



VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

Oakland Public Schools



THE SCHOOL DAY

MIDDLE SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE

<u>Regular School Day</u>		<u>Minimum Day Schedule</u>	
7:53	Student lockers/Report to Homeroom	7:53	Student lockers/Report to Period 1
8:00-8:05	Homeroom	8:00 – 8:30	Period 1
8:07-8:51	Period 1	8:33 – 9:03	Period 2
8:54-9:38	Period 2	9:06 – 9:36	Period 3
9:41-10:45	Period 3	9:39 – 10:09	Period 4
10:28-10:49	PERIOD 4A	10:12 – 10:42	Period 5
10:51-11:12	PERIOD 4B	10:45 – 11:15	Period 6
11:15 -11:36	PERIOD 5A	11:18 – 11:48	Period 7
11:38-11:59	PERIOD 5B	11:51 – 12:21	Period 8
12:02-12:23	PERIOD 6A	12:21	Bus Riders Only Dismissal
12:25-12:46	PERIOD 6B	12:28	All other students dismissal
12:49-1:33	Period 7		
1:36-2:20	Period 8		
2:20	Bus Riders Only Dismissal		
2:27	All other students dismissal		

<u>Delayed Opening Schedule</u>		<u>School Closings & Delayed Openings</u>	
9:55	Student lockers/Report to Period 1	<p>School closings will be announced on WABC - Channel 7 and on the District website. The District will also utilize its Reverse 911 notification system to alert parents of school closings. If there is inclement weather, and the Reverse 911 alert systems has not operated, parents can refer to www.oaklandschoolsnj.org to determine if schools are closed.</p> <p>On a Delayed Opening Schedule students should enter the building at 9:50. Students should be in their homeroom by 10:00.</p>	
10:00-10:30	Period 1		
10:33-11:03	Period 2		
11:06-11:36	Period 3		
11:39-12:09	Period 4		
12:12-12:42	Period 5		
12:45-1:15	Period 6		
1:18-1:48	Period 7		
1:51-2:21	Period 8		
2:21	Bus Riders Only Dismissal		
2:27	All other students dismissal		

Valley Middle School Day – Arrival and Dismissal:

Arrival

Valley Middle School opens at 7:53 a.m. Students in grade 8 who arrive before 7:53 a.m. must report to the cafeteria. Students in grade 6 and 7 who arrive before 7:53 a.m. must report to the gym. Students may not be dropped off prior to 7:40. If a student has an appointment with a teacher, guidance counselor, or administrator, they must have a pass indicating that permission and check in at the office prior to going to a classroom. At 7:53 a.m. students will be dismissed to go to their lockers if needed and report to Homeroom. Please note: Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. will not have sufficient time to adequately prepare for the school day. Students **MUST** be in Homeroom by 8:00 a.m. or be marked tardy.

Dismissal

Bus riders who are riding the bus will be dismissed at 2:20 p.m. If a bus rider is not taking the bus on any given day they will then be dismissed with the remaining students at 2:27 p.m.

There should be no students in the building after dismissal time unless:

1. They are staying with a teacher for extra help.
2. They are participating in a scheduled activity such as a club or sports activity.
3. They are required to stay for detention.

Attendance

Students cannot fully benefit from a school's educational program unless attendance is regular and uninterrupted. Therefore, we ask that families plan vacations and medical appointments during times that school is not in session. On the day(s) of absence, parents/guardians should call the Main Office and leave a message, before 8:00 A.M., to report the child's absence. Parents/guardians, who need to take a student out of school early, must sign the child out at the time of pick-up in the Main Office.

If absent, students can view their homework and class assignments on the Student/Parent Portal. Students who are seen by a doctor in relation to an illness and/or absence, are encouraged to bring in a doctor's note. Parents/guardians who anticipate prolonged absences should notify the Nurse, who will assist in the arrangement of make-up work. All work should be made up as soon as possible after returning to school. It is the students' responsibility to find out what work has been missed, and to complete this work according to the teachers' instructions. After 10 cumulative absences, the school may involve the Intervention and Referral Service Team to develop a plan to support the student's regular attendance. Students who attain 18 absences during the school year will be recorded as chronically absent.

