

Van Gorder



Elementary School

FAMILY AND STUDENT HANDBOOK



2026-2027

WELCOME TO VAN GORDER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We are so excited for you to be attending Van Gorder Elementary for the 2026-2027 school year. Our school prides itself on partnering with families to provide an inclusive and safe learning environment where all students can learn.

This handbook is a way of communicating important information about our school. It has been compiled to serve as a convenient reference and to assist you in answering questions about school policies and expectations.

As a staff, we believe schools are for children; that our purpose as educators is to create an environment necessary for every child's academic and social growth.

Your questions, concerns, and suggestions are always welcome. We look forward to working in partnership with you this year!

Mrs. Bruemmer and Ms. Manor

VAN GORDER ELEMENTARY OFFICE DIRECTORY

(775) 425-7722

Rebecca Bruemmer, Principal
Monique Manor, Assistant Principal
April Luke, Administrative Secretary
Kim Finch, Clerk
Clinical Aide, Jessica Gregory
Candyce Cardona, Counselor
Nurse- Rachel Niethold
Kitchen Manger, Lisa Contos



GENERAL INFORMATION

Van Gorder Office
School Hours: 9:25 – 3:30
Wednesday Early Release 2:45

Main Phone Number: (775) 425-7722. 24 hour voice mail

Phone Hours: 8:30 – 4:00 Monday through Friday

Students are expected to arrive at school on time and no earlier than 9:15am, as supervision is not available until 9:15am.

Please check in at the office with a current and valid ID for the following reasons:

- **If your child is late to school**
- **If you are picking your child up early from school**
- **If you are attending a field trip or volunteering in the classroom**

**** Students will only be released from class when a parent has checked them out with the office ****



We, the staff, students, and families of Van Gorder Elementary School, will create a learning community that promotes high academic achievement, personal success, moral responsibility, and the fulfillment of higher educational goals for 100% of our students. We strive to teach and our students strive to learn!



As an exemplary school in the Washoe County School District, Van Gorder will be the highest-achieving elementary school in the state of Nevada by providing a safe, engaging, and rigorous environment, which will ensure that all students reach their full potential and excel on their educational journey.

EXPECTATIONS

HAVE RESPECT

ACT RESPONSIBLY

WORK HARD

KEEP HIGH EXPECTATIONS

STAY SAFE



We believe ALL children have the potential to achieve at a high level. ALL children CAN and DO learn given high expectations, grade level curricula, and appropriate supports.

We believe ALL teachers guide students to reach their highest potential by fostering relationships, maintaining high expectations, modeling a growth-mindset, and teaching students to think, solve, and produce grade level work.

We believe ALL families want what is best for their children and are necessary partners in guiding students to reach their highest potential. All families can be empowered to engage in honest conversations and positive interactions as integral members of the school community.

We believe our community is a critical stakeholder who partners with school staff and families in recognizing the importance of student success, modeling successful citizenship, and developing future leaders.





Van Gorder

Guest Expectations

At Van Gorder Elementary School, we are committed to maintaining a professional and respectful environment for our students, staff, and visitors. We kindly ask that all parents and guardians conduct themselves with the same respect and courtesy that you would expect in any professional setting. **Please be aware that foul language, name-calling, or demanding behavior will not be tolerated.** If such behavior occurs, you will be invited to leave the premises immediately. To ensure we can address your concerns in an organized and effective manner, we encourage you to schedule appointments with our staff. Just as in doctors' or lawyers' offices, this allows us to give you our full attention and support in a structured and professional manner. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us create a positive and respectful school environment for everyone.

All Visitors and Volunteers to Van Gorder must check in and sign in at the front office. Any person who wishes to enter the building beyond the single point of entry, must submit a volunteer application through volunteer services online application system. Volunteer applications can take up to 10 business days to process. Final approval and/or assignment of volunteer opportunity shall lie with the school principal or as appropriate, the volunteer services department.

