

2023 - 2024



VERITAS SCHOOL

WELCOME TO VERITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Welcome students and parents to Veritas Elementary School. This handbook will provide you with information regarding our school rules, policies, activities and daily procedures so that together we can create an atmosphere where children are able to be successful in a safe environment.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's instructional program, homework, grades, test scores, behavior, etc., please contact your child's teacher. Your continued support and interest in your child's education is of the utmost importance to help the Veritas staff in educating your child.

Sincerely,
Dr. Cowan, Principal

ABSENCES

According to the California Education Code, excused absences are student illness, medical or dental appointment or a death in the immediate family. When a student must be absent, the parent or guardian must contact the school by calling (209)858-7390 or provide a written note verifying the date of absence, person reporting the absence, and reason for the absence, and if ill, the symptoms of illness. A voicemail message can be left on the school answering machine before or after school hours. Parents are asked to send in a doctor's note for dental or medical appointments. Absences of three or more consecutive days require a doctor's note to excuse the absence. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments during after-school hours. If the appointment must be scheduled during the school day, please also notify your child's teacher. Excessive absences will result in a referral to the Truancy Prevention Counselor and could result in a referral to the District Attendance Review Board for a hearing and a Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) contract. Parents may excuse a student from physical education for up to two days; a doctor's note is required to excuse a student for more than two days. Any student who is not in attendance at school for the minimum number of instructional minutes (180 minutes) is not eligible to participate in after school activities, including sports, dances, competitions, or performances (unless the performance is a grade requirement for a class such as band).

ENROLLMENT

MUSD is experiencing shifting enrollment patterns throughout the district. As a result, the district may find it necessary to overflow students from their school of residence to another school to meet enrollment and staffing needs for the 2023/24 school year.

MAKE UP WORK

It is the student's responsibility to request and complete schoolwork for any excused absence. Make-up work for unexcused absences and/or late work may not be accepted and could affect a student's overall grade. If a student is going to be absent from school for several days, a parent or guardian should contact the teacher to request make-up work. Please allow 24 hours for the teacher to prepare the necessary work.

LATE STUDENTS

Students in grades 1st – 8th may not arrive at school prior to 7:45 a.m. as there is no adult supervision before that time. School begins at 8:00 a.m. Transitional Kindergarten & Kindergarten students may not arrive at school prior to 7:30 a.m. and their school begins at 7:45 a.m. Any student arriving late to school after their bell **must** report to the school office for a tardy pass. Teachers may notify parents when students are tardy to school. The office will send a truancy warning letter at five tardies. Students who are habitually late to school will be referred to the Truancy Prevention Counselor and could also be referred to the District Attendance Review Board for a hearing to be placed on an attendance contract.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

In compliance with Education Code 49423, no medication will be accepted or administered at school without parent request and a physician form (with detailed instructions, filled out completely and signed by both the parent and the physician). Students are not allowed to bring non-prescription medications such as aspirin, cough drops, etc. to school, nor are they allowed to keep medication on their person, in their backpack or in their desk. All medication must be turned into the office. Non-prescription medication may not be administered by the school even at the parent's request. Parents may bring medication to school and administer it to their child. Medication may be carried by the student ONLY if the physician has indicated such on the required documentation furnished to the office. The school does not have an on-site nurse. Nurses are shared among numerous schools.

INJURIES

When a student is injured at school, some or all of the following procedures may be used: School Site Assistant and/or teacher is notified, office personnel are notified, parents are notified if needed. If a serious injury is suspected, the student will be stabilized to determine if the student can or should be moved, students on the playground will be directed to move away, and office personnel will direct emergency vehicles if needed.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of daily instruction. Homework can provide reinforcement or application of skills and concepts previously taught, the opportunity for individual enrichment and/or research opportunities, and preparatory experience for upcoming classroom instruction. You can help your child succeed with homework by providing a quiet place, free of distractions, for your child to study, and by monitoring the completion of the work. The recommended amount of time is:

Grade	Daily
K-1	20-30 minutes
2-3	30-45 minutes
4-6	45-60 minutes
7-8	60-90 minutes

Unfinished class work may also become homework and may increase the time required for schoolwork to be completed.

