VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
JUNIOR HIGH
"Do it heartily as to the Lord." Col. 3:23

JUNIOR HIGH
NEW STUDENT FAQS



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Introduction

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the guide, the "Junior High New Student FAQs." It has been created to answer many of the questions that you might have regarding your Junior High experience. (Yes, both parents and students experience Junior High.) As you are aware, there is a remarkable difference between students in their elementary years and those in their Junior High years. The students, who once were talkative and would come home to tell their parents about their day in detail, may now respond with very few details, leaving the parents in the dark. So, this publication was designed to help parents (and students) understand the program at Valley Christian Junior High School.

Sincerely,

Shari Gambello
Vice Principal
Valley Christian Junior High School

Start Here

Parent Portal
The Junior High Parent Portal is designed to help parents gain information that is specifically geared for the Junior High. The Junior High Parent Portal is located on our VCS website at JHPortal.vcs.net.

At this site, you can easily access many items, such as:

- Your Account - Update Contact Information
- Teacher Websites -
- PowerSchool, Grades, Attendance, and Discipline (Log Entries)
- Lunch Funds by MSA (My School Account)
- Announcements and News
- Busing Information
- Calendar and Schedule
- Club Information
- Forms
- Handbook and Publications

The Junior High Parent Portal will require login. The Junior High Parent Portal usernames and passwords stay the same for returning families each school year. The username/password for new families is the information created at the time of applying to VCS. For your convenience, the "Forgot Your Password" link is available on the login page and will provide your username/password by simply verifying your email address. Please contact support@vcs.net for further assistance if necessary.

Newsletter
At the beginning of each month, the Junior High sends a newsletter to parents by email. This is one of the greatest sources of information regarding the calendar and activities going on at school. Parents are STRONGLY encouraged to read it in its entirety. Parents need to make sure to keep their email address up to date, so that they do not miss any valuable information published by VCJH. Email addresses can be updated by logging on to the Parent Portal at www.vcs.net/Parents, or going to JHPortal.vcs.net and then My Account. Current and previous newsletters are found there.

Daily Announcements
Each afternoon, a Daily Bulletin is sent out to students' Warriorlife email addresses with important information for the following day. It is also kept current on the Parent Portal and PowerSchool. Please check these announcements regularly to stay current with what is happening on campus.

Warriorlife
Warriorlife is our students' personal Google account. Each student's account comes with a suite of tools including email, calendar, and documents. Students may use these tools to communicate with their teacher and complete much of their schoolwork. The username and password are the same for Warriorlife, learn.vcs.net, and a student's PowerSchool access. Note that everything created in Warriorlife is saved on the web, so students can access their tools and any work they've created from any computer with Internet access. The Warriorlife username and password should be used when creating the student's Apple ID on their iPad.

Communication

Throughout the course of the school year, you will likely have questions regarding the specific needs of your child. Here are the best points of contact depending on the circumstance:

Teachers
These are men and women who are partners in their student's educational endeavors and passionate about coming alongside them to help them to achieve their personal best. They work tirelessly to provide stimulating, comprehensive lessons, that keep their students' interest and meet and exceed the California State Standards, Common Core Standards, and ESLRs. They are the most knowledgeable about the specific subject matter, assignments, and academic progress of your child.

Department Heads
Department Heads work directly with the Curriculum Director in choosing new curriculum when it becomes necessary, reporting to the principal regarding the activities of their department, establishing guidelines for student placement in their discipline, and having overall responsibility for the curriculum in their department. This is the person to contact if there are questions remaining after a student or parent has first spoken with a teacher.

Vice Principal
This person deals with academic and curriculum issues that are unresolved after speaking with both the teacher and Department Head.

Principal
The person in charge of the Junior High who deals with all the overall facets of the day-to-day operations.

Academic Counselor
This person helps students and parents navigate the academic world at VCJH. They will help support students with placement and academic achievement.

Dean of Students
This person deals with discipline, field trips, and special school-wide events

Key Places on Campus

Amphitheater
The outdoor theater located at the end of the "Quad" by the Baseball Stadium.

Conservatory of the Arts Building
One of three large buildings located on the Skyway Campus. This is the first building to the north of the Football Stadium. It is located next to Visitor Parking.

Education Building
One of three large buildings located on the Skyway Campus. The Education Building is located on the east side of the campus and is the building on the right upon entering the Quad from the main parking lot.

Gym Building
The large building on the west side of the campus housing two gyms on the upper level. The girl's locker room is located on the lower level. It is the building on the immediate left when approaching the Quad from the main parking lot.

Office
The Junior High office is located at the furthermost north end of the Quad on the right-hand side. The Junior High office is separate from the High School office.

Main Gym
The larger gym located at the north end of the Gym Building.

Mall - (see Quad)

Parking Lot A/Blue
Staff Parking - the lower lot, closest to the Baseball Stadium.

Parking Lot C/White
Visitor Parking - closest to school buildings. Parents are to park here when visiting the campus during school hours. Drop off and pick up are prohibited in the Visitor Lot both before and after school.

Parking Lot D/Green
Staff Parking - closest to the Softball Field

Parking Lot E/Orange
Staff Parking – below the Soccer Field

Parking Lot F/Yellow
Student Parking - below Lot E/Orange, the largest lot on the south end of campus

Parking Lot - Fehren Lot
Student Parking and Remote Drop Off- at the Park 'N Ride on Monterey Road (one mile north of Skyway Drive). Valley Christian Shuttle busses operate from 6:45-9:15am and 2:30-6:30pm daily.

Quad (Mall)
The concrete area at the entrance level between the two main buildings.