Leaving School and Early Dismissal

If a student becomes ill in school they must see the Nurse. If a student exhibits any of the following symptoms, they are to report to the Nurse immediately: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, loss of taste or smell or body rashes. If necessary the Nurse will contact the student's parent/guardian. If a student has an appointment, he/she will be excused only into the care of a parent or guardian. For pre-arranged appointments, a student must present a note from the parent/ guardian to the office before homeroom period, stating the reason, the time, and a telephone number where the parent/guardian can be reached for verification of the request for early dismissal. Before leaving the building the student must first report to the Main Office and await the arrival of the parent/ guardian. That person must come into the office and "sign out" his/her child.

Truancy

If you are absent from school without the knowledge and permission of your parents/guardians, you are considered truant. When the school becomes aware of an unauthorized absence, this procedure will be followed:

1. Parents/Guardians are notified of a student's absence.
2. Municipal police are notified that the student did not arrive at school.
3. The Superintendent is notified of student absence.

Consequences for an unexcused absence may include but not be limited to: making up time missed after school, completing the work missed, lunch detention to complete work, after school detention, suspension of participation in after school activities (including evening socials), revocation of privilege of overnight trips, loss of participation in off campus activities (e.g., field trips). The Principal/Vice Principal will determine appropriate consequences.

Attendance Requirements for Interscholastic Athletics

Students are expected to be in school at the regularly scheduled times. Any student NOT in attendance at school due to, but not limited to, illness, suspension, or exclusion will not be allowed to participate in after-school activities the day of absence from school. (Emergency absences must be approved by a

building administrator in order for the student to participate). All VMS students/athletes are required to be entirely changed and actively participate in physical education class in order to take part in any after school activities.

Grading & Report Cards

Report card grades that students may receive are: "A," "B," "C," "D," "U." These grades mean the following:
A = Student has not only attained all objectives, but has also consistently demonstrated **Excellent** performance.

B = Student has attained all objectives and has demonstrated **Very Good** performance.

C = Student has attained most of the objectives and has demonstrated **Satisfactory** performance.

D = Student has not attained the objectives and has demonstrated **Minimal** performance.

U = Student has not attained the objectives and has demonstrated **Unsatisfactory** performance.

Letter Grade Scale:

A = 90% - 100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

U = 59% and below

Student Achievement Recognition Program

At Valley Middle School, all students are asked to work hard and be the best students they can be. Students who accept this challenge earn academic distinction by receiving the **Principal's Award**, a **Scholastic Commendation** or an **Effort Commendation**.

Principal's Award is given to any student who earns an "A" in every subject and no effort grade less than a "2".

Scholastic Commendation is awarded to any student who earns no less than a "B" in any subject and has no effort grade less than a "2".

Effort Commendation is given to any student who does not qualify for the two awards above but who has worked hard and has no effort grade less than a "2" in any subject.

Parent Portal: Reporting Student Progress

Student progress is available to parents on the Parent Portal throughout the school year except for at the end of each marking period when Parent Portal is closed due to grade submission. Quarters are approximately ten weeks long, and report cards are available on the Parent Portal at the end of those times. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to email and/or call teachers in order to work together to create an academic improvement plan. At conferences, parents and teachers have the opportunity to discuss each child's progress and to share information with each other.

Academic Requirements for Co-Curricular Programs

Students are provided the opportunity to participate in challenging and meaningful athletic and co-curricular programs. Those students who desire to participate in these after school learning experiences must accept the challenges, sacrifices and responsibilities associated with these programs. After school activities are considered an important component of the educational program being offered for Valley Middle School students.

All students participating in basketball, soccer, track teams, cheerleading, Student Council, and/or certain co-curricular activities must maintain an average of "C" in **all** academic and special area courses in order to be eligible. If a participant fails to achieve a "C" average in all subjects he/she will not be allowed to participate until their academic achievement is satisfactory. Additionally, if students are not making **satisfactory** progress in their academic subjects, **club participation may be suspended**.

Homework

Many assignments require study and research outside of class. Individual study is essential if students are to better understand the subject matter. Homework provides the student with the opportunities to

sharpen his/her knowledge, helps the student become aware of personal responsibilities, discipline, and work habits, provides help in needed skills and leads to proficiency in the subjects being studied. Assigned homework must be completed. Grades will be affected, and students may be held after school, during lunch, or requested to come in early if their homework is not completed. Since students work at different rates, it is difficult to prescribe homework in a set amount of time. Assignments will vary from class to class. Some assignments will be due the next day, and some will need to be completed over a determined period of time. During extended school breaks, it is the district's philosophy that this is family time and no homework will be assigned during these extended breaks.