GRADES AND CITIZENSHIP

Report cards for Tk – 6th grade are issued on a trimester basis during the school year; 7th and 8th grades are issued quarterly. Progress notes are issued mid-trimester/quarter, and in some cases more frequently. It is the teacher's responsibility to notify parents when the child is in danger of failing at mid-trimester/quarter with the progress note. Parents are encouraged to maintain contact with the teacher if their child is struggling. Grades are assigned in two parts: a *progress* grade (E, S, N) for grades 1-3 and an A to F for grades 4-8 is assigned for the quality of work completed. An *effort* grade (E, S, N, U) is assigned to indicate the degree to which the student applied him/herself in completing the work. A *citizenship* grade (E, S, N, U) is assigned to indicate the level of proper conduct by the student. Citizenship is defined as positive attitude and behavior toward schoolwork, activities and personnel. Parent/teacher goal setting meetings are held in September and January.

*Some of our teachers will be piloting a new report card system this year – they will communicate with families how their report cards will differ from the grading system mentioned above.

LUNCH

All students will receive free lunch during the 2023-2024 school year.

Forgotten lunch: Students are asked to check the office at lunch for forgotten lunches. Classes will not be disturbed to inform students of lunches brought to the office after school starts. Students will not be allowed to call home for

forgotten lunches. Cafeteria lunches are free for all. We request that you do not drop off fast food lunches for your child in the office. Fast food items will not be allowed to be taken into the cafeteria and students will be directed to eat the lunch in the office. Students are also not allowed to bring food to share with others. Students will not be allowed on campus with outside coffees, sodas, or drinks other than water.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If you are planning to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please make arrangements with the classroom teacher in advance. Please visit the district website to see the Manteca Unified adopted wellness guidelines for suggested and/or approved snacks. If it is not an approved snack it will be turned away. Also, please keep in mind that we do not allow balloons or decorations.

PHONES

In an effort to reduce classroom interruptions that interfere with learning, our office will not be able to relay non-emergency messages to students, nor will students be asked to come up to the office to call parents back. Students may use the school phones for **EMERGENCIES only**. Emergencies do not include calling for: forgotten lunches, money, homework, progress notes, permission slips, PE equipment, permission to go to a friend's house or getting a ride because it's raining (**HAVE A PLAN AHEAD OF TIME!**)

Please make sure your child(ren) know how they are to get home every day - rain or shine! Do not expect the office to relay last minute messages to students. Often, the teacher will not get the message until after school because messages are transferred to the teacher's voicemail so as not to interrupt instruction.

MUSD allows students to possess and use cell phones while on campus **before and after school only**. **Phones must be off during school hours**. **Students and parents are to be advised that the district and school are not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of students' electronic devices**. All devices will be out of sight and in the "off" mode (including, but not limited to text messaging) during the instructional day. For K-8 students, **cell phones must be turned "off" during lunch**.

LOST AND FOUND

A "Lost and Found" barrel is located inside the multipurpose room for all coats, sweaters, gloves, etc. Please label all your children's items. Prescription glasses and valuable items are located in the office lost and found. All items will be donated to charity on the day after school is dismissed for summer break.

CHANGING SCHOOLS

When planning to move, please notify the school office as soon as possible. Students will need to turn in all textbooks, devices, library books, and instruments before having their transfer request signed off. Any lost or damaged books will need to be paid for before leaving the school to receive a clear transfer.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers can be contacted by phone or email. Calls received during the instructional day will be transferred to the teacher's voicemail so as not to interrupt instruction. Teachers will respond to all calls or emails within 48 hours. Please check our website for staff email addresses. The office will not interrupt the classroom during instructional hours.

EVENING/OFF CAMPUS EVENTS

Students must sit with, and be supervised by, their parent or guardian at ALL evening and/or off campus events unless otherwise directed by the staff in charge. This includes but is not limited to athletic events, choir/band concerts, and other activities.

VISITORS TO CAMPUS

The law requires that all visitors check in at the office for a pass so that the school may monitor who is on the school grounds. If you are planning a visit to your child's classroom it must be arranged in advance with the teacher and principal or designee during an agreeable time. A parent or guardian has the right to observe instruction and other school activities that involve their child in accordance with the procedures indicated in this administrative regulation to ensure the safety of pupils and school personnel and to prevent undue interference with instruction or harassment of school personnel. Reasonable accommodation of parents and guardians shall be considered. Upon written request by the parent or guardian at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance, Monday — Friday, school officials shall arrange for the parental observation of the requested class or classes or activities by that parent or guardian for no more than twenty (20) minutes and parents will be accompanied by an administrator during their visit.

