

Valdez High School



Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook

Home of the Buccaneers

2025-2026

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Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to Valdez High School!

Valdez High School (VHS) strives to create a positive and welcoming [school climate](#). A positive school climate includes a safe, supportive, and well-managed classroom and school environment. Research indicates that student achievement is often higher in schools with a positive climate and VHS implements practices supporting this climate, including appropriate expectations implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner, social and emotional supports, trauma informed practices, community and family relationship supports, a positive peer climate, caring adult relationships, a school safety program, and opportunities for student involvement. Please reach out to teachers or the building principal if you have any questions about our school climate or how you can support our efforts.

The 2025 - 2026 VHS Student Handbook provides students and parents/guardians with updated information regarding policies, guidelines, expectations, and standards of expected student behavior; it has been carefully prepared and presented. This handbook is intended to be of value in helping students adjust to high school successfully and become an integral part of VHS.

The information outlined in this handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive. Refer to the online [VCS Board Policy manual](#) for additional details; specific policies and regulations providing additional details are linked in the applicable section. Board policies and administrative regulations are updated regularly. Please check with the building principal for updates and/or changes that may occur.

[Expected Behavior/Appropriate Conduct](#)

All VHS students are expected to demonstrate integrity, civility, responsibility, and self-control. VHS students are expected to be model citizens in honesty, adherence to school and classroom rules and policies, and assisting at all times in the maintenance of a productive, and safe school environment. It's clear and simple: *respect people and respect property*.

VHS students are expected to respect and to follow directions and instructions from employees of the district. When under the classroom direction of a substitute teacher, students are to treat the substitute with respect and abide by the daily guidelines and policies of the regular classroom teacher.

VHS Teacher and Staff Contact List

2024-2025

School Phone: 907-835-4767

MAIN OFFICE STAFF

Peter P. Baxis, Building Principal, pbaxis@valdezcityschools.org
Bristyl Comer, Building Secretary/Registrar, bcomer@valdezcityschools.org
Pearl Holmes, Administrative Secretary, pnavarro@valdezcityschools.org
Todd Wegner, Athletic Director, Physical Education, twegner@valdezcityschools.org

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Shannon Major, School Counselor, smajor@valdezcityschools.org

CERTIFIED TEACHING STAFF

Samantha Addler, Science, saddler@valdezcityschools.org
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Katelyn Eisen, Science, keisen@valdezcityschools.org
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PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

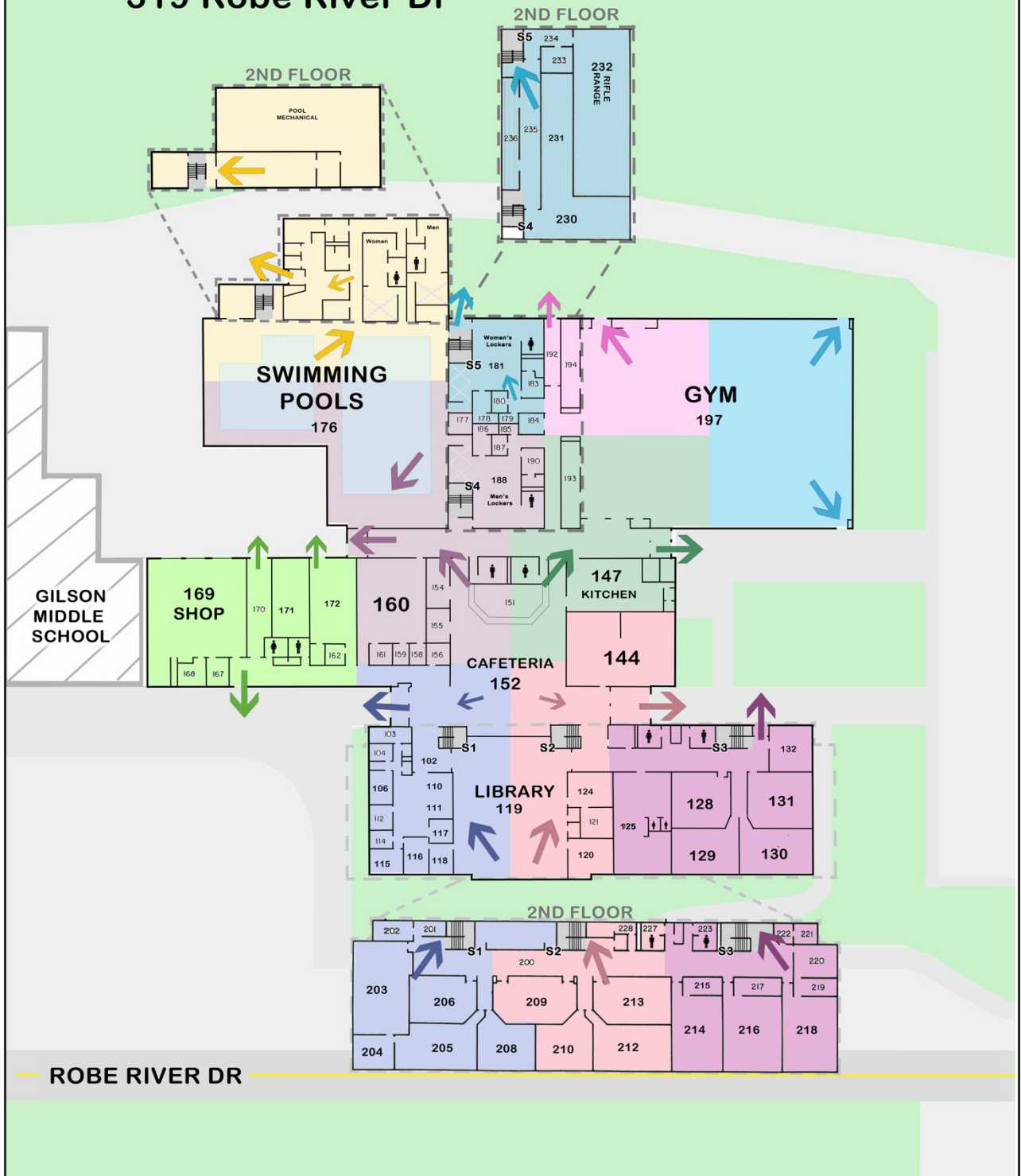
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ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONIST / LIBRARY

