



Vegas Vista Academy
PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Updated June 2025
Approved by VVA Board of Trustees 03/06/2024

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INTRODUCTION

Mission

Vegas Vista Academy breaks down the barriers set by traditional patterns of inequality through experience and education. We facilitate equity and access for all to a data-driven, world class curriculum focused on academic excellence, community service learning, bilingual fluency, and outdoor experiential education.

Vision

We believe ALL students and families deserve access to innovative, effective, and proven models of education to realize and unlock their potential. Vegas Vista Academy graduates will find future success as Inquisitive and Research-Based Critical Thinkers; Effective and Courageous Communicators; Socially Conscious and Community-Minded Leaders; and Goal-Oriented, Resolute and Motivated Lifelong Learners. With a student-centered focus, Vegas Vista Academy aims to be a community center of lifelong learning, strong support, and full social services for all of our stakeholders. Together, we will work to effect lasting positive change in our community.

Vegas Vista Academy Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

At Vegas Vista Academy, everyone has a seat at the table, and everyone has a voice. Our social emotional learning efforts will focus on creating a comfortable and safe space for sharing emotions and experiences, and our vision includes creating a brave and inclusive space where we will equitably respect and respond to the diverse voices of all students, families, staff, and community stakeholders. Together, we will welcome and celebrate those things that make each of us a unique member of the Vegas Vista Academy community.

Vegas Vista Academy is a free public charter school. As such, there are no required fees, donations, or charges for any family or student to attend VVA.

VVA 2025-2026 School Calendar

8/04/25	Staff Development Week (First Day for 10-Month Employees)
8/07/25	Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting/Back to School Night (All Staff + Families)
8/11/25	First Day of School (Mon-Thurs; All Fridays are Teacher In-Service Days)
8/26/25	August Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
8/27/25	Picture Day, K-1
8/28/25	Picture Day, 2-5
9/01/25	No School: Labor Day
9/30/25	September Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
10/01/25	Nevada Count Day
10/10/25	End of 1st Quarter
10/3, 9, 10	No School: Parent Conferences
10/13-17/25	No School: Fall Break
10/28/25	October Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
10/30/25	Fall Festival!
10/31/25	No School: Nevada Day
11/11/25	No School: Veteran's Day
11/17-21/25	VVA Book Fair
11/25/25	November Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
11/26-28/25	No School: Thanksgiving Week
12/16/25	December Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
12/19/25	End of 2nd Quarter and 1st Semester
12/22-1/2/26	No School: Winter Break
1/05/26	Classes Resume
1/19/26	No School: MLK Day
1/27/26	January Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
2/13/26	Contingency Day
2/16/26	No School: Presidents' Day
2/24/26	February Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
3/6, 13	No School: Parent Conferences
3/13/26	End of 3rd Quarter
3/16-20/26	No School: Spring Break
3/23/26	Classes Resume
3/27/26	Contingency Day
3/31/26	March Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
4/28/26	April Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
4/30/26	International Culture Festival (May Day)
5/15/26	Contingency Day
5/25/26	No School: Memorial Day
5/26/26	May Donuts With Doc (Family Meeting)
5/29/26	End of 4th Quarter and End of School Year
6/03/26	Last Day for Teachers and 10-Month Staff

ACADEMICS

International Baccalaureate (IB)

VVA is an IB Candidate school. As such, we will be employing the IB Approaches to Learning skills and the IB Learner Profile.

Homework, Practice Packets, and Daily Reading

Vegas Vista Academy does not give homework (in the form of graded assignments), but we do give take home practice packets every 1-2 weeks. Vegas Vista Academy expects all students and families to engage in reading every evening. Reading has been proven to exponentially increase student academic engagement and achievement, it has been proven to increase their empathy and compassion, it helps them build stronger imaginations, and it can bring families together. Every VVA family is expected to create a calm space and dedicated time for your child to read every day. The amount, time, and tracking of your child's daily reading will vary by grade level and increase with independence as your child ages and improves their reading. Parent involvement is strongly encouraged. The best thing you can do is model reading for and/or with your child and create a routine for reading.

- Read aloud to your child
- Read next to them
- Ask them questions about what they read
- Get excited about reading

Interventions and Learning

VVA recognizes that all students will learn and grow in different ways and at different speeds. As such, some students may require additional support in the curriculum. Students may require support because of language, special needs, or trouble with a specific concept. VVA will take clear steps to provide students with the support they need. This may include individual attention in the classroom, small group instruction, or individual support outside of the classroom. If additional time after school is required, parents will be notified in advance. Likewise, if additional work is required, families will be notified and the additional assignments will be explained.

Assessments and Evaluation

In addition to the traditional classroom assessment measures, we will use several other assessment tools to evaluate the progress of our students:

- Externally-created exams: VVA students are held to the same standards as other students in Nevada. Students will take the state assessments (SBAC) in grades 3-8 in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies in order to demonstrate grade-level proficiency. In all grades, students will take the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment – a nationally standardized assessment. Families will receive MAP Individual Progress Reports during all assessment windows tested.
- Reading benchmarks: To demonstrate students' progress in reading, students will be given reading proficiency tests, such as the NWEA MAP assessment, Fountas and Pinnel, or similar assessments. The results will determine the student's current reading level that will be noted on report cards.
- Kindergarten Assessment: Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, the State of Nevada is requiring all kindergarten students to be assessed using the Kindergarten Early Assessment Gold (KEWA Gold). Students will be given this assessment during the month of August in their Kindergarten classes.

Assessment, Grading, and Report Cards

At VVA, our focus is on teaching students how to learn and instilling a lifelong love of learning. The IB PYP curriculum emphasizes learning skills, and assessing students' understanding and application of knowledge rather than solely relying on numerical grades. Grading in IB and at VVA goes beyond grades and scores by focusing on authentic, holistic assessment. Vegas Vista Academy promotes personalized learning, critical thinking, and the application of knowledge.