<https://www.washoeschools.net/Domain/91f>

https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/1501_Reg-Volunteers-v1.pdf

https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/1506-Reg-Visitors-v3.pdf

STUDENT CELL PHONE POLICY

All student cell phones that are brought to school will be required to be off and turned in to their teachers. Teachers will store phones in a safe location in the classroom. At the end of the day cell phones will be given back to students. Electronic devices, such as smart watches, must be put on quiet hours during the school day.

All communication between parents and students during the school day will need to go through the office.

Cell phones should be clearly labeled with the student's name.

Teachers will provide reminders to turn phones in for the day. If students do not comply with requests from teachers their cell phone will be held in the office until a parent can come pick it up.

Helpful tips and information about children and cell phone usage include the following:

- Consider a child's maturity and responsibility levels before giving him or her a cell phone
- Monitor their phones by randomly checking text messages and other phone content regularly
- Require your children to provide you passwords to all apps they use
- Use parental controls on the phone and apps
- Be your child's social media friend to keep tabs on what is being posted
- Educate yourself on the latest apps
- Limit phone usage for at least one hour prior to bedtime. Remove the phone from your child's bedroom to prevent the temptation to be on the phone/device during the night.
- -Be honest and let your children know that you will be holding them accountable for their actions on their phone from the beginning so there are no surprises.
- Communicate openly with your children about the risks of cell phone usage to keep them safe from cyberbullying, child trafficking, and putting content out to the internet that can never be retrieved.

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:052a0b19-3d56-4b54-a7b0-0fc8e2296de3?viewer%21megaVerb=group-discover>



ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

- Students may arrive between 9:15 and 9:30. Do not arrive any earlier.
- Walkers can walk along sidewalks and enter the gates at either D Hall or C Hall (red x). Students walk immediately into the building. **Parents are not allowed in the building unless they go through the office and get a visitor badge.**
- Drivers will drop off at the designated Kiss and Drop loop only. Do not park and drop off students in the kiss and drop parking lot or in the front parking lot.
- Drivers, do not get out of the car in the drop off/pick up line.
- Students must exit and enter their car from the right side only.
- Do not park in the Day Care/Bus Drop Off Zone.



ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Dismissal

- Students will be dismissed at 3:30
- Do not arrive earlier than the 3:30 pick-up time to prevent congestion.
- Drivers, place a large paper sign with your child's grade and name to put on the car dash to aid in faster pick up
- Drivers, pull as far forward as possible and have your child walk up to meet you
- Children will not be allowed to walk across traffic to the parking lot. They must use the crosswalk.
- PK and Kinder Families will receive explicit directions from their teachers.



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is extremely important and is a focus at Van Gorder Elementary. The state of Nevada tracks student attendance, and Van Gorder is held accountable for students attending school. Aside from state reporting, students need to learn the life skill of arriving on time to school every day.

If your child is absent from school, the school must receive notification within three school days after their return, or the absence will be deemed unexcused.

Please be aware that ten (10) consecutive days absent without any contact with the school will cause automatic withdrawal from Van Gorder ES. Twenty (20) consecutive days absent, with or without contact with the school, will cause automatic withdrawal from Van Gorder ES.

Please call the office to report student absences. **(775)425-7722** or submit an absence request on Infinite Campus.

If students miss more than 10% of school days, they are considered Chronically Absent which may have significant impact on academic growth and likelihood of on-time graduation.

Please arrange for appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

- We are proud to partner with the City of Sparks Kids Konnection to provide before and after school care for families.
- For enrollment and additional information, please visit [www.https://bgctm.org/programs/before-after-school-programs/](https://bgctm.org/programs/before-after-school-programs/)

Program Details:

- Kid Konnection is held in the multi-purpose room at the school site on school days, Monday-Friday. The program runs from 7:00 am until 15 minutes before school begins, and from the time schools are dismissed to 6:00 pm after school.