Pamela Verfaillie, pverfaillie@valdezcityschools.org

VALDEZ HIGH SCHOOL

319 Robe River Dr



SECTION 1

Student Services and Activities

Student Services

PowerSchool

[PowerSchool's Parent Portal](#) provides parents/guardians with confidential and real-time access to information tied to their child(ren), such as attendance and grades, through their own secure account. Please contact the VHS Office Staff to obtain the forms and information required to create a personal and confidential PowerSchool Parent Portal account.

School Counselor

The school counselor academically supports students in scheduling classes, tracking credits for graduation, supporting standardized testing at VHS, and is a liaison with Prince William Sound College for dual-credit opportunities. Students will have access to their [School Counselor](#) to assist them with individualized needs, social and emotional learning, behavior, academic concerns, and information on post-secondary options. .

College and Career Advising

The College and Career Counselor will work with students from grades 9-12 on college and career exploration by advising students on scholarship and educational opportunities, summer programs, and professionalism. The College and Career Counselor will administer college entrance exams, host the annual Valdez College & Career Fair, and coordinate college/career exploration opportunities.

Library

The VHS library's fundamental role is to provide a wide variety of materials, resources, and activities that educate and enrich our students' learning. We have a carefully curated collection to support both the curricular and personal interests of our students. The library is open daily before school starting at 7:30 am and after school Monday – Thursday until 4:15 pm.

Military Children

VHS supports the needs of our military children and adheres to provisions in the [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#), adopted by Alaska in 2009. If your military child is in need of additional support or guidance due to a military transfer, please reach out to our school counselor or building principal.

Administering Medication

Medication may be securely stored in the VHS office and dispensed to a student with written instructions from the student's parent or guardian and a medical provider. Anaphylactic Injections (EpiPen) and Asthma Inhalers may be carried by the student for self-administration upon completion of permission and release of liability forms. Please refer to [AR 5141.21 Administering Medication](#) for details regarding medications at school. Failure to follow appropriate guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Inspection of Student Records

Parents and students age eighteen or older have the right to inspect [student records](#). Please contact the main office to schedule an appointment.

Telephone Use/School Phones

A courtesy telephone is located in the office for student use. Only emergency messages from parents/guardians will be delivered to students.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast 7:45-8:15 am, at a cost of \$2.50 per meal.

Lunch 12:00-12:30, Monday- Friday, at a cost of \$4.25 per meal.

Campus Access Restrictions

Students must be in supervised areas when class is not in session.

The VHS library opens at 7:30 am Monday through Friday and is open until 4:15pm Monday through Thursday.

Students with an open period in their schedule that wish to remain on campus should report to and sign in to the Career Center or the Library.

Flyers and Posters

The School Board respects rights to [freedom of speech](#).

All printed matter and petitions distributed, circulated, or posted on school property shall bear the name and the address or contact location of the sponsoring organization or individual and need pre-approval by the principal or principal’s designee.

Activities

Sports and ExtraCurricular Activities

Refer to our Athletic/Activities Handbook for rules governing sports and activities. Copies can be picked up from our athletic director, who can answer any questions you may have regarding activities and student eligibility. In addition, you can refer to the [Alaska School Activities Association website](#).

Extra-curricular activities offered at VHS include:

Student Government	Cross Country Running	Cheer
National Honor Society	Swimming	Native Youth Olympics
Beta Club	Volleyball	Track and Field
Pep Band	Wrestling	
Academic Decathlon	Nordic Ski	Other activities as may be approved
Football	Basketball	

It is important to remember that participation in activities is a privilege, not a protected right.

Dance Functions at VHS

VHS dance functions are for students in grades nine through twelve and their invited guests only.

VHS will host four (4) dances per year, maximum: Homecoming, Winter Ball, Sadie Hawkins/Fall, and Prom.

[Dress code](#) and proper conduct will be enforced.

During the annual *Elks Basketball Tournament*, logistics prohibit scheduling a dance. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

VHS Dance Participation Guidelines and Procedures

VHS dance function sponsors are to hold a meeting with the VHS teachers/staff and the parent/guardian chaperones one (1) week prior to the dance to inform all chaperones of *VHS Dance Participation Guidelines and Procedures*. Dance function activities, food table monitoring, lighting, musical selections/DJ, and student behavior during dance functions are to be reviewed with chaperones. The VHS principal or designee is to be included in this informational meeting.

1. *VHS Dance Student Participation Guidelines and Procedures* are to be distributed to all high school students and their invited guest one (1) week prior to the dance event.
2. Parents/guardians are invited to attend and chaperone dance functions. Parents/guardians must observe the same guidelines, policies, and procedures governing students at dance functions.
3. Dance functions are to end at 11:30 p.m. sharp with cleanup completed by 11:45 p.m. (Exceptions to this time frame will be allowed for Prom. The ending time for Prom will be extended until midnight. Valdez Police Department approval for extension of curfew must be secured well in advance of the prom.)
4. Once a student leaves the dance function, that student or invited guest will not be allowed to reenter the dance function.