Shechem Oak
Located to the south of the football field on the small hill is a large oak tree referred to as Shechem Oak. This site was built as a remembrance of God's provision and blessings to Valley Christian Schools during the building of the Skyway Campus. It is also the site of the meeting in 2001 when all the teachers and staff vowed to pray for students each day - beginning what is now the Prayer Warrior Program. Parents and their children are encouraged to visit the site together and read the plaques, which tell of the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior.

Skyway Campus
The entirety of the Junior High and High School campus located on Skyway Drive.

Programs and Clubs

Applied Math, Science, and Engineering (AMSE)
The Applied Math, Science, and Engineering (AMSE) Institute, is where students can experience unique learning and hands-on opportunities that introduce and expand their knowledge of various technologies, fields, and professions. In this program, students may enroll in AMSE electives such as Investigative Science, the ISS Space Program, and Project Lead the Way classes. AMSE students participate in club and program opportunities like: Robotics, Science Club, Math Club (Mathletes), and Makerspace.

Students who apply to the VCJH AMSE program have a set goal to prepare for the AMSE Institute in High School. For first-time applicants to the JH AMSE program, please complete the online application at https://govcs.net/amse_app at the beginning of the school year.

Business and Entrepreneurship Initiative (BEI)
With BEI, students learn core business concepts in school-day courses and also apply what they learn through several dynamic business programs. These unique opportunities expose students to successful Silicon Valley business leaders who exemplify Christian principles as they mentor and spark innovation in the young entrepreneurs. Valley Christian Schools' BEI program is on the cutting edge of creating future leaders, giving Warriors another avenue to lead, serve, and impact as they follow their *Quest for Excellence.*

Clubs
VCJH offers a variety of that are posted in the Daily Bulletin starting in September. They can be before or after school and are free of charge. These include but are not limited to: Aggies Club, Clay Club, Homework Club, Makerspace, and Math Club. Additional information can be found in the JH Parent Portal by going to JHPortal.vcs.net and then Clubs.

Conservatory of the Arts
The Conservatory of the Arts is an example of our commitment at VCS to connect students' God-given talents with extraordinary opportunities for growth and service. This program offers VCJH students a full range of visual and performing arts classes in visual arts, dance arts, music, and theatre arts. Budding young artists have the opportunity to further develop their God-given

talents in a program of unmatched quality and breadth of offerings, while providing the necessary preparation for matriculation to the High School Conservatory of the Arts.

One to One Program (1:1 Program)
VCJH uses the Apple iPad for our One-to-One program. Paper and pencil will not be obsolete, but rather, the foundation for learning will be found through technology. The iPad won't be another tool in the student's backpack; it will become the backpack - providing access to educational apps, textbooks, and teacher-driven curriculum. To learn more about the iPad, visit the iPad site on Learn.vcs.net - VCJH iPad Program Home page. If a student is having difficulty managing their time on the iPad, parents may want to consider adding "restrictions" to the iPad. Information on how to do this is also on the VCJH iPad Program Home page (http://learn.vcs.net /course/view.php?id=550).

Sports - Afterschool
Students are offered many opportunities to participate in afterschool sports at the Junior High. We currently belong to the SCCESJHCA League (Santa Clara County East Side Junior High Coaches Association). Many of the sports require students to try out. There are different seasons for sports. Academic success and citizenship will play a part in whether or not a student is allowed to play an afterschool sport. Also, to try out for an afterschool sport, the student must have a current Athletic Pre-Participation Medical Examination form on file that has been filled out by their doctor.

Splash
An afterschool swimming program run by the Aquatics Department is open to all students in the community. For more information, contact the Aquatics Director at (408) 513-2450.

WEB - Where Everybody Belongs
WEB is a program designed to connect new students with current students and build a positive and supportive atmosphere on campus. Students will have opportunities to develop and build relationships through a variety of activities, including Warrior Welcome (our New Student Orientation), WarriorTime meet-ups, ice cream socials, luncheons, as well as festive celebrations throughout the year. In order to have students recognize their importance as a part of the VCJH community, new students will be in a group with a WEB Leader. (These leaders are students selected from our Campus Leadership class.) All sixth graders are part of the WEB program.

WarriorTime
Every Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, students will have time set aside with a teacher for valuable instruction beyond the definition of specific subjects.

Monday and Thursday will be a time to extend students' learning in our Academic Lab setting. Clubs will be offered during this time as well as opportunities to meet with teachers in a small group setting for support.

Wednesdays will be a time for students to participate in Chapel to learn more about God through worship and His Word. (See **Spiritual Formation** to learn more about our Chapels)

Events

Breakaway
The tradition known as "Breakaway" is for eighth-grade students only! This yearly retreat for the entire eighth-grade class gives them a dedicated time for class bonding and spiritual reflection.

Fifth Grade Visitation
A day during the school year when Valley Christian Elementary School's fifth graders come to the Junior High campus to experience "A Day in the Life of a Junior Higher."

Back to School Night
An evening within the first few weeks of the beginning of school where parents are invited to experience "A Day in the Life of a Junior High Student." To begin the evening, there is a group meeting in the Main Gym to introduce many of the staff members and give instructions for the rest of the evening. Following the meeting, parents attend each of their child's classes and hear a brief outline of the classroom expectancies and curriculum. This is an evening of group talks. Individual conferences regarding a student should be scheduled at a different time.

MAP Testing
A computerized adaptive test that measures student achievement and improvement with a high level of accuracy and precision throughout a given year. It is administered three times a year and provides feedback on a national percentile scale as well as individual student growth between testing periods.

Open House
An event where the campus is open for viewing by potential students and their families.

