

Elementary School Handbook

2026-2027



USD 262 VALLEY CENTER

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Welcome to the Valley Center Elementary Schools. This year promises to be an exciting year filled with wonderful learning experiences for our students. Valley Center is a special place where parents and teachers join in providing the most positive learning environment possible. We are very proud of the Valley Center tradition of mutual cooperation, respect, trust, and communication among students, parents, teachers and administration.

Our teachers will provide you with an overview of the grade level expectations, a sketch of the subject area or curriculum expectations, and any special procedures or requirements. Please review these and retain them for future reference. Our rules, policies and procedures help us to provide a safe and positive learning environment. We hope these expectations will provide for a smooth transition this year.

Parent involvement is vital to the success of our students. We welcome you to get involved! Conferencing regularly with teachers, assisting with homework, volunteering your time, and joining PTO are excellent opportunities for involvement. As we work together teaching positive character traits, holding high expectations for education, and modeling good citizenship, we prepare our students to be productive members of their communities.

The following student handbook has been prepared as a guide and is not meant to be all inclusive of all school policies. Interpretation of items in the handbook and those things that are not in the handbook shall be the responsibility of the building principal. In the event the rules and regulations set forth in this Handbook conflict in any way with the policies set forth by USD No. 262, Board of Education, then the Board policies shall govern.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Arrival/Dismissal/Early Dismissal	3
Assemblies/Programs	3
Attendance/Tardy Policy	3-4
Behavioral Expectations	4-5
Bicycles/Scooters/Skates/Skateboards	5
Bullying	5
Bus Transportation/Shuttle Bus Service	6
Cafeteria Information	6
Unpaid Meal Charges	7
Remaining Meal Account Balances	7
Counselor	7
Deliveries	7
Emergency Drills	7
Emergency Information	7
Emergency Safety Interventions	8
Fees	8
Field Trips	8
Health Matters/Illnesses/Medication Policy	8-9
Homework Make-up Policy	10
Insurance	10
Kindergarten	10
Library	10
Lost and Found	10
Money	10
Music	10
Notes Home/Newsletters	10
Parent Portal	11
Parent/Teacher Conferences	11
Parties/Refreshments	11
Pets	11
Physical Education	11
Playground Supervision	11
PTO	11
Report Cards	12
School Attire	12
School Cancellation Procedures	12
Student Activities	12
Study Skills	12
Technology/Internet Usage	12
Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Communication Devices	13
Use of Artificial Intelligence	13
Video Camera Use in Schools	13
Visitors	14
Walking Students	14
FERPA	14-17
Acceptable Use of Technology Policy	17-19

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL / EARLY DISMISSAL

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOURS

8:00 School doors open (no supervision before this time)

8:25 Classes Begin – Tardy bell rings

3:45 All students dismissed

4:00 End of contracted day for teachers

Abilene - Students being delivered to or picked up from school should use the south parking area. The west lot is reserved for bus traffic.

Valley Park Elementary - Car Riders will enter at the front of the building, or southwest side. Bus riders will enter through the North entrance.

West - Students being delivered to or picked up from school should use the north parking lot. The south lot is reserved for bus traffic.

Wheatland –Students being delivered to or picked up from school should use the southwest or west parking lots. Dismissal is from the west lane by the cafeteria for car riders. Bus riders use the northeast lot.

Parents should notify the school office and classroom teacher in the event of student dismissal changes before 3:15 pm on the day the changes are to occur.

ASSEMBLIES / PROGRAMS

Assemblies and programs are planned to enhance learning opportunities. Some typical assembly themes include music, athletics, academic recognition, cultural presentations, and professional speakers. Special attention to etiquette and good citizenship is expected of all students.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDY POLICY

Regular attendance is necessary to the success of your student and will be recorded on a daily basis. Students in regular attendance maximize their learning opportunities. We believe that the major responsibility for regular school attendance belongs to the parent and student. Consequently, the following regulations have been adopted:

A. The Compulsory Attendance Law makes it mandatory that any child under the age of seven (7) years who is enrolled in school or who has reached the age of seven (7) years and is under the age of eighteen (18) years shall attend school continuously each school year. Any child who is inexcusably absent from the school of enrollment on any three (3) consecutive school days or five (5) school days in any semester or seven (7) school days in any school year, whichever of the foregoing occurs first, shall be considered truant and not attending school as required by the Compulsory Attendance Law (K.S.A. 72-1111, et seq., or as it may be amended by the Kansas legislature). A child is inexcusably absent from school if the child is absent or misses more than two (2) hours of instructional time in the school day. In accordance with Kansas law, all school age children who are not attending school will be reported to either the Department For Children and Families or to the Sedgwick County District Attorney, whichever is appropriate for the age of the child.

B. When a student is absent, parents are requested to call the school between the hours of 8:00 and 9:00 A.M. to report the nature of a student's absence. If no phone call is received in the office by this time, an attempt will be made to contact a parent or guardian to determine the reason for the absence. If no contact is made, a written note or phone call is required from the parent or guardian when the student returns to school. We request that this occur within 48 hours of the absence. Parents requesting homework should call before 9:00 A.M. and homework may be picked up at the end of day.

C. For pre-planned absences, a parent should request assignments at least two days in advance. This prevents last minute confusion or delays from occurring. Students should have the work completed upon return.