Inviting a Guest to a Dance

Students who wish to invite someone to attend a VHS dance function must abide by the following:

1. Guests must be no younger than ninth grade and no older than nineteen years of age.
2. Guests must be in good legal standing and approved by the Valdez Police Department and building principal. No guest will be permitted at VHS dances who has been convicted of a felony or served jail time.
3. Register the invited guest in the Administrative Offices, supplying all requested information on the Dance Guest Registration form no later than 3:30pm on the Wednesday prior to the dance. Check for approval of your guest with the Administration Offices after two (2) days.
4. Students who invite a guest are responsible for the behavior of their invited guest. Guests must adhere to the guidelines written on the dance pledge form.

SECTION 2

Attendance, Grading, Graduation

Attendance

Valdez High School firmly believes that regular attendance plays a key role in the success a student achieves in school. However, there are circumstances when illness or activities prevent a student from attending classes. Please see [Board Policy 5113 Absences and Excuses](#) for additional details pertaining to this attendance section.

Required attendance

VHS students are expected to attend school Monday through Thursday.

Flex Fridays

Flex Fridays are open days for students to receive extra help or to participate in enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Attendance is encouraged, but not required. Students will need to check in and out for their Friday learning experiences.

Open Campus

VHS has an [open campus policy](#). With written parental/guardian approval, VHS Students may leave the school grounds during lunch and times during the school day without a scheduled class. Students must remain on campus at all other times. VCS administration may revoke a student's open campus privilege for disciplinary reasons including, but not limited to, failure to return to campus before the student's next class period has started.

Students with an open class period choosing to remain on campus should sign in to and remain in a supervised area, such as the career center or library.

Parent Notification

A "Safe Arrival" text or email from PowerSchool will be sent to the parent or guardian each time a student is absent. Parents should respond to the Safe Arrival notification with the appropriate attendance code. Failure to do so will result in continued messaging from Safe Arrival until the message is acknowledged or the front office has been contacted by the parent.

Return To School

When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. School Messenger notification. Note – follow up verbal or written verification may be requested.
2. Written note from parent/guardian, parent-representative, or medical provider.
3. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the school district and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative.
4. Any other reasonable method that establishes the fact the student was actually absent for the reasons stated.

Make Up Work

Any student who knowingly will be absent from school must make arrangements before the absence to make up all the class requirements. Pre- Arranged Absence forms are available in the front office. This requirement will be satisfied for any school sponsored activity and/or parent-sponsored activity.

In case of an unplanned absence such as illness or a family emergency, the student will be given one (1) day to make up work for each day absent. For extended absences, two (2) weeks make-up time may be allowed at the discretion of the building administrator.

Tardy

A student arriving late to class will be counted as tardy, but present, through the 9th minute of class. At the 10th minute of class, a student shall be counted absent for the class period. Repeated late arrivals will result in disciplinary action.

Ten-time absence limit

High School students (grades 9-12) must not be absent, for any reason not related to school activities, more than ten (10) times from each semester course in which they are enrolled if they are to receive credit for that course.

The following absences **shall not** count toward the ten-time absence limit:

- Illness, injury, or medical appointment substantiated by a statement from a parent/guardian, and/or medical practitioner. The principal may ask a parent/guardian to provide medical evidence from a physician or medical practitioner for excessive absences. Excessive absences are not defined by one description but can be 1-10 days given the medical event. In which case, the student and parent will be asked to provide a doctor's note for the absences accrued.
- Death in the student's family necessitating an absence
- Absences from school due to participation in school-sponsored activities
- Absences due to work or training college as an approved part of their educational plan
- Unavoidable emergencies at home as determined by the principal
- Medical or dental appointments (best practice is to inform the office of these appointments)
- Religious observances
- Other special circumstances approved by the principal
 - A student may be absent up to five (5) days in addition to the 10-day limit each semester for special reasons if approved by the building principal.
 - Additional days may be granted for exceptional circumstances such as national competition or academic competition.

The following absences **shall** count against the 10-time absence limit if a student:

- skips a class having once arrived at school.
- leaves the school campus without checking out through the office, except during lunch.
- is more than 10 minutes late for a class.

Loss of Credit or Course Failure

When a high school student's absences exceed the 10-time absence limit the student will lose credit/fail the class for each affected course. The student may be given the option to either make up the absences or be withdrawn from the class and assigned to a study area for the remainder of the semester. The determination of placement shall be made by the principal based upon input from the student, parent/guardian, counselor, and teachers.

High School Credit Loss Make-up

Students who have lost credit due to excessive absences, may attend Flex Fridays to make up days. Credit may be reinstated at the completion of the appropriate makeup time and learning expectations. Students must receive approval from the classroom teacher and building principal prior to using a Flex Friday to make up days.

Appeals Procedure

If a parent or student wishes to appeal a decision made pursuant to this policy, such an appeal must be initiated in writing within fifteen (15) school days of the date of the decision or the date of the letter of notification to the Superintendent of schools. The letter requesting an appeal must include specific reasons that the request should be considered. If an appeal is not filed within the timeline provided, the student/parent/guardian shall be deemed to have waived the right to an appeal and a hearing.

A parent/guardian may appeal the Superintendent's decision by requesting in writing that the school board review the decision within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision. The board will hear the appeal in executive session at the next scheduled board meeting.

Academics

Grades / Evaluation of Student Achievement

VHS uses the A, B, C, D, and F [grading system](#). Plus, or minus notations may be affixed at teacher discretion to indicate directional progress for grades A-D but do not affect grade points awarded. Report cards will be issued following each quarter. Parents will be contacted regarding their children performing below “C” level at appropriate intervals throughout the quarter. Parents and guardians are encouraged to use PowerSchool to monitor student progress.

Weighted Courses

At VHS, [weighted classes](#) will earn one extra grade point for students earning a C or better.

Weighted courses at VHS include honors level core-content courses and certain college courses in core-content subjects. VHS weighted classes will be clearly identified; to find out which dual credit courses are weighted, please contact the VHS school counselor. For students moving into the district, grades from AP, IB, and dual-credit core-content college classes will be weighted.

