

Alta Vista Elementary

2024-2025

Student & Family Handbook



Mission Statement

Together we will learn.
Together we will grow.

Together we will take pride in ourselves, our school and the community we know.
Together we will create a better world.

Voyagers Go!

School Values

Be Safe
Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Ready to Teach & Learn

Our job is to keep you safe. Your job is to help keep the school safe.

STAFF Lindsey Helton, Principal amber.orchard@wacoisd.org Rebecca Maynard, Counselor rebecca.maynard@wacoisd.org Bonnie Berryhill, Secretary bonnie.berryhill@wacoisd.org Coral Piña, PEIMS/Registration coral.pina_munoz@wacoisd.org Juan Acosta, Office Clerk juan.acosta@wacoisd.org Emily Schmillen, Community School Specialist emily.schmillen@wacoisd.org	ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL ARRIVAL: Students riding the bus will begin unloading at 7:00 am. All students will enter through the 2nd front door and go to the cafeteria for breakfast. Students are TARDY at 7:30 am. Students are missing instruction if they arrive late. DISMISSAL: Students that ride the bus home will be dismissed from the front doors. After buses have departed, all other students will be dismissed no earlier than 3:15 pm. Students that are being picked up by a parent that walks and students that walk home will be dismissed from the side door to the far right of the campus (near the fence). Students in grades PK through 1st will be picked up in the front driveway. Students in grades 2nd through 5th will be picked up in the parking lot to the far left side of the campus. If a family has students in both groups, all students in the family will be dismissed from the front driveway. A staff member will text or call your dismissal number to the teachers stationed with students inside. Your students will meet you at the assigned dismissal location. DISMISSAL NUMBER: Every student will be assigned a dismissal number. Parents are required to have the number at dismissal. If you do not have your dismissal number, you will be required to park and provide photo identification at the front office in order for your child to be released to you.
ATTENDANCE For your convenience, the school building opens at 7:00 each morning. Please do not drop off your child before 7:00. Students must be in their classrooms to start school at 7:30 <u>am</u>. The school day ends at 3:15 <u>pm</u>. It is important that your child is picked up as soon as possible. To get the most benefit, your child needs to be here all day. Picking up your child early or bringing students late can impact learning dramatically. Parents will <u>not</u> be allowed to pick up students between 3:00-3:15 pm. If your child is going to be absent from school, please call 662-3050 to let the school know. You will receive an automated phone call if your child is marked absent. <u>Pre-K/Kindergarten:</u> Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his/her education. Texas law does not require children of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten age to be enrolled in school. However, if a parent chooses to enroll a child in pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, the child is under the compulsory attendance law. This section of the law requires any pre-kindergarten or kindergarten student who is enrolled in a public school to attend school every day for the entire period of the program of instruction provided. Any child not having reached 6 years of age by September 1 of the current school year may be withdrawn by the parent(s) and not be in violation of the compulsory attendance laws.	

	EXCUSED ABSENCE: An excused absence is a documented student absence resulting from: - Healthcare appointments (including medical, dental, and mental healthcare appointments) - Student illness - Doctor's note: always excused - Note from parent: excused at discretion of principal - Required court appearance - Observance of a religious holy day - Court-ordered activity - Activities to obtain U.S. citizenship UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: An unexcused absence is a student absence which does not meet the requirements of an <i>excused absence</i>. PART OF DAY ABSENCE: A part of day absence is an absence in which the student: - Arrives on campus after attendance has been taken at 9:30am, and in which the student does not have documentation which meets the requirements of an <i>excused absence</i>. - Leaves before 3:00 pm, and does not have documentation which meets the requirements of an <i>excused absence</i>. TARDY: A student is tardy when the student arrives on campus after 7:30 am. ABSENCE REPORTING: - CALL: Call to inform the School of your student's absence. - DOCUMENT: Document and obtain documentation for your student's absence. - RETURN: Return the documentation of your student's absence to the School. REMINDER: We're here to help! Having 3 unexcused absences can begin Truancy Prevention Measures which can lead to State mandated court appearances, and court costs for families of truant students. Please contact the school for help if your family is experiencing a hardship which is leading to excessive student absences.
BACKPACKS	All Waco ISD students should carry their items to school in a clear backpack. Mesh material or colored, transparent backpacks are not allowed. Small logos or monograms to identify a student's clear backpack can be used but large, visual design obstructions are not allowed. It is permissible to bring a private, small makeup type bag for personal items.
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS	Families may send snacks and juice boxes to school to celebrate their students birthday if they are store-bought or purchased at a restaurant and in their original packaging. Our campus commits to celebrating each student's birthday with a special treat in the office. **We are NOT allowed to serve treats to students during lunch or 30 minutes before/after lunch.