VVA recognizes that children have diverse strengths and abilities. We will employ a variety of assessment strategies that cater to different learning styles and allow students to demonstrate their understanding in various ways. An integral part of the assessment in the IB PYP is the use of rubrics. Rubrics provide clear criteria for evaluating student work across different subject areas. By using rubrics, teachers can provide specific feedback highlighting areas of success and improvement. This approach ensures that learning is personalized and tailored to each child's unique needs.

GRADING EXPECTATIONS:

All VVA teachers are expected to enter a minimum of 1 grade per class, per week. These may be formative or summative grades. Teachers and staff utilize report cards each quarter to formally communicate students' academic and behavioral performance. Grades do reflect effort, but are focused on the student's level of mastery of the material. Report cards will be based on the standards and reflect the learning of the student. At Vegas Vista Academy, report cards reflect mastery of both academic standards and holistic standards for wellness, social-emotional development and project-based learning. VVA uses a 4-point scale:

4 Point Scale:

Grades will be reported utilizing a 4 point scale, which also translates well to the use of rubrics for specific assignments and projects.

4	Exceeding Standards/Learning Goals	Consistently exceeds expectations for skills and understanding
3	Meeting Standards/Learning Goals	Consistently meets expectations for skills and understanding
2	Approaching Standards/Learning Goals	Meets some expectations for skills and understanding
1	Below Standards/Learning Goals	Meets few expectations for skills and understanding

Promotion Policy

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students in all grades are expected to meet the following criteria or receive a comprehensive review for retention (at the school's discretion):

- Absent less than or equal to 15 days
- Achieve average standards-based mastery of "meets standards" in all subjects and/or demonstrate 1.25 years of growth on grade-level standards
- Grow a minimum of one year in reading

If two or more of these criteria are not met, the student may not be eligible for promotion. Students

enrolling at VVA will be presumptively placed in the grade level equivalent to their corresponding age per Nevada statutes. In order to place a student in a grade not corresponding to the typical age upon initial enrollment (advancement or retention), a family must provide current school documentation in the form of a cumulative file or current retention paperwork indicating the current or next expected grade level of the student. VVA retains the right to utilize academic data to modify grade level placement within the first semester enrolled.

Student Supplies

The easiest way to manage supplies in primary classrooms without disrupting classroom time or having unprepared students is to have shared supplies within the classroom. Vegas Vista Academy provides students with their own supplies. We do not ask families to purchase an exhaustive list of materials. Each teacher may give a short list of requested items.

Each student should have their own backpack, water bottle, and lunch bag (if bringing lunch from home). Families needing assistance acquiring these items may speak with the main office, who can assist.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance Policy

Students at VVA must be in school, ready to learn every day. Regular attendance is mandatory and poor attendance will not be tolerated. Families should not schedule vacations and non-emergency appointments during school time. Families should take advantage of Staff Fridays, as well as holidays and school vacations, to schedule appointments and travel.

Absences

Absences are only “excused” for illness or a verifiable family emergency. These absences can only be counted as excused if a written note from the legal guardian is received in the main office within 24 hours of the student’s return to school. All other absences, including those related to trips or vacations taken outside of school wide breaks and those for appointments, are considered “unexcused.”

If and when you know your child will be absent, please do one of the following:

- Send a written and signed note ahead of time
- Email an absence note to attendance@vegasvistaacademy.org
- Call the school office and leave a voice message at 702-291-8741

In all cases, please include your child’s name, grade, teacher’s name, date of absence, and reason for absence. Please also include your name. Sample absence note:

September 20, 2024

Please excuse my child, Moana of Motonui, Grade 1, Ms. Cinderella’s class, for her absence on September 18, 2024. She was home with a fever. If you have any questions, please contact me at 702-111-1111.

*Thank you,
Chief Tui of Motonui*

A doctor’s note or other official documentation is required for any absence period of 2 or more consecutive days. Notes from the doctor must come on official letterhead.

To be counted as present for a full day, a student must attend the majority of the school day, missing no more than two hours (120 minutes). Students missing more than 30 minutes but less than 120 minutes will be counted as having attended for a half day, with the remainder of the day being either an excused or unexcused absence.

Tardies And Early Dismissals

School begins each morning at 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be inside the school building by 8:00 a.m.. Students arriving at school after 8:15 am are marked tardy. In order for a student to be marked tardy, the student must arrive with a parent to sign them in. Late arrival exceeding 30 minutes will be counted as a half-day, unexcused absence.

Similarly, a student leaving early by more than 60 minutes will be counted half-day, unexcused absence. A student leaving less than 60 minutes early will be considered early dismissal.

Consequences For Excessive Tardies, Early Dismissals, Or Absences

After 10% absences or 20% tardies/early dismissals in a school year, a child is at risk of retention. Exceptions to this policy are made on extremely rare occasions for long-term hospitalizations or other

health-based measures based on an appropriate medical authority, court-mandated appearances, and religious observances. Additionally, students are afforded rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act should their absences be related to a disabling condition.

Monitoring and Early Intervention:

- 15% absences in a month: If a student misses 15% of days of school in one month, it is considered a significant amount of time missed and a serious problem. At this point, the school will send an official notice of concern.
- 15% tardies and/or early dismissals in a trimester: If a student is tardy or signed out from school before 3:45pm five (5) times in a month (20% of total school days), it is considered a significant amount of time missed and a serious problem. The school will send an official notice of concern.