Picture Day
Every student has their picture taken whether or not they are purchasing a package of pictures. Eighth-grade students are expected to dress in "Dressy Attire." Boys must wear a shirt and tie, and girls should wear a nice sweater, dress, or blouse. All students must be dressed within the VCJH Dress Code to be included in the Yearbook. The picture resulting from this photo session will be in the Yearbook as well as on the VCJH Student ID Lunch Card. Additionally, graduation pictures of every eighth-grade student will be taken later in the year.

Washington DC Trip

Each year, the eighth-grade students are given the opportunity to tour the Washington DC area as a group in the spring or early summer. The trip typically lasts seven to ten days and covers many of the major attractions in Washington, DC, Virginia, and the surrounding areas. It is the optimal time to visit as the students study our government and the Constitution during their eighth-grade year. All eighth-grade students are invited to go on the Washington DC trip. Students receiving 15 or more demerits during their eighth-grade school year and students on a Behavior Contract may **not** go on the Washington DC trip.

Spiritual Formation

At Valley Christian Schools, we are passionate about helping our community grow in its relationship with God through an intentional pathway called Spiritual Formation. Through interactions with Christian teachers, mentors, campus pastors, biblical teaching, and meaningful life experiences, students thoughtfully begin to answer the questions, "Who is God?" and "How am I developing a relationship with Him?" Even our youngest students can define and live out their own faith both on our campus and in the community.

1. WAY OF THE WARRIOR

For over sixty years, Valley has impacted over 9,500 students and their families. Our VCS community strives toward a primary mission: to point people to Jesus. The *Quest for Excellence* is how we accomplish God's unique call on our community, but God's kingdom mission through Valley Christian Schools is to reach Silicon Valley (and beyond) with the good news of Jesus through education.

A well-rounded education goes beyond classrooms and test scores. A comprehensive education weaves character and identity formation into our academic pursuits. In 2022, VCS launched an initiative to focus on building faith, character, and virtues for our students in their *Quest for Excellence;* we call it, the "Way of the Warrior."

The Way of the Warrior ethos is:

- **Wisdom.** The Warrior seeks to become wise on the journey of education (Proverbs 1:7).
- **Honor.** The Warrior takes ownership over their attitude, actions, thoughts, and feelings today (2 Corinthians 10:5).
- **Courage.** The Warrior knows resilience is indispensable (Proverbs 12:28).
- **Sacrifice.** The Warrior seeks the heart and mindset of Christ with whomever, or whatever is in front of them (Philippians 2:2-8).

We believe these virtues are not only foundational for students but transformational for our community and what it means to be a Warrior. Imagine the impact of a Warrior community that demonstrates wisdom, honor, courage, and sacrifice in all thoughts, words, actions, and relationships. We believe the Way of the Warrior can shape how we lead, serve, and impact our world.

Steve Dang ('02)
Chief Ministry Officer & Campus Pastor

2. OUR DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As a missional school, we desire to reach the Bay Area and beyond with the good news of Jesus. We believe every person is on a spiritual journey, so whether you are uncertain about faith or deeply committed to serving God with your life, we want to help you take the next step in your relationship with God.

3. BIBLICAL UNITY AND WELLNESS

Spiritual Formation is for everyone and is interwoven into everything we do. Jesus said the greatest command is to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:28-33). Here at Valley Christian Schools, we seek to care for the whole person through K-12 Wellness and the entire community through K-12 Biblical Unity.

A. BIBLICAL UNITY

Biblical unity is a process for the whole community of Valley Christian Schools to find belonging based on biblical examples of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Establishing belonging has three major elements: seeking unity, listening better, and reconciling differences. We want to understand and honor everyone in our diverse community of ethnicities, national origins, cultures, languages, abilities, and beliefs.

- Cultural education and celebrations throughout the year
- Healthy relationships curriculum and program development
- Parent focus groups about cultural conversations and God's commission
- Monthly Biblical Unity articles and reflections for the community

B. WELLNESS

Psalms 139 states God created our inmost being and we are fearfully and wonderfully made by Him. He designed us to have thoughts, feelings, passions, and gifts, all packaged in a physical body. Each part of us needs care and attention to ensure we are thriving and living the life God created us to live. The Wellness team ensures our community understands these parts of themselves and learns how to care for and honor each of them. Our desire is to provide:

- Pastoral Care for the Whole Person
- Opportunities for our community to care for each part of their being
- Social, emotional, and spiritual resources to support our community
- Embedding healthy coping strategies and Social Emotional Learning Strategies into the school day
- Investing in and Supporting Parents

6. CAMPUS MINISTRIES

A. BIBLE CLASSES

Every student is required to take a Bible class each year. Our Junior High Bible curriculum is shaped around the Trinity, with sixth grade focusing on God the Father, seventh grade focusing on God the Son, and eighth grade focusing on God the Holy Spirit.
Valley Christian Junior High offers students the opportunity to learn at a young age how to demonstrate God's love. VCJH encourages students to serve, inspire, and motivate others on and off our campus in their everyday lives. Through action and love, students seek to advance God's Kingdom with the redemptive power of the Gospel to transform our communities and the world.

B. CHAPEL

Chapel is our opportunity to take a pause from our busy weekly schedules to be encouraged

in our faith. Faith and fun go hand-in-hand so we seek to build an interactive experience to help students grow through a combination of music, games, fun, conversations, service, and/or guest speakers who connect Biblical principles to everyday life. To learn more about our chapel experience, visit - https://www.vcs.net/spiritualformation/junior-high-faith

• Weekly Chapels
• Bi-annual Spiritual Emphasis Weeks give students the opportunity to focus on their faith.

With our aim to meet our students in a developmentally appropriate and engaging way, we program our chapels so that they are fun and engaging. They feature skits or games, and we offer three different styles of chapels that we offer.

i. **Standard Chapel** - boasting a 5-minute game, 10 minutes of worship, and a 15-minute biblical message
ii. **Play Chapel** - featuring 10 minutes of games, 10 minutes of worship, and a 10-minute biblical message
iii. **Sing Chapel -** featuring 5 minutes of games, 15 minutes of worship, and a 10-minute biblical message

C. **CLUBS**

We are excited to share about our Spiritual Formation Warrior Time, which features two Bible studies designed for students to connect with staff and peers. These sessions are an excellent opportunity for students to build relationships and explore the scriptures together. Our assistant chaplains have developed relevant lessons aimed at fostering relationships and encouraging spiritual formation among students. These groups are part of our Discipleship Track and are gender-based, meeting on Thursdays during Warriortime:

- Girls: Radiant Souls
- Boys: Iron Sharpens Iron

We believe this program provides meaningful spiritual development and community for your teenagers. We hope they will join us in these enriching sessions.

D. **DISCIPLESHIP TRACK**

The Discipleship Track is an optional monthly gathering to help equip students with the essentials to grow in their relationship with Jesus. The Discipleship Track helps students connect to a community and explore topics such as: “how to read Scripture,” “how to find a church,” “why is it essential to serve,” “how to share your testimony,” and “why worship matters.” Our Discipleship Track leaders include teachers, chaplains, pastors, and students. For more information, visit vcs.net/spiritualformation

E. **SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

Student Opportunities of Service:
• Community Outreach Fellowship
• Campus Leadership
• Where Everybody Belongs (WEB) Program

- Warriors United
- City Team
- Socktober
- Operation Christmas Child

7. STAFF

Chief Ministry Officer
Steve Dang

Campus Pastor to Kindergarten - 8th grade
Anna Messersmith - Amessersmith@vcs.net

Assistant Chaplains
Kristin Annab - Kannab@vcs.net
Daniel Malmin - Dmalmin@vcs.net

Bible Department Head
John Delke - Jodelke@vcs.net

Attendance Procedures

What do students do when they arrive to school early?

If students arrive on campus before 8am, they MUST report to an Early Bird Study Hall class. This is not optional.

What do students do when they need to leave early?

Students who leave school early must sign out at the Junior High office and cannot be released until the office has received confirmation that the parent or approved guardian is on campus. The parent or guardian can either visit the office to sign out their student or call the office to arrange for the student to be sent out.

What do students do when they are absent due to an illness?
Parents should call the attendance line before 9am, at (408) 513-2473 or email jhattendance@vcs.net each day a student is absent. If the student is absent for more than five days due to medical reasons, a note must be obtained from the doctor stating the reason for the absence and confirming that the student is well enough to attend classes. If the student's absences exceed 10% of the school days, it is considered excessive. At that time, a doctor's note will be required for all future absences. This may also jeopardize promotion or graduation.

What do students do when they feel sick at school?

The student should tell the teacher about not feeling well. The teacher will send the student to the office with an escort. Once in the office, the office staff will assess the student. If it is necessary to have the student leave school, either the student or the office staff will call the parents.

How do students take medicine at school?

The ONLY way to take ANY medication on school grounds is to have the office dispense it (this includes cough drops, vitamins, aspirin, Midol, and Tylenol). If students need to take any medication on school grounds, they must obtain a Medication Consent Form from the office or online at JHPortal.vcs.net. The form needs to be filled out with the appropriate signatures and brought with the medication in its original container to the office. Students are responsible for coming to the office at the appropriate time to take their medication.

What do students do when they will be absent due to a personal vacation?

A parent must call or email the Junior High office to notify them of the time that will be missed from school and the reason the student will be gone. The student is responsible for completing the work listed on the teacher websites by the day of their return. There are no extensions.

What if my child forgets something? May I bring it to them?

While a parent may bring forgotten items to their child during the school day, we advise against it. VCJH subscribes to the Love and Logic philosophy of discipline. Students at this age are expected to make mistakes. It is our job as the adults in their life to help them cope with the mistake or oversight and help them problem-solve the situation. If the item is the child's lunch, the Junior High office can provide Cup Noodles to the student (cost = $1). Following this process will help the child to develop good habits,

Responsibility and encourage respect for others.

Academics

What is an A/B Block schedule?
This schedule allows students to take eight classes, four of which meet each day. Periods 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A meet on 'A' Days, while periods 1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B meet on 'B' Days.

How do students/parents keep up-to-date with changes in the schedule?
Days that we have rallies or special events on campus call for a special schedule. Special schedules are announced in the morning announcements and the Daily Bulletin, which students receive through their warriorlife email. The Daily Bulletin may be viewed on PowerSchool and the JH Parent Portal (jhportal.vcs.net).

Do the High School and Junior High students see each other during the day?
The High School and Junior High have gone to great lengths to run separate programs where the students rarely see each other during the day.

How do students and parents find current grades?
Parents and students may sign on to Schoology/PowerSchool to view the student's current grade in each of their classes.

What qualifies as Honor Roll?
Students who receive a 3.5 GPA at the close of each quarter qualify for Honor Roll. Certificates are calculated and issued by mail with their final Report Card in June.

How much homework will a student have?
On average, students will need to spend about one to one- and one-half hours on homework each evening. Remember that typically, they will not have homework in their elective classes and PE, and not every teacher will assign homework every evening. Keep up with larger projects by spending a small amount of time (30 minutes) each evening on the project over a long period of time rather than saving it all up for the night before it is due.

How do parents find out about their child's homework?
Parents may view daily lesson plans and homework on the teacher websites located at Schoology. Students are also encouraged to keep a planner to record daily homework.

Where do students purchase textbooks?
ALL student textbooks (including workbooks and online subscriptions) will be supplied by the Junior High school for a flat fee, due by mid-July. All student eBooks and workbooks will be provided through the Junior High school once school begins. Families are responsible for

purchasing and downloading the required apps listed on the VCJH iPad Program Home page.

What kind of an iPad do I need to have for school and how do I set it up?
Requirements and directions for setting up the student iPad can be found at learn.vcs.net in the VCJH iPad Program Home page after August 1.

How do I connect to the school's Wi-Fi?
Student iPads are connected automatically. Guests to the campus can access Wi-Fi through VCS visitors. Username: guest Password: gowarriors

Should a parent put restrictions on their child's iPad?
This is truly a family choice. We recommend that instead of putting restrictions on the iPad right away, the parent should have frequent communication with their child about the importance of good digital citizenship. A fantastic resource for this can be found at Common Sense Media (www.commonsensemedia.org). Additionally, parents should frequently view their child's history on the iPad, knowing that if it has been erased, there is a problem. If a parent determines that restrictions on the iPad are a necessity, information and directions on how to do this are located on the VCJH iPad Program Home page. If restrictions are placed on the iPad, be sure to email the office and/or academic counselor (sstewart@vcs.net or solson@vcs.net) with the restriction code. She will keep the code in the Junior High office in the event that the student needs iPad assistance during the school day.

What is Turnitin?
An Internet-based software program used to train students in the area of literary integrity. It compares students' papers to Internet sites, published books, other publications, and other students' papers. Periodically, students will be asked to submit their work using Turnitin. Teachers will provide detailed instructions for the students.

What is MLA format?
The MLA (Modern Language Association) format is the format most high schools, colleges, and universities require students to use in writing research and other papers. VCS teaches this format from the junior high level on to ensure that every student is proficient in using the format by the time they graduate.

Are there prerequisites for any classes?
Yes, many of the elective classes and Honors classes require prerequisites; some of the electives and math classes have several prerequisites. Math prerequisites can be found on our "Math Map" which shows the different courses available at each grade level in order to meet the needs of each individual learner and their level of competency for math. You can find this map with your child's Academic Counselor. For elective prerequisites, be sure to thoroughly read the elective descriptions. All prerequisites will be listed in the description.

How are students placed in Honors versus grade-level classes?
Each department offering Honors classes uses a set of criteria to place students at the level where the student will have the greatest chance of success coupled with a reasonable challenge. Some of the criteria used are assessment on final tests, letter grade in the subject, standardized test scores, teacher recommendation, and, if required, the placement exam to VCJH. They are required to complete more classwork and homework than in a grade level class. Also, if the student misses a certain number of homework assignments or performs poorly on tests and

quizzes, they will be moved to a grade-level class during the school year. If being in an Honors class the next year is a priority for the student, they should let the current teacher know this. This teacher will help the student know which areas they need to work on and will encourage them in meeting those goals.

Why is there such an emphasis on critical thinking in all the subjects?
Critical thinking is the ability to take thoroughly understood information and make projections based on this knowledge. The ability to think critically about any given subject demonstrates the level at which a student understands the subject. If a student is able to use critical thinking in any subject, it reveals that they not only know the facts and understand the information, but they are also able to use the information in a practical way.

Does VCJH meet the California State Standards?

Valley Christian Schools' standards and curriculum are uniquely developed to support the VCS mission, vision, and Philosophy of Christian Education. These standards exceed, meet, or modify state, national, and subject-specific association standards to achieve the highest academic quality. Fortunately, as a private school, Valley Christian Schools has the unique opportunity to select and develop K-12 standards and curriculum. While state and national common core standards mandate the skills students are taught in public schools, Valley Christian Schools is not compelled to adopt government curriculum standards.

How do parents contact a teacher?
There are several ways to contact teachers:
Email them - This is the teachers' preferred method, as the time available for them to contact parents is limited. Typically, they are able to quickly respond to an email during the school day. Teachers are available to meet with parents and students for the half hour after school has ended. Please email the teacher to set up a time to meet. Parents must check in with the security kiosk for a Visitor's Pass, and then go to the Junior High office. Students are to let their teacher know during the day that they will be stopping by during office hours.

How long before a parent can expect an email/phone call back from an administrator or teacher?
Teachers and staff are obligated to return a parent's call or email within a 24-hour business day. Sometimes, in the rush of the academic schedule, a phone call or an email to a teacher or a staff member from a parent may go unnoticed. If we do not respond within a 24-hour business day, please contact the Junior High office at (408) 513-2460.

Extra-curricular Activities

How does a student try out for a play?
Valley Christian Junior High productions are announced in the Daily Bulletin and include audition details. Keep in mind that there are academic and citizenship qualifications that must be met in order to participate.

How does a student become a cheerleader at VCJH?
Cheerleading is an afterschool sport open to all students. Tryouts are held in the spring for the following year's cheerleaders. Watch the announcements for tryout dates.

What does a student need in order to try out for an afterschool sport?
All students need an Athletic Pre-Participation Physical exam with their doctor prior to trying out for an afterschool sport. Physical submission take place by visiting https://valleychristian-ca.finalforms.com/

Is there a cost to participate in an afterschool sport?
Yes, the participation fee is per sport for the first two sports and the third sport is free for any given year.

Are there sign-ups for competing in an afterschool sport?
Sign-ups and physical submission take place by visiting https://valleychristian-ca.finalforms.com/ Follow the prompts to create an account, sign up for sports and submit your child's physical.

When do tryouts begin, and where is that information posted?
Tryout dates are posted at gowarriors.net; hover over Junior High and then click on Tryouts.

Where can parents get a copy of game schedules?
Athletic schedules are posted on the Athletic website at gowarriors.net. Keep in mind that schedules DO change, so when in doubt, confirm it with the coach.

When is practice, and how long is it?
Practice is typically Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:15-5pm. Some practices may end at 4:30pm or 5:30pm. Each coach will provide a complete practice schedule at the start of the season with practice days and times.

Is there an opportunity for parents to meet the coaches?
Yes! At the start of each season, there is a parents' meeting for each team. This is a great opportunity to meet the coach, learn about their expectations, and ask questions. Dates and times for these meetings are distributed to the players at the end of tryouts.

How are players selected for a particular team?
Each sport takes a minimum of two days of tryouts to assess each student's skill level and overall character traits. The coaches then maximize their team roster by choosing the best players based on their evaluation from tryouts.

How many players make each team?
It is our goal to keep as many players as possible. Listed below is the average number of players that typically make each team offered by VCJH.

6th, 7th, and 8th Girls Volleyball: 10-12 per team
6th, 7th, and 8th Flag Football: 18-25 per team
Softball: 12-15 per team
Cross Country: Unlimited
6th, 7th, and 8th Girls Basketball: 10-15 per team 6th, 7th, and 8th Boys Basketball: 10-15 per team Wrestling: Unlimited
Girls Soccer: 18-25 per team
Boys Soccer: 18-25 per team
Spring Girls Volleyball: 12-15 per team
Spring Boys Volleyball: 12-15 per team
Track and Field: Unlimited
Tennis: Unlimited
Golf: Roughly 30 make the practice squad and the top 10 players play in matches.

Does VCJH offer any non-cut sports?
Yes! Cross Country, Wrestling, Tennis, and Track and Field are all non-cut sports.

Whom can parents call with additional questions regarding after-school sports?
Call the Athletic Office at (408) 513-2522 or check out the Athletic Handbook located at gowarriors.net.

Discipline

Where do students and parents read about school discipline?
There is a large section in the Student Handbook about discipline. It is a good idea to read that section and the Student Handbook in its entirety.

What happens if a student gets a Referral?
Any staff member or teacher may write a student a Referral for breaking school rules. Students receiving a Referral will first visit with an administrator to discuss the reason for the Referral. At the time of that visit, the administrator will determine the consequence using the guidelines outlined in the Student Handbook. The consequence is determined by the offense. Students who receive numerous Referrals will be placed on a Behavior Contract.

What is the criterion for any student to participate in an overnight trip?
Students must have less than 15 demerits in any given year to participate in an overnight field trip in the Junior High. A list of demerits may be viewed in the Student Handbook. A parent may view their child's discipline record on PowerSchool by clicking on the blue "View Log Entries" at the top of the screen once they have signed in.

Demerit Point System:
Referrals = 5
demerits Pink Slips =
1 demerit

Why can't students use phones in the classroom?
Actually, with the iPad utilizing iMessage, there is no need for a student to have a phone while on campus. Phones are a major distraction in the classroom. When they ring, they bring the class to an abrupt halt. Also, text messaging and other forms of silent communication on cell phones facilitate cheating in the classroom. If a phone is in the classroom, it is to be powered OFF and in the student's backpack at all times.

Get Connected

All parents who have a child at VCJH are considered members of the Parent Teacher Prayer Fellowship (PTPF). The PTPF Board is composed of strong Christian parents of current Valley Christian Junior High School students.

The purpose of the fellowship is to provide an organizational structure through which parents, teachers, and administrators of Valley Christian Schools can work together in prayer and fellowship to strengthen the spiritual and educational objectives of the school. At the beginning of the school year, opportunities to serve can be found by logging in to the JH Parent Portal by going to JHPortal.vcs.net then Announcements and News, then clicking the July Newsletter on the page that opens. Information about opportunities to serve can be found here.

There are also many opportunities for parents to meet other VCJH families. These include: New Parent Orientation, Student Orientation, and the Pancake Breakfast, to name just a few. Be sure to read the monthly newsletter to keep up to date with opportunities.

How are the PTPF Board nominations made?
"The nomination and election process shall be as follows: The principal shall submit the names of potential candidates for elected offices and standing committee chairmanships to the Board of Directors of Valley Christian Schools for approval. From the list of approved candidates, nominees will be selected by the principal in consultation with the current board members and the elected officers of the fellowship. These officers shall be elected annually by the members of the fellowship at a regular meeting during the fourth quarter of the school year and will assume office effective July 1." (PTPF Constitution, VC017 rev. 6/01)

Traffic

Why must students only be picked up in front of the Football Stadium and Soccer Field?
Students are picked up in this area for safety reasons. When students were allowed to be picked up outside this area, many crossed the pickup lane and entered the passing lane, nearly getting hit by passing cars in the process. There was also a lot of "shenanigans" by students in non-supervised areas, causing real danger to themselves and others. So, students are now required to stay in the supervised area in front of the Football Stadium and Soccer Field. We also have an agreement with the city that does not allow students to be picked up in the neighborhoods. Students also may not be dropped off or picked up in the Visitor Lot or Blue Lot.