BULLYING	"Bullying" means engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that: - Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student. This conduct is considered bullying if it: - Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and - Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school. If you feel that your child or another student is being bullied, we encourage you to report it immediately. You may contact our Assistant Principal, Amber Orchard, at 254-662-3050 or report it online using the "Report Bullying" button on the Waco ISD webpage (www.wacoisd.org) or Alta Vista webpage (altavista.wacoisd.org)
COMMUNICATION	At Alta Vista Elementary, we send home a weekly campus newsletter on blue paper every Wednesday; it will also be posted on our campus website, Facebook page, and sent via the Parent Square app. Staff will also utilize the ParentSquare app to share news with families and communicate with individual parents; parents may also message staff through Parent Square. Please expect a response from staff within 1 business day. Campus Website: altavista.wacoisd.org Campus Facebook Page: Search "Alta Vista Elementary School"
COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY SCHOOL SPECIALIST	Communities in Schools serves families at Alta Vista Elementary in various capacities, from connecting students to mentors to helping families secure important resources. We also have a Family Support Specialist that can aid families in connecting with various community support. If your family is in need of any type of assistance, please call our office to speak to our Communities in Schools representative or Community School Specialist
COMPLAINT PROCESS	The Waco ISD Administration understands that from time to time you may have concerns or complaints about situations that arise in our schools. We encourage parents and students to discuss these concerns through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level. The Grievance Section under the Waco ISD web page provides information about the process of filing a grievance, either as a parent or a citizen of the community. You can

	find the information at https://www.wacoisd.org/Page/8957
COUNSELING	The counseling program at Alta Vista Elementary includes monthly whole group guidance lessons, guidance small groups, and individual counseling. If you would like to speak with the counselor, please contact Rebecca Maynard.
DISCIPLINE	Student misconduct will be handled in accordance with the district student code of conduct. Depending on severity, you may generally expect a continuum of consequences such as: • Warning • Time out or removal from situation • Parent phone call • Conference with teacher, student, parent • Lunch, recess, or after-school detention • In School Suspension • Out of School Suspension (Grades 3-5 only) • Referral to DAEP (Alternative School) Please understand that incidents that include 2 or more students hitting, scratching, kicking or otherwise physically hurting each other will most likely be considered "Mutual Combat" and both students will receive consequences in accordance with the district code of conduct. Students may not engage in misconduct online. This includes (but is not limited to) bullying, name calling, using inappropriate language or gestures, or teasing online.
DRESS CODE	Alta Vista Elementary follows the dress code set out by Waco ISD. Specific dress code requirements include: Shirts or Blouses: • Females will not wear halters, tank tops that expose any part of the midriff, low-cut dresses/tops, short shorts, or excessively tight clothing. • Males must wear shirts with sleeves. The neck opening on any type of shirt may not exceed the equivalent of the second button below the collar. • Shirt may not have any prohibited graphics such as references to gangs, alcohol, or drugs. Hats, Caps, & Hoods • Hats, caps, and hoods may not be worn inside the school building during the school day. Pants, Skirts, Capris, Jumpers, Jeans or Shorts: • Pants, shorts, capris, skirts, and jeans must be worn at the waist at all times. • Skirts, dresses, or shorts must be fingertip length when standing. Hair • Hair must be neat and well-groomed. • Hair must not be tied up in a bandana or covered by a hat, a hood, a cap, a doo rag, or a visor.

Shoes	• Students must wear shoes. • Roller shoes are NOT allowed. • Beach-style flip-flops or house shoes are not allowed. • Crocs and other similar-styled shoes are <i>discouraged</i>; they are prohibited in PE. • Students must wear closed-toed shoes for PE. Crocs, sandals, dress shoes, and boots are NOT allowed in PE. In the case of dress and grooming code violations, parents will be notified and requested to bring the appropriate apparel to school, or pick up the student in order to correct the violation.
HOMEWORK POLICY	During a regular school year with all in-person instruction, Alta Vista Elementary is a "limited homework" policy. We do not believe in sending home regular homework to be turned back in for a grade. We value family time, opportunities for extracurricular activities, and READING. Regardless of the instructional method, we expect every student to read (or be read to) 20 minutes a night in order to build strong reading foundations. We encourage students in grades 1-5 to practice their math facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) as they progress through the grades.
ILLNESS	If a student has symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, or a temperature of 100 degrees or more, the student may not come to school or will be sent home from school. Students must be fever free (without the benefit of medication) for 24 hours before they can return. All medications that are sent to school must be age-appropriate and in the original package. Non-prescription medication may be kept in the nurse's office for 10 days with a Waco ISD Medication Request form. Prescription medication must have a signed release from the prescribing physician. A parent or guardian must bring all medications into the office. Please do NOT send medications with your child.
INSPIRACIÓN	Inspiración teaches parents of young children how to better assist their students so they are kindergarten-ready. If you have a child that is 3 or younger, please consider contacting Inspiración about their classes at 662-3050.
LOST AND FOUND	Small items such as jewelry and glasses are brought to the office. Clothes and larger items are placed on coat hooks in the cafeteria.
LUNCH MONEY	Breakfast and lunch are provided free for all Waco ISD students. There is no need to send your child with money.