Note: courses that are retaken to earn a better grade will not be given a weighted grade.

Sports Participation for Credit

Any student who has completed two full seasons in an approved VHS sport may apply to earn a physical education .5 credit. This credit will be recorded on the student’s transcript with a grade of P (pass). A maximum of 1 credit can be earned through sports participation. Forms to request credit for sports participation are available in the office.

Class Fees

Some classes at VHS will have a class fee to offset materials costs. Please contact the VHS office or school counselor for the fee information. Note: students requesting a needs-based fee waiver should contact the building principal or school counselor.

Class Examinations / Challenging Courses by Examination

Credit by examination (testing out) is an opportunity for the advanced student to progress at his/her own learning rate in courses approved by the Valdez School Board. Credit may be awarded on demonstrated proficiency through an examination process. The test will be developed by a teacher selected by the building principal and will be equivalent to the final examination of a given course. A score of 90 percent (90%) is required to receive credit. A fee of \$85.00 is required, in advance, to compensate the teacher for creating, administering, and evaluating the test. Administration has the right to waive any/all fees for students unable to meet the fee requirement.

Class Changes

Students will be allowed to drop a course in order to add a new course through the first five (5) days of the semester with approval from the student’s parent or guardian and the School Counselor. After the first five days no schedule changes will be made without building principal approval. Students who drop a class after the five-day deadline will receive a “WF” (withdraw/fail) on their transcript unless they receive an exemption from the building principal.

Audits

Audits are possible when the student wishes to take a course for no credit and no grade. In order to distinguish between a retake and an audit, the student must have prior approval of the principal to audit a class.

Outside Credit

VHS accepts credit for courses taken at an accredited educational institution with the pre-approval of the building administrator. These courses will appear on a student's transcript and grades received will be used in the computation of the grade point average.

Grade Reporting

Quarterly (~9 weeks) reports are issued via email PDF attachment to the parent/guardian addresses no later than one week after the grading period. Please contact the appropriate teacher if you have any grading concerns.

[Grades for achievement](#) shall be reported each marking period as follows:

<i>Letter Grade</i>	Grade Points – general classes	Grade Points – honors classes	<i>Additional Grading Notations</i>
A (90-100%)	4	5	P – pass
B (80-89%)	3	4	F – fail
C (70-79%)	2	3	INC – incomplete
D (60-69%)	1	1	WF – withdrawn after 5 days
F (0-59%)	0	0	AU – audit

Retakes

Students with a grade of D or F may choose to re-take a Valdez High School course for a higher semester grade. Once the course is completed with a higher grade, the previous score will be replaced.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points by the total number of credits attempted for all courses taken during a specific term or grading period. For example, a semester-long regular course (0.5 credits) in which the student received a grade of "B" would have 1.5 grade points ($3 \times 0.5 = 1.5$).

The grades of INC (incomplete) and WF (withdraw fail) will be counted as an F. Grades of P, AU, and grades of S or U awarded by other school districts will not be used in computing the GPA.

Graduation

Credit Requirements for VHS Graduation by Subject Area.

A total of 24 credits are [required](#) for graduation at VHS. Required credits are:

- English – 4 credits
- Social Studies – 3.5 credits, must include:
 - Alaska History – .5 credit
 - Government – .5 credit
 - Economics – .5 credit
 - US History – 1 credit
 - World History – 1 credit
- Mathematics – 3 credits
 - must include Algebra I or above
- Science – 3 credits, must include:
 - Physical Science – 1 credit
 - Biology – 1 credit
- Physical Education – 1.5 credits
- Health – .5 credit
- Electives – 8.5 credits

Class Standings for High School Students

A high school student's class standing shall be determined by the number of years the student has been enrolled in high school or by the number of credits earned. The following shall apply:

- **Freshman** (ninth grade): A student in his/her first year of high school.
- **Sophomore** (tenth grade): A student in his/her second year of high school, OR a student who has earned six credits but less than 11.5 credits.
- **Junior** (eleventh grade): A student in his/her third year of high school, OR a student who has earned twelve credits but less than 16.5 credits.
- **Senior** (twelfth grade): A student in his/her fourth year of high school or any year thereafter until graduation or until the student exceeds school age, OR a student who has earned seventeen or more credits.

A high school student's class standing shall be determined at the end of each semester in the event that the student has earned sufficient credits to be promoted.

Class Ranking

[Class rank](#) will be calculated at the completion of a minimum of 6 semesters, and based on a maximum of 21 class credits for Juniors and 28 class credits for Seniors. Those who earn more than that number of credits will select which elective credits to omit in calculating their class ranking. Junior class ranking scores will be calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned in those 21 (or fewer) credits by 21. Senior class ranking scores for graduation will be calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned in the chosen 28 (or fewer) credits by 28.

Dates of Graduation

Students completing all graduation requirements prior to the last student contact day of the school year will be awarded a high school diploma with a date reflecting the last student contact day of that year. Students who receive incompletes or who have not satisfied the requirements will not be awarded a diploma until the work has been completed.

Graduation Ceremony Participation

Graduation exercises will be held at the end of twelfth grade. To be eligible for participation in high school's regular graduation exercises, students must have met the district graduation requirements as stated in the school board policies. Exceptions to this policy may be made in special cases by the superintendent, based on the recommendation of the principal.

Graduation Ceremonies and Activities

In accordance with district rules, the principal may deny a student the privilege of participating in graduation or promotion activities because of misconduct. School-sponsored invocations and/or benedictions shall not be included in graduation ceremonies.

Withholding Grades, Diploma, or Transcripts

When [school property](#) has been willfully damaged or not returned upon demand, the superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian in writing of the responsible student's alleged misconduct and the reparation that is due.