Annual Attendance Expectations

- Students are encouraged to take necessary sick days, including mental health days, with appropriate parental supervision and documentation, if the absence is two days or longer. Please ensure your child stays home if they are or may be contagious. The average student misses approximately 2-4 days of school each year.
- 15 Days of Absence: If a student becomes chronically absent defined as 15 or more absences within a school year, the school will require that the parent/guardian meet with the student's teacher, as well as a school administrator to discuss the problem, its significant impact on the student's education, and the risk of retention in the same grade.
- 20% tardies and/or early dismissals: If a student is excessively tardy (defined as 20% tardies within a school year), the school will require that the parent/guardian meet with the student's teacher, as well as a school administrator to discuss the problem, its significant impact on the student's education, and the risk of retention in the same grade.
- At any point in the academic year, after sending an official notification of concern or the student's attendance does not improve, the school reserves the right to remove the student at any given moment during the year.

VVA follows all legal and regulatory requirements and technical guidance from the Nevada Department of Education to determine if a student is classified as Did Not Return, Consecutive Absences, Return Date Unknown, Whereabouts Known or Whereabouts Unknown rules regarding when a student must be unenrolled. Once unenrolled, all students must follow standard application procedures to seek enrollment at VVA.

Pursuant to NRS 392.040, enrolled children under the age of 18 are expected to be in school during the time the school is in session. All students will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow procedures set out in NRS 392.180, *et seq.*, if the student does not comply with the law. In cases of truancy, the Principal (or their designee) will investigate the situation.

Arrival And Early Morning Procedures

VVA opens its gates at 7:30 a.m. every day. Students are welcome to arrive any time between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Unless an appointment has been made with a specific staff member ahead of time, students and families must remain outside of the school building until 7:30 a.m. Students who have arranged for early arrival (before school care) will follow their pre-approved individual arrival schedules.

Procedure For Early Dismissal

When a student must leave early for personal reasons, the parent/guardian, or designee must sign the

student out with the Main Office before removing the student from school grounds prior to the end of the school day. Students will not be dismissed unless the parent/guardian or designee has physically come to the Main Office. Early dismissal requests within 15 minutes of the end time of the school day will not be granted.

Dismissal And After-School Procedures

Students will be dismissed from school at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (there is no school for students on Friday). Parents/guardians who arrive before dismissal must wait in the carpool line or the designated walkers area until students are dismissed by their teacher. The carpool lane opens 30 minutes before dismissal. Gates will remain closed until that time.

In order to ensure a timely dismissal for all students, we are unable to provide early dismissal for students in the last 15 minutes of school. The last 15 minutes of the day contain important learning for students, and this part of the day is critical to ensuring that all necessary work and announcements get home with students.

If parents need to speak to a teacher or conduct any other classroom business, this should occur by appointment with the teacher only. Timely pick-up of students is critical so that our already hard-working and highly dedicated teachers do not have to stay after their normal working hours.

School Closings

In the event of a school closing, such as for building, safety, or weather issues, VVA will send emails and text messages to parents when the closing decision is made or learned of by administration. Parents will also be notified of school reopening information as soon as it is made available. When Clark County School District (CCSD) closes for inclement weather or modifies the calendar or mode of instruction for any other state of emergency (75% or more of schools), so does VVA.

ATTIRE (School Uniform Policy)

All Vegas Vista Academy students will wear standard attire every day. Standard attire helps to promote a sense of community and belonging, and minimizes perceived inequalities between children. We realize many of our families may have hardships providing their children with attire. Our aim is to provide every student with a polo shirt and a VVA t-shirt at the start of each year (at least). We also hope to set up uniform assistance with some of our wraparound providers and set up a uniform exchange for our families. All uniform items must fit correctly (nothing oversized or excessively small).

Tops: All students must wear solid color polo shirts, long sleeved polo shirts, button down shirts, or VVA t-shirts. All polo shirts must be solid colors and must be one of the standard tops colors: Navy, Light Blue, Yellow, Khaki, White, Dark Green, or Black. No Red or Pinks are allowed.

Bottoms: All students must wear pants or knee-length shorts or skirts. All bottoms must be solid colors and must be one of the standard bottoms colors: Navy, Khaki, or Black. Jeans are allowed as long as they are Navy or Black with no holes or tears.

Shoes: All students must wear close-toed shoes (sneakers, boots, or flats).

Accessories: Belts worn must be Black or Brown. Students may wear ties. Sweaters, sweatshirts, or jackets worn indoors must be solid standard jacket colors: Navy, Light Blue, Khaki, White, Dark Green, or Black. No logos may be worn on any articles of clothing besides the Vegas Vista Academy logo. No hats may be worn indoors, with the exception of religious or cultural head coverings, wraps or ties. Piercing of the ears and wearing up to 2 earrings in each ear will be allowed, however, the wearing of other body piercing items and/or tattoos is not allowed.

Spirit Days

VVA will occasionally offer themed spirit days with alternative dress. Students must participate in the activities of the specific spirit or dress down day in order to be excused from the typical uniform requirements.

Field Trips

Students MUST wear their blue VVA t-shirts and be clearly identifiable as a VVA student in order to attend a field trip. This is a safety issue. Students not in uniform or refusing to wear uniform apparel will not be allowed to attend field trips. In all cases, attendance at field trips is a privilege and not a right. The Executive Director, at their sole discretion, may elect not to allow a student to participate in a field trip, excursion, or other activity in or outside of school as a result of the students' behavior, academic performance, or other concerns.

BIRTHDAYS AND CLASS CELEBRATIONS

We encourage families to celebrate their students birthday in small but meaningful ways, such as allowing them to wear a special crown or headband (hats are not permitted), wearing a pin or sash that celebrates their birthday, or bringing a store-bought treat to share with their class. Students are permitted to bring store-bought treats to be shared with classmates, provided they meet these requirements:

- The teacher is notified at least 24 hours in advance. Families can notify the teacher by email or leaving a message with the Main Office.
- The treats, such as cupcakes or cookies, are already packaged in individual servings.
- All treats are **nut free**.
- Sufficient items are provided that every child in the homeroom class can have one. Ask your child's teacher for the exact number. We also recommend bringing enough for the teacher!