Teachers will post homework assignments in the classroom and on the Student/Parent Portal. If a student misses a class, students can check the Student/Parent Portal to see what was assigned. It is recommended that all students have a study partner in each class who can share work that is missed due to illness or special program participation as well as someone who can work with them on any missed notes.

Rules and Regulations

Respect and responsibility are cornerstones of the middle school experience. Every student has a responsibility in helping to ensure a safe environment where everyone can learn. It is also the expectation that students demonstrate respect for themselves, for their environment, and for others. For these reasons, a number of school rules and regulations have been established in order to maintain safety, the learning environment for all, and overall order in the school.

Academic Integrity

Student tests, quizzes, projects, and other assessments need to accurately reflect student growth and understanding. If students are not specifically told that group work is permitted, it is expected that students do their own work and properly cite resources. Misrepresentation of the work of others as one's own work may result in disciplinary and academic consequences. This includes plagiarism from online sources and the use of artificial intelligence (AI), unless it is specifically discussed in class and the student cites the use of an AI source.

Parent Drop Off of Items

Although we encourage the students to be responsible, we understand that on occasion, an item may be forgotten. There is a drop off table outside the main door for those rare instances. These items will be distributed between classes. To preserve the flow of the day and the security of all, please use your discretion in limiting the school day interruptions.

Bicycles and Bicycle Safety

Students may ride their bicycles to school if they abide by school and state bicycle rules. Bicycles must be kept in the racks provided by the school. Bicycle locks are the students' responsibility and are not provided by the school. Bicycles are not to be ridden in school, on pedestrian walkways or on school grounds except upon arriving and departing. It is the law that everyone under the age of 17 must wear a helmet when cycling, roller-skating, in-line skating, or skateboarding. Because we value student safety, all students using these modes of transportation to go to or from school are required to wear a helmet. Parents/guardians of any student without a helmet who rides their bike on school property will be called to either bring a helmet or pick up the bike. We work in conjunction with the Oakland Police to enforce this important rule.

Dress Code

Schools are workplaces for our community's children. Just as adults dress appropriately for their work environments, students need to dress appropriately for school. All students must adhere to the district policy. The dress code can be found on the district website. Students not adhering to the dress code will be asked to change or parents/guardians will be called to bring appropriate clothing/footwear.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills will be conducted monthly to help students and staff understand the actions to take in an emergency. These drills will include fire drills, lockdown drills, evacuation drills, tornado drills, and shelter-in-place drills, as well as additional simulations to help ensure student safety during the school

day. Students will become familiar with the closest emergency exit in every classroom they attend. Should a student be in the restroom, library, or at any other location away from his/her class during a fire drill or evacuation drill, that student should exit the building immediately, locate the closest teacher and tell them their name and the name of their teacher. When the emergency bell sounds, all classes will follow the procedures they have been shown. **There should be no talking during any drills and no hesitation in leaving the building during fire or evacuation drills!**

Equal Opportunity for All Students: Reference Policy 5750

At Valley Middle School, we believe that students should receive equal and bias-free access to all school facilities, courses, programs, activities and services. This assures them maximum opportunity to achieve their potential regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, nationality, place of residence within the District, socioeconomic status, or disability. We believe in a positive, wholesome, and inclusive school community that ensures each child's right to learn and honors their varied learning styles.

Students must also respect the rights of other children and not impede their ability in pursuing an education. Staff and students are expected to maintain high standards of respect between students and to confront any and all incidents where one student interferes with the learning of another.

Health Services

Students should come to school physically well and be able to participate in class for the entire day. If a student becomes ill during the day, he/she must go to the Health Office with a pass filled out by the classroom teacher. If the nurse is not available, the student is to go to the Main Office. If a student is too ill to continue the day, a parent or designated person will be contacted by telephone. A parent or designated person must come to the Main Office to sign-out the student who is being excused because of illness.

Prescriptions and Medications

All prescriptions and medications must be brought to school by a parent/guardian. All medication must be in the original container and accompanied by a note from your parent/guardian authorizing appropriate school personnel to dispense the medicine. Any student who, because of illness/injury, cannot participate in Physical Education must bring a note from his/her parents to the nurse during homeroom period. Restrictions for more than a week require a doctor's note.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

All students are entitled to a safe school environment where they can focus on their social, emotional, and academic growth. All incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying should be reported to a building administrator immediately as it will not be tolerated in our school community. If an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is reported to the administration or school personnel, the school Anti-bullying Specialist will investigate the complaint and recommend appropriate actions to be taken by the administration.