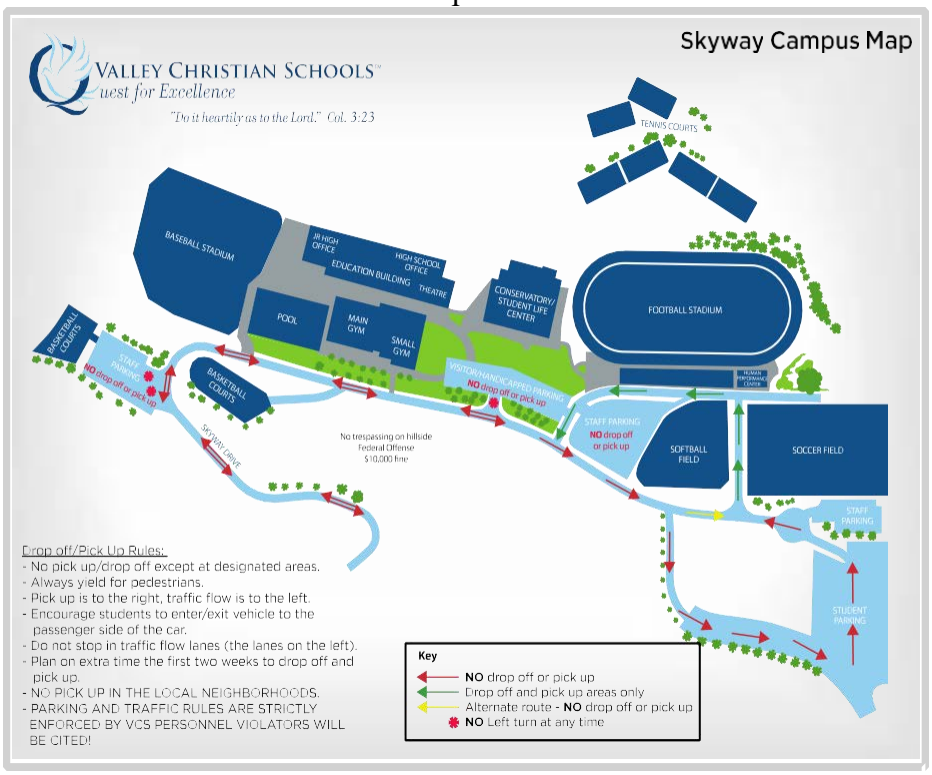
What is the best way to avoid traffic when picking up a student from school?
Because the Junior High and High School share the same campus but have different dismissal times, it is important for parents to pick up during the particular campus' dismissal time. This means that junior high parents should arrive on campus no sooner than 3:15pm for regular dismissal time. This will allow the High School, which has been dismissed at 2:35pm, enough time to clear their students and cars from the area before the Junior High parents arrive. Students may not be picked up or dropped off in the Visitor Lot, Blue Lot, or in the neighborhood.

May students walk out to the outer parking lot to be picked up by a high school sibling who drives to school?
The junior high students with a senior (twelfth grade) sibling who drives to school may obtain a "Walking Pass" from the Junior High office. This will allow the student to cross WITH their high school sibling to walk out to the car. Students may not go out by themselves nor go out without a pass.

May students walk home from school?
Yes. If the student's parent has signed the Walking Home Permission Slip AND the student has come to the office to pick up a "Walking Pass," then the student may walk home from school. Students must follow all pedestrian laws as they walk home so that they are safe!

What if the student's parents can't pick them up right away?
If a student's ride does not pick up immediately after school, the student may wait in the Quad area, on the grassy area by the Small Gym, in the Learning Commons between 4 and 6pm, or in the library (Monday through Thursday until 5pm). All other areas are off limits. Students may enter the pick-up area just before their ride arrives but may not wait in that area for an extended period of time.

Where can information about busing be found?
Information about buses can be found by logging in to the JH Parent Portal by going to JHPortal.vcs.net then Transportation.



How To's

Food Service Account Information

Instead of using cash, students will now make their on-campus food purchases digitally! Students will be assigned a Valley Christian Food Services Student Lunch ID Number to use when purchasing from VCS Food Services (the Lunch Line). This 5-digit ID will be located on the student body card and may alternatively be keyed in as a PIN number.
Please note that cash will no longer be accepted at the Lunch Line.

In order to take advantage of this service, a parent account will need to be created.

1. Open a browser and go to www.myschoolaccount.com
2. Click "Create Account" on the top menu bar
3. Fill in the required information on the "Parent Account Sign-Up" page
4. Create a User Name ID and Password
5. From the "School District" drop-down menu, choose Valley Christian Schools
6. Accept the terms of the user agreement and click Next
7. Review the information and click Finish
8. Read the information and then click Continue. The system will send a verification code by email. Use that verification code on the first login.

Go to http://www.myschoolaccount.com and log in using the newly created User Name ID and Password (keep this info secure, VCS staff will not be able to recover it should it be lost or forgotten). Enter the verification code to verify the account and email address. Parents may then begin adding their child's information according to the guidelines provided. For more than one child, parents will need each of their children's Food Services Student Lunch ID Numbers in order to add each separately. After the accounts are created, parents will be able to load an account balance to the student lunch account and eventually be able to view lunch account activity.

How much money should a student bring for lunch?
The only reason that a student will need cash on campus is to purchase a snack from one of our vending machines.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is a program that provides access to a student's grades, attendance records, and school announcements. It is an Internet-based system that provides for real-time management of student data within a user-friendly environment. It allows parents and students to access up-to-date information such as grades, attendance, assignments, discipline records, and more. Access to PowerSchool is gained through the Parent Portal at JHPortal.vcs.net or directly through powerschool.vcs.net.

As parents and students view grades and assignments, they should keep in mind that the available information will vary from course to course, depending on the curriculum. Click on any percentages, letter grades, or assignments, which are blue, to reveal more information. The Valley Christian Junior High Grading and Posting Policy will be:

POWERSCHOOL GRADING AND POSTING POLICY

Grading Student Work:
DAILYASSIGNMENTS,WORKBOOKS,and QUIZZES will be graded and returned the next day the class meets or no more than two class days later. * MAJOR TESTS and ASSIGNMENTS will be graded and returned within one week.*

Posting to Schoology/PowerSchool:
After an assignment has been graded within the above guidelines,t he assignment will be posted to Schoology/PowerSchool. All graded student work for the week will be updated in Schoology/PowerSchool by Friday at 5:00pm.