D. Students with excused absences will be allowed to make up missed assignments and will be given full credit. It is the responsibility of the parent to make arrangements with the teachers. The student will be granted the number of days missed plus one to complete the assignments.

E. Absences

The principal or designated representative shall be responsible for determining if an absence is excused, unexcused, or excessive. The following criteria will be considered in making this determination:

1. Excused Absences:

- a. Personal Illness
- b. Death in the family
- c. Medical or legal appointment
- d. Absence requested by parent in writing and approved by administration prior to the absence.
- e. Doctor-ordered absence
- f. School activities (must be a participant)
- g. School-sponsored educational field trips
- h. ALC or Out-of-School Suspension
- i. Other as approved by the administration

2. Unexcused/Inexcusable Absences for Substantial part of a School Day:

- a. "Substantial Part of the School Day" is defined as being inexcusably absent after more than two (2) hours of instructional time.
- b. All absences that do not fall into the categories of excused absences.
- c. Leaving school when school is in session without obtaining permission and signing out in the office.

3. Excessive Absences

USD 262 is committed to the philosophy that every student should attend school each day whenever possible. Regular attendance allows students to benefit from the educational opportunities provided by school staff. When students are absent, they miss valuable learning experiences, including, but not limited to: direct teacher instruction, class discussion, problem solving, teamwork, and social skills. Research shows a direct correlation between regular attendance and student success.

Chronic Absenteeism is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more of school days, for both excused and unexcused reasons. This places students at risk of not being successful academically.

Prompt arrival at school is expected. If a student misses more than two (2) hours of instructional time it shall be considered a significant part of the school day. All students who arrive after the 8:25 a.m. tardy bell rings must report to the office before being admitted to class. Tardiness, due to late buses or doctors' appointments, are excused, all others are unexcused. **Students arriving between 8:25 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. will be counted tardy. Those arriving after 10:30 a.m. will be counted absent 1/2 day. Students that leave before 10:30 am will be counted absent.** Students who leave between 10:30 a.m. and 1:50 p.m. and do not return to school will be counted absent 1/2 day. Students who leave after 1:50 p.m., will be counted present for the full day. Should you need to pick up your child during the school day, you must come to the school's office and sign your child out. The office will then call the classroom.

4. Exceptional Cases

When a student is not in class and receiving school-approved, outside instruction, such as, homebound, hospital-bound, or institutional-bound situations, the student is not counted absent. When a student is not in class due to a school activity, this is not counted as an absence but make-up work is always required.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Our school goal is that students will conduct themselves with respect and safety towards all peers, adults, and school property. In the event inappropriate actions are committed, the parents will be contacted concerning the student's behavior. If the inappropriate behavior continues, further discipline actions will be implemented by the administration. Actions could include the following: conference with student and/or parents, detentions, and suspensions (in and/or out of school). The following types of conduct are never permissible:

1. Fighting.
2. Defiance of school staff.
3. Use of profanity.
4. Refusal to prepare assignments or to participate in class.
5. Possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
6. Possession or use of tobacco.
7. Possession or use of any controlled substance.
8. Gambling.
9. Vandalism.
10. Bullying/Harassment/Discrimination

If a student's actions are determined to be a misdemeanor or felony or involve weapons or illegal drugs at school, on school property, or at a school supervised activity, an immediate report will be made to the local law enforcement agency.

Per Kansas State Statute 72-6136, notification to law enforcement will be given for all students expelled from USD 262. In turn, law enforcement will notify the division of vehicles as soon as practicable but not to exceed 10 days, excluding holidays and weekends, after receipt of the report and shall include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, driver's license number and a description of the act committed by the pupil. Expelled students may lose their Driver's license for up to one year as a result of this notification. Additionally, Division of Children and Families may be notified. This could result in an investigation to insure the wellbeing of the student expelled.

DEFINITION OF WEAPONS AND DESTRUCTIVE DEVICES: As used in this policy, the term "weapon" and/or destructive device means:

- any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- the frame or receiver of any weapon described in the preceding example;
- any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- any explosive, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or similar device;
- any weapon which will, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than 1/2 inch in diameter; any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled;
- any bludgeon, sand club, metal knuckles, or throwing star;
- any knife, commonly referred to as a switchblade, which has a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring, or other device in the handle of the knife, or any knife having a blade that opens or falls or is ejected into position by the force of gravity or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement. (See KSA 72-6131, BOE Policy)

BICYCLES / SCOOTERS / SKATES / SKATEBOARDS

Bicycles/Scooters are to be parked in the racks provided outside each building. At all times bicycles and scooters should be walked on school grounds, school sidewalks or when using the crosswalks. Skateboards, skates, shoes with wheels and motorized scooters are not allowed. It is recommended that all bicycles and scooters be padlocked. USD 262 Valley Center School District will not be responsible for damaged or stolen property.

BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

BULLYING

Valley Center Schools do not tolerate bullying of any form.

Bullying means: a) any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act or threat either by any student, staff member or parent towards a student or by any student, staff member or parent towards a staff member that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that such gesture, act or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have the effect of:

- a. Harming a student or staff member, whether physically or mentally;
- b. Damaging a student or staff member's property;
- c. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm to the student or staff member; or
- d. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student's or staff member's property;
- e. Cyberbullying; or
- f. Any other form of intimidation or harassment prohibited by the district.