The anti-bullying specialists for Valley Middle School are:

Ms. Binder
Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Sinclair

Lockers

Valley Middle School has lockers for each student. Lockers are school property and they are lent to students for safekeeping of books, supplies and personal belongings.

1. Locker combinations should never be given to another student.
2. Before leaving their locker, **students should always check to see that they are tightly closed and locked.**
3. Careful planning will enable students to get the necessary materials for classes from their lockers. **A student may not be late for class due to locker visits!**
4. Opening another student's locker is prohibited.
5. Students are expected to take care of their lockers.

6. Students will be responsible for keeping their lockers free of graffiti and other markings. No student is to write on or mark up any locker.
7. Lockers are not to be kicked or hit to open or close since these actions damage the lockers. If students are having difficulties with their locker, they should contact the Main Office. Students should keep their lockers clean. There will be locker checks and locker cleanups from time to time.
8. Only locks provided by the school are permitted.
9. Students are not permitted to decorate the outside of any locker.
10. It is highly recommended that items of value are not brought to school but if necessary, it is the student's responsibility to lock their locker.

Having the use of a locker is a privilege, which will be taken away if it is misused or abused, or if any of the above rules are violated.

School lockers remain the property of the district even when used by pupils. Lockers are subject to an administrative search in the interest of school safety, sanitation, discipline, enforcement of school regulations and to search by law enforcement officials on presentation of a proper warrant.

A pupil's person and possessions may be searched by a school official provided that the official has reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will turn up evidence that the pupil has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school

Student Substance Abuse

For the purpose of this Policy, "smoking" means the burning of, inhaling from, exhaling the smoke from, or the possession of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other matter or substance which contains tobacco or any other matter that can be smoked, or the inhaling or exhaling of smoke or vapor from an electronic smoking device pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:3D-57. For the purpose of this Policy, "smoking" also includes the use of smokeless tobacco and snuff. Staff is trained to identify signs of substance use and report any suspicions to the school nurse and administration. If a student is suspected to be under the influence, the parent/guardian will be notified and the appropriate process will be followed as outlined in Policy 5530 to ensure student and school safety.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

While cell phones may be brought to school, they may only be used before 8 A.M. or after student dismissal. It is strongly recommended that students leave their cell phones, Apple Watches, or any other electronic devices in their lockers. If a student chooses to carry their cell phone with them during the school day, it must be turned off and not visible. If a student needs to communicate with his or her parent/guardian during the school day, he or she may use the phone in the Main Office. Likewise, parents/guardians who need to communicate with their child during the day should contact the Main Office and a message will be sent to the child. If a student has a cell phone or other electronic device including an Apple Watch on him or her during the school day, it will be taken away and turned in to the Vice Principal. Students are obligated to report to the Main Office at the end of the day to retrieve their cell phones or electronic devices. Disciplinary action will be at the discretion of administration. Other personal electronic devices such as MP3 players and personal computers should not be brought to school without special permission from the administration.

Bus Regulations and Safety

Use of the school bus is to provide safe transportation to and from school for students who live beyond a certain distance from the school and for school sanctioned field trips. Safety is a most important consideration in devising rules of behavior for students using the school bus. Violation of these rules will result in the suspension of the student's privilege to use the bus.

- The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and students are bound to obey directions given by the driver. While waiting at the bus stop, students will act in an orderly fashion. Playing games in the street is dangerous and is prohibited. Students should not approach the bus until it is completely stopped and the entrance doors are fully opened.
- Prior to loading, students should form a line without any pushing or shoving. When the bus door is completely open, students should proceed directly to their assigned seats, be seated, put on a seat

belt and remain seated until the bus is completely stopped at the school or at the student's assigned bus stop.

- Appropriate behavior on the school bus does not include shouting, using abusive language, smoking, vaping, possessing items such as snow, ice, or large sports equipment. Placing arms and heads outside the windows, dropping or throwing items from the bus, harassing or bullying students and engaging in other unreasonable behavior is also prohibited. Deliberate damage to the school bus will not be tolerated and will also result in disciplinary action and may result in removal from the bus.
- Only students who are authorized to ride the school bus may do so and they are only permitted to ride the bus they are assigned to. Requirements under the Board of Education's insurance policy do not permit exceptions to this rule.

Code Of Conduct

Each student at Valley Middle is a valued member of the school community and is encouraged to be an active participant in the educational process. Rules for student behavior at school and in the classroom have been established to protect the rights, safety and well being of all students and to further the academic achievement of each student. All students at VMS are expected to adhere to these rules.