This notice shall include a statement that the district may withhold grades, progress reports, diploma, or transcripts from the student and parent/guardian until reparation is made, except that records will be released to another school district to which the student has transferred.

SECTION 3

Dress and Grooming

Students are expected to dress appropriately in ways that model expectations for a work environment. The VCS School Board believes that [appropriate dress and grooming](#) contribute to a productive learning environment.

- Students must wear modest clothing. Sexually explicit or suggestive clothing is not school appropriate.
- Underwear (bra, boxers, etc.), midriffs, and private parts of the body must NOT be visible.
- Hats of any kind (including bandanas, scarves, or headbands not being used to hold back long hair) will not be worn in school between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- Clothing imprinted with or promoting obscenity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, violence, or illegal behavior is not allowed.
- Sexually suggestive, racist, or abusive slogans or logos are not to be worn at school.
- Pants must be worn at or near waist level.
- Dress and appearance that are so distracting as to clearly interfere with the educational process or present health and safety hazards shall not be permitted.

Students wearing [inappropriate attire](#) will be asked to change their clothing and disciplinary action may be taken.

Students with health or religious needs may make arrangements with the principal.

SECTION 4

Electronic Devices, Internet

The complete [VCS Internet Policy](#) can be viewed on [BoardDocs](#).

Electronic Devices

Valdez City Schools expects that students will use VCS-provided technology for purposes consistent with the curriculum. VCS technology resources should be used for class assignments and other learning activities. Students are expected to take good care of VCS technology resources, leaving equipment and work areas in good condition. Students may use district technology resources when directed by a teacher or when technology has been designated for open student use.

When on campus *during the regular school day* (excluding before school, after school, breaks and lunch), students may only use technology (school-issued or personally owned devices) for activities that are directly linked to a class in which a student is currently enrolled unless permission for other use in a classroom has been granted and is being supervised by a teacher.

Teachers and staff must enforce [board policy](#) regarding use of technology and personally owned devices in their classrooms or areas.

Internet Authority

The principal shall notify students and parents/guardians about authorized uses of district technology and the Internet, user obligations and responsibilities, and consequences for unauthorized use and/or unlawful activities, including the following:

- The electronic information available to students and staff does not imply endorsement of the content by the district, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of the information received on the Internet.
- The district shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved via the Internet.
- The school district shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.
- The use of the Internet and similar communication networks by students and staff is a privilege, not a right. Failure to follow established rules can lead to appropriate disciplinary action as well as the loss of access to the Internet or other networks through school accounts. Legal action may be taken where/when appropriate.
- School computers are the property of the school district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of computers provided for the convenience of the students and staff. Computers shall not be used to disseminate sexually explicit, vulgar, indecent, offensive, or lewd communications. Nor may computers be used for harassment or bullying.
- The school district reserves the right to inspect and review files and data on district computers and to monitor the online behavior of minors when using district computers or networks. Such inspection and monitoring are for the purpose of ensuring compliance with laws and appropriate use of technology as specified in this and other policies. Monitoring may be conducted by school authorities when they deem it necessary, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Security of Internet System

System security will be protected with passwords. Failure to adequately protect or update 19 passwords could result in unauthorized access to personal or district files. To protect the integrity of the system, the following guidelines shall be followed:

- Employees and students shall not reveal their passwords to another individual.
- Users are not to use a computer that has been logged in under another student's or teacher's name.
- Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network.

VCS can and does monitor technology use and activity on VCS's network, including, but not limited to, sites visited, content viewed, and e-mail sent and received. VCS may examine a student's account and activity and search the contents of a student's account if there is a reason to believe that school policies, regulations, or guidelines regarding access to the network or use of VCS technology have been violated. The school may require a student to produce or relinquish a school-owned device for examination or confiscation at any time. The school may seize and hold a personally owned or other non-VCS-owned device at any time.

Internet access is limited to only those acceptable uses as detailed in the policy listed separately in the Technology Use and Guidelines. Internet users may not engage in unacceptable uses and a signed copy of the Technology Use and Guidelines is required before any student accesses district computers or Internet technology.

VHS Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are only allowed before school, after school, and during breakfast and lunch.

- Students may not have their phones out during passing periods or bathroom breaks.
- Students should store their phones securely before school. The school is not responsible for loss or theft of personal electronic devices.
- If brought to class, the phone should be set in a container or location at the front of the room and picked up after class.
- Refusal will result in administrative intervention.

SECTION 5

Safety

VHS is fully committed to preventing violence and crime on school grounds and will strictly enforce [district policies](#) and regulations related to crime, campus disturbances, campus intruders, student safety, student conduct, and student discipline. All students and staff should feel safe and secure at school.

Drills (Safety)

Drills will be conducted regularly to ensure students and staff are familiar with evacuation and safety procedures.

Accident and Injury Procedure

Every [accident](#) in the school building, on school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any school-sponsored event resulting in **must be reported immediately** to the person in charge, who will contact the school office and file the appropriate injury or incident report. Parents and Guardians should contact the front office at 907-835-4767 if there are any questions regarding the forms. Accidents resulting in property damage must be reported to the person in charge and school office. Property damage may be reported to the Valdez Police Department.

Intruder Response

VCS has adopted the [ALICE](#) program, designed to empower staff and students to respond to an intruder or violent critical incident with options and confidence. ALICE is an acronym which stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate.

Reporting

Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information regarding student safety, including weapons on campus, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or concerns about self-harm or an upcoming dangerous event or activity should immediately [report](#) the information to the building principal or the principal's designee. In addition to in-person reporting, VHS utilizes the [School Messenger Quick Tip](#) feature to provide a simple tip line allowing students, staff, and members of the community to communicate with VHS about pressing issues in a truly anonymous way.