If the issue involves a direct threat, we encourage students/staff to come to the office immediately to report the situation. If students would rather remain anonymous, they can fill out the online bullying form found on the webpage. Bullying can be reported via the Speak Up program. The staff takes every bullying report seriously and bullying will not be tolerated. We encourage parents to tell their children to "speak up" and tell school staff members, teachers or administrators about the bullying. Students who have bullied others in violation of school policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion. If appropriate, students who violate the bullying prohibitions shall be reported to local law enforcement.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

No student or staff member should be subject to harassment for any reason by any student or staff member. The district is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment free from discrimination, insult, intimidation, and harassment due to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, genetic information, or disability.

Harassment involves bullying behavior (see above) directed at someone because of their race, color, religion, sex, natural origin, age, or disability.

Sexual harassment may result from verbal or physical conduct or written or graphic material. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to: verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implication; unwelcome touching; or suggesting or demanding sexual involvement.

Any incident of discrimination, including acts of harassment, shall promptly be reported to the building principal, another administrator, the counselor, another certified staff member, or the district compliance coordinator for investigation and corrective action by the building or district compliance officer. Any student who engages in discriminatory conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

For a complaint of harassment to be fully resolved, it may be necessary for the victim to make a written report to be used as evidence against the accused. If a claimant of harassment is not satisfied with the resolution of their complaint by the Administration, the claimant may file a grievance with the District Grievance Officer, Jamie Lewis. His office is at 143 S. Meridian and his phone number, during school hours, is 755-7000. Information regarding Title IX complaints including procedures for filing a complaint can be found on the district website under "District Information" and the subcategory of "Title IX information" <http://www.usd262.net/about/about-our-district>.

BUS TRANSPORTATION / SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE

All students in our school system who ride a bus are subject to passenger rules and procedures until they get off the bus at their school or the bus stop near their home. Students must conduct themselves on the bus as they would at their own schools. A copy of the Transportation Passenger Rules and Procedures will be made available at enrollment time. Riding a bus is a privilege and the privilege may be revoked if the students fail to comply with the rules and procedures. Shuttle bus services may be available for students attending all elementary schools. In order to ride a shuttle bus, students must be at Abilene, Valley Park, West, or Wheatland no later than 7:55 a.m. Shuttle bus service will also be provided at the conclusion of the school day to return to Abilene, Valley Park, West, or Wheatland. Contact Transportation at myride@usd262.net for shuttle information. For safety reasons, all non-school related items such as but not limited to, balloons, glass items, animals, etc. are not permitted on the buses.

CAFETERIA- Valley Center USD 262 - Student Meal Policy

In the cafeteria:

- 1) Students are to get their trays and utensils and sit at their assigned table in a quiet, orderly manner. Children must ask permission to leave their table. The cafeteria aide will help the student get an item that was forgotten or get an item that has dropped off his/her tray.
- 2) Students may visit quietly with classmates at their same table in an appropriate table voice. We want the cafeteria to be as normal as possible so students can enjoy their mealtime. If the noise level becomes too loud, a pre-arranged signal will alert the students that the loud talking should cease. Students who do not respond to these warnings will be subject to a loss of privileges. Individuals who cause problems in the lunchroom will be disciplined on an individual basis.
- 3) Students are not allowed to trade food. This applies to hot and cold meals.
- 4) Soda pop is discouraged in the cafeteria.
- 5) Students are to walk in a normal manner at all times and not run in the cafeteria.
- 6) Good manners, courtesy, and respect for the rights of others should be the guide for all students attending school, whether they are in the halls, classrooms, or in the cafeteria. Any student who follows these guidelines will have few, if any, discipline problems.

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

Students, parents, and guardians of students are expected to prepay meal costs. Should the balance in meal accounts fall to zero or below, the following policy is in effect.

The district's meal charging requirements are as follows.

An account for students paying full or reduced price for meals may be established with the district. Students may charge no more than \$20.00 to this account. Once the account falls to a negative balance, charging of a la carte or extra items to this account will not be permitted. Any student failing to keep his/her account solvent as required by the district shall not be allowed to charge further meals until the negative account balance has been paid in full. However, such students will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. Students who have charged the maximum allowance to this account and cannot pay out of pocket for a meal will be provided an alternate meal consisting of a cheese sandwich and milk. The charge for an alternate meal is \$1.00

When a student's meal account balance falls below a balance sufficient to pay for two meals, the student and/or parent/guardian will receive payment reminders. At least one written or verbal warning shall be provided to a student and his/her parent or guardian prior to denying meals for exceeding the district's charge limit. If payment of the negative balance is not received within 5 working days of the maximum charge limit being attained, the debt may be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection in accordance with board policy DP. If the debt is not paid within 10 days of mailing the final notice of the negative account balance under policy DP, it shall be considered bad debt for the purposes of applicable law concerning unpaid meal charges. Payments for school meals may be made at the school, district office, or online. Again, students, parents, and guardians of students are expected to prepay meal costs.

REMAINING MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCES

Money remaining in meal accounts at the end of the school year will roll-over to the following school year. For graduates and students moving out of the district, account balances will be used to help pay any outstanding school fee obligations. If the student does not have such obligations, the balance will be transferred to other household members. If after all of the above options have been exhausted and the account has a remaining balance greater than \$10.00, parents seeking a refund may submit a refund request to the Food Service Director at molly.rainey@usd262.net within 30 days following the last day of school.