1. Students are expected to be prepared for class, having with them their books, completed assignments, pens and pencils, fully charged Chromebook, and any other items required for each class.
2. When students are absent from class, it is their responsibility to find out what the classwork has been and to complete that work according to the teacher's instructions. Assignments will be listed on the classroom board and in the Student/Parent Portal.
3. Students in our school consistently demonstrate respect for their peers, their teachers and other adult personnel. Students understand that rude, disrespectful behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
4. Students arrive to each class **on time**.
5. Students **walk**, not run, in the hallways. Students must keep their hands to themselves at all times to ensure safety.
6. Students respect and uphold the rights of others. Students refrain from fighting, stealing, smoking, vaping or using abusive language. Students in our school do not engage in unsafe or destructive activities, which might cause injury. This applies in school, on school grounds, on field trips and during all school related activities.
7. Students in our school respect school property, the property of others, and one's own belongings at all times.
8. Students in our school who participate in after-school activities, clubs, field trips, evening programs and sporting events, conduct themselves in the same respectful, well-disciplined manner in which they behave during the school day. If a student behaves inappropriately, he/she may be excluded from after school/evening activities or field trips.
9. Students in our school do not chew gum or eat candy during the school day. Students must not sell candy, or any other items, in school without permission.
10. Students in our school understand that their parents will be notified if they do not consistently behave appropriately and follow the school Rules for Conduct.
11. The lunchtime in the cafeteria is an extension of our school day. All Code of Conduct Rules apply including students must be respectful to all students and adults at all times.

Those students who choose not to comply with the VMS Code of Conduct can expect to be required to attend Teacher Detention(s), Lunch Detention(s), After School Detention(s) and may have "points" applied to their record. (See below)

Students who repeatedly disregard the VMS Code of Conduct should understand that privileges, such as extra-curricular events/trips, might be taken away. All school consequences are intended to guide student behavior in a positive direction.

Valley Middle School has a progressive point system that begins in sixth grade. This point system will be in effect from the beginning of the sixth grade school year through eighth grade graduation. Parents/guardians will be notified by mail when students have accrued 5 points. At 10 points, a meeting will be scheduled consisting of the Principal, Vice-Principal, Counselor, Child Study Team member (if

applicable), parent, and student. When 15 points are accumulated, student participation in the overnight trips, and other extra-curricular activities will be discussed by the Principal and Superintendent.

The Principal and / or Vice Principal will assign all points:

1. One (1) point for Code of Conduct violations for the first incident. Repeat infractions may result in more than 1 point for the incident. These include but are not limited to:
 - Using or having phone or other electronic device visible
 - Removal from class
 - Late to school/class
 - Teacher assigned detentions
2. Two (2) points for the following Code of Conduct violations:
 - Disrespect to faculty, staff, school property or grounds
 - Inappropriate bus behavior
3. Three (3) points for In-School Suspension.
4. Five (5) points for (1) day Out of School Suspension
5. Six (6) points for two (2) days Out of school Suspension
6. Seven (7) points for three (3) days Out of School Suspension
7. Eight (8) points for four (4) days Out of School Suspension

Any confirmed HIB incident will follow the suspension point system.

If a student reaches fifteen (15) points, they will have the opportunity to reduce their total number of points by attending a scheduled meeting with their parents/guardians and the Principal or Vice Principal, where a plan of action will be discussed.

ABRIDGED 1:1 HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS

Overview

The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) believes that the use of educational technology services and access to information have become an integral part of the educational initiative for all of its students. It is through this belief that the District has undergone great strides to provide every student with the advantage of ubiquitous access to information and educational technologies.

The overall goal of the District's Middle School 1:1 Chromebook is to prepare students for high school and their future in a global society by enabling teachers to provide a learning environment where they facilitate:

- Student empowerment and engagement*
- Student-centered learning opportunities*
- Student accountability and responsibility*

With the great learning opportunities that this provides comes a responsibility for the District, parent/guardian, and student to ensure a safe and productive experience. This handbook will inform parents/guardians and students of procedures and guidelines for the District's 1:1 Chromebook. As the District moves forward with the Middle School 1:1 Chromebook, this document may change. A reasonable effort will be made to notify parents/guardians and students that changes have taken place with regards to this handbook, and it is the expectation that the procedures and guidelines set forth in future revisions will be adhered to.

Liability

It is important that the parent/guardian and student ensure the return of the Chromebook and all provided accessories (cases, power cords, etc.) at the end of each school year or before withdrawal from school.

