

Valley Springs Middle School

Student Handbook



2021-2022 Academic Year

Principal

Mr. Benjamin S. Alexander, Ed.S.

Assistant Principals

Mr. William A. Thrasher

Mr. Terry Gossett, Ed.S.

School Counselors

Mrs. Jennifer Anthony – 7th Grade

Mrs. Lyn Bush – 8th Grade

Grade Level and Department Chairs

Mrs. Erin Maccarelli – 7th Grade

Mrs. Sandra Gilmore – 8th Grade

Mr. Robert Waller – Electives

Mr. Jordan Powell – Athletic Director

224 Long Shoals Rd
Arden, NC 28704

BCS & Board Policy Website

<https://www.buncombeschools.org>

Valley Springs Website

<https://vsms.buncombeschools.org>

INFORMATION ABOUT VALLEY SPRINGS MIDDLE SCHOOL

PTA President

Shannon Reese

Office Personnel

Tracy Anderson, Bookkeeper
Michelle Gilbert, Head Secretary
Cynthia Gonzalez, Receptionist
Steve Greenhoe, Data Manager

School Resource Officer

Officer Caroline Gentry

Library

Librarian
Library Assistant

Stacey Olney-Whitesell
Michelle Fore

Additional Information:

Academically Gifted
Art
Athletics
Attendance and Grades
Band
Battle of the Books
Breakfast and Lunch Program
Custodians
Checking Out of School
Chess
Chorus
ESL
Parent Conferences
Personal Problems/Concerns
Rambassadors
School Nurse
School Yearbook
Student Scheduling
Transportation/Buses

Amber Shiver
Angela Cloud
Jordan Powell
Steve Greenhoe
Bryon Graeber
Stacey Olney-Whitesell
Kathleen Lawlor
Joe Payne
Lobby
Lyn Bush
Robert Waller
Natalie Romanello
Cynthia Gonzalez/Counselors
Counselors
Counselors
Lisa Saladin
Brittin Cox
Will Thrasher
Terry Gossett

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Valley Springs, a middle school of approximately 700 students, is in the ever-growing south end of Buncombe County. With a strong diverse student population and a committed staff, Valley Springs regularly leads Buncombe County's middle schools in academic growth.

Our mission is, *A Continue Tradition of Excellence Since 1919*. At Valley Springs, we strive to excel in all areas that make up our school and community: Academics, Athletics, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and Career-Technical Education. Wherever Valley Springs is present, our students strive to lead and represent the best of what middle school has to offer.

Daily, all students have the chance to grow socially, emotionally, and obtain a strong education.

Valley Springs RAMS

The expectations are simple. How and what each principle looks like depends on your setting and/or situation. Refer to the school matrix and your classroom teachers for more specific expectations.

The general school expectations are as follows:

Responsible

- ❖ Be prepared for each day's activities.

Achieve

- ❖ Put forth effort and time into your work.

Mindful

- ❖ Be aware of yourself, others, and the school environment.

Strive

- ❖ Strive for success in all you do.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle schools include one or more of the following in their program:

1. Interdisciplinary Teacher Organization

"Interdisciplinary" means that the teachers are from different subject areas. Groups of teachers share the same students and the responsibility for planning the instruction in more than one area of the curriculum.

2. Skills through Exploration

Middle School builds off skills learned at the elementary level. Our Elective Department is foundational in allowing students to further discover or better hone their interests in subject areas beyond Math, English, History, and Science.

3. Block Schedule

The middle school day is divided into several large blocks of time that represent both core academics (Math, English, History, and Science) and elective courses. The typical academic block is 60-65 minutes. The typical elective block is 40-45 minutes.

4. Team Areas

Middle Schools place students on academic teams that are comprised of a Math, English, History, and Science teacher. Students travel with their class group to these various teachers throughout the day.

5. Interest-Based Activities

Involvement in extracurricular activities further strengthens our school community. Students can be involved in athletics as well as academic competition teams that practice and compete typically after the school day. Being involved further develops students' pride and investment in their school.

6. Instructional Time

Teachers are involved with their students and work closely with other teachers to produce challenging and engaging curricula. The day, the building, the grouping, and the teaching are organized to fit student needs.

7. Open School

Valley Springs is an open school. Parents are encouraged to visit our school and speak to administrators and counselors concerning any problems that arise. All visitors are welcome; however, appointments with administration or counselors is highly encouraged in order to avoid having to wait a significant time.

CURRICULUM

At Valley Springs, we emphasize a positive and rigorous instructional environment. Our educators provide a solid instructional place for each student to well transition from elementary/intermediate to middle school. Additionally, they provide the academic rigor needed to prepare students for their future transition to high school. Teachers will use all resources available to help students reach their highest academic potential.

Because it is important that students know that education as a lifelong process, Valley Springs emphasizes basic skills as well as those things needed for future education and employment.

Valley Springs has a block schedule with all the students taking four core subjects daily: English, Math, Science, and History. The use of technology is emphasized in all areas of the curriculum. Classroom teachers incorporate computer skills in their classes. Equally, paper/pencil and rote memorization still play a vital role in our education system and students' day.

In addition to these subjects, all students are required to take one semester (two nine weeks) of Health and Physical Education.

Valley Springs also offers electives courses to our students. These are: Art, Band, Strings, Chorus, Project Lead the Way, Carpentry, Family Consumer Science, Spanish, and Latin.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Valley Springs administration strives to maintain consistency and equity when assigning consequences for students who receive disciplinary referrals. All administrative decisions are made in compliance with Buncombe County Schools Board Policies 4300: Student Behavior Policies; and 4302: School Plan for Management of Student Behavior. Potential consequences for minor violations and serious violations can be found in Policy 4302 by visiting: www.buncombeschools.org

More information related to student behavior and consequences can be found under relevant headings throughout this handbook. Additionally, for equitable purposes, the Student Discipline Matrix Chart on the last page of this handbook lists consequences for inappropriate actions.

Expectations of strong parental involvement with academics and respect/appropriate behavior at home translate to high learning engagement and low disciplinary infractions at school.

ABSENCES AND LEAVING EARLY

If a student is absent, they should bring a note from their parents or guardians on the day of their return to their homeroom teacher. The Valley Springs Middle School Absence Policy states that a written excuse must be presented to the homeroom teacher within three days after the last absence. **If a written excuse is not received by the third day, the absence(s) will be coded as unexcused.**

Student absences will be marked excused with a written note from the doctor or parent. However, after the third consecutive absence, a doctor's note is required to excuse the absence. If a doctor's note is not given, the fourth absence onward will be marked as unexcused.

Students are responsible for making up any work that is missed. For extended excused absences, assignments may be requested through the school office (after the third absence) and picked up by a parent. Please remember that excessive absences, excused or unexcused, are detrimental and should be avoided. **Valley Springs Middle School will file truancy charges on the parents or guardians on a student's 15th total absence (excused or unexcused).**

If a student needs to leave early for any reason, parents must come to the office to sign the student out

of school. **To be counted for the day, students must stay until 11:15 a.m.** No student can leave school grounds during school hours without written permission from parents. Doing so will result in out of school suspension.

ACCIDENTS

Accidents do happen. If a student is injured during the school day, it is important that the student report their injury to their teacher or coach immediately. School officials will make every effort to contact a parent or guardian if medical attention is necessary. Please keep the school informed of any change in phone number or emergency contacts.

ALCOHOL, NARCOTICS, ILLEGAL DRUGS

It is illegal for any student, teacher, faculty or staff member to possess, use, transit, or be under the influence of any drug, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind (1) on the school campus, before or after school hours; (2) away from the school premises at any school sponsored event; (3) at the school bus stop or on any school bus. Students involved in alcohol, narcotics, or illegal drugs will be referred to law enforcement and immediately out of school suspended. Valley Springs will take whatever steps are necessary to have a drug and alcohol-free school.

A violation of the alcohol and drug policy will result in the student being **suspended for up to 10 days**. A second violation of this policy may result in the student being recommended to the Discipline Hearing Board as described in Board Policy #4370. The Hearing Board may recommend a long-term suspension, 365 – day suspension or expulsion.

ARRIVAL TO/DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL - CAR RIDERS

Parents who bring their children to school should drop their student off no later than 7:35. Students are not to be dropped off in front of the building prior to 7:40. **Students who are dropped off in the front of the building before 7:35 are subject to disciplinary action.** If a student is meeting with a teacher before school, a morning pass from the teacher is required.

Car riders who are not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be taken to the covered area at the front of the school. No students should be picked up in the front of the building before 3:00.

ARRIVALS - LATE TO SCHOOL

There may be times students cannot be at school by 7:45 a.m. due to medical, dental, or other appointments. Upon a student's arrival, an

appointment slip from your doctor or dentist should be given to the receptionist. This is necessary to keep student attendance records accurately. For all other tardies, parents may send a note explaining the tardiness. Following this procedure will facilitate getting a student into class quickly and prevent losing even more academic time.

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Valley Springs Middle School, Home of the Rams, is a member of the French Broad Middle School Athletic Conference. This conference includes the following schools:

Asheville Middle	Owen Middle
Cane Creek Middle	North Buncombe Middle
Enka Middle	Reynolds Middle
Erwin Middle	Valley Springs Middle

Our teams compete in the following athletic events: Football, Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Softball, Baseball, Tennis, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Track, Wrestling, and Golf.

The opportunity to be a member of all these teams is extended to all students.

Coaches will conduct tryouts for each sport at the beginning of each season. Students who try out and do not make one of our teams are encouraged to participate in the South Buncombe or the Asheville Parks and Recreation Sports Programs to continue developing their athletic skills. **Continued hard work and participation may make them even better athletes.**

Each athlete must have a physical examination by a doctor and be deemed healthy and fit enough to participate in interscholastic sports. In addition to the physical, each athlete must register on Family ID prior to the start of their sports season. The link can be found on the Valley Springs website under the Athletics tab. Please click on "Mandatory Athletic Forms" and follow the website instructions. Athletes must also have school insurance, private insurance, or a waiver of insurance before being allowed to participate. The physical is only valid for one (1) year from the date of the physical. All athletes must pay a one (1) time fee to cover transportation and insurance.

Athletes are required to maintain passing grades in all six (6) classes and be in attendance at least 85 percent of the time. All sports have the same eligibility requirements. Any athlete that receives out of school suspension (OSS) will be immediately removed from their sports team for the duration of the season. Any athlete that receives their first in school suspension (ISS) will be suspended from practice and/or a game held on the day ISS is served. A second assignment of ISS will result in a week's suspension from the athletic team. Each coach can increase a student athlete's consequence due to a

disciplinary infraction. Additional assignments of ISS beyond two will result in removal from their sports team for the duration of the season.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS GRADES 7-8

The Buncombe County Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is of crucial importance for educational achievement, that learning experiences that occur in the classroom are essential components of the learning process, that time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction, and, therefore, that each student should attend school every day. The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of seven (7) (or younger if enrolled) and sixteen (16) attend school. Further, the Board affirms that the primary responsibility for regular attendance resides with the parents/guardians and the individual student.

Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in school the full day. Tardies and early dismissals cause students to miss important information and are strongly discouraged. Excessive tardies of 15 or more