COUNSELOR

Valley Center is fortunate to have counselors assigned to the buildings. They are involved in providing whole class instruction, small group discussion, and individual counseling. They are interested in the educational progress of all the students. Please contact your counselor for assistance.

DELIVERIES

Due to disruptions in learning, allergies to flowers/latex, and concerns with transportation, deliveries of flowers, gifts, balloons and other celebratory artifacts are discouraged. Students/staff will be notified of deliveries only at the end of the school day.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

The schools are prepared for a variety of emergency situations, including: fire drills, tornado drills, intruder alerts, bomb threats and lock downs.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is very important for the safety of the children that the schools have up-to-date information on file for each student. Each student is required to have on file in the school office the following information:

- Parent (s) or guardian (s) name (s).
- A complete and up-to-date address.
- A current home phone number and the current parent (s) work phone numbers, and any cell phone numbers.
- A contact name and phone number of a friend or relative in case of an emergency when parent/guardian can't be reached.

- A physician's name and phone number.
- Any medical alert information of which we should be aware.

Please notify the school office if any of this information changes throughout the school year. Custodial parents and/or guardians are responsible to provide the school office with one of the following authentic documents as proof of current residency upon request: a copy of a utility bill with current name and address, i.e., water bill or electric bill; copy of a rental/lease agreement; or a copy of a contract to build a new residence in the USD 262 school district with date to begin construction within the next six months.

EMERGENCY SAFETY INTERVENTIONS

Please click on the link below to access all district Emergency Safety Intervention documents.

<https://www.usd262.net/about/emergency-safety-interventions>

FEES

The school charges a variety of fees for different services and materials. Fees should be paid promptly. If a student or his/her family has a financial problem that affects the payment of school fees, the situation should be brought to the attention of the administration so that suitable arrangements can be made. Parents have a responsibility to have fees paid prior to the end of the school term. Valley Center Schools USD #262 uses a collection agency-Recheck Inc. (phone # 316-265-8225) to process all returned checks. All returned checks will have a \$30 return check fee. Any unpaid fees at the end of the school year will be turned over to Recheck Inc. for collection as well.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips within our city and to nearby points of interest are scheduled by various classroom teachers throughout the school year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community. Parents will receive notices of field trips well in advance of the scheduled trip date and will be asked to sign field trip permission forms. Sometimes a small amount of money may be requested from each student to help defray transportation or facility use costs.

HEALTH MATTERS/ILLNESS/INJURY/MEDICATION POLICY/NURSE'S OFFICE

Your school nurse or health aide is responsible for the maintenance of health records, routine health checks, parental contact concerning health problems, care of minor injuries, care of chronic diseases and assistance in health teaching.

School nurses and health aides also complete health screenings to include mandated vision, hearing and dental screenings at intervals set by the state or when there might be teacher or parent concerns.

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the student will be taken to the emergency room at the nearest hospital. Please remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached and the name and telephone number of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school.

Below are some health guidelines for deciding if your child should attend school or not:

Fever – Students should be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications like Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Motrin (ibuprofen). A fever is determined to be anything greater than 100.0 F.

Vomiting and Diarrhea – Students with these symptoms should remain home until they are symptom free for 24 hours prior to returning to school, eating better and no longer having bouts of diarrhea/vomiting.

Infections – Any child who has been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours is no longer considered infectious and may return to school as long as also fever free those 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).

Influenza - USD 262 will enforce the Kansas Health Department regulations, which require each person with a positive influenza test to remain in home isolation until fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications AND overall symptoms are getting better. Under the regulations, ill persons may leave home isolation temporarily while seeking medical care.

Anytime your student has been diagnosed with a communicable disease (meaning others can get sick by being around the person who is ill), please notify your school's nurse as it will help the school nurse be able to guide you in your student's return and also to alert others' parents of potential exposure if needed."

There are times when medications may need to be given at school. Our district medication policy is as follows:
Medication Policy:

Valley Center USD 262 Medication Policy
Article V – Students, Section 2 – Medication, BOE Policy

Section 2 – Medication

A. Prescription Medication – Under certain conditions, prescribed medication may be given at school by the school RN or designated person. All prescription medications, except inhalers, epipens, and diabetic supplies, must be transported to the school health office staff by the parent/guardian. Prescribed medication, vitamins, herbals, and food supplements can be given only after the physician and parent/guardian have completed the district "Request to Administer Medication At School" form. This may be found on the district website or in your child's school nurse's office. The dosage intervals on many medications can be adjusted so that times for taking the dosages come outside school hours. If at all possible, medication should be taken prior to coming to school or after leaving school under parental supervision. The initial dose of medication must be given by the parent/guardian to determine if the student will have an adverse reaction.

The following information must be complete and on file with the school health office before the prescribed medication can be given:

1. A completed "Request for Administration of Medication".
2. A completed "Request for Self Administer Medication".
3. The medication needs the correct information: Student name, the name and purpose of the medication, dosage, frequency, time of administration, date, prescription number, physician number, pharmacy, expiration date and any additional special circumstances under which the medication is to be administered, and the length of time for which the medication is prescribed.
4. Parents/guardians shall submit their instructions in written form and understand school personnel and/or the school district will not be held liable for any action resulting from this request to self-medicate. Inappropriate decisions by the student relative to this policy may result in disciplinary action. Students in grades K – 5 may carry their medications for asthma and anaphylactic reactions but need school personnel to supervise administration.