Chromebook Rules & Guidelines

The rules and guidelines are provided here so that students and their parents/guardians are aware of the responsibilities of all parties involved when the students accept a District-owned device. The following is summarized from the District's Acceptable Use Policy. All rules and guidelines are in effect before, during, and after school hours, and wherever the Chromebook is being used (on or off school campus). These are the rules and guidelines.

Acceptable Use Procedures

General Guidelines • All use of technology use must:

- Support learning
- Follow local, state, and federal laws
- Be school appropriate

Inappropriate Content • Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to, explicit or implicit references to:

- Alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Violence
- Gangs

- Obscene language or nudity
- Bullying, intimidation, or harassment
- Discriminatory or prejudicial behavior
- Gambling
- Pornographic material
- Weapons/Weapon related activity

Security Guidelines •

- Do not share username or password information with anyone except your parent/guardian
- Do not develop initiatives or implement methods that harass others, hack systems, bring in viruses, or change others' files
- Follow Internet safety guidelines at all times

Expectation of Use • Chromebooks are intended for use at school each day. It is expected that students:

- Bring their Chromebooks to school every day
- Charge their Chromebook each night
- Carry their Chromebook in the District-provided protective case at all times
- Use their Chromebook in the District-provided protective case during school and at home
- Follow each teacher's rules and expectations regarding Chromebook use in the classroom
- Will be respectful of their peer's work and devices

Students who forget their Chromebook or have a drained battery may be required to complete assignments using alternative methods as determined by the teacher if a loaner is not available.

Chromebook Use and Care

Classroom Routines • Your teachers will provide guidance with appropriate use of the Chromebook.

- Center the Chromebook on the desk
- Use the Chromebook in the District-provided protective case
- Keep sound muted unless otherwise instructed
- Close the screen of the Chromebook before standing up or moving, and transporting the Chromebook from one spot to another
- Take care not to close the Chromebook on papers or other objects
- Never** leave the Chromebook unattended
- Never** grab and carry the Chromebook by the screen/display
- Never** push on the Chromebook screen/display

Saving Data / Workflow • Each student will have access to Google Drive through their school-provided Google account. It is the expectation that each student:

- Will use Google Drive to save school-related files
- Understand that all District rules and guidelines apply to any storage device attached to a school-provided Chromebook.

- Understand that the school-provided Chromebook is the property of The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS), and should not contain personal files
- All Google Accounts will be deleted as students transfer out of The Oakland Public Schools or graduate from 8th grade.

Hallways / Common Areas •

- Never leave the Chromebook unattended or unsecured for any reason.
- Keep the Chromebook in its case at all times to prevent bumping and accidental damage
- Zip the case completely before carrying the Chromebook
- Do not store additional materials or supplies inside the Chromebook case**
- Carry by the handle or shoulder strap when walking through the hallways

Apps • The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) understands that there may be instances when additional apps may be used to enhance the educational process. With that stated, it is understood that:

- District-provided apps will not be altered in any way
- Students are not able to install apps on the District-provided Chromebook as a result of the restriction set in the Google domain

If students find a way to bypass the restriction set in the Google domain, they will be subject to consequences based on our Code of Conduct.

Home Use • Ensure care of the Chromebook and its use at all times:

- Use the Chromebook in a common room in the home
- Parents / Guardians - ask to see what your child(ren) is(are) working on with their District-provided Chromebook
- Store the Chromebook on a table or desk - Never on the floor
- Protect the Chromebook from extreme hot or cold temperatures, food and drinks, small children, and pets

Traveling • Take the following precautions when traveling with the Chromebook to help ensure that it is not lost, stolen, or damaged:

- Do not leave the Chromebook in a vehicle
- Carry the case by the handle/shoulder strap when transporting your Chromebook
- If threatened for the Chromebook, give it up and report the theft to school administration and the police as soon as possible
- Chromebooks are not allowed on school-sponsored field trips unless approved by the sponsoring teacher

Personalization • The Chromebook and respective accessories are the property of The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS). Students are **prohibited** from:

- Removing District identification tags or barcodes
- Removing or switching keys
- Placing stickers** or otherwise marking the Chromebook or accessories in any way

Cleaning • Use the Chromebook with clean hands and avoid touching the screen.

- Do not insert foreign objects (ex. paper clips, pencils, pens, etc.) into the Chromebook
- Do not use Windex or other cleaning solutions on the surface or screen
- Wipe surfaces with a white vinegar & water mixture using a damp, clean soft cloth
- Do not spray the mixture directly on the device

Listening to and/or Watching Media

At School • Listening to and/or watching media on your Chromebook is only allowed during school hours with the permission from the teacher. It is expected that students will use headphones when listening to and/or watching media on their Chromebooks.

At Home • Listening to and/or watching media on your Chromebook at home is allowed with permission from parents/guardians.

Games

At School • Gaming is not allowed on the Chromebooks. Most games are blocked by the District with the exception of those that directly support education.

At Home • The same safety filters that are enforced in school are also applied at home as a result of our Google domain and GoGuardian.

Messaging

At School • Messaging on the Chromebook is prohibited during school hours unless permission is granted from the classroom teacher. Permission will be given only for messaging that is useful in completing a school assignment. All communication must be related to the school assignment and have educational purposes.

At Home • Messaging on the Chromebook is allowed at home with permission from the parent/guardian. It is expected that the content of these messages is school appropriate.

Printing

Purpose • The District encourages students and teachers to conserve paper and limit the amount of printing as much as possible. It is also understood that some assignments will need to be submitted via hard copy (paper) to the teachers. It is the responsibility of the student to plan for and come to class prepared with the required format for submitted work.

At Home • Students are allowed to connect to printers at home.

Desktop Backgrounds & Screensavers

Considerations • Default settings have been set and locked by the District.

Inappropriate media may not be used as a desktop background. This includes guns, weapons, pornographic material, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, or gang-related symbols.

Bypassing District settings will result in consequences based on our Code of Conduct.

Troubleshooting & Loaners

General Procedure • When students experience trouble with the Chromebook, they should follow the steps outlined below:

- Always try restarting the Chromebook as the first step in troubleshooting
- Student may ask a teacher if the teacher is available to help for this purpose

- Students are reminded to not waste too much time troubleshooting so they do not miss too much class time

If the issue is not resolved, the student should contact the Main Office. The Main Office is open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

If necessary, the student will receive a loaner Chromebook to return to class. The student must sign out the loaner device. When the student's original Chromebook is ready to be picked up, the student will be notified. It is the responsibility of the student to return the loaner device in the same condition it was received.

Network Access & Filtering

All Internet traffic for the students' Chromebooks will be filtered to block inappropriate or objectionable material. Internet traffic at school is filtered at three levels through the District's Internal firewall, the Google domain, and GoGuardian. Gaggle monitors students' Google accounts for inappropriate or objectionable material. All Internet traffic when the student is away from school will be filtered using the District's Google domain and GoGuardian.

It is the responsibility of the user and parent/guardian to follow guidelines for appropriate use of the Chromebook and the access that it provides to the Internet, as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy.

Students are to use their The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) provided Google account and password, which will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Attempting to disable or bypass District Internet filters and firewall, including using or attempting to use proxies to access sites that would otherwise be restricted, is not permitted and will result in consequences based on our Code of Conduct.

Student use of the Internet may be monitored at school. Although the Google domain and GoGuardian filtering services are in place, it is suggested that the parent/guardian monitor Chromebook use (including the Internet) at home.

Students are allowed to connect to wifi networks at home and other public locations. All Internet traffic at these locations will be filtered using the District's Google domain and GoGuardian.

Only The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) devices are allowed access on the District network. Personal devices are not allowed on the network.

Use proper etiquette when using the Internet:

- Never reveal personal information about yourself or anyone else.
- Do not publish student pictures or names on any website.
- If you see anything dangerous or inappropriate, tell a teacher or parent/guardian immediately.

Security and Privacy

As per the Anti-Big Brother Act (N.J.S.A. 18A:36-39 (P.L. 2013, c. 44)), you are hereby notified that school-issued electronic devices have the ability to record or collect information on user's activity, both online and offline. The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) will not use any of these capabilities in a manner that would violate the privacy rights of a student or individual residing with the student.

User Data • All files stored on The Oakland Public Schools (TOPS) Chromebook or network are the property of the District and are subject to regular review and monitoring for responsible use. Internet history checks may occur at the discretion of the District Administration.

Monitoring • Building and District administration may search computers for inappropriate material if they have reasonable suspicion of its existence. Teachers will have the ability to check and monitor student activities while in their class to assure students remain on task. While off school campus, parent/guardian monitoring is highly recommended.

Restrictions • Restrictions on the network and the Chromebook will block certain functions all in the name of safety. Any attempt to bypass these restrictions, either on campus or off, will be seen as a violation of these rules and will result in consequences based on our Code of Conduct.