Tips are sent using a form available on the school website or via an app that can be downloaded onto a personal device. When sending a tip, tip submitters will select the relevant school or organization, the topic which best describes their tip, and then enter the tip message. If they have an image related to the tip, they are encouraged to attach it to their message. If tip submitters want to include contact information, there are also fields to allow them to do so.

The VHS [Threat Assessment Team](#) shall review the information and take appropriate measures, including notifying law enforcement if necessary.

Valdez City Schools Threat Assessment Team

The VHS [Threat Assessment Team](#) is comprised of the building principal, school counselor, school resource officer, and others as needed and invited. The team is responsible for:

1. identifying threats to school and/or student and staff safety,
2. determining the seriousness of the threat, and
3. developing intervention plans that protect potential victims and address the underlying problem or conflict that caused the threatening behavior.

The Threat Assessment Team shall conform to all applicable Alaska state statutes.

Fire Evacuation

In the event of a [fire](#), students, teachers, and other employees shall be instructed as to leaving the school building in an orderly and rapid manner, and shall proceed to a designated meeting area on school grounds. In the event the students must be moved to an alternate location parents will be notified via the school messenger system. Parents can pick up students from the alternate location after verifying with the school official.

Earthquakes

During strong [earth tremors](#) all safety precautions will take place. In the event the students must be moved to an alternate location parents will be notified via the school messenger system. Parents can pick up students from the alternate location after verifying with the school official. School maintenance employees will make a thorough inspection of school facilities after an earthquake to evaluate the safety of the buildings.

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Students shall not bring, possess, or use deadly weapons, firearms, dangerous instruments, or their replicas while in school buildings, on school grounds or district-provided transportation, or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity away from school unless written permission has been previously obtained from the superintendent or designee specifically authorizing that possession or use. Please see [Board policy 5131.7 Weapons and Dangerous Instruments](#).

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Cyberbullying

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying disrupt a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Students and staff are expected to demonstrate positive character traits and values. Students who engage in such acts are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means an intentional act, whether written, oral, electronic, or physical, that when the act is undertaken with the intent of threatening, intimidating, harassing, or frightening the student, and

- physically harms the student or damages the student's property; and/or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's education; and/or
- is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; and/or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The district's computer network, including access to the Internet via that network, whether it is accessed on or off campus or during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Users are responsible for the appropriateness of the material they transmit over the system.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originates from a private (non-school) computer or other electronic device, but is brought to the attention of school officials, disciplinary measures may be imposed when communication

- contains threats of violence or harm against staff members, students, or their property;
- suggests or advocates physical harm to staff members or students;
- causes a student or staff member to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health
- causes a student or staff member to experience substantial interference with academic or work performance, or with his/her ability to participate in or benefit from district services or activities; 5. threatens vandalism to school property; or
- creates a significant disruption to the school's educational mission, purpose, or objectives.

- Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion for those committing acts of cyberbullying. In addition, any kind of threat or hate crime will be reported to law enforcement officials. Students and staff who believe they have been the victims of cyberbullying, as described in this policy, should not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the material should be printed and a report made under this policy.

Sexual Harassment

Types of conduct that are prohibited in the district and that may constitute sexual harassment include the following:

- Unwelcome sexual flirtations or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Sexual or “dirty” jokes
- Graphic verbal comments about an individual’s physical appearance
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual
- Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures in the educational environment
- Unwelcome touching, such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another’s body
- Graffiti of a sexual nature
- Sexual gestures
- Touching oneself sexually or talking about one’s sexual activity in front of others
- Spreading rumors about or rating other students as to sexual activity, performance, or sexual orientation
- Any act of retaliation against an individual who reports a violation of the district’s sexual harassment policy or who participates in the investigation of a sexual harassment complaint

Hazing

Hazing means a behavior or pattern of behavior directed at one or more specific individuals that persecutes, harasses, humiliates, degrades, or endangers the physical safety of an individual.

False Report

Students who knowingly or willfully make a false report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or who provide false information in connection with an investigation, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or who cooperates in an investigation, is strictly prohibited. Any such retaliation or reprisals will result in disciplinary action up to and suspension or expulsion.

SECTION 6

Building and Grounds, Transportation

Building and Grounds

Students are provided use of school facilities and are expected to follow rules and regulations while on school grounds. When not in a regularly scheduled class, students should remain in a supervised area (cafeteria, library, career center, etc.). Students should not have an expectation of privacy, and are subject to search and seizure procedures. See [Search and Seizure](#) in this handbook or [board policy](#) for more information.

Lockers

Lockers will be issued by the administrative office according to a student's grade classification. Students are required to review and sign a locker use agreement.

Student Vehicles

- Students who drive to school must be licensed, have insurance coverage, and apply for and receive a VHS parking permit.
- The VHS parking permit must be clearly visible according to instructions and the vehicle must be parked in the parking lot east of VHS (excluding the row designated as staff parking) or in the parking lot south of the football field.
- Repeated parking violations may lead to revocation of driving privileges, referral to the Valdez Police Department, and other disciplinary sanctions.
- Vehicles are subject to search by school officials if they have reasonable grounds to believe that drugs, alcohol, firearms, stolen property, or other contraband might be present in the vehicle.

Students who do not adhere to automobile requirements may not be allowed to bring vehicles on campus.

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Neither Valdez City School Board, Valdez City Schools, nor Valdez High School is responsible for any vehicle or its contents while it is parked on the school campus.

Bus Conduct - Regulations for Pupils Riding School Buses

[Bus transportation](#) is a privilege extended to students who display [good conduct](#) while preparing to ride, riding, or leaving the bus.

All Times:

- Exercise good manners, caution, and consideration for other people.
- Obey the school bus driver; his/her primary concern is for your safety.
- Pupils must sit in assigned seats if required by the driver.
- Pupils shall not have anything in their possession that may be used to cause injury.