B. Non Prescription Medication - Over the counter medication may be given at school by the RN or designated person. Over the counter medication will be kept locked in the health room and dispensed by the RN or designated person. When a health condition requiring this medication has been alleviated, this medication will be sent home.

The following information must be complete before the over the counter medication can be given: 1.

- A complete "Request for Administration of Medication".
2. The over the counter bottle with correct medication and dosage.

C. Employees of USD 262, including registered nurses (as an individual or as an employee) or designated person, who administer the medication in accordance with physician instructions or parent/guardian instructions, shall not be liable for damages resulting from adverse reactions. In the event of an adverse reaction, the student will be treated according to standard emergency care guidelines.

All medications prescribed by a physician must be in the original pharmacy container, clearly marked as to the patient, type of medicine and dosage. Over the counter medications must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the student's name and the dosage recommendations. At the end of the school year, parents are requested to contact the school nurse regarding the disposition or return of all medicine. Any medicine left in the possession of the school district after the end of the school year will be destroyed.

HOMEWORK MAKE-UP POLICY

Students who miss class due to an excusable absence will be given the number of days missed plus one to make up any missed assignments.

INSURANCE

Independent insurance companies offer student insurance at the beginning of each school year. This insurance is not offered or provided by the district, and the district makes no recommendation as to the quality of any insurance. Insurance forms are located in each school office and can be picked up at any time during the school year.

KINDERGARTEN

Children entering kindergarten are required to be five years old on or before August 31st for the school year in which they are enrolling. Enrollment takes place in the spring. Parents must bring birth certificates, immunization records, and health assessments in order to complete the enrollment. Proof of residency (e.g. gas/city/electric bill or rental/house contract) inside USD 262 boundaries is required to complete registration.

LIBRARY

The library is open on a regularly scheduled basis and is supervised by the librarian. Library classes are held for grades PreK-4 and for special classes in the school. They are held for the purpose of library instruction, as well as for the enjoyment of the materials and books. Students are allowed to use the library during library hours with the permission of their classroom teacher. They may use the library to read, check out books, return books, use audio-visual materials, and do reference work or work on special projects. There is no fine for overdue books, but lost or damaged books must be paid for to replace them. The library collection is constantly updated and expanded. Books are chosen for either their educational or recreational value.

LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

All clothing found, regardless of its value, is placed in the lost and found. Money, jewelry, or any other articles of value are turned in to the office. Students may claim items after proper identification. Unclaimed items will be donated periodically throughout the school year. Please help reduce the collection by labeling your child's items with a first and last name.

MONEY

Children should not bring money to school unless there is a special reason: lunch money, school pictures, field trips, or ordering books. If a child has to bring money to school, he/she should leave it with his/her teacher or in the office for safekeeping.

MUSIC

All students at our schools are enrolled in music classes. The music program provides opportunities for students to develop music skills and have a better understanding and enjoyment of music. The basic elements of music are presented to students through various experiences involving singing, playing instruments, listening, movement, expression, and music reading. Each grade level participates in one evening music concert during the school year.

NOTES HOME/NEWSLETTERS

School, classroom, individual notices and reminders will be sent home periodically. In an effort to reduce paper waste, distribution lists for sending information via e-mail and our school's student information system will be established at the beginning of the school year and will be our primary method for distributing information. For families without internet access, paper copies will still be sent home with students.

PARENT PORTAL

An information tool available to parents is our Infinite Campus Parent Portal. The Parent Portal is a family-centered student information system accessible via the internet. Information about Parent Portal can be found on our district website at www.usd262.net. You can obtain your password and directions on how to access your child's information and grades from the school's office.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the first and third nine-week periods. A parent's attendance at conferences is very important. A parent may request a conference with his/her child's teacher at any time during the school year. Please call the school for an appointment if a conference is desired. Likewise, a teacher may find it necessary to request a special conference with a parent. Please make every effort to meet with the teacher if you receive such a request.

PARTIES/REFRESHMENTS

Parties and refreshments are based on teacher discretion. Please contact your child's teacher for guidelines regarding classroom parties, including any food allergies.

Snacks served during the school day, used as reward/reinforcement incentives, or served during the after school program or other school enrichment programs (including summer school), shall make a positive contribution to the child's diets and health. Emphasis will be on healthy snack and drinks and must be considered in relation to the time of breakfast and lunch for the student. Schools are encouraged to consider non-food rewards/reinforcement as incentives.

Snack Guidelines:

- Fat – 35% or less total calories from fat
- Sugar – except for fruit without added sugar, 35% or less of weight from total sugar.
- Calories – 200 or less
- In order to increase food safety and decrease the risk to students with food allergies, classroom “treats” brought to school by students must be individually prepackaged by a manufacturer.

Please also consult the USD 262 Health and Wellness policy located on the District's webpage.

