



Vista Middle School
6051 Vista Drive, Ferndale, WA 98248
(360) 383-9370 (Main Office)

Vista Student Handbook 2024 – 2025

August 2024

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VMS MISSION

Our mission is to cultivate an environment where students are creative and innovative, think critically and solve problems, communicate and collaborate with one another to be compassionate, contributing citizens in our world.

We believe that...

- ◆ All individuals have worth, dignity, and value; therefore, we shall treat each other with respect.
- ◆ All students need a safe and positive environment.
- ◆ All students need to be responsible, accountable, and to experience consequences.
- ◆ Our school will provide a quality education that prepares students academically, vocationally, and socially for a life of learning.
- ◆ Learning is enhanced when students are actively and creatively engaged.
- ◆ Staff members at Vista Middle School strive to be positive, caring, and professional.
- ◆ Our school community has high academic expectations and we are committed to helping students reach their maximum potential.
- ◆ Supportive parents and community members promote school and student success.
- ◆ Good communication among staff, students, parents, and community members is vital to the success of the school.

Our school is a place where:

- ◆ Students and staff are challenged on a daily basis to ask themselves, “What will you do for others today?”
- ◆ Students demonstrate a strong knowledge of basic skills necessary for success in school, the community, and the workplace.
- ◆ Students use problem solving skills to process information as they connect learning to the changing world and workplace.
- ◆ Students have access to current technology and learn the skills to use it effectively.
- ◆ Students communicate using appropriate modes for a variety of purposes.
- ◆ Students are accountable for responsible behavior, productive work, and positive social interaction.
- ◆ Staff, parents, and community members are eager to provide and participate in activities which support students.
- ◆ Creativity is fostered and seen as an opportunity for growth through a wide variety of courses and extracurricular activities.
- ◆ The staff receives support to grow through curriculum development, continuous education, and professional opportunities.

REGULAR BELL SCHEDULE

1st	7:58-8:52
Advisory	8:55-9:22
2nd	9:25-10:17
1st Lunch	Lunch: 10:17-10:47 3rd: 10:50-11:42 4th: 11:45-12:37
2nd Lunch	3rd: 10:20-11:12 Lunch: 11:12-11:42 4th: 11:45-12:37
3rd Lunch	3rd: 10:20-11:12 4th: 11:15-12:07 Lunch: 12:07-12:37
5th	12:40-1:32
6th	1:35-2:27



2024-25 School Year

August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2024

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October 2024

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27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2024

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2025

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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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June 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

First/Last Day for Students

Emergency circumstances could cause calendar changes, including extending the school year. The last day of school is an early dismissal day.

School Start and End Times

Beach Elementary: 8:10 a.m. to 2:10 p.m.
All Elementary Schools: 9:25 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Horizon Middle School: 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Viata Middle School: 7:58 a.m. to 2:27 p.m.
Ferndale High School: 7:40 a.m. to 2:16 p.m.

Early Dismissal Times

Beach: 11:50 a.m. **All Elementaries:** 1:00 p.m.
Horizon MS: 11:13 a.m. **Viata MS:** 11:31 a.m.
Ferndale High School: 10:59 a.m.

Key Dates

Aug. 27: Staff Learning Day (no school)
Aug. 28: First Day of School
Sep. 2: Labor Day (no school)
Sep. 3: First Day for Kindergarten
Nov. 4-8: School Conferences
Nov. 11: Veterans Day (no school)
Nov. 27: Early Dismissal for All Schools
Nov. 28-29: Thanksgiving (no school)
Dec. 23-Jan. 3: Winter Break (no school)
Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (no school)
Jan. 21: Semester Break (no school)
Jan. 22: Treaty Day (no school)
Feb. 17: Presidents' Day (no school)
April 7-11: Spring Break (no school)
May 26: Memorial Day (no school)
June 6: FHS Graduation (tentative)

June 9: Last Day of School and Early Dismissal for All Schools

June 10-16: Snow Day (no school, unless needed)

June 19: Juneteenth (holiday)

July 4: Independence Day (holiday/no school)

Legend:

- First/Last Day of School
- First Day for Teachers
- All Schools Early Dismissal
- K-5 Early Dismissal
- No School Day/Holiday
- Snow Make-up Days (if needed)
- FHS Graduation (tentative)
- First Day for TK & Kindergarten

Vista Middle School
 6051 Vista Dr. Ferndale, WA 98248
 360-383-9370
 Principal: *John Jensen* Asst. Principal: *Julla Besola*



AED in GYM and OFFICE: NURSE'S STATION

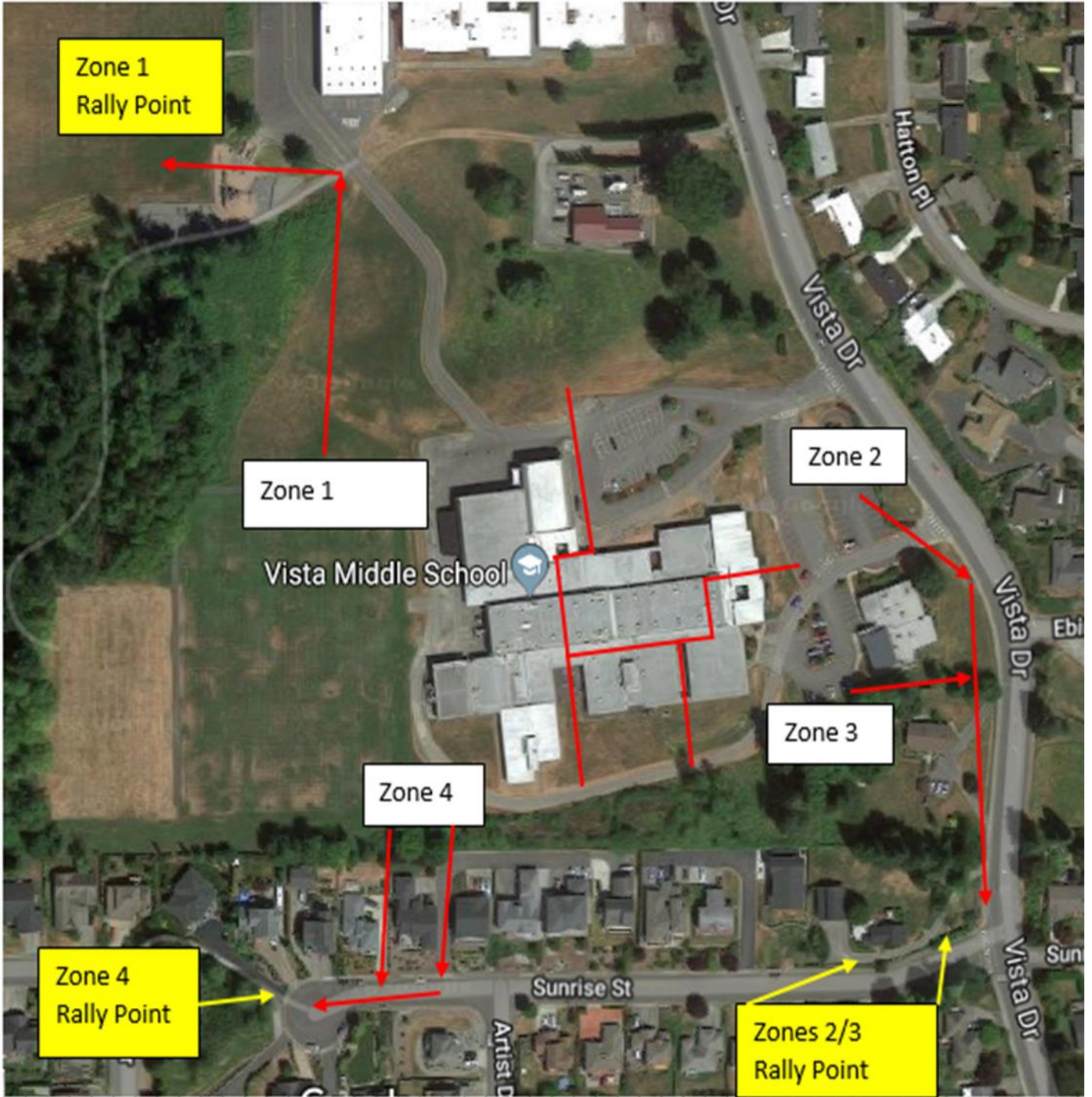
Room	Teacher	Phone 383-
19	Elsner, Randy	9424
18	Berry, Ryan	9745
38	Schwab/Schlichting	9415
10	Brown, Travis	9386
Gym	Walker, Andrew	9422
20	Burnett, Danielle	9423
22	Castleberry, Brita	9395
2	Walker, David	9425
14	Oliver, Zac	9410
21	King, Kelly	9428
25	Frentrop, Terry	9397
6	Genger, Fran	9382
30	Harting, Kristi	9404

Room	Teacher	Phone 383-
11	Hutchinson, Donna	9387
13	Student Support	9413
15	LaFortune, Jessica	9550
31	Lincoln, Lori	9405
4	Lower, Cindy	9380
7	McMasters, Laura	9229
39	Menefee, Chelsea	9864
Art -34	Nickelson, Susie	9414
26	Nickelson, Susie	9354
29	Nylen, Amy	9406
1	Entz / Jefferson	9422
Gym	Oliver, Zac	9418
33	Olson, Keeley	9409

Room	Teacher	Phone 383-
17	Omdal, Matt	9376
12	Rawls, Leah	9391
8	Roddel, Jen	9384
9	Berry, Andrew	9385
5	Schulz, Denise	9381
32	Solorzano, Melissa	9407
35	Hale, Jennifer	9412
24	Sposari, Sean	9396
28	Sudbery, George	9408
Office	AED Station	9730
Office	Nancy Dale	9373
27	Walker, Andrew	9418
16	Gambito, Jessica	9438

*You can e-mail any of Vista's Teachers by using the following example:
 firstname.lastname@ferndalesd.org

VMS EVACUATION ROUTE



VMS PERSONNEL

Principal

J.J. Jensen john.jensen@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9377

Assistant Principal

Julia Besola julia.besola@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9374

Assistant to the Principal

Jennifer Henken jennifer.henken@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9371

Administrative Assistance/Attendance/Bilingual

Eva Viveros Hernandez eva.viveroshernandez@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9371

Registrar/ASB Funds

Hilleary Sorenson hilleary.sorenson@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9433

Counselor

Nancy Dale nancy.dale@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9373

Nurse

Adaela Pelton adaela.pelton@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9898

Head Custodian

Chris Holeman chris.holeman@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9370

Night Custodians

Carrie Moore carrie.moore@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9370

Michelle Williams michelle.williams@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9614

Native American Student Engagement Liasion

Rachel Entz rachel.entz@ferndalesd.org 360.383.9422

SECTION A: GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

At Vista Middle School, students are SAFE, ALWAYS RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE and are LEADERS (SAIL)

SAFE: Make smart choices, keep hands to yourself, see something / say something

ALWAYS RESPECTFUL: respect yourself, respect peers, respect school staff, respect the building

INCLUSIVE: include everyone, be kind, respect differences

LEADERS: give best effort, help others, set an example

1. PARENT COMMUNICATION

- a. Parent Square: parents should activate their ParentSquare account to receive updates from the school and school district in their home language. Parents should also communicate with teachers via ParentSquare.
- b. Skyward: Skyward is where current grades and missing assignments are found. Parent login information is mailed at the beginning of the school year. Parents can call the office with questions.
- c. Canvas: Some teachers use Canvas for assignments. Parents can have access to their student's Canvas pages. Canvas logins are handed out with their devices. Parents may become observers on a student account and may contact the office with questions.

2. SMART PASS

See Section E #11. Vista utilizes SmartPass which is an electronic hall pass system. Students request passes from their device to leave class. Teachers may also create hall passes for students. Students are allowed two hall passes per day for the restroom and water breaks except in cases of emergency or medical necessity. Hall passes may also be created for visiting the library, printer, office, counselor, or other classrooms. Students with individual health plans will be given an accommodation.

3. VISITORS

Any visitor must check in at the main office and state the purpose of the visit. Please understand we may ask for identification. Visitors are expected to prearrange their visit. If a parent is interested in meeting with a teacher, please allow 24 hours before your visit. Due to teaching responsibilities, teachers are not available during class time. Our counseling staff may assist you in setting up an appointment to meet with your son or daughter's teacher(s). Student visitors will not be allowed at Vista during the school day.

4. BREAKFAST AND LUNCH OPTIONS

The kitchen staff serve a variety of breakfasts and lunches daily. Breakfast and lunch is available to all students at no charge.

5. CLOSED CAMPUS

Vista Middle School is a closed campus. This means we expect our students to stay on campus for the entire school day, including lunch. Students will not be allowed to leave school at any time without contacting parents and checking out through the office.

6. EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF BUILDING

In cases of severe weather, school may be delayed or canceled. Parents will receive notification of a school closure or delay via ParentSquare; school closures will also be updated on Ferndale Schools Facebook page and website.

7. EMERGENCY DRILLS & LOCKDOWNS

Our district's safety program is named "I Love U Guys". All teachers were trained on the Standard Response Protocol based on five actions: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter. These actions will be modeled by practicing safety drills for our students and staff in case of a real emergency. All people on campus in an emergency should follow the directions and comply with teacher instructions. In case of an emergency, parents should follow instructions provided via ParentSquare or other district-directed communication. Please do not call the office during an emergency. We need to keep the phone lines open.

8. DRESS CODE: (also refer to Section E)

Vista Middle School is committed to developing students who are SAFE, RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE AND LEADERS in the community. Students are expected to present themselves in an appropriate way for school and a workplace setting. While we encourage individuality, the dress code aims to foster a positive and healthy environment. Students' choices in matters of dress should be made in consultation with their parents/guardians.

- a. Students should dress casually and comfortably for school, while wearing clothing that is well-suited for a school environment.
- b. Clothing must cover the torso, midriff and backside, and have sleeves or straps. Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
 - i. The bottom of the top/blouse/shirt must touch the belly button.
 - ii. Backside refers to the area on a student's body between the waist and mid-thigh, front and back.
- c. The following are not permitted at Vista: Clothing with a vulgar or offensive message (including face masks, drawings, tattoos and accessories); references of hate, violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco/vape, gangs, weapons or sexual innuendo.
- d. Sunglasses should not be worn inside the building unless for medical reasons. If for medical reasons (concussion, eye surgery, etc.), students will be required to have a doctor's note on file with the front office or nurse.
- e. Bandanas (red, blue, black, purple or brown) are not allowed at Vista.
- f. Hoods may be worn upon entering the building; however, students must follow all individual teacher classroom expectations.

Violation of the dress code may require a change of clothing. Special circumstances will be considered by the school administration on a case-by-case basis. Repeated violations will result in consequences for non-compliance.

9. HAT POLICY

- a. Beanies/stocking knit caps, bucket hats and baseball caps are allowed at Vista.
- b. Hat choice must be school appropriate – No gang, drug, or alcohol-related hats allowed.
- c. Do not touch or play games with other people's hats.
- d. Don't bully or tease people for their hat selection.
- e. Make sure your hat is not a distraction.
- f. Keep your hat on your head or in your backpack.
- g. Don't throw hats at people.
- h. Don't share hats – head lice can be distributed by sharing hats.

10. **LOST AND FOUND**

Items lost at school will be placed in the lost and found by the front doors. Students should check the lost and found bins for any missing items. The unclaimed items are donated regularly to local charities.

11. **Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters and Heelys**

These items are NOT TO BE USED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY. If a student brings these items to school, they are to be stored in the office.

12. **FOOD & DRINK:**

Eating food is allowed at the designated breakfast and lunch areas. Open containers of food or drinks are not allowed in the hallways. Students will comply with individual teachers' classroom expectations regarding food and drinks. To maintain the best possible learning conditions:

- a. Energy drinks and large amounts of candy are not permitted at school.
- b. Students may not sell candy, food or drinks at school.
- c. Students may not order food to be delivered to the school.

Food and Drink Violations

Students who violate our food and drink policy will be asked to put away their drinks and/or food. If students have a pattern of violating our food and drink policy, a staff member will work with the student and parent to develop a plan to eliminate further violations.

13. **SWIS – Behavior management system**

- a. SWIS is a web-based app that allows schools and districts to collect behavior referral data and make data driven decisions.
- b. Teachers at Vista record a SWIS referral when behavior disrupts the learning of self and others or creates an unsafe environment.

SECTION B: HEALTH

1. **FOOD POLICY:** Refer to Section A 12

2. **MEDICATION AT SCHOOL**

Per School Board Policy No. 3410, a parent/guardian of a student needing prescription medication or over the counter medication at school are required to complete a medication authorization form prior to bringing or consuming the medication at school. Each medication request requires an authorization form. This form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and prescribing Health Care Provider (HCP) unless otherwise indicated (i.e. over the counter medication for self-administration.) All medication forms must be renewed by the parent each school year. Medication authorization forms and a complete list of guidelines are available at our main office or online at <https://www.ferndalesd.org/student-services/health-and-nursing-services>.

Any student who shares, gives, sells, etc. medication to another student for any reason will be subject to disciplinary action.

3. **COUNSELORS**

Our counselors provide many services for students, parents, and school staff. For many it is simply an answer to a scheduling question, but our counselors also help with peer issues and mediation, and other

problems that interfere with students performing successfully at school. School counselors can also support referrals for mental health services. Students may make an appointment with the school counselor in the main office, use the Counselor link in Canvas, or send an email to the counselor. Parents may contact the counselor via email.

SECTION C: ACADEMICS

1. GRADES, REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS:

- a. Progress reports are mailed to parents and guardians quarterly and report cards are mailed home to parents or guardians at the end of each semester.
- b. Parents are encouraged to check Skyward for grade and assignment information. Skyward also provides parents/guardians access to demographic information, discipline, attendance, grades, and missing assignments. Please contact the VMS office if you have questions or need help with these tools.

2. SCHOOLWORK:

- a. Since learning is a priority, all class time should be used for assigned work, iReady, SSR, or current a& missing work.
- b. Classes will offer in-class time to complete assigned work, but occasionally students may need to complete work at home.
- c. Please contact teachers with any academic questions. Contact the school counselor or an administrator with further concerns.

3. LATE WORK POLICY

Check with individual teachers for their late policy for their classroom. Late policies are outlined in the teacher's course outline/syllabus.

4. SCHOOL ISSUED EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

a. TECHNOLOGY

- i. Students will be issued a device (laptop or tablet) and one charger for educational purposes. Before receiving the device and charger, parents and students must review and sign the FSD Technology Resources Use Agreement in the student's Skyward account under forms.
- ii. Devices and chargers are the student's responsibility and can be taken home. Students should charge their devices each night to ensure it is ready when needed at school.
- iii. A limited number of loaner devices will be available for check out in the library on a first come, first served basis. We cannot guarantee a loaner device will be available.
- iv. For more information, see [FSD Student Parent Technology Handbook](#)
- v. Students will be charged for damaged or lost devices and/or chargers in their care.
- vi. School issued devices are for school-related tasks only. If a student is on a non-school related computer game during class time, teachers will write a discipline referral.

b. TEXTBOOKS

- i. If issued a textbook, students are responsible for keeping books in good condition and returning them at the end of the school year.
- ii. FINES will be issued to students for lost or damaged textbooks.

c. LIBRARY

- i. Students are encouraged to check out library books from Vista’s library. ELA classes have set library times for book check-out or renewal.
- ii. Students may also check out or renew books after school or during passing time.
- iii. Vista library books are expected to be turned into the library in good condition.
- iv. Public Library: Vista partners with the Whatcom County Library System, so students can request books from the public library that will be delivered to Vista. Students may also return public library books to the Vista library.

d. TEACHER LIBRARIES

Many teachers lend books to students from their own classroom libraries. Students are responsible for checking out books from their teacher and returning the books in good condition.

5. CELL PHONE & HEADPHONE/EARBUD Policy

- a. **During the school day, 7:35 am - 2:27 pm, students are expected to store cell phones and earbuds/headphones in their backpack; devices should be turned off.** We ask that parents contact the main office at **360-383-9370** if they need to get a message to their student.
- b. Students may not wear earbuds/headphones during the school day, 7:35 am - 2:27 pm except for teacher-directed instructional purposes only.
- c. Cell Phone Violations:
 - i. If a staff member sees your cell phone, earbuds, or headphones out without permission, they are instructed to take it to the office.
 - ii. Parents will be notified that the phone or earbuds are in the office and asked to pick it up. Vista’s administration will follow up with parents.
 - iii. Teachers will complete a SWIS referral for a technology violation and disruption to the learning environment. Students will be assigned appropriate discipline.
 - iv. If a phone continues to be out of a student’s backpack, students will be asked to check it in to the office in the morning for the entire school day.
 - v. If a teacher gives permission for the phone to be out during class, it must be for academic purposes only and returned to the backpack at the end of the period.

Students are prohibited from videotaping, recording, or taking pictures of any student or staff member without teacher permission and for academic purposes only. If consent is not given, students will be in violation of RCW 9.73.030 for intercepting, recording, or divulging private communication and RCW 9.73.060 for violating right of privacy. Content or images that violate state or federal laws will be referred to law enforcement.

6. I-Ready

Ferndale schools grades K-8 use I-Ready for reading and math instruction as well as data collection. At Vista, students will take I-Ready diagnostic tests that provide information on reading and math levels. Students then complete I-Ready lessons at their individual levels throughout the year.

7. **ACADEMIC NON-COMPLIANCE**

Students at VMS are expected to work to achieve high standards. Students who are intentionally choosing not to perform daily tasks or homework could be redirected into an intervention and/or be assigned school discipline depending on the situation.

RCW 28A.600.040. Pupils comply with rules and regulations.

All pupils who attend the common schools shall comply with the rules and regulations established in pursuance of the law for the government of the schools, shall pursue the required course of studies, and shall submit to the authority of the teachers of such schools, subject to such disciplinary or other action as the local school officials shall determine.

- a. Work Refusal Discipline Steps:
 - i. The teacher will create a SWIS (discipline) referral for insubordination as documentation and conference with student privately.
 - ii. Lunch intervention will be assigned. The teacher will contact parent/guardian.
 - iii. Conference with administration/counselor, teacher, student, and parent/guardian for next steps.
 - iv. Discipline will be assigned on a case-by-case basis.

8. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: (Also refer to Section E 11)**

Forgery/Providing False Information/Plagiarism:

Students are expected to demonstrate academic and school integrity. Plagiarism in assignments, projects, or other schoolwork is not permitted. In addition, forging a parent/guardian signature or providing any other misinformation in communication to the school is prohibited. School response for these types of offenses includes parent notification; possible grade reduction; re-doing assignments and restorative conferences.

9. **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER**

Substitute teachers provide an important service to the school, and we appreciate their efforts. We also hold our students accountable for any disrespect shown to our guest teachers. The students will not misrepresent their names, the seating chart, assignments, or exhibit other deceitful behavior. Students will always be cooperative and respectful; students who do not follow these guidelines will receive appropriate discipline.

SECTION D: ATTENDANCE

Regular, consistent, timely attendance is essential to school success, student learning and future employment habits. Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day on time. The role of the parent or guardian is to ensure that his/her children attend school and to verify that a student's absence was for an excusable reason.

1. **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

These are defined as absences due to illness or a health condition, approved pre-arranged activities, religious observance, school-sponsored activities, or emergency situations.

- a. To excuse any absence, parents must contact the office. Contact (360-383-9370) to have the student excused (voicemail available 24 hrs per day). Any absence not cleared within 48 hours will be considered an unexcused absence.
- b. When a student is absent from class, the school will contact parents.

2. MISSED WORK DUE TO ABSENCE

If absent, the student is responsible for making up work missed during that time.

3. TARDIES

At Vista we expect our students to be in class on time. Every minute in class is valuable to student learning, and being late distracts from the learning environment for all. Students need to be in class following the teacher's expectations and ready for learning when the bell rings.

- a. If you are tardy due to an appointment with a teacher, counselor, or administrator, please ask for an excused tardy pass before returning to class.
- b. A student is marked tardy if they are up to 10 minutes late to class. If they are over 10 minutes late, they will be marked absent.
- c. TARDIES specific to ONE CLASS
 - i. 1st & 2nd tardy = teacher conversation with student / warning + marking the student tardy in Skyward.
 - ii. 3rd tardy = teacher contact home + teacher create SWIS referral, which results in lunch intervention.
 - iii. For every tardy >3 to one class = teacher contact home + teacher create SWIS referral, which results in lunch intervention.
 - iv. If the tardies continue, the administration will request a family meeting to create an individual plan for attending class on time.
- d. MULTIPLE CLASS TARDIES:
 - i. Four tardies in one week to multiple classes will receive a phone call home and a lunch intervention from VMS administration or designee.
 - ii. The next four tardies in a week will result in another lunch intervention.
 - iii. Next four in a week will result in ½ day In School Suspension.
 - iv. Next four in a week will result in full day In School Suspension.
 - v. If the tardies continue, the administration will request a family meeting to create an individual plan for attending class on time.

4. HOMEWORK REQUESTS

- a. Parents are encouraged to request homework for their absent child by contacting teachers via Parent Square.
- b. Students are responsible for meeting with their teachers upon returning from an absence to arrange time to complete missing work, including tests, quizzes, or labs.
- c. Some classes utilize Canvas, and students may find classwork for those classes on Canvas if absent.

5. PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE POLICY

If a student has an upcoming planned absence for three or more days, students may pick up a planned absence form in the office for teachers to sign and approve. The pre-arranged absence form must be returned to the attendance secretary three days before the first date of absence. Students are expected to make up work from the absence.

6. PARENT SIGN OUT

If a student needs to leave school during the school day for any reason (appointment, etc.), the parent or guardian must sign out the student in the front office. When the student returns to school, the student must sign in at front office and return to class.

7. ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Students who are not feeling well should ask for their teacher's permission to check in at the main office. Students who are too ill to return to class within 30 minutes must go home. A parent/guardian will be contacted to have their ill student go home.

8. BECCA LAW

(Truancy Law) Students who are truant from school with unexcused absences are in violation of Washington State Law (RCW 28A.225.010). By State law (RCW 28A.225.030), Ferndale School District is required to file a petition with the Whatcom County Juvenile Court System after students have accumulated seven unexcused absences in a month and not later than 15 cumulative unexcused absences in a school year. Pursuant to RCW.28A.225.018 (BECCA Law), the school district shall schedule a conference or conferences with the parent and child at a time reasonably convenient for all persons included the for the purpose of identifying the barriers to the student's regular attendance, and the supports and resources that may be made available to the family so that the child is able to attend school regularly. If the parent does not attend the conference, the conference may be conducted with the student and school official.

9. SKIPPING CLASS

If a student is skipping class, the absence is unexcused, parents/guardians are notified, and the student will be assigned discipline.

10. ABSENCE DUE TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Students who are absent from school due to suspension (in or out of school) have the right to make up all work missed from the absence.

- a. For students assigned to ISS (in school suspension) the work will be sent to the ISS supervisor as soon as possible.
- b. For students who are suspended out of school, students/parents contact teacher to pick up work in the office or check Canvas. Please contact the teacher for due dates on missed work.

SECTION E: BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS for STUDENTS

1. At Vista Middle School, students are SAFE, ALWAYS RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE and are LEADERS (SAIL)

SAFE: Make smart choices, keep hands to yourself, see something / say something

ALWAYS RESPECTFUL: respect yourself, respect peers, respect school staff, respect the building

INCLUSIVE: include everyone, be kind, respect differences

LEADERS: give best effort, help others, set an example

2. BEFORE SCHOOL

- a. Students may enter the school building at 7:35 a.m.
- b. Before school, students may be in the hallways, gym, cafeteria, or classroom (if open), or eating breakfast in the cafeteria (served at 7:35 a.m. & available to all students)

3. AFTER SCHOOL

Students are expected to leave campus 15 minutes after dismissal unless involved in a supervised activity.

4. CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

Our staff appreciates all efforts to keep the lunchroom clean, and students should model SAIL expectations while in the cafeteria.

- a. Students are expected to pick up after themselves when they have finished eating. If there is an accidental spill, contact one of the lunch supervisors for help in cleaning up the spill.
- b. The following are prohibited at school and in the cafeteria: cutting in line, throwing food, pushing, running, horseplay, etc.
- c. Students are given 15 minutes to eat then 15 minutes for outside recess. On occasion, other options are available for students during inclement weather or for students wanting another location for lunch.
- d. There is no food allowed out of the cafeteria.
- e. Students who violate the lunch expectations will receive disciplinary action.

5. HALLWAY/RESTROOM EXPECTATIONS

Vista students will model SAIL expectations in the hallways.

- a. Inappropriate behavior (pushing, running, keeping hands/feet to self, or other horse play) in our hallways will not be tolerated.
- b. Students who do not behave appropriately in Vista hallways may be assigned intervention or other appropriate consequences.
- c. Smart Pass: Vista utilizes SmartPass which is an electronic hall pass system. Students request passes from their device to leave class. Teachers may also create hall passes for students. Students are allowed two hall passes per day for the restroom and water breaks except in cases of emergency or medical necessity. Hall passes may also be created for visiting the library, printer, office, counselor, or other classrooms. Students with individual health plans will be given accommodation.
- d. During lunch, hallways are off-limits unless students have staff permission.
- e. Restrooms throughout the day are limited to the number of students to stalls. If a student arrives and all stalls are full, they are expected to wait outside to enter.

6. BUS CONDUCT

Students will model SAIL expectations while on the school bus. All school policies apply to conduct on the school buses. Failure to follow expectations will result in discipline. If a student does not follow expectations while on an activity bus, it can result in suspension from the activity bus. For specific school bus safety rules and consequences, refer to the Ferndale School District transportation policy for school bus rules: <https://www.ferndalesd.org/deptprograms/transportation/school-bus-rules> and https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1614200742/ferndalesdorg/m6ioe7ya4er3searoeqs/FSD_Bus_Safety_Sheet-ada.pdf

7. ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are an important part of life and education at Vista. The same expectations in the classroom are in effect at all assemblies. Students are expected to stay with their teacher, exhibit respectful behavior, and enter/exit the assembly safely. Students who choose to disrupt or misbehave during our assemblies will receive consequences.

8. Dress Code (refer to Section A #8)

9. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- a. Freedom of expression is an important part of education in a democratic society. Students' appropriate verbal and written expression of opinion is encouraged.

- b. District policy prohibits verbal or written expression (including clothes) that is libelous, obscene, or profane; causes a disruption of school procedures or processes or invades the privacy of others; demeans any race, religion, gender, or ethnic group; advocates a violation of the law; or advertises cigarettes, liquor, illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia. Any clothing that is deemed gang-related is prohibited.

10. PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Holding hands is the only public display of affection allowed at school. Kissing is not allowed at school.

11. ACTS of DISHONESTY OR THREATS

- a. Types of DISHONESTY may include the following:
 - i. FORGERY & MISREPRESENTING
 - a. Altering any signature or communication from an adult (parent/staff/medical provider), impersonating a parent/staff are examples of forgery and/or misrepresentation.
 - ii. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
 - a. Examples of academic dishonesty include copying another student's work without teacher permission, turning another student's work as their own, plagiarizing work from the internet or any other source, and use of artificial intelligence without teacher permission to complete assignments.
 - iii. DISHONESTY/MAKING A FALSE REPORT AGAINST A STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER
 - a. Example would be falsely accusing someone of misconduct or providing false or misleading information.
- b. MAKING A THREAT AGAINST STUDENT or STAFF MEMBER
 - a. Example would be declaring harmful actions towards a student, staff or school property.

b. INVESTIGATION & DISCIPLINE

- i. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Students may be asked to redo assignments or offered a variation of the assignment for the student to show competence in the learning.
- ii. Students who make false claims or threaten other students or a staff member—indirectly, directly, electronically, written and/or orally--will be provided intervention and support, notification to their parents, and/or are subject to police notification, suspension, emergency expulsion, and expulsion.

12. Cell PHONE (see Section C 5)

13. TECHNOLOGY

- a. School issued devices are for school-related tasks only. If a student is on a non-school related computer game during class time, teachers will write a discipline referral.
- b. Electronic games and other disruptive materials should not be brought to school. If these items are brought to school, they must remain off and in backpacks during the school day.

SECTION F: STUDENT BEHAVIOR SUPPORT & STEPS

Although the classroom rules may vary slightly from classroom to classroom, students are expected to follow the SAIL expectations from Section E #1.

1. CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

All teachers hold their students to the highest expectations in their classroom. Behavior concerns in the classroom will be addressed as follows (unless the behavior warrants immediate removal from class):

- a. Teacher conference with student. Potential SWIS referral.
- b. Continued disruptive behaviors, teacher will conference with student, make parent contact, and submit a SWIS referral.
- c. Administration follows up with student and parent regarding SWIS referral.
- d. Develop an intervention plan if needed including the counselor, behavior support staff, or administration.
- e. If a teacher initiates a student break longer than 5 minutes, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to notify parents their student missed instruction.

2. SWIS REFERRAL (School Wide Information System)

A SWIS referral may result in the following:

- a. Meeting with administrator, lunchtime intervention/reteach, contacting parents, in/out of school suspension, loss of riding privileges on district-provided transportation, or other restorative practice.
- b. Cumulative SWIS referrals may result in additional discipline including In or Out of School Suspension.
- c. Students suspended are not permitted on any school district campus and may not attend any district sponsored activity.

3. DISCIPLINE OPTIONS & STEPS

VMS follows a matrix of progressive discipline. Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, the following discipline options are used:

- a. Reteach of Expectations – 30 minutes
- b. Lunch Intervention – 30 min.
- c. In-School Suspension (ISS) – 1-2 days
- d. Short-Term Suspension (STS) – up to 10 days
- e. Long-Term Suspension (LTS) – 11+ days
- f. Expulsion – remainder of the semester.

4. VMS Student Success Center (SSC):

The SSC at Vista provides additional support for students with an academic, social-emotional, or behavior need. It is a support for all students if they demonstrate a need. It can provide a quiet, smaller environment for students to take a test or work on academic content given by their academic teacher. The SSC does not replace an academic class or replace Special Education Services or replace IEP minutes. Any student wanting to use SSC services must go to class first for teacher permission. In school suspensions are served in the SSC.

SECTION G: VIKING ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES

1. **ATHLETICS:** We welcome and encourage all students to become involved in Vista athletics and activities.

- a. Athletes must have appropriate accident and health insurance, a doctor's physical, ASB membership, appropriate grades, and fees paid (if required).
- b. Parents must sign up their student for each sport the athlete participates in through Final Forms (links sent through Parent Square). Please visit our website, www.ferndalesd.org/vistamiddle/athletics for more information. You will find team rules, schedules, policies, and other useful information (such as physical forms and participation agreements.)
- c. Student Fees: All athletic and student fees may be paid in the main office. Cash or check only.
- d. We have four sports seasons:

Fall	August - October	Cross country, Softball, Boys Soccer, Football
Winter I	October - December	Boys and Girls Basketball
Winter II	January - March	Girls Volleyball, Boys and Girls Wrestling
Spring	March - May	Girls Soccer, Track

2. **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

- a. Vista encourages all 6th graders to become involved in Vista intramural sports.
- b. 7th and 8th graders are encouraged to participate in the interscholastic athletic program, but students must be **passing at least five classes** to be eligible to participate.
- c. If a student is absent during the event, they may participate in athletics if the absence is excused. If the absence is unexcused, the student may not participate.

3. **VISTA ATHLETIC EVENT EXPECTATIONS**

Students are required to show their Vista ID card or ASB card to attend events and sign a sportsmanship contract. We expect our students to demonstrate excellent behavior and to positively represent VMS at all athletic events. This is true whether the student is in the audience or on the field/court. Students who choose to behave inappropriately will be asked to leave the premises and are subject to additional school consequences. Remember, all school rules are in effect at every athletic event. Students and adults in the audience are expected to remain seated, treat the opposing team with respect, and treat the officials with respect. Students who insult other teams or officials will be removed from the athletic event (and perhaps for the rest of the season) and may have additional school consequences. Adult spectators are encouraged to attend athletic events. Adults are role models for conduct and citizenship; if adults exhibit inappropriate behavior at any event, they will be warned then asked to leave.

4. **ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAMES (AND OTHER HS EVENTS)**

Ferndale High School football games are a big event in the community. Therefore, the high school takes very seriously its support of student spectator safety and fan enjoyment. As with middle school games, be a good sport and fan. Guidelines for middle school students to be aware of include:

- a. Middle school students must be accompanied to football games by a parent or responsible adult. That adult must remain at the stadium throughout the game. An adult may chaperone up to four students (special circumstances may arise on a case-by-case basis). Unaccompanied students will not be permitted to enter the stadium.
- b. The designated seating area for middle school students is the upper, south end of the bleachers, next to the FHS band. All middle school students must sit in this location or with their parent/guardian.

- c. All students are to remain in their seats, in their designated seating areas, during the games. Students should only leave their seats to use the restroom or visit the concession stand.
- d. Students may not “hang out” behind the stadium. Horse play, loitering in groups in restrooms and games of tag are not permitted.
- e. Students may not bring backpacks, skateboards or sports balls to the games.
- f. Students who choose to behave inappropriately will be asked to leave the premises and are subject to additional school consequences. Any student who is removed from a high school sporting event will not be permitted to attend any more Ferndale School District athletic/music/performing arts events for the remainder of the semester.

5. ATHLETIC GEAR/BAGS

Students who have athletic gear will need to plan with their coach for storage or check with the Main Office.

6. OTHER VISTA ACTIVITIES

Other after school activities, such as clubs and activities, for Vista students will be communicated to students and parents/guardians via Parent Square. All school, district and state laws remain in effect after school while on campus.

SECTION H: STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

1. PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING:

Anonymous Reporting Link: <https://ferndale-wa.safeschoolsalert.com/>

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by any characteristic as listed in RCW 9A.36.080(3), (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, or sensory disability), or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including all forms of electronic harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying:

- a. Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
- e. “Other distinguishing characteristics” can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and marital status. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral, or physical actions. “Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other District policies or building, classroom, or program rules. Depending upon the frequency and severity of the conduct, intervention, counseling, correction, discipline and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to remediate the impact on the victim and the climate and change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention, restoration of a positive climate,

and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation, or bullying also constitute violations of this policy. Sexting is prohibited. See also section on Sexting for further details.

2. PROMOTION OF A SAFE SCHOOL /PERSONAL SEARCHES

Authority to Conduct a Safety Check Pursuant to RCW 28A.600.230, school authorities may search a student or a student’s possessions if the school authority has reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will yield evidence of the student’s violation of the law, or a violation of the conduct standards contained in the Student Rights & Responsibilities.