LEAVING CAMPUS

Veritas School is a closed campus. If a student needs to leave the campus for an appointment, he/she **must be checked out** through the office before leaving. The parent must come into the office to check the student out. A written note from the parent/guardian is required when a student varies their normal departure pattern. Students are to submit this note to the office in the morning for verification by the school office personnel.

CAR DROP OFF/PICK UP ZONE

Students should be dropped off/picked up in the half-circle driveway on Collins Street. Please remember to pull as far forward as possible to allow for more vehicles to enter. Please do not make a left turn from Collins Street into the circle drive. When leaving the circle drive it is a right turn only.

Parents should not get out of their vehicle when stopped along the curb while dropping off or picking up. Please arrange car seats so that school age children can enter/exit the vehicle on the passenger side of the vehicle. If you need to conduct school business, please park in the parking lot in a designated space.

Remember to always use the crosswalk in the middle of the parking lot – do not cross between cars. The entrance to our parking lot is located next to the Veritas sign closest to Collins Street. The other driveway is an exit only.

Please remember to use extreme caution when driving in the parking lot or the half-circle driveway. Please do not leave a car parked in the red zone at any time. Do not park a car anywhere else, but in a parking space. **Drop off and pick up in front of the school is only from 7:45 to 8:00 am and from 2:20 to 2:35pm.**

PHOTOS

Students' pictures are taken during the school year for a variety of purposes. The individual student and class pictures are taken shortly after school starts. Students are issued one student ID card. The yearbook staff may take pictures of students participating in various activities. On occasion, the local newspapers are invited to cover activities or events. If you do not wish to have your child's photograph taken, please complete the appropriate form in your district handbook and inform your child's teacher as well.

TEXTBOOKS/DEVICES

Textbooks and student computer devices are very expensive and are loaned to the student for the school year. From the moment these books/devices are assigned to your child, they are the student's responsibility. Students should cover all textbooks (paper covers are preferred instead of fabric covers). **State law requires payment for lost or damaged books/devices.** Please do not do any of the following: write or mark in books/on computers, add stickers to books/computer, stuff a book/computer with papers or pencils, lend books/computer to others or leave any of these unattended. Please make sure students charge their device nightly as there are no extra devices to loan.

SCHOOL INFO

Please be sure to keep your eyes open for fliers with information on upcoming events. You can also view the school website at www.mantecausd.net, go to elementary schools and click on Veritas. We use text, email, mobile apps and an automated phone system for upcoming events as well. If you change your phone number or email, please update the office as soon as possible so you do not miss any messages. You can view the district calendar for all holidays and minimum days on the website.

EIGHTH GRADE CELEBRATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to receive an 8th grade certificate and participate in our celebration event and activities, your child must meet all district mandates. Please see Celebration Flier for 7/8 graders for all requirements. Mylar/vinyl balloons are not allowed at any school events.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Veritas School staff appreciates and encourages active parent and community involvement in our school. Please stay in touch with your child's teacher throughout the year for more specific activities. If you would like to volunteer in the classroom please complete a pink volunteer form, available from your child's teacher or in the office. Allow 10 days for approval. Your child's teacher will inform you if you have been approved.

The administration and Parent Teacher Association welcomes your participation in any of the following activities: Movie Nights, Jog-A-Thon, Fundraisers, Spring Fling and other activities such as English Learner parent meetings (ELAC), School Site Council (SSC), Book Fairs, Field Trips, classroom celebrations and/or performances. All parents are encouraged to become a member of the PTA and attend the PTA general meetings.

SCHOOL RULES

All students should feel safe and comfortable at school. Rules provide a structured system to eliminate confusion and misunderstanding. It is important for students to develop responsibility, self-discipline and communication skills to resolve difficulties and promote a positive learning environment. It is impossible to foresee every potential behavior problem; therefore, the school administration reserves the right to hold students accountable for any behavior that endangers the well-being of others or disrupts the learning environment whether the particular behavior is, or is not, included in the rules below.

Treat others as you would like them to treat you.

Respect and cooperate with all persons in authority.

Use clean and courteous language at all times.

Do not sell candy or other items for individual profit at school.

Gum, candy, and seeds are not allowed in class or on the playground.

Do not bring any personal items from home.

At Veritas, we expect students of all ages to be Ready, Respectful, and Responsible throughout their school day.

Bullying/harassment is prohibited. Harassment is any ongoing unwelcomed behavior (physical, verbal or non-verbal) that makes another student feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Harassment is forbidden by both state and federal law.