Field Trips

The VCS Board of Education supports [field trips](#) as an outgrowth of the instructional program. Instructions for field trips will be given through the overseeing official, coach, teacher, etc., to the student and parents. All bus transportation regulations will remain in effect.

Students may not provide their own transportation for a field trip without a travel deviation form and building principal approval.

SECTION 7

Discipline, Search & Seizure, Consequences

Discipline

Student Discipline Secondary Schools

The appropriate level of discipline requires professional judgment and will be based on the VHS Behavior Matrix and an individualized evaluation of the conduct and the student(s) involved.

Due Process

Before any discipline is decided upon, the building administrator or his/her designee must advise the student of the nature of his/her offense(s), receive an explanation of the evidence, and allow the student the opportunity to explain his/her position, except in cases of exigent circumstances in which immediate action must be taken to ensure student safety.

Search and Seizure

Searches of a student or a student's property may be conducted if a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe a violation of a school rule or local, state, or federal law has taken place. Special rules shall apply to search and seizure pertaining to students, school property assigned to students (e.g., gym and hall lockers), and student vehicles parked on school grounds.

* Any student search must be conducted in private by the school principal or designee and witnessed by a staff person.

Parent Notification

The principal or his/her designee will make a reasonable effort to contact parents regarding student searches before they are conducted. In the event that a parent or guardian cannot be notified before the search, they will be notified as soon as possible after the search is concluded. If a student and or his/her parent/guardian refuse to allow the search to be conducted, this will be considered a failure to follow district policy and will result in a three-day out-of-school suspension.

Search of School Facility and Grounds

Student lockers, desks, and other items or spaces provided to the student by the school are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. Students shall not have any expectation of the privacy of such areas or use of those areas.

Periodic general inspection of these items and areas may be conducted by school authorities, with approval of the superintendent, for any reason, at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Search of Vehicles

All student vehicles parked on school grounds, whether or not a permit has been obtained, may be searched when the principal or his/her designee has reasonable suspicion to believe drugs, weapons, dangerous or illegal matter, or stolen goods are likely to be found.

Search of a Student's Person

The Valdez City School District will not under any circumstance conduct strip searches of students. If a building principal or his/her designee feels a strip search is necessary for safety reasons, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted.

Should an administrator have reason to believe that a student has drugs, weapons, illegal, or dangerous materials or stolen goods concealed on his/her person, the administrator may conduct a search of the student's person. No such search may be undertaken unless, in the administrator's judgment, there is adequate information that a student is likely to have prohibited material on his/her person and the student will have the option to a witness during the search.

Prior to commencing a search of a student's person, the student must be told the nature of the information against him/her. The principal or his/her designee will explain to the student his/her rights and the possible consequences faced by the student.

Possessions and Outer Garments

The school administrator has the authority to inspect and search the possessions (e.g., purses, gym bags, backpacks, instrument cases) and outer garments (e.g., jackets, shoes, socks, boots) of students when the school administrator or his/her designee has reasonable suspicion to believe that drugs, alcohol, weapons, illegal or dangerous instruments, stolen goods, evidence of rule violations, or other prohibited material are likely to be found.

Confiscated Items

Any item found during student, facility, or vehicle searches may be used in school disciplinary proceedings. Items used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be seized temporarily by school authorities.

Consequences

Detention of Students

A school administrator or teacher may detain a student for disciplinary reasons after school hours and, in the case of bus students, arrangements have been made for the student's transportation home. In cases where transportation is required, twenty-four hours' notice will be given so that transportation may be arranged. Parents may be asked to arrange for the transportation of the detained students. However, if the parent cannot or will not provide it, an alternative disciplinary procedure must be substituted.

Detentions are cumulative for behavioral infractions per semester except where otherwise stated. All detentions and suspensions fall under the progressive discipline model set forth by and determined by the principal.

1. 30-minute detentions must be served in one school day, no less than a 30-minute increment may be served, except the difference of remaining detention.
2. All detentions of 48 minutes must be served within two (2) consecutive days from the date set by the principal.
3. If a student fails to serve the assigned detention within the two (2) day time frame from the date set the detention is doubled.
4. Detentions over 48 minutes may be served in no less than 30 min increments in consecutive days (every day student is present once they begin detention time)
5. If a student fails to complete the assigned detention (in the appropriate time allotted), the student will be assigned an ISS day.

Students who choose not to serve a required detention will have their detention time doubled. All detentions must be served in no less than thirty-minute increments on consecutive days every day a student is present in school until completed. Continued disregard for completing detention(s) may result in suspension, as

determined by the principal's discretion.

If a student chooses to leave school grounds without prior approval from the principal while serving a detention and/or suspension, further disciplinary action may result, including detention or suspension, as determined by the principal's discretion.

In-School Suspension

In an effort to establish disciplinary procedures that are effective in reducing student truancy and misbehavior and that do not interrupt the educational process, the school board, superintendent, or designee may authorize in-school suspension as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Failure to serve in-school suspension or removal from the in-school suspension program for disciplinary reasons shall result in out-of-school suspension or additional time assigned.

At the beginning of each school year, the superintendent or designee shall ensure that every student and his/her parents/guardians are notified in writing of the availability of board policies and administrative regulations related to student rights and responsibilities.

Discipline BP 5144 Reporting to Law Enforcement

In addition to subjecting a student to discipline, any crime committed by a student while at school, on school grounds, or during any school-sponsored activity on or off campus shall be reported to law enforcement. Criminal proceedings are independent of actions taken by the school district.

Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for the following causes:

- Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of reasonable school authority.
- Behavior that is in some way harmful to the welfare, safety, or morals of other students.
- Conviction of a felony that the board determines will cause the attendance of the child to be in some way harmful to the welfare or education of other students.