Note:
*Given the nature of the assignment, some assignments may take longer to grade and post than others. Teachers will post in the "assignment description" detail on Schoology/ PowerSchool information regarding extra time needed for individual assignments.

Parents also have the opportunity to sign up for automatic email alerts, which provide such information as grades, assignments, and/or attendance information sent to them via email at user-specified intervals. They must provide a current email address in the field provided. It is important for parents to remember that all email replies must be directed to the faculty member or administrator who can best serve them. The auto-generated email will not process direct replies.

Tough Situations

How will VCJH protect my child in the event of an intruder on campus?
In addition to fire and earthquake drills, VCS practices Lockdown and Shelter-in-Place drills, which prepare students to take cover in the unlikely event that an unwanted intruder enters the campus. The staff at VCS has received specific training regarding protecting and calming the students. VCS employs and maintains 24/7 on-campus armed security staff.

What if I am running late?
Step 1: Look at the time.
Step 2: If it is 5 minutes before the last bell, then go to class; if it is after, then go to the office.
Step 3: Look inside the door of the class.
Step 4: If people are praying, pray with them at the door. If they aren't, then quietly enter.
Step 5: Enter the classroom quietly and go to your seat.
Step 6: During break, ask a classmate, "Did I miss anything at the beginning of class?"
Step 7: Stay after class and tell the teacher, "I am sorry for being late."

Help! I went to the wrong class!
Tell your teacher, "I'm sorry, I went to the wrong class. Will you please do me a favor and iMessage my teacher to let her know I am on my way? Thanks so much."

- Re-read the schedule and memorize it.
- Set the image of your schedule as your iPad's screen saver.

Help! I don't know what class to go to. I am lost!
Our schedule changes, and sometimes it is hard to always know where you should go when the bell rings.
Step 1: Find out if it is an A Day or a B Day. (It will be posted in the office window and can be found on your iPad's calendar.)
Step 2: Remember, Wednesdays are weird.
Step 3: If you are still lost, go to the office or ask an eighth grader for help. Helpful tricks to not get lost:

- Read the schedule and memorize it.
- Listen to the announcements closely; there are rallies and other special schedules.

I do not have anybody to sit with at lunch!?
Step 1: Make a friend in each class.
Step 2: Ask them to meet you near the office at lunch.
Step 3: If you are feeling bold, sit next to them… Or say…. "May I please sit next to you?"
Sep 4: If you are not comfortable asking people, then come visit the Warriors United Club. There are lots of people there ready to be friends. They meet in Room 406!

- Remember, in the first weeks of school, many people are nervous about this. You are not alone.

How in the world is this "eight-different-teachers" thing going to work?
Step 1: Bring an iPad, pencil, and paper.
Step 2: When you sit down in class on the first day, take notes on what the teacher likes.

Step 3: Talk to peers after class about how this teacher likes work turned in and assignments finished.
Step 4: Read the Syllabus; it is your map and your guide.
Step 5: Follow the rules as best you can.
Step 6: If something is unclear, email the teacher or stay after class and ask.

I feel anxious about all of this change! Help!!!
Step 1: Ask God for help.
Step 2: Look out over the view and take a couple of deep breaths.
Step 3: Tell yourself, "I am going to be ok. This is stressful, but I will make it home today safely and will be alright."
Step 4: Find a counselor to talk about your feelings.

Uh…. I didn't know that was a rule here!
Step 1: Read the Student Handbook cover to cover.
Step 2: Say, "I am sorry."
Step 3: If there are consequences, accept them. Say, "I am sorry and I am still learning the rules."

My iPhone is going off in the middle of class; what do I do?
Step 1: Silence your phone as calmly and quickly as possible.
Step 2: If appropriate, apologize to the class; say something like, "I am sorry my phone went off in class. It will not happen again."
Step 3: Allow the teacher to take it.
Step 4: You will meet Mr. Parmenter (he seems scary, but he is actually nice). He will return your phone to you.

- Make sure to turn off or put your phone in Airplane Mode every morning before school starts.

Getting called on in class
Step 1: Say, "Thanks" to the teacher or classmate who called on you. You just bought yourself time to come up with an answer.
Step 2: Then cover your mouth with your left hand. Take your hand off your mouth when you are ready to speak.
Step 3: Answer the question, or ask a clarifying question like, "What do you mean?"
Step 4: Use as few words as possible to satisfy the answer.

- If you are nervous about reading in front of the class or something else like that, practice at home. Next time you have to read for English, read part of it in front of the mirror or an adult and ask them how you did.

How do I stay in dress code?
Step 1: Read and know the Handbook policies.
Step 2: If unsure, bring it to the front office and ask if it is in dress code.
Step 3: If still unsure, bring a second clothing item that you are sure is safe.

Which bus do I get on?

Step 1: Find the number of the bus you need to ride on.
- If you know your number, look at the front of the bus where they should have that number posted.
- If you are out **by the pick-up line**: find a teacher to figure out what number bus you need to get on.
- If you are **by the office**: go to the office to find the Bus Routes paper.

Step 2: When stepping on the bus, ask or confirm with the bus driver. They are nice.

A student is bugging me in class…
Step 1: Tell the student: "Please stop."
Step 2: Ask the teacher to move seats. Tell them it is hard to learn next to this student due to their actions.
Step 3: Email the teacher explaining what has happened, asking them for further help.

A student is bugging me outside of class…
Step 1: Tell the student: "Please stop."
Step 2: Find a teacher who is on duty or go to the office.
Step 3: If the student persists, tell the teacher or office staff member this person's name and what they are doing.
Step 4: Email the Dean of Students, Mr. Parmenter, asking for help on how to address the student who keeps doing this.