Classroom teachers will decide when treats will be served to students. Birthday treats should be easy and quick to serve. Large productions like parties are not permitted for birthdays. We will not celebrate birthdays in the cafeteria but celebrate in classrooms during snack or at the end of the school day. Please do NOT bring ice cream, as this is difficult to serve and clean. Individual goodie bags are permitted as long as every student in the student's class receives one.

Parents are not required to send birthday treats to school. The VVA community may sing "Happy Birthday and/or Las Mañanitas" regardless of whether families have sent anything to school. Invitations for individual birthday parties are not to be distributed at school unless there is an invitation included for every child in the student's class. Large birthday displays or decorations are not permitted as they often distract from learning for the student and their peers.

Other Celebrations

We know holidays can be exciting times of year for children. The many celebrations that take place at VVA center on school traditions, academics, or celebrate our college-going culture. These include things such as the 100th Day of School, field trips, Reading Week, the May Day Multi-Cultural Festival, and others. We also recognize, honor, and celebrate the national identity months, such as Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Pride Month. If you require accommodation for sincerely held religious beliefs to have a student abstain from specific celebrations, please communicate with your child's teacher and accommodations will be made.

VVA SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

VVA is a public institution. As such, it is every individual's right to attend VVA Board meetings. The VVA School Board meets on the first Wednesday of every month. All Board meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes are posted on our website (www.vegasvistaacademy.org).

VVA COMPLAINT POLICY

Both the school and the Board of Directors work in conjunction with one another to hear and resolve any complaints. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the problem directly with the staff member(s).

If you are dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the appropriate faculty or staff member, the complaint should be delivered in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will also request a written report from the appropriate faculty or staff member. After reviewing the written

statements by the staff member and the complainant and undertaking any additional investigation deemed necessary by the situation, the Executive Director will present an appellate decision to the complainant.

If the situation has still not been resolved and you would like to submit an appeal, the Board encourages you to fill out a grievance form to be addressed to the Board of Directors by requesting one at the school and submitting it to be delivered to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will not hear complaints that have not first followed these procedures of complaints being addressed directly to staff, and properly documented in writing.

We welcome you to contact us at any time. Please use the information below to contact us at your convenience.

Vegas Vista Academy
hr@vegasvistaacademy.org
702-291-8741

VVA DISCIPLINE POLICY

Philosophy

At Vegas Vista Academy, we believe the best approach to student discipline is to be proactive to teach students what is and what is not acceptable individual and group behavior, to provide opportunities for students to learn these expectations, policies, and procedures, and to provide student and staff support along the way. There are multiple levels of interventions to meet the differentiated needs of our students.

Expectations

In accordance with our school culture and climate of caring, it is the responsibility of every Vegas Vista Academy student and staff member to respect the rights of everyone and manage their own behavior. All Vegas Vista Academy students are supported in caring for each other and are expected to do so, including caring for those who are different from them. A culture and climate of caring also means students feel welcome, safe, and have a sense of belonging to the Vegas Vista Academy community.

At Vegas Vista Academy, we use the “HOOT” model of school wide behavior expectations:

H: Honor Everyone
O: Own Your Actions
O: Observe the Rules
T: Try Your Best

Classroom Management

The first step in being proactive in teaching our students is to clearly communicate classroom expectations, policies, and procedures. The Vegas Vista Academy Mission and Vision will be clearly posted and reviewed by all teachers. School and class expectations will be posted, explained, and re-visited in each classroom. School and classroom policies (rules) will be discussed in detail with all students, and they will all indicate agreement on the class social contract. All class procedures will be reviewed with students, posted, and continually referred to throughout the year.

Unacceptable classroom behaviors will be immediately and consistently addressed. For appropriate responses, please see the Behavior Matrix.

Circle Time: Restorative Circles

Following breakfast and our all-school Morning Meeting, all classes will start and end each day with Circle Time. Circle Time will be utilized proactively for positive interactions and support to build community and develop relationships. Some of this time should also be used reactively to respond to misconduct, conflicts, and issues. Circle Time will also be used to teach social skills including listening, respect, and problem solving.

Progressive Discipline

With the exception of the major behaviors indicated in the Behavior Matrix, teacher responses to classroom behavior will follow these steps:

- 1st Offense: Warning; Proximity; Behavior Corrected
- 2nd Offense: Student One-on-One Conference
- 3rd Offense: Phone Call Home
- 4th Offense: Referral (See Behavior Matrix; Refer As Appropriate)

Bullying

In accordance with NRS 388, all allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Bullying may be reported to any VVA staff member in person, online, or over the phone. We will take the following actions:

First response: We will make sure all parties are safe.

Step One: All involved parties will be noticed via phone call and/or email and a physical notice.

Step Two: Allegations will be fully investigated, and all contacts (and attempts to contact) will be documented. This will be completed on or before 48 hours after the initial report is received.

Step Three: A determination will be made and actions will be taken. Depending on the severity, these may include referral to Peer Mediation, referral to the Judicial Board, Mediation Contract, Required Parent Conference (RPC), Suspension, Expulsion, or Police Involvement.

Step Four: All parties will be notified of determination and actions taken via phone call and/or email, and a physical written report.

Step Five: All parties will have a follow up within 10 days to ensure the issue has been resolved. If it has not, further discipline may be assigned

Appeal Process

In accordance with NRS 392, families have the right to appeal a suspension or expulsion following this process.

1. Parents/guardians will notify the school of their wish to appeal within 48 hours of initial notice of suspension or expulsion. Notifications must be submitted in writing in person or via email to the Executive Director.
2. A meeting will be set up between the Executive Director and the family. Appeals will be heard, including the reasoning behind the appeal. The school will have all appropriate supporting documentation available for the family.
3. A decision will be made by the school and the family will be notified within 24 hours. The decision made by the Executive Director is final.