3. SEXTING

Taking, sending, viewing, and/or possessing nude, semi-nude or other sexually explicit images, videos, text messages, or other digital content, also known as “sexting” is not permitted on any school district property or at any school district event. Underage sexting, even when consensual and even if you took the pictures of yourself, is illegal under Washington State child pornography laws. Violators may be charged with a felony and, if convicted, may be forced to register as a convicted sex offender for the rest of their life. Forwarding and or keeping images, videos, texts, or other digitally sexted content may result in school discipline, as well as police notification.

4. ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS, AND OTHER SUBSTANCES/ ABUSE POLICY

A Vista Middle School student shall not knowingly possess, attempt to possess, or use, manufacture, or be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, and other illegal substances. Likewise, a student shall not offer for sale, barter, or transfer these substances to other persons in the school, while on school premises or at school-sponsored events/activities, or in district vehicles.

Illegal drugs, alcohol and other substances can be, but are not limited to:

- a. Any controlled substance as defined by Washington state statute (RCW 69.50, Uniform Controlled Substances Act.)
- b. Any drug which applicable federal or state law states must be obtained by prescription only (RCW 69.41, Legend Drugs).
- c. Any drug not properly labeled for use by the person in possession of the drug.
- d. Any “look alike” drug or substance believed or represented as being a drug or controlled substance.
- e. Drug paraphernalia, including rolling papers, lighters, vape mods and liquids/juice.
- f. Inhalants.
- g. Anabolic steroids.
- h. Alcohol or other intoxicants of any kind.

Any student who displays indicators of consumption of alcohol, intoxicants, drugs (illegal or illegally used drugs), and/or any other controlled substances is subject to school discipline. Any student who possesses drug paraphernalia, a vape and/or dab pen(s) is subject to the same consequences as drug possession or usage.

5. WEAPONS AND LOOK-ALIKE WEAPONS

It is a violation of State law and District policy for any person to be in possession of a firearm, dangerous weapon, look alike weapon, or dangerous object on school premises, school-provided transportation or other facilities being used for school activities. Law enforcement and the student’s parents or guardians will be notified of any known or suspected violations of this policy.

- a. Dangerous weapons include but are not limited to firearms, firearm look alike, slung shots, sand clubs, metal knuckles, daggers, dirks, spring blade knives, nun-chu-ka sticks, throwing stars, air guns, stun guns, and devices intended to injure a person by an electric shock.
- b. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to discipline, including a one-year expulsion for a violation involving a firearm, dangerous weapon, and/or look-like weapon. However, the superintendent may modify the one-year expulsion on a case-by-case basis.
- c. The district may also suspend or expel a student for up to one year if the student acts with malice, as defined under RCW 9A.04.110, and displays an instrument that appears to be a firearm on school premises, school-provided transportation, or areas of facilities while being used exclusively for school activities.

6. VANDALISM

Vandalism is the intentional destruction or defacement of public property or property belonging to others and is not tolerated at Vista. Vista Vikings treat all school property (and all others' property) with respect. (This includes desks, chairs, tables, bathroom walls, lockers, etc.)

7. THEFT

Theft and stealing are defined as having property belonging to others in your possession without prior permission of that person. Theft and stealing is not tolerated, and may result in disciplinary action, and/or police notification.

8. TRESPASS

(RCW 28A.635.020) Students are not to be on any Ferndale School District property without proper authorization. A charge of trespass, with notice to police authorities, may be given to any person who creates a disturbance on school property and whose continued or reoccurring presence may result in a real and substantial disruption to the school environment or pose a threat to the safety and well-being of property or person. Violators may be subject to disciplinary action, Suspension, Expulsion, and/or arrest for criminal trespass. Students on campus or at school-sponsored activities while on Suspension and/or Expulsion are subject to additional disciplinary action and arrest for criminal trespass.

9. VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

The Ferndale School District and Vista Middle School assume no responsibility for loss, theft, or damage of personal property.

SECTION I: PRIVACY ACT

1. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 requires a school district to notify parents that schools maintain official records regarding their child, which include information deemed necessary to the welfare of students and the orderly operation of schools, or information required by law regulation.
2. Student records are the property of the school district; however, parents and/or students eighteen years of age or older may inspect the records by contacting the school counselor for an appointment. Copies of school records are provided upon request for a charge of ten cents per sheet. Parents may challenge the inclusion in their student's records of any information they believe inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. Parents may request modification of the records or enter their own statements of explanation. Concerns about the information included in the student's records are to be discussed with the principal. If the concern cannot be resolved between the parents

and principal, a fair and impartial hearing, upon the parents' written request, will be convened to review the matter.

3. With very few exceptions, the school will not release information regarding your child to other persons or organizations except with your written, signed consent. However, the district does specify certain directory information, which may be released by the district for non-commercial use without the parent's permission. Such information is limited to the following: name, address, and telephone number, date and place of birth, grade level, major field of study, records of participation in school activities and sports, weight and height of team members, dates of attendance, awards and honors received, and the most recent previous school attended. If you do not want the school to disclose directory information from your child's educational records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school in writing at the beginning of each school year. This form may be obtained from the VMS front office.

FSD Link: <https://www.ferndalesd.org/family/annual-public-notice>

SECTION J: Non-Discrimination

1. Ferndale School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 Officer, P.O. Box 698, Ferndale, WA 98248, (360) 383-9206 and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinator, P.O. Box 698, Ferndale, WA 98248, (360) 383-9221.

FSD Link: <https://www.ferndalesd.org/family/annual-public-notice>