MENTORS, TUTORS, & STARS BOOK CLUBS Alta Vista enjoys a wide variety of community support, including mentors and tutors. If you feel like your student is in need of mentoring, please contact our Communities in Schools representative to get connected. STARS Book Clubs meet in a small group setting with an adult every week to read and discuss a book together. This program is open to ALL students in grades 2 through 5. If you are interested in having your student participate, please see the office for a permission slip. Please note that students are not able to participate in mentoring or tutoring activities without prior written parent/guardian approval.	OBSERVATIONS Parents/guardians may request to observe a classroom according to the following guidelines: • Requests for classroom observations must be made through the campus principal at least 24 hours in advance of the observation. • A classroom observation may last up to 30 minutes. • During the observation, parents/guardians are asked to remain in the seat provided for them during the entire observation time and should not initiate conversation with any child. It is important that lessons continue as planned. The teacher will continue working with students during an observation. Questions may be answered if the parent contacts the teachers outside of class time.
STUDENT CONFERENCES Parents will be invited to meet with their child's teacher to discuss academic levels and set goals for the school year. The parent involvement policy and home-school compact will also be discussed during this meeting. Teachers will contact parents to schedule these meetings for September by appointment. Students in all grades are expected to meet with their parents and teacher in September, February, and May to discuss their academic and social growth and progress toward goals. These meetings will be scheduled through the teacher a few weeks prior to the meeting date.	TITLE 1 Alta Vista Elementary is a Title 1 campus. This means we receive money each year from the federal government to enhance our students' education. Funds are used to pay salaries and buy materials for our students. At the beginning of each year you must sign a Home-School Compact and a Parent Involvement Policy letter. Input is encouraged on both of these documents. Please let Emily Schmillen (emilyschmillen@wacoisd.org) know if there are items that you think need to be changed on either document.
VISITORS	Each visitor is required to have a driver's license, state identification card or military identification scanned by our school secretary whenever he/she arrives. The office will hold the identification card until the visitor signs out. Visitors will receive an ID sticker which must be worn at all times.

If a visitor does not have one of the above mentioned forms of identification, the visitor may see the office secretary for steps to have identification verified.	VOLUNTEERS There are lots of opportunities for volunteers at Alta Vista Elementary. A few of these include: • STARS Book Club Mentor • Student Mentor or Tutor • Book Fair • Campus events like Family Lunches, Field Day, and Picture Day • Field trip chaperone In order to be a volunteer, adults must go to the Waco ISD website and fill out a volunteer application at www.wacoisd.org/volunteer. You may contact our Communities In Schools representative for more information.																
WHO TO CONTACT? Need help but not sure who you need to speak with? Please see below. You may reach any of these staff members by calling 254-662-3050. • 504 Counselor, Rebecca Maynard Assistant Principal, Amber Orchard PEIMS, Coral Piña • Attendance Behavior & Discipline Assistant Principal, Amber Orchard • Bilingual & ESL Services Instructional Coach, Jennifer Williams • Communities In Schools CIS, Ronte Crump • Counseling Counselor, Rebecca Maynard • Dyslexia Counselor, Rebecca Maynard • Gifted/Talented Teacher, Jo Spark • Health & Nursing Nurse, Stacy Leathers • Interventions & Support Assistant Principal, Amber Orchard • Parent Involvement Community School Specialist, Emily Schmillen • Parent Portal Instructional Coach, Jennifer Williams • Registration PEIMS, Coral Piña • Special Education Special Ed. Teacher, Jennifer Salazar • Speech Principal, Lindsey Helton • Technology Support Instructional Coach, Jennifer Williams • UIL Teacher, Jo Spark	GRADE LEVEL CONFERENCE TIMES Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday (Teachers have meetings on Monday & Thursday) <table> <tr> <td>Pre-Kindergarten</td> <td>8:15-9:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kindergarten</td> <td>10:00-10:45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1st Grade</td> <td>9:05-9:55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd Grade</td> <td>10:50-11:35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd Grade</td> <td>12:15-1:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th Grade</td> <td>1:10-1:55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th Grade</td> <td>2:00-2:45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Art, Music, PE, intervention</td> <td>7:30-8:15</td> </tr> </table>	Pre-Kindergarten	8:15-9:00	Kindergarten	10:00-10:45	1st Grade	9:05-9:55	2nd Grade	10:50-11:35	3rd Grade	12:15-1:00	4th Grade	1:10-1:55	5th Grade	2:00-2:45	Art, Music, PE, intervention	7:30-8:15
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