Vegas Vista Academy Behavior Matrix	
Behavior	Intervention/Consequence
Aggressive Behavior/Arguing Class Disruption Dishonesty Insubordination Inappropriate Behavior/Comment Policy or Procedure Violation Public Display of Affection Nuisance Item Tardy	Teacher Progressive Discipline/Restorative Circle 1 st Offense: Warning; Proximity; Name on Board, Etc 2 nd Offense: Student One-on-One Conference 3 rd Offense: Phone Call Home 4 th Offense: Referral (See Behavior Matrix; Refer As Appropriate)
4+ Offenses in Class for Same Behavior Aggressive Behavior (Major) Arson Assault – Staff Battery – Staff Bullying Allegation Campus Disruption Fighting/Physical Altercation Graffiti/Destruction of School Property Immoral Conduct Possession or Use of Drugs, Tobacco, or Alcohol OR Paraphernalia Possession of Weapon on Campus Repeated Insubordination Sexual Assault Theft Violation of Peer Mediation Contract Violation of Judicial Board Decision	Referral to Administration Possible Consequences: Required Parent Conference (RPC) Suspension Expulsion Police Involvement

Peer Mediation

Extreme cases of disagreement between students or groups of students may necessitate a referral to the Peer Mediation board. Students will be trained as peer mediators and in restorative practices. All involved parties will work through the mediation process together. Desired outcomes will be agreed upon, and a resolution agreement will be signed by each person involved. Violation of the signed agreement will result in a referral to administration. This will be put into place as VVA grows and we add older grades.

VVA Judicial Board

Extreme violations of the student behavior policy may result in referral to the Judicial Board. The Judicial Board is a board of students who are elected by their peers to enforce the student code of conduct, and also includes a faculty advisor who oversees all of the workings and proceedings of the board. Students on the board will serve a one-year term and will be trained in all appropriate areas. All decisions of the Judicial Board are final. Any further violation of the same or similar nature will result in a referral to administration. This will be put into place as VVA grows and we add older grades.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are not permitted to have electronic devices in school. Electronic devices include games (Nintendo DS, Nintendo Switches, etc.), tablets, portable music devices, and cell phones. None of these devices are needed and often represent a distraction from successful academics. In addition, these items can cause conflict and lead to grief when lost or stolen. While VVA obviously strives to prevent theft of any item, the school will not spend extra energy tracking down electronic devices that should not be at school. In the event that a student disobeys this rule and is seen with an electronic device or uses a prohibited electronic device in school, a staff member will confiscate it and turn it in to the main office for Parent pickup. It will be returned only after a parent/guardian has come to school to pick it up. Repeated violations of this policy may result in indefinite confiscation irrespective of any costs or fees students and/or their families may incur as a result.

FIELD TRIPS

As a school with a focus on Experiential Education, field trips are an integral part of the curriculum at VVA. Participation in school field trips should NOT be used as reward or punishment - they are a part of the school model and student learning. At the beginning of the school year, VVA will send home a blanket field trip permission slip, which will cover most trips. The exception will be if a particular location has their own permission requirement. Parents will be notified ahead of time if any additional permission is required for any upcoming trip.

Students MUST wear their blue VVA t-shirts and be clearly identifiable as a VVA student in order to attend a field trip. This is a safety issue. Students not in uniform or refusing to wear uniform apparel will not be allowed to attend field trips. The Executive Director, at their sole discretion, may elect not to allow a student to participate in a field trip, excursion, or other activity in or outside of school as a result of the students' behavior, academic performance, or other concerns.

FOOD PROCEDURES

In order for your student to engage in the rigorous academic program at VVA, it is important that students have healthy, balanced meals. VVA participates in the National School Breakfast, Lunch, and School Snack program which provides free or reduced breakfast, lunch, and snack, as well as milk for qualifying families. Families of students who order school meals and have particular dietary restrictions should alert the administrative staff prior to the beginning of school, so that school staff is able to make reasonable accommodations for the student or, if necessary, the family can choose to make alternate arrangements.

Students will be offered breakfast every morning. Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. (tardy by 15 minutes) will miss breakfast and will not have an opportunity to eat. Students eat lunch in the multipurpose room or outside. Students may opt into the school's lunch program or bring their own lunches from home. Families may choose to send a lunch from home on any day, even for families who participate in the school's lunch program. All lunches, snacks, and items brought to school from home must be **nut free**. This is a safety regulation. Students who bring any item containing nuts will have their lunch confiscated and will be provided the school meal for the day. The family will be notified.

VVA implements clear expectations to allow students to eat their whole meal and make use of their lunch time. We follow these rules during lunch:

- We speak with our inside voices
- We stay seated on our bottoms
- We keep food on our tray
- We say please and thank you

- We raise our hand if we need help
- We do not share food
- We clean up after ourselves

HEALTH POLICIES

Health and safety are a top priority at VVA. Before a student can enroll in the school, the school must have on file the following forms:

- Immunization form or Immunization Religious or Medical Exemption Form
- Health Information Form. This form provides important information about a student's emergency contacts, health care providers, and insurance. Most importantly, it gives the school permission to initiate emergency medical treatment in the event that a parent or guardian cannot be reached.
- Authorization To Dispense Medication: This must be indicated on the Health Information Form if a student has specific medication that they need at school.

No student is allowed to bring medication to the school without the school's full knowledge. Students who have provided the school with medication dispensation authorization should bring the medication (other than Tylenol and Ibuprofen, which the school will stock in the main office) to the school on the first day, or contact the school to make other arrangements. All medication must be presented in its original container from the pharmacy and must be brought in by a parent or accompanied by a note from the parent and dispensation directions from the physician and/or pharmacy.