Damaged, Lost, and Stolen Equipment

Repairs • Unexpected problems may occur with the Chromebooks that are not the fault of the user. The Technology Coordinator, along with the building's respective technology staff, will assist students with resolving these issues. District-owned Chromebooks should never be taken to an outside computer service for any type of repairs or maintenance. Taking a Chromebook to an outside vendor will result in loss of Chromebook privileges.

Loaner Chromebooks • Temporary replacement Chromebooks (loaners) are available so learning is not disrupted by the repair process. Students are responsible for the care of the loaner Chromebook while it is issued to them. The same rules and guidelines apply to loaner Chromebooks.

Reporting • Students are responsible for the Chromebook and all accessories they have been issued. Chromebooks in need of repair must be reported to the Valley Middle School Main Office as soon as possible (same day or next day they are in school). *Failure to report damage may result in consequences based on our Code of Conduct.*

Lost Equipment • The student or parent/guardian must report lost equipment to the school immediately. Students and their parents/guardians will be financially responsible for the loss of the protective carrying case.

Stolen Equipment • If equipment is stolen, a police report must be filed and a copy of the report must be provided to the school by the student or parent/guardian.

The Oakland Public Schools and Valley Middle School work together to promote wellness:

Habits of Mind

(After Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick, *Habits of Mind: A Developmental Series*, Copyright 2000)

The Habits of Mind are an identified set of 16 problem solving, life related skills, necessary to effectively operate in society and promote strategic reasoning, insightfulness, perseverance, creativity and craftsmanship. The understanding and application of these 16 Habits of Mind serve to provide the individual with skills to work through real life situations that equip that person to respond using awareness (cues), thought, and intentional strategy in order to gain a positive outcome.

1. ***Persisting***: Sticking to task at hand; Follow through to completion; Can and do remain focused.
2. ***Managing Impulsivity***: Take time to consider options; Think before speaking or acting; Remain calm when stressed or challenged; Thoughtful and considerate of others; Proceed carefully.
3. ***Listening with Understanding and Empathy***: Pay attention to and do not dismiss another person's thoughts, feeling and ideas; Seek to put myself in the other person's shoes; Tell others when I can relate to what they are expressing; Hold thoughts at a distance in order to respect another person's point of view and feelings.
4. ***Thinking Flexibly***: Able to change perspective; Consider the input of others; Generate alternatives, Weigh options.
5. ***Thinking about Thinking (Metacognition)***: Being aware of own thoughts, feelings, intentions and actions; Knowing what I do and say affects others; Willing to consider the impact of choices on myself and others.
6. ***Striving for Accuracy***: Check for errors; Measure at least twice; Nurture a desire for exactness, fidelity & craftsmanship.
7. ***Questioning and Posing Problems***: Ask myself, "How do I know?"; develop a questioning attitude; Consider what information is needed, choose strategies to get that information; Consider the obstacles needed to resolve.
8. ***Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations***: Use what is learned; Consider prior knowledge and experience; Apply knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.
9. ***Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision***: Strive to be clear when speaking and writing; Strive to be accurate when speaking and writing; Avoid generalizations, distortions, minimizations and deletions when speaking, and writing.
10. ***Gathering Data through All Senses***: Stop to observe what I see; Listen to what I hear; Take note of what I smell; Taste what I am eating; Feel what I am touching.
11. ***Creating, Imagining, Innovating***: Think about how something might be done differently from the "norm"; Propose new ideas; Strive for originality; Consider novel suggestions others might make.
12. ***Responding with Wonderment and Awe***: Intrigued by the world's beauty, nature's power and vastness for the universe; Have regard for what is awe-inspiring and can touch my heart; Open to the little and big surprises in life I see others and myself.
13. ***Taking Responsible Risks***: Willing to try something new and different' Consider doing things that are safe and sane even though new to me; Face fear of making mistakes or of coming up short and don't let this stop me.

14. ***Finding Humor:*** Willing to laugh appropriately; Look for the whimsical, absurd, ironic and unexpected in life; Laugh at myself when I can.
15. ***Thinking Interdependently:*** Willing to work with others and welcome their input and perspective; Abide by decisions the work group makes even if I disagree somewhat; Willing to learn from others in reciprocal situations.
16. ***Remaining Open to Continuous Learning:*** Open to new experiences to learn from; Proud and humble enough to admit when don't know; Welcome new information on all subjects.