the junior or senior class.
2. To be eligible for selection to membership in this chapter, the candidate must have been in attendance for a period of one semester at VLHS.
3. Candidates eligible for election to the chapter shall have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.75.
4. Upon meeting the grade level, attendance, and GPA standard requirements, candidates shall then be considered based on their service, leadership, and character.

Social Events

Student organizations sponsor a variety of social activities throughout the school year. These events are chaperoned by faculty members.

Guest Policy for Social Events

Guests who will attend VLHS social events must be invited by a VLHS student and have a signed guest contract on file with the Student Council sponsor prior to any event. Guests must be willing to abide by the established guidelines and provide a copy of his/her student ID.

Guest contracts are available in the school office.

(If a VLHS student brings a guest to a dance without a guest form on file, the student must call the guest's parents and inform them of the situation. The parents must then be willing to come to the dance and sign the appropriate form for the guest to be admitted to the social event.)

Student Council

In an effort to encourage student participation in the school's functioning and to foster communication, a Student Council is elected annually. The Council is composed of the elected student body executive officers and class representatives. The Council meets regularly with its faculty advisor and addresses student concerns, plans social activities, and promotes school spirit.

Yearbook

Under the direction of a faculty advisor, students on the yearbook staff are responsible for the production of a yearbook documenting the year's activities at VLHS. Students/families can purchase yearbooks throughout the course of the school year.

Special Recognition

Honors and Awards

On a yearly basis, various local, state and national institutions and agencies bestow honors and awards upon students of VLHS. The students are selected for these awards based on specific criteria for the specific award, e.g., Grade Point Average. When the selection of a student for an honor or award is made by the school, the criteria are reviewed by the guidance counselor and a recommendation is made to the faculty for approval.

AIA Awards

Students who are members of athletic teams are eligible for nomination to receive Arizona Interscholastic Association awards. Coaches nominate athletes who are then considered for inclusion on the All-Region, All-Conference and All-State teams.

Fine Arts Awards

The music and drama directors select students for performing arts awards who have contributed significantly to the music and drama programs. The art instructor selects students for visual arts awards who have contributed significantly to the arts program.

Christi Lux

The "Light of Christ" Christi Lux award is given to one student each school year. The student body votes for a fellow student who best exemplifies Christ's light in day-to-day living within the school community.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Designation of the valedictorian and salutatorian will be determined at the end of the third quarter by a committee, which includes the Principal, School Counselor, and Registrar.

Vitae Scholae

At the conclusion of each school year, faculty members nominate students for Vitae Scholae, "Life of the School" awards. These students have exhibited exceptional enthusiasm and involvement in improving school life.

Please visit the school website for the most up-to-date listings of school phone numbers and extensions.

Website: www.vlhs.org
School Calendar: <http://calendar.vlhs.org>
PlusPortals: <http://www.plusportals.com/vlhs>