The medication dispensation authorization requirement applies to all medication, including Children's Tylenol and Ibuprofen. If a student needs to take Tylenol, Ibuprofen or another over the counter (OTC) medication during the school day, they must have on file the authorization signed by a parent or guardian, giving the school permission to administer the medication during the school year. The medication dispensation authorization requirement also applies to asthma inhalers, which will be stored in a locked space in the school building. If a student needs to use their asthma inhaler during the school day, they should go to the main office to self-administer the inhaler. Students are not permitted to transport medications in their backpacks.

LOST AND FOUND

To prevent confusion, parents should write their student's name in permanent marker on the tags of all clothing, backpacks, and lunch boxes. Since every student wears the same or similar clothing, mark your tags clearly and help your student keep track of all jackets, sweaters and coats. All clothing items that are left in common spaces (playground, cafeteria etc.) will be put in the school's Lost and Found bin for families to retrieve.

RECORDS AND REPORTING POLICIES

Student Records - FERPA

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents/guardians have certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18 or attend a school beyond the high school level.

Definition Of Student Records

"Student Records" shall mean any written or recorded information VVA maintains by which a student

may be individually identified. They may include, but are not limited to, the following: basic identifying information, academic transcript, attendance records, health records, performance scores on standardized assessments, disciplinary records, records from previous schools. Recorded information maintained by a staff member for their exclusive use, or their substitute, shall not be considered a part of the student records.

Inspection Of Student Records

Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect, challenge, and copy student records of that parent's child until the student attains the age of 18. Student records shall be made available to parents and eligible students within fifteen (15) school days of the time a written request for review is submitted to the Executive Director.

Right To Control Access Of Student Records

School officials shall release student records to the official records custodian of another school in which the student has enrolled or intends to enroll upon the written request of such official or student, provided that the parent receives prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information to be transferred. Parents may, upon written request, inspect, copy and challenge such information. Once parents have been notified of their right to inspect, copy and challenge information to be transferred to another school and the parents do not respond within ten (10) school days, the records shall be forwarded to the requesting school.

Access To Records Without Parent Consent

School staff members who have a current and legitimate educational interest in the student records shall have access as needed for professional purposes to both the student's permanent and temporary records. School officials shall release student records without parent permission pursuant to a valid court order or subpoena presented by local, state or federal officials. However, the school officials shall notify the parents in writing regarding the judicial order and the information so provided. Student records may be made available to researchers for statistical purposes, provided that: a) Permission has been received from the State Superintendent of Education; and b) No student or parent shall be personally identified from the information released. Information may be released without parental consent in connection with an emergency to appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. If a student is 18 years of age, the student may request the parents be denied access to their records. No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change, or edit a report of abuse.

Challenge Procedures

A parent shall have the right to challenge the accuracy, relevance or propriety of any entry in the student records of his or her child, exclusive of grades. A request to challenge the contents of a student record shall be made in writing to the school by the parents and shall state in specific terms what entries in their child's record are being challenged. The Executive Director shall conduct an informal conference with the parents within fifteen (15) school days of the receipt of the written challenge.

Maintenance Of School Records

Student permanent records and the information contained therein shall be maintained for a period of sixty (60) years after the student has transferred, graduated or permanently withdrawn from school. Student temporary records shall be maintained until August 1st of the year the student transfers, graduates or permanently withdraws from school. The records of special education students shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years. Information maintained by staff members for their exclusive

use shall be destroyed by the staff member maintaining the information no later than the student's transfer, graduation or permanent withdrawal from the school. The Executive Director shall be responsible for having all student records verified and to eliminate or correct all out-of-date, misleading, inaccurate, unnecessary or irrelevant information on all students' files.

Mandated Reporter Policy

According to NRS 432B.220, et seq., all school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have reason to believe that harm has come to a child that "reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect." Under this law, failure to report such abuse is a Class A Misdemeanor.

Once any staff member becomes aware that a student may be the victim of abuse or neglect, they must:

- Contact the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (702-399-0081) as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours after they know or have reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected, to report the suspect case of child abuse or neglect.
- Notify the Executive Director and/or School Counselor
- Complete a VVA incident report.

While these steps are taking place, the Executive Director and/or School Counselor will assist both the faculty member and student in understanding the ramifications of the call. The Executive Director or designee will debrief the student and, when appropriate, will contact the parent(s)/guardian.

SCHOOL SAFETY

VVA is a Closed Campus

Under no circumstances are students allowed to leave the school campus without permission. A student with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult. Students should be aware that the school has several neighbors, and should be respectful and courteous of their needs.

Searches

In order to maintain the security of all students, the school authorizes the Executive Director and/or designee(s) to conduct searches of students and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the policies and procedures of VVA or otherwise constituted a threat to the health, safety, welfare, or morals of the school, other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function. In authorizing searches, the school acknowledges both state and federal constitutional rights, which are applicable to personal searches of students and searches of their possessions.

Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy rights in school lockers, cubbies, desks, or other school storage places. The school exercises overriding control over such school property, which may be opened and subjected to inspection at any time by school officials.

Students may be subject to personal searches and searches of their possessions where reasonable individualized suspicion exists to conduct such search. Reasonable individualized suspicion to conduct a search of a student or a student's possessions and the scope of the particular search shall be based upon, among other things, the student's age, the prevalence and seriousness of the problem to which the search

is directed, the urgency necessitating an immediate search, and the probative value and reliability of information used as justification for the search.

An authorized school official may search a student or the student's belongings based upon information received from a reliable informant. Individuals will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, make an admission against their own interest, provide the same information that is received independently from other sources, or appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. School employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate.

TEACHER CONTACT AND MEETING WITH TEACHERS

Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher. Teachers are not available for unscheduled phone calls during school hours. Messages may be left for teachers with the front office and families will have a phone number that they can use for teachers. When leaving a voicemail message, please leave your name and your child's name, a phone number and time you may be reached, and a brief message regarding the reason for the call. Teachers will return a parent's call within two business days. Please remember that messages will not be received until after the instructional day ends. Teachers are also available through their VVA email address. Their first priority is to deliver instruction - teachers will return emails within two business days.