Law prohibits weapons of any kind that can cause injury to another person. Also prohibited are explosive or destructive devices. This includes stun guns, pepper spray/tear gas, pellet guns, air soft guns, or any other injurious, nauseous or offensive substances: (Penal Code 375). Laser devices of all kinds are prohibited.

STUDENT DRESS

The Governing Board of Manteca Unified School District believes that it is a responsibility of the school and parents to develop socially responsible standards of dress and personal grooming. The board further directs that schools maintain standards of dress and grooming that support a positive and safe learning environment. Accordingly, the Board of Education requires that student clothing shall not (BP 5132):

- Create a health or safety hazard for the student or others
- Be disruptive of school operations and the education process in general
- Be offensive or unusually distracting to others
- Convey profane or offensive language or illustrations
- Be contrary to the law
- Advertise alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or controlled substances
- Include any apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook, or manner of grooming which suggests gang membership

Only school approved hats may be worn at school or school-related activities. Plain beanies are allowed during the cold season only. Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Clothing shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.

District dress code violations will be addressed by the teacher with the student and parent. Students who repeatedly violate the dress code standards will be referred to the administration for further disciplinary action.

PLAYGROUND RULES

All intentional body contact is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to, public displays of affection, pushing, shoving, tripping, fighting, play fighting, wrestling, tackling, hitting, or other rough play, etc.

Follow all rules for games and display good sportsmanship.

Students are not allowed in classrooms or buildings without staff supervision.

Chin up bars are for chin-ups and pull-ups only.

No loitering in or near bathrooms.

Play only in designated play areas.

Don't bounce balls in hallways or outside of classrooms.

Always obey the directions of teachers and yard duty staff.

Remember to always be safe, responsible, and respectful when playing.

BICYCLE RULES

All students must wear a helmet.

Walk bicycles on the front sidewalk and on school grounds.

Obey all traffic and safety rules.

Park and lock your bike in the bike racks located by Room 3.

Scooters, skateboards, roller blades, and roller shoes are not permitted on school grounds unless prior approval is given by the principal.

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher has specific classroom rules which students are expected to follow (see Standard Operating Procedures from your child's teacher). Teachers and administration utilize a schoolwide discipline matrix system with Discipline Action Reports (DARs) when needed. The Discipline Matrix is a progressive discipline system with varying levels of consequences depending on the seriousness of the discipline issue. Consequences may include but are not limited to: warnings, detentions, suspensions, and expulsion when necessary. For more detailed information on the Discipline Matrix please talk to your child's teacher or the administration should you have questions. General classroom rules are:

Report to class on time from recess, lunch, or other breaks.

Come to class prepared to work with pencil, books, charged device and assignments.

Follow the directions of the teacher or substitute teacher.

Complete class work and homework as assigned.

Do not disrupt the class by talking or other off-task behavior.

Line up in a quiet and orderly manner-no pushing, shoving, etc.

CAFETERIA RULES

Wait in line in a quiet and orderly manner.

Keep cafeteria clean by picking up after yourself.

Loud talking is not acceptable.

Stop all talking when directed to do so.

Do not throw food.

Do not take food from another person's plate or share food with others. We have many students with serious food allergies and these actions could cause harm to them.

Do not take food outside the cafeteria.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Please refer to the MUSD student First Day Packet for information regarding Student Discipline and Rights of Parents or Guardians of Minor Pupils.

BUS LINE RULES

- Walk in an orderly manner to the bus line and line up according to the bus and grade level assigned
- Wait for the teacher on duty to release the line to the bus
- Walk in single file to the bus and board the bus in an orderly manner
- Students may not ride another bus or board/depart from a bus stop which is not their regularly assigned stop without written permission from the parent, bus driver and office

Dogs

The only dogs allowed on campus are clearly labeled as service dogs and detection dogs. Emotional support pets are not allowed. Detection dogs may periodically visit our campus to help maintain a safe and secure environment.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Prohibited items that are brought to school (electronic devices, electronic games, etc.) that are confiscated will be returned to the student at the end of the day. Further offenses will require parent pickup. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items brought from home. Confiscated items not picked up will be donated to charity at the end of the school year.

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE SIGNED TO THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Veritas Elementary School

Parent and Student Handbook

I have received and read the Parent and Student Handbook for Veritas Elementary School.

I am aware of the policies, procedures and rules and have reviewed them with my child(ren).

Student Name (Please Print)

Date

Parent Signature