PETS

No pets, of any kind, are allowed at school without advanced permission from administration and the pet's current vaccination record. Under no circumstance is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

For your child's safety, athletic tennis shoes must be worn in all physical education classes. Failure to do so will result in non participation and will affect the child's grade. Girls need to wear shorts under dresses or skirts. If your child needs to be excused or is unable to participate for more than three consecutive days of physical education classes, a physician's note will be required or they will be unexcused. If your child needs to be excused on a daily basis, not exceeding three consecutive days, a note signed by a parent/guardian will be required. Should there be any questions or concerns pertaining to physical education, please feel free to contact the physical education teacher at your school.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

Supervised recesses are provided at various times throughout the day. Adults are on the playground during regularly scheduled breaks. The playground is not supervised before and after school. Students are expected to leave for home immediately following dismissal. Students should wear shoes appropriate for outdoor/indoor play. **Open-toed shoes, sandals, and flip flops are discouraged for safety purposes.**

PTO

Parent teacher organizations have been highly involved in improving our schools. All parents are urged to become involved and to actively participate in their school's PTO. Meetings are scheduled on a regular basis and they are announced in advance.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be posted the last day of each nine-week grading period at the end of the day on Parent Portal. Please carefully review your child's progress and contact the school if you have questions regarding grades.

SCHOOL ATTIRE

School attire is expected to be appropriate to learning activities. Clothing that calls attention to itself or is distracting is inappropriate. The following are examples of clothing not acceptable for school: slang or obscenities printed on clothing, see-through clothing, bare midriffs, halter-tops, and pajamas. (Exceptions for pajamas can be made for school-sponsored spirit days.) Shorts and skirts must be at finger-tip length or longer.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION PROCEDURES

If weather conditions dictate the cancellation of school, the superintendent will make the decision as soon as possible. Notifications will be sent to local news outlets and posted on the district website at www.usd262.net and on the District's Facebook and X sites. A message will also be sent to parents using our Infinite Campus Messenger system.

During school hours, school will be dismissed early whenever it is deemed necessary to do so in order to complete bus routes. **Parents should instruct their children where to go and what to do in case no one is at home.**

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activities are an important part of school and we want students to have the opportunity to participate in musicals, plays, field trips, etc. Academics, however, are our first priority. Students may be excluded from school activities.

STUDY SKILLS

Specific skills and techniques can make learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

- Come to class prepared with pencil, paper, and other necessary materials.
- Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in class.
- Ask questions to clarify problems.
- Plan your day and schedule time for homework.
- Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.
- Strive to do the very best work possible.

Homework is important. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for the students to work and by seeing that assignments are completed. As a "rule of thumb" parents may expect approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level each weeknight. For example, a first grade student may have 10 minutes of homework while a third grade student may have 30 minutes of homework.

TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET USAGE

USD 262 is committed to providing all students with technology-based learning opportunities that facilitate resource sharing, research, cooperative learning, and communications. The use of computers, networks, Internet, and other online services shall be in support of education and research consistent with the district's mission and goals. Access to technology in USD 262 is a privilege which brings with it responsibilities. All students and parents are required to sign a technology acceptable use policy. Inappropriate use of technology will result in the cancellation of those privileges and/or disciplinary action by school officials.

CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Personal Electronic Communication Devices (including but not limited to, mobile or cellular phones, tablets, computers, watches, wireless headphones or earbuds, text messaging devices or personal digital assistants) are prohibited during the school day. Any such device(s) must be turned off and securely stored away from the student's person in an inaccessible location during the school day.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The use of Artificial Intelligence technologies shall be responsible, ethical, and in compliance with applicable law and district policy. The superintendent shall establish and maintain a list of approved AI tools permitted to be used throughout the district. Only district-approved AI tools may be permitted.

While utilizing approved AI tools, staff and students shall comply with the following:

1. Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and responsibility in completing academic work, including only submitting and presenting work that represents the individual's own learning and understanding.
2. Use AI only to the extent that it supports learning without undermining the authenticity of an individual's efforts or the validity of the educational process.
3. Understand that AI technologies are only meant to supplement, not replace, human instruction, supervision, or judgment.
4. Use approved AI tools in a manner consistent with board policy, including Policy IIBF (Acceptable Use Guidelines), the Student Code of Conduct, and employee conduct requirements.
5. Properly cite or disclose the use of AI-generated content used in assignments, teaching materials, or official communications in accordance with this policy.
6. Only use AI for idea generation, editing, or skill development when expressly permitted by the teacher or administration.

Prohibited Uses:

No staff member or student shall use AI in violation of board policy or applicable law, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Violate academic integrity by generating or submitting work without appropriate authorization or citation.
2. Use AI to generate or substantially complete assignments, essays, or assessments without explicit authorization.
3. Use AI to fabricate sources, falsify data, or impersonate another individual.
4. Submit AI-generated work as a student's own or fail to cite or disclose the use of AI or AI-generated work.
5. Produce, alter, or distribute synthetic or manipulated content that misrepresents or harms individuals, commonly referred to as deepfakes.
6. Produce, alter or distribute synthetic or manipulated content that violates school rules; individual rights, such as privacy, safety, reputation; or applicable law.
7. Access or disclose confidential or personally identifiable information in violation of law or district policy.
8. Circumvent district security systems or established procedures.
9. Use AI tools in violation of instructions or directives from teachers or administrators, board policy, or applicable law.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action or loss of credit for plagiarism and shall be addressed in accordance with district disciplinary procedures and/or applicable law.

VIDEO CAMERA USE IN SCHOOLS

Video cameras may be used in any school building, school bus, or on any property of the school district to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, students and visitors, and to safeguard school facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the superintendent.

The district will take steps to notify staff and students through notices to students and parents and notices to employees that video surveillance may occur on school property.