A student may be suspended or expelled for behavior that includes, but is not limited to, the following circumstances:

- While on school grounds.
- While participating in a school-sponsored activity on or off school grounds.
- While off school grounds outside of the school day provided that the misconduct is shown to be related to school order. Such determination shall be made by both the building principal and the superintendent.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school-related extracurricular activities during the suspension or expulsion. Only the board may expel a student.

The superintendent or principal shall recommend a student's expulsion for any of the following acts, unless the principal or superintendent finds, and reports in writing to the board, that expulsion is inappropriate because of particular circumstances that shall be set out in the report of the incident:

- Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object at school or at a school activity off school grounds.
- Unlawful sale of any controlled substance.
- Robbery, extortion, or the conviction of any other felony that will cause the attendance of the student to be injurious to the welfare or education of other students.
- Student who receives a fourth recommendation for suspension during the course of one school year.

Readmission

An expulsion order shall remain in effect for the dates determined by the board. In addition, the readmission procedures shall be as follows:

1. A written request for review of expulsion action and request for readmission shall be submitted by the parent/guardian to the building administrator.
2. The building administrator will hold a conference with the parent/guardian and the student. At the conference the conditions for readmission will be reviewed.
3. The building principal shall verify that the conditions have been met.
4. School regulations will be reviewed and the student and parent/guardian will be asked to indicate in writing their willingness to comply with these regulations.
5. A meeting will then be held with the student, parent/guardian, and the school board to review the request for re-admittance. The meeting will be held in executive session unless requested to be held at an open meeting. Regardless if the meeting is open or closed, the board will vote in open session as to re-admittance.

Procedure and Responsibilities:

At the high school level, offenses from one school year will be added to those of previous years to determine the disciplinary action to be taken. Therefore, from ninth grade to graduation, offenses occurring in one year will progressively increase the disciplinary consequence.

Tobacco/E-Cigs

Educational Alternative to Suspension:

Students who violate the school rules regarding tobacco use or E-Cigs can attend a tobacco/e-cigs cessation program as approved by the building principal in place of serving suspension. At the meetings, they will discuss the effects of tobacco/e-cigs use, and view educational materials as designated by the school principal on the health risks of tobacco/e-cigs use.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Valdez City Schools believes that substance abuse decreases a child's chances of succeeding in all academic and personal realms and intends to maintain a drug-free school environment so learning can take place.

Truancy

Please see the [attendance](#) section in this handbook for further information on absences.

Fighting, physical conflict or mutual combat between two or more individuals.

4th offense - May lead to recommendation for expulsion

Disruptive Behavior

Behavior which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process or lawful activities of others.

Assault

Verbal, written or physical threats directed toward a student or a staff member.

Theft

The taking of another's property without their permission. Theft may be reported with local law enforcement agencies.

Firearm

Firearm or other gun possession or threatened use.

Any offense - Confiscation, with recommendation for expulsion for a minimum of one calendar year

Weapon

Use or threatened use of any object with intent to cause death or serious injury.

Any offense - May lead to recommendation for expulsion

Damage, Destruction and / or Vandalism.

Computer Hacking, unauthorized access to a computer system or information on that system.

Cheating /Academic Dishonesty /Plagiarism

Cheating is behavior that falsely presents a student's work as a product of his or her own effort or as a product achieved in keeping with the rules of the task, and may result in disciplinary penalty as well as an academic penalty. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Procuring, possessing, stealing, using or distributing tests, quizzes, answer keys, teaching materials, teacher manuals or teacher textbooks;
- Any attempt to tamper with or alter a teacher's records or grades;
- Representing the work of others as one's own work;
- Making use of unauthorized notes, homework assignments, and crib sheets; and
- Obtaining or offering unauthorized assistance or communication on a test, quiz or other assignment.
- Behavior that violates this offense may also involve theft and/or unauthorized access to a computer or information on a computer.

Arson

Attempting to or starting a fire or causing an explosion that burns buildings or property, or taking action that could lead to a fire or explosion.

False Alarm

Any false calling in threats to or about a school or district property or school sponsored activity or activating a false fire alarm will result in the school contacting authorities and may lead to recommendation for expulsion. Contact Authorities.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

Any oral, written, or physical conduct relating to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, physical or mental conditions, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation

that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent that it substantially interferes with or limits an individual's academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic or work environment.

Hazing

A behavior or pattern of behavior directed at one or more specific individuals, which persecutes, harasses, humiliates, degrades, or endangers the physical safety of an individual.

Parent Signature Page

Parents/Guardians: Please take the time throughout the school year to review this handbook with your child. If you have any questions, please contact the school at 907-835-4767. This handbook will be reviewed and discussed with every student at the beginning of the school year.

I, the Parent/Guardian of _____
(Print Student's Name)

acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to read the Valdez High School Student Handbook and discuss its contents with my student.

I will support the policies and regulations within this document. I understand that all disciplinary referrals that result in disciplinary action will become part of my child's Valdez School District student file. I will take the time to review this handbook with my student during the school year.
Please return this signed form to the VHS front office. Thank you!

Printed Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date Signed

Student Signature Page

Please return this signature page to the high school office. If you choose not to sign this page, it does not exclude you from any action, if you choose not to follow the rules.

<p>I, _____ Printed Name of Student</p> <p>have read and will abide by all Valdez City School District policies and procedures. I will review the Valdez High School Student Handbook throughout the school year. I understand that if I misplace or lose my handbook, I can receive a copy from the front office.</p> <p>In addition, I understand that all disciplinary referrals that result in disciplinary action will become part of my Valdez City School District student file.</p> <p>Please return this signed form to the VHS front office. Thank you!</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Printed Student Name</p> <hr/> <p>Student Signature Date Signed</p>	
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