Teachers will list their contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses in the introductory letter to students' families during the first week of school. Parents should contact their child's teacher directly with questions about academic progress, as well as behavior (including any reports).

If you would like to meet with your child's teacher outside of the regularly scheduled conferences, you must make an appointment. An appointment can be made by calling the school and speaking with or leaving a message for the teacher directly, as well as by emailing the teacher. Parents should not expect to meet with a teacher without a prior appointment. Because our teachers are teaching your child from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm, meetings should take place before or after school. Occasionally, teachers may be able to meet during their prep period, but teachers use this time at their sole discretion. Fridays are ongoing teacher development time. Teachers are often in professional development sessions until 4:00 pm and may be unable to meet.

Parents can contact the main office directly for any of the following issues:

- Information about your student's records (ex. updating contact information etc.)
- Visits or volunteering
- Attendance issues
- Calendar and schedules
- Food
- Uniform questions or purchases

TRANSPORTATION

Families at VVA will be responsible for transporting students to the campus. Families must follow the arrival and dismissal plan to properly ensure safety during these times. At all times, families must follow directions from designated VVA staff to ensure proper traffic flow and safety. VVA will have

available transportation for students who need it as well.

VVA Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Families may walk or drive their students to school. All students must be dropped off at the designated locations within the VVA parking lot. At all times, crosswalks and sidewalks must be used to maintain safety and order in the parking lot. All students must be handed off to VVA staff at a designated drop-off location, and be dismissed into the custody of parents by a VVA staff member.

Parking Lot Traffic Flow and Times

There will be a one-way flow of traffic into and out of the VVA parking lot, which will be clearly indicated by cones, signage, and VVA staff directing traffic. Families will enter from Torrey Pines Drive and exit out to Rancho Drive. The Torrey Pines Gate into the parking lot will open at 7:30 for regular drop off. The gates will be locked at 8:00 each morning (school starts at 8:00 each morning). At the designated drop off location, all students must be handed off to VVA staff. Any student arriving after 8:00 am must be checked in to the main office by a parent or guardian.

The Torrey Pines Gate into the parking lot will re-open for afternoon pick up at 3:00 pm (School ends at 3:30 pm). Students will be escorted to their designated pick up areas by VVA staff. Students will be released into custody of parents/guardians by VVA staff. **Students will only be released to adults who have been entered into Infinite Campus as contacts. Parents/guardians should be prepared to show identification at pickup to verify their identity if asked.**

Drop Off Locations

All students will be dropped off at the main entrance of school (by the Multi Purpose Room/Cafeteria) and met by a VVA staff member. Students will enter through the gates and go directly into the Multi Purpose Room/Cafeteria.

EXCEPTION: THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL: *During the first week of school ONLY, students will be dropped off in front of their buildings as indicated below. Parents may also walk their students in during this week only.*

K-2: Lower Elementary Building

3-5: Upper Elementary Building

Pick Up Locations

At the end of school each day, all students will be escorted out of the building by VVA staff. Students will only be released to adults who have been entered into Infinite Campus as contacts. Parents/guardians should be prepared to show identification at pickup to verify their identity if asked.

Siblings: All families with more than one child at VVA will pick up at their OLDEST sibling's pickup location.

Buses: All students riding the bus will be escorted by a VVA staff member and picked up at the west side of the Upper Elementary building (by the volleyball court).

Kindergarten: All kindergarten students will be picked up at the southeast lawn in front of the Lower Elementary building.

1st and 2nd Grades: All 1st and 2nd grade students (and younger siblings) will be picked up in front of the east lawn of the Upper Elementary building.

3rd - 5th Grade: All 3rd - 5th grade students (and younger siblings) will be picked up on the south side of the Upper Elementary building (by the soccer field and volleyball court).

All students who have not been picked up by 3:45 pm will be escorted to the MPR to participate in VVA's After School Program. Families will be charged accordingly.

Bussing

VVA is currently working on providing transportation (bus) to and from school. More information on our bussing policy will be provided on our website (www.vegasvistaacademy.org).

VEGAS VISTA ACADEMY FAMILY ORGANIZATION (VVAFO)

The Vegas Vista Academy Family Organization (VVAFO) is the parent/guardian, family, and VVA staff group. VVAFO works with all stakeholders to promote the needs and interests of VVA students and staff. Meetings are held regularly. All VVA families are encouraged to attend and get involved. For more information, please contact Greta Valdes, VVA Community Engagement Coordinator, at 702-291-8741.

VVA VISITOR POLICY

All visitors are required to report to the Front Desk upon entering the building. Any visitor, including parents, who do not report to the office or who is found in the building without authorization, will be asked to leave immediately. Visitors must wear visitor badges at all times to indicate that they have checked in at the main office. Parents are encouraged to visit the school and parent involvement is discussed in more detail later in this handbook.

VOLUNTEERING AT VVA

Vegas Vista Academy encourages families to get involved in their student's education and actively support student success. To accomplish this, Vegas Vista Academy asks that adult family members volunteer each school year. Volunteering can include (but is not limited to) classroom and teacher support, family support (wraparound services), chaperones for field trips, coaching, and event support.

VVA will never require a parent or legal guardian of a prospective or enrolled student to volunteer as a condition of the child's enrollment, attendance, or participation in the school's educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against a student because their parent cannot, has not, or will not provide volunteer service to the school. Special status, consideration, or other preferred treatment will not be given to students or families of those who volunteer.

Becoming A VVA Volunteer

All family members wishing to volunteer must be cleared with the Main Office. Volunteers may participate for a single-day (ex: an event, classroom party) or may return to campus on multiple days (ex: classroom helper, front office volunteer, parking attendant). In some instances, a volunteer may be tasked with a special project (ex: painting a mural).

- Single-day volunteers will be permitted without a background check, provided they are under supervision of a licensed staff member and do not have unsupervised access to children
- Multi-day volunteers or those wishing to volunteer for special projects must be background checked, per NRS 388A.500-516.

When the budget permits, the school will cover the costs of background checks for parent volunteers of up to 10% of our student population (on a first-come, first-serve basis each year) to support families' engagement and participation in volunteering.

All volunteers serve on an "at-will" basis and at the pleasure of Vegas Vista Academy. Additionally:

- Misrepresentation on any of the application forms or during the review process may result in immediate disqualification of a volunteer applicant.
- Any individual who has been convicted of any criminal offense outlined in state statutes shall be ineligible to be a volunteer.

- An individual who has been convicted of an offense that requires her/him to appear on a sex offender registry in any jurisdiction shall be ineligible to serve as a volunteer.

Volunteer Procedures - Single-Day Volunteers

1. Gain Approval as a Volunteer from the Main Office. This will require sign in and current identification.

Schedule Volunteer Day(s)

1. Call the front office to schedule a volunteer day or time. Schedule your volunteer time in advance, at least 24-hours in advance for all classroom volunteers.
2. Request a specific classroom, teacher, or location

Day-Of Procedures

1. Check-In at the Main Office - all visitors, including volunteers MUST sign in and wear their visitor badge the entire duration of their visit to Vegas Vista Academy
2. Refrain from talking to, engaging with, or disciplining students – including your own – in classrooms, as well as talking to or engaging with school staff who are teaching or transitioning students. Students are expected to remain focused on their learning while in school. Families should not engage with students or school staff during instructional time by talking with them, observing their work, etc. We strive every minute of every day for 100% student and staff engagement in learning and ask that you respect our efforts by disrupting our natural school day as little as possible. Our staff has been extensively trained on specific teaching methods and behavior management techniques. Volunteers should allow the teacher to lead all aspects of the instructional program, and not discipline students, including their own.

Multi-Day and Special Project Volunteers

1. Apply to be a volunteer using the Volunteer Form on the VVA Website
2. Submit to a background check. Directions will be provided to your email.
3. Following an approved/cleared background check, directions will be provided to you. Directions will be specific to your volunteer purpose at the school.

Volunteer Chaperone Procedures - Field Trips

VVA engages with our community frequently and may have opportunities for family members of our students to assist with chaperoning their child's field trip(s). Chaperoning falls under all of the requirements and provisions of volunteering listed throughout this document.

Additionally, volunteer chaperones should:

1. Respond to the Field Trip Volunteer form that will be sent home with their child's field trip notice. You must respond by the date posted or will not be permitted to attend.
 - a. You must be able to arrive on time (including chaperone training) and stay for the whole duration of the field trip.
2. Participate in chaperone training for that field trip; generally this takes place the morning of the field trip and is held at the school before student arrival.
3. Participate in the field trip according to your training. You will most likely be tasked with leading a small group of children under the supervision of their teacher (ex: at a museum visit, the class breaks into three smaller groups but all stays in the same exhibit). Your responsibilities will likely include physically tracking all of your assigned students, correcting minor misbehavior, helping students unwrap their lunches or snacks, supporting with clean up, etc. You

should refrain from disciplining students and should instead report any significant behaviors to the supervising teacher.

As a note, we try to pair parents/guardians with their child's group where possible, but this is not guaranteed. You may or may not get to spend time with your child. Likewise, you will certainly be tasked with the care of additional children and should devote your time and attention equally to all in your group. You should refrain from overly engaging with, disciplining, or instructing your child and should follow the lead of the supervising teacher, ensuring all students have a safe, educational, and joyful experience.

State Requirements Regarding Background Checks and Fingerprinting for Volunteers

Nevada Senate Bill 185 outlines newly mandated state requirements for all school volunteers, which include background checks and fingerprinting for adult volunteers who will interact with students before, during, after, and outside of the school day for school-sanctioned events, field trips or sports. Volunteers included in SB185: classroom & teacher support, field trip chaperones, coaches, PTO, and event support participants.

Under SB185, volunteers must submit to a background check and fingerprinting before volunteering, overnight on a field trip, as an athletic coach, or in an "unsupervised" capacity. In contrast "unsupervised" interaction is not detailed within the verbiage of the bill, Vegas Vista Academy, has elected to enforce the strongest interpretation of the bill's context and will require all volunteers fitting the above criteria to submit to background checks and fingerprinting before interacting with our students.

Results may take 2-5 weeks, depending on submission volume at the state processing level; parents, guardians, and adult family members may NOT volunteer on campus, coach, or chaperone field trips until results have been received. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Should you wish to begin completing your background check, please fill out the correct forms (available in Main Office) and return it either to the front desk or via email to info@vegasvistaacademy.org. Once approved, volunteer status will be valid for three (3) consecutive years and will not need to be renewed until 2028.

Vegas Vista Academy prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, gender (including gender identification or expression), sexual orientation, sex, religion, age, disability, military or veteran status or any other protected status as defined by federal, state or local law, including in the approval of volunteers.

We do reserve the right to deny volunteers on factors including, but not limited to:

- Positive approach and enthusiasm for working with children;
- Ability to work cooperatively with school personnel and participate regularly;
- Ability to upload volunteer policies and procedures; and,
- Strong communication skills, character, dependability, health and personal hygiene.
- Under 18 without adult supervision; under 15 in any circumstance involving physical labor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE VVA PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

I have received and read a copy of Vegas Vista Academy's Parent-Student Handbook and understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. I will review the policies and procedures with my child(ren), as applicable. I understand that if I ever have any questions regarding school policies, I can always ask a member of the school community for further explanation.

Please sign and return to your child's teacher or to Gretel Valdes, VVA Operations Director.

Student Name

Parent or Guardian Name

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date