Video Surveillance, based upon its images, use and specific circumstances, may or may not be a student record. Any information obtained from video cameras may only be used for school and law enforcement purposes, and may not be used for any other purpose. Video surveillance records may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action, administrative proceeding or criminal proceeding, and may become a part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record.

Subject to and in compliance with applicable law video recordings may be disclosed to law enforcement personnel and to school officials with legitimate educational interests. Subject to and in compliance with applicable law, parents or guardians of students suspected of disciplinary violations may view the relevant portions of any video relating to the incident upon written request to the school principal.

If the video shows more than one student violating school rules, that portion of the video is the educational record of each student involved in violating the rules. Parents of all students involved in breaking the rules may view the video without consent of the other children's parents, but none of the parents is entitled to a copy of the video unless all of the involved children's parents' consent.

School personnel may also view the relevant portions of any video relating to any disciplinary charge against them upon written request to the school principal. Parents, guardians, or school personnel should be aware that the district maintains security camera video recordings for a limited period, so any request under this policy must be made within seven (7) calendar days of the event.

Because the schools are subject to FERPA (The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act), copies of video recordings containing other identifiable students shall not be released by school officials without legitimate educational interests or to students or parents without the written permission of the parent or guardian of all such identifiable students, or through subpoena or court order.

VISITORS

We welcome parents and visitors to our schools. Parents and visitors must register in the office by providing identification and wearing a visitor's badge before visiting other areas in the building. Notices are placed at each school's entryway, regarding procedures for visitor registration. Due to limited space in some buildings, visitors may not be allowed to eat in the cafeteria.

WALKING STUDENTS

Students who walk to school should come straight to school. Students should walk on sidewalks at all times (where available). Students should cross streets only at designated crosswalks. Please remember the safety rules: walk with a friend and never accept a ride from a stranger.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Valley Center School District, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Valley Center School District may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Valley Center School District to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- School and district newsletters, news releases to local and area newspapers
- School district website, podcasting
- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs
- Yearbooks
- Sports activity programs, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members

According to federal guidelines, directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEA's) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories — names, address and telephone listings — unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Valley Center School District has designated the following information as directory information:

• Student name • Parent name(s) • Address • Telephone listing • Electronic mail address • Photograph • Video images • Audio recordings	• Date and place of birth • Major field of study • Dates of attendance • Grade level • Participation in officially recognized activities and sports • Weight and height of members of athletic teams • Degrees, honors, and awards received • The most recent educational agency or institution attended
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If you do not want Valley Center School District to disclose directory information as outlined above, you must notify Valley Center School District, in writing, by August 15th (or for new students enrolling in Valley Center School District, at the time of enrollment).

Written notification from parent or guardian must include ALL of the following information:

- Name of student (print or type - must be legible)
- Student's school (2026-27 school year)
- Student's grade (2026-27 school year)
- Parent's name (print or type - must be legible)
- Parent's signature

Send written notification to:

USD 262-Assistant Superintendent
143 S. Meridian
Valley Center, KS 67147

Please also review additional Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) information on the back of this page.

** These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.*

Notification of Rights under FERPA for elementary and secondary schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Valley Center School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901 **Drug**

Free/Gun Free School Zone

Valley Center Schools are declared Drug Free/Gun Free areas. Board policy prohibits the presence, sale and/or use of illegal substances including tobacco products and weapons on school property. If a student brings to school items that could be used in a threatening, intimidating, violent or improper manner, these items will be taken from the student and appropriate consequences will be imposed. Consequences may include suspension from school for 186 school days according to Board policy JCDBB.

In order to ensure the highest possible standards of learning as well as the safety, health and well-being of all students, USD 262 endorses a substance abuse prevention policy and procedures. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the district. This policy is designed to aid all students in abstaining from the use of alcohol/drugs, intervene early when student use is detected, take corrective disciplinary action when necessary, and provide aftercare support for the student when necessary. (See Board policy JCDAB, JCDA and JCDBB.)

Notice of Nondiscrimination

USD 262 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in its employment practices or in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Persons having inquiries concerning the District's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act may contact the school district's ADA and Section 504 coordinator/Assistant Superintendent, 143 S. Meridian, Valley Center, KS 67147, Telephone: 316-755-7000.

Asbestos Notification

In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) passed in 1986, Valley Center USD 262 hereby notifies parents/guardians, students, teachers and other school employees that the district has a Management Plan in effect and semi-annual surveillances are performed. The Management Plan is available for review at the USD 262 Administrative Office.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this subject, please contact the District Administrative Office at 143 S. Meridian, Valley Center, KS 67147. Telephone 755-7000

Acceptable Use of Technology

Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students

USD 262 is committed to providing all students with technology-based learning opportunities that facilitate resource sharing, research, cooperative learning, and communications. The use of computers, networks, the Internet, and other online services shall be in support of education and research consistent with the district's mission and goals. Access to technology in USD 262 is a privilege which brings with it responsibilities.

District Responsibilities

USD 262 will provide filtered access to the Internet and make reasonable efforts to monitor student access to the Internet and communication resources via the Internet. The district will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of students and student information. District administrators or their designees may review student files and student communications to prevent misuse and to ensure that students are using the system responsibly and in compliance with laws and district policies.