EFFECTIVE HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We at Van Gorder Elementary believe effective home/school communication is essential for a successful school experience. We value parents' vital role in supporting children's academic success at school. Our teachers and staff strive to maintain a positive school climate where all students can learn and feel safe at school.

When working with children, parents may have questions or concerns and students may encounter conflict. We want to work together to solve issues that may arise in a positive and timely manner. Therefore, we have developed the following guidelines to ensure effective communication between home and school, and we appreciate your cooperation.

Be Proactive

If you have a question or concern, be proactive and ask the teacher for an appropriate conference time or email your question.

Start with the Teacher

If you have a concern, please bring it to the attention of the teacher right away so it can be addressed. We encourage communication between families and teachers. If you would like to schedule an in-person meeting with a teacher, please be sure to let the teacher know you would like to meet. Teacher meetings are scheduled before and after school hours.



EFFECTIVE HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Keep Class Dojo Positive

At Van Gorder, we use Class Dojo to share learning experiences, provide information, update parents about events, and share exciting things happening. Please remember that messages on Class Dojo need to stay positive and focus on creating a positive culture.

Misuse in Dojo will result in being removed from the school account.



ClassDojo

Time-Sensitive Messages for Teachers

If you have an urgent or time-sensitive matter that needs to be communicated to the teacher during the instructional day, please call the school office and leave a message with the office staff.

Please note that to avoid interrupting instruction, only messages deemed extremely urgent by the administration will be delivered during instructional time.

Contacting Administration

Van Gorder administrators are committed to creating a positive school climate where all students can learn and grow academically. We believe all parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them. The administration will ask that you first attempt to resolve the concern with the classroom teacher. However, the administration is happy to meet with parents to discuss any questions or concerns. **Administration does not receive Dojo messages in a timely fashion. Your best communication tool is a phone call or email.**

To schedule an appointment with Mrs. Bruemmer or Ms. Manor, please call **(775) 425-7722**.

EFFECTIVE HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Communication from Administration

The administration will communicate in various ways to ensure the Van Gorder community is up to date with all important information.

- Van Gorder Elementary Website
- ClassDojo
- Connect-Ed

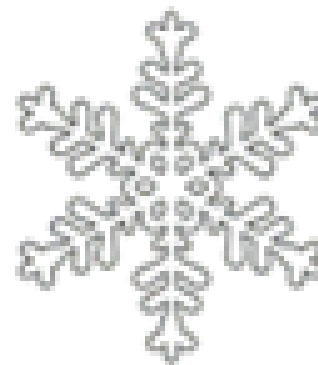
Connect-Ed

Connect-Ed is the school's and district's communication system. The system will make phone calls to contacts listed in Infinite Campus each day for absences. Parents will be notified by phone of upcoming events and important district information. School delays and closures will be announced via Connect-Ed. It is important that the school have your most recent phone numbers so the system can make its calls. Please notify the office of any changes in phone numbers and we can make sure the corrections are in the phone system.

Snow/Smoke Days

Hotline (Parent Line) 6:00 am

(775) 334-8373



Washoe County School District Website

<https://www.washoeschools.net>

Local News Channels



****If the school has a delayed start, all morning programs are cancelled. ****

E-MAIL & INTERNET

The Washoe County School District establishes protocols related to the issuing and use of e-mail and e-mail accounts by students in the Washoe County School District.

https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/5007-Reg-Student_Email-v3_FINAL.pdf

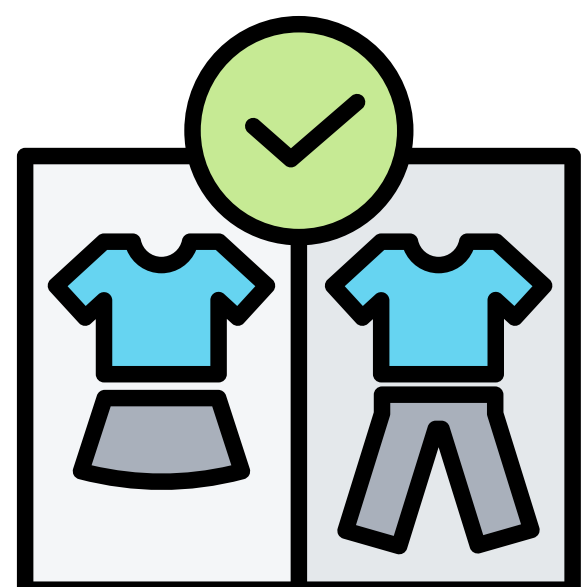
https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/7211-Reg-RUA_Internet_Safety-v4.pdf

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFO.

It is extremely important for the school to have a current home and emergency telephone numbers listed in Infinite Campus, as well as your current address, so that you may be notified in case of an accident, illness, or emergency. If this information changes throughout the year, please inform the office as soon as possible.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/5102_Reg-Dress_Code-v1.1.pdf



HOMEWORK

Some teachers may assign projects to be completed at home. Additional assignments may be assigned to meet student needs, focus on special projects, or complete make-up work. The purpose of homework is to practice and maintain previously learned skills from the classroom. Additionally, homework builds responsibility, develops study habits, and promotes adult involvement in the child's education. Along with regular homework, your child will be required to read on average 15 minutes per night in the primary grades and at least 20 minutes per night in the intermediate grades seven days per week.

Daily Average Per Grade Level

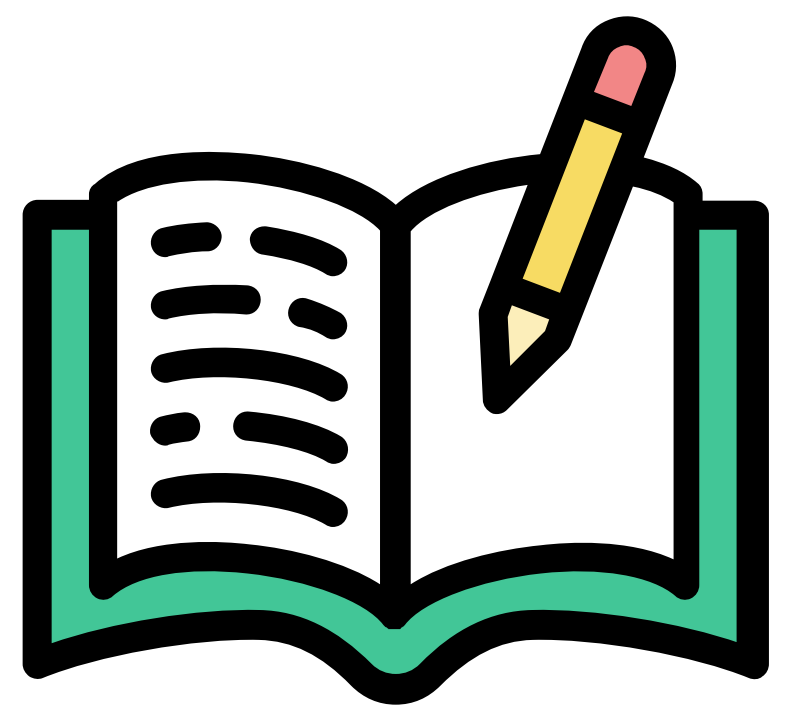
Kindergarten 5-10 Minutes

1st Grade 10-15 Minutes

2nd Grade 20 Minutes

3rd Grade 30 Minutes

4-5th Grade 40 Minutes



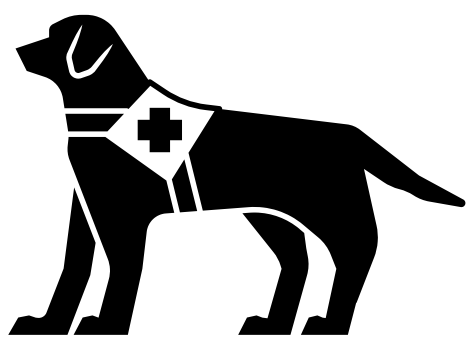
LOST AND FOUND

Children are sometimes inclined to lose personal belongings at school. Please mark all items clearly with your child's first initial and last name. Clearly labeling your child's belongings will help us to return items quickly. Students can claim lost items by checking the Lost and Found located in the lunchroom. Small items like money, purses, jewelry, glasses, keys, and cell phones can be claimed in the school office. The accumulated unclaimed clothing and other items will be donated to local charities throughout the year.

MEDICATION



Parents must contact the school and sign a legal release form if a child is well enough to be in school but requires medication during the school day. Medications must be in the original prescribed container and must be kept in the health office. Please do not send over-the-counter medication with your child. Under no circumstances is the school allowed to administer medication to a student without a prescription.



SERVICE ANIMALS

The Washoe County School District established the guidelines related to the use of service animals on the properties of and at the activities of the Washoe County School District. NO family pets are allowed on school grounds.

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CELEBRATIONS AND BIRTHDAYS

School-wide celebrations for students in grades PK – 5 may be held to recognize special holidays/events related appropriately to instruction. Details of school-wide celebrations will be announced during the year. Parents may be asked to assist teachers with special preparations. Please do NOT send in family sized bags of chips for individual students to share at lunch.

Birthday Celebrations - Prior to celebrating your child's birthday at school, please contact the classroom teacher. Classroom instructional time is not to be used for birthday celebrations. If the classroom teacher agrees, it is required that all food items be prepackaged (not homemade), and it is recommended that items be individually wrapped. The classroom teacher will also check for student allergies prior to handing out any treats. Treats may only be served on designated TREAT days.



SAFE AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Washoe County School District seeks to create a safe and respectful learning environment free from race discrimination, bullying, and cyber bullying in order for students to achieve success.

Ways you can help

- “ Read with your children every night.
- “ Stay in contact with your child’s teacher.
- “ Ensure your children arrive to school on time each day.
- “ Get involved in school activities with your children.
- “ Remind students not to bring toys or personal items to school.
- “ Do not send students to school before 9:15 am.
- “ Remind your children to ask an adult for help when trying to solve problems.
- “ Remind your children to keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- “ Remind your children to report any accidents or injuries to the office immediately.

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PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING



This administrative procedure shall describe and define protocols related to plagiarism and cheating.

https://www.wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_procedures/6642%20Admin%20Proc%20-%20Plagiarism%20and%20Cheating%20V4%205.16.24.pdf

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS & BEHAVIOR

The Van Gorder philosophy is to provide a challenging academic program in a safe nurturing environment. Classroom management is approached from a belief that teachers use skills or concepts to plan and maintain a learning environment in which students learn decision making skills needed to be responsible for their own learning and behavior.

At Van Gorder Elementary School, student discipline is dealt with through positive incentives and empowering students to solve problems through teacher facilitation. Students are taught the expectation that Van Gorder Students are **HAWKS** who Have respect, Act responsibly, Work hard, Keep high expectations, and Stay safe!

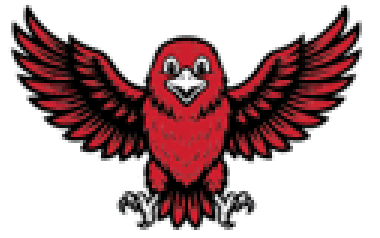
In addition to positive behavior support, Van Gorder Elementary School implements Restorative Practices as an approach to discipline. Students reflect on the following questions: What happened? Who has been impacted? In what ways? What were you thinking at the time? What are you thinking about now? How can we repair harm done?

We treat every student with love and respect, holding students accountable for their actions with natural consequences.

This plan, adhering to guidelines set forth by NRS 392.4644, is an effort to empower teachers and students to create a school environment of high standards, positive culture, and academic success.

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https://wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/manuals/WCSD_Behavior_Manual_2025-2026%20FINAL.pdf



Van Gorder Elementary Levels of Discipline

Warnings

Level 1 (Teacher Handled)

Redirect and Reteach

(Non-referred/Non-recorded)

Breaking cafeteria rules
Breaking playground rules
Breaking HAWKS Expectations
Blurting
Chewing gum or eating candy without teacher permission
Disrespect
Disruptive
Dress code violation
Inappropriate behavior in the bathrooms
Insubordination
Intentional tardy
Loud voices/Yelling
Name calling
Noise making
Off-task behavior
Out of seat
Property misuse
Running
Saying No
Talking out of turn
Tattling
*Any behavior that you need to reteach/redirect

Minors

Level 2 (Teacher Handled)

Minor Behavior Incidents

(Non-referred/Recorded)

Academic integrity/Cheating
Defiance
Disrespect
Disruption
Dress code violation
Forgery
Harassment – minor (Bothering others)
Inappropriate Language (Bad, Unkind, or Curse Words)
Inappropriate sounds or gestures
Infraction of playground rules
Interference with instruction
Lying
Physical contact/Aggression - minor
Property misuse
Rock throwing (Not at a person)
Technology violation

Majors

Level 3 (Teacher Handled with Admin Support)

Major Behavior Incidents

(Referred/Recorded)

Bullying
Defiance/Insubordination
Disrespect- severe and/or habitual
Disruption- severe and/or habitual
Fighting
Harassment/Intimidation – major (Intentional, targeting, or unsafe)
Inappropriate Language (Intentional, targeting, or unsafe)
Physical aggression – major (Intentional, targeting, or unsafe)
Promoting/Instigating a fight
Property damage/Destruction (Under \$500)
Technology violation
Theft or possession of stolen property
Threat- severe and/or Habitual
Truancy

Level 4 (Admin Handled)

Illegal Behavior Incidents

(Referred/Recorded)

Alcohol use/Possession
Arson
Assaults/Threats
Battery to employee causing injury
Battery to students
Bomb threat
Combustibles
Drug use/Possession
Extreme property damage/destruction (Over \$500)
Sexual misconduct
Tobacco use/Possession
Truancy
Vandalism
Violence or harm to staff
Violence or harm to students
Weapon use/Possession

Van Gorder RedHawks



NOISE LEVELS



Hawk
Silence

Hallways,
emergencies,
assemblies



Hawk
Whisper

Independent
work time,
bathrooms, library



Hawk
Discussion

“Restaurant voice”
Classroom
Cafeteria



Hawk
Presentation

“Presentation
Voice”



Hawk
Blast

“Outside Voice”
Playground



Van Gorder Behavior Flow Chart



How is the behavior handled?

Level 1 (Teacher Handled) Redirect and Reteach (Non-referred/Non-Recorded)

Step 1

- Use the 5 Questions of Misbehavior/ RP Questions
- Reteach Expectation Using the HAWKS Matrix
- Reinforce the HAWKS Matrix
- Begin Intervention

Step 2 of the Same Behavior

- Use the 5 Questions of Misbehavior/RP Questions
- Reinforce the HAWKS Matrix
- Reteach Expectation Using the HAWKS Matrix

Step 3 of Same Behavior

- Reinforce a Third Time
- Reteach Expectation Using the HAWKS Matrix
- Verbal Reminder
- Verbal Warning
- New Intervention

Step 4 of the Same Behavior

- Reinforce a Fourth Time
- Reteach Expectation (Using the HAWKS Matrix)
- Verbal Reminder
- Verbal Warning
- Document in Infinite Campus
- Parent Notification
- New Intervention

Level 2 (Teacher Handled) Minor Behavior Incidents (Non-referred/Recorded)

Minor 1, IC Recorded, Sent Home

- Use the 5 Questions of Misbehavior
- Reinforce
- Reteach Expectation Using the HAWKS Matrix
- Begin Intervention

Minor 2, IC Recorded, Sent Home

- Use the 5 Questions of Misbehavior
- Reinforce a Second Time
- Fill Out Behavior Support Tracking Form
- Document into Infinite Campus
- Parent Notified
- New Intervention Started
- Admin Notified

Minor 3, IC Recorded, Sent Home

- Use the 5 Questions of Misbehavior
- Reinforce a Third Time
- Reteach Expectation Using the HAWKS Matrix
- Fill Out Behavior Support Tracking Form
- Document into Infinite Campus
- Parent Notified
- New Intervention Started
- Admin Notified

If 3 Minors of the Same Behavior Within 10 Days is a Major (Habitual)

- Fill Out Behavior Support Tracking Form as a Major
- Document into Infinite Campus
- Print Off and Send to the Office

Level 3 Major (Teacher Handled with Admin Support) Major Behavior Incidents (Referred/Recorded)

Major 1

- Fill Out Behavior Support Tracking Form
- Review the 5 Questions of Misbehavior
- Discuss the consequence from question 5
- Confer with Administration about behavior, intervention, consequence
- Document into Infinite Campus
- Parent Notified
- Teacher setups up Parent Conference with Administration

Major 2

- Fill Out Behavior Support Tracking Form
- Review the 5 Questions of Misbehavior
- Discuss the consequence from question 5
- Confer with Administration about behavior, intervention, consequence
- Document into Infinite Campus
- Parent Notified
- Teacher setups up Parent Conference with Administration
- Additional actions and consequences will be determined by Teacher and Administration

Level 4 (Admin Handled) Illegal Behavior Incidents (Referred/Recorded)

Step 1

- Immediate contact to admin and office

2nd Step

- Admin determines actions or consequences using the WCSD Behavior Guide Matrix

5 Questions of Misbehavior

1. What are you doing?
2. What are you supposed to be doing?
3. Are you doing it?
4. What are you going to do about it?
5. What is going to happen if you do it again?

Possible Interventions

- Reteach expectation using the HAWKS matrix
- Talk one on one with the student
- Seating change
- Student conference
- Give choices
- More structured routine
- Engage the student
- Redirect
- Proximity
- Verbal reminder
- Take a break or Use of Buddy Classroom
- Student contract
- Have student repeat directions back
- Use a timer
- Teach relationship skills

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Washoe County School District prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and/or discrimination based on an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veterans or military status, marital status, political affiliation, or the presence of any sensory, physical or mental disability in any of its educational programs/activities, employment or employment opportunities, or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The District prohibits discrimination against any youth group listed in Title 36, as a patriotic society, (i.e. Boy Scouts of America) from access to public school facilities use. The District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Student Bullying, Harassment, and/or Discrimination Complaint and Appeal Procedures:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:9a104448-afa6-41c1-8477-f97d5626194f>

Gender Identity and Gender Non-Conformity-Students:

https://wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/administrative_regulations/5161_Reg-Gender_Identify-v2.pdf



STUDENT RECORDS

All requests for student records must go through ScribOrder. This includes Subpoenas. Student Accounting/Student Records fulfills all Subpoena/Attorney requests. Schools are not to fulfill Subpoena/Attorney requests. When your school receives a phone call, fax, email, request from an attorney, or a parent/guardian walk-in requesting student records, including special education records and DMV Certificate of Attendance requests, please refer them to <https://washoeschoolsnv.scriborder.com>. They can also access the link by going to the WCSD homepage, hovering over the school's tab, and clicking on Student Records. Students and Parents can also access the request page under the Student and Parent tab, then click on Student Records. Parents who need help with access can call (775) 861-4428 for support.

https://wcsdpolicy.net/pdf_files/board_policy/5000_Policy-Student_Records-v3_Final.pdf