Student Responsibilities

Students shall be responsible for displaying appropriate behavior and maintaining a productive learning environment when using district computers, networks, the Internet, and other online services. Copyright law shall be respected for all Internet and online services. Files and communications on the network shall be considered public in nature; students should not expect that files stored on the district's servers or the district Internet service provider's servers will be private. Students who observe or identify a security issue should notify an administrator immediately. Students should show any messages that are suggestive, obscene or threatening to a teacher, who will contact appropriate district staff. If students encounter objectionable material on the Internet, they should minimize the browser and notify a teacher or administrator immediately so that the site may be blocked. Students should not click any other links or graphics on the objectionable page.

Permission

Students must have permission from and be supervised by district staff when using district hardware, software, folders, files, networks, the Internet, or other online services. Permission is not transferable from one student to another and may not be shared. Students shall not be allowed to use the Internet or electronic communications unless a current signed Student Access Contract is on file. Access to district technology is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in, among other disciplinary measures, the cancellation of those privileges.

Inappropriate Use

Inappropriate use of district technology, including district hardware, software, networks, the Internet, or other online services include, but are not limited to, the following:

General

- Violating any local, state (K.S.A. 21-3755), or federal statutes;
- Accessing another individual's materials, information, folders or files without permission;
- Violating copyright, plagiarizing or otherwise using the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission; • Failing to follow a district policy while using the district's technology or failing to follow any other policies or guidelines established by district administrators or their designees;

Internet

- Transmitting obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- Accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;
- Harassing, defined as persistently annoying of another, interfering with another's work, insulting, or attacking others; • Giving out personal information online such as full name, home address, phone number or Social Security number or arranging to meet anyone via the Internet ;
- Creating mailing lists for non-school purposes with district email addresses from the district's Internet site, network, or servers; • Downloading software that has not been approved by district staff;
- Downloading materials from the Internet for any use other than school-related activities;
- Using credit cards with any online service;
- Using a district supplied email account or chat room access for non-school related activities;
- Using the Internet not in support of education and research consistent with the purposes of USD 262;

Hardware, Software, Network

- Giving out personal passwords
- Attempting to log on or logging on with another's' password;

- Vandalizing, defined as any unauthorized access and/or malicious attempt to damage computer hardware/software or networks or destroying the data of another user, including creating, uploading, or intentionally introducing viruses;
 - Wasting storage or other technology resources intentionally;
 - Using the network for commercial, advertisement or political purposes;
 - Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities;
 - Invading the privacy of individuals;
 - Seeking to gain or gaining unauthorized access to information resources or other computing devices or attempting to bypass district security measures;
 - Altering improperly the set up of computers (e.g., desktops, icons, wallpapers, screensavers, installed software); •
- Copying illegally, installing or using software that has not been approved by district staff;
- Using district hardware, software, storage space or network for non-school-related activities;

Security Risk

Any student identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to district technology.

Disclaimer

The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology access provided. The district shall not be responsible for any damages suffered, including the loss of data resulting service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet shall be at the user's risk. The district denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its system and is not liable for any commercial transactions conducted through its system.

Statements of Personal Belief

Any statement of personal belief found on computers, networks, the Internet, other on-line services, or any other telecommunication system is the author's individual point of view, and not that of the school district, school, or district staff. No representations to the contrary shall be published without written approval from district administrators. District administrators or their designees may review all content in any Internet or online accounts paid for, in whole or in part, by the district without notice of any kind.

Student Access Contract

Prior to use of school technology, networks, the Internet, other online services, each student desiring to use such account(s) shall sign a Student Access Contract. A new contract shall be signed at the beginning of each year. If a student is under the age of 18, a parent/guardian shall also sign the contract. These agreements shall be kept on district file for the entire school year.

Student

I understand that when I am using the district hardware, software, network, the Internet or any other telecommunication medium, I must adhere to all rules of courtesy, etiquette, policies, guidelines and laws regarding access and information as prescribed by federal, state, and local laws, and I must accept and abide with the attached Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students.

My signature below, and that of my parent (if pupil is under the age of 18), means that I have read and agree to follow the guidelines of the attached Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students while using services provided by USD 262. I waive any right to privacy in my use of the Internet, electronic communications, files, folders and network use, and I consent to the access, monitoring and disclosure of my use of the Internet, electronic mail and the network by authorized USD 262 employees. Violation of these guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Violations will result in disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action

Student's Printed Last Name:

Student's Printed First Name:

Date:

Student's Signature:

Parent or Guardian

(If the applicant is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must also sign read and sign this agreement.)

As the parent/guardian of student listed above, I understand that the teaching staff of USD 262 cannot monitor all of the information my child is accessing or downloading while in the classroom/library nor while the child is away from the school. The district will provide filtered Internet access within the district and will do its best to monitor student access. I agree not to hold USD 262, any of its employees, any institutions or networks providing access responsible for the performance of the system or the content, costs, or material accessed through it. I understand the technology is provided for only educational purposes.

In order to ensure smooth system operations to assure compliance with laws and policies, appropriate district administrators have the authority to monitor all accounts including my child's accounts, folders and files.

I hereby give my permission for my child to use the Internet in the classroom/library and waive any right to privacy my child may have as to his/her use of the Internet, electronic communications and the network. On behalf of my child I consent to the access, monitoring

and disclosure of my child's use of the Internet, electronic communications, folders, files and use of the network to authorized USD 262 employees. I agree that my child will abide by district guidelines and conditions. Violation of these guidelines is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Violations will result in disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action.

Parent/Guardian's Printed Last Name:

Parent/Guardian's Printed First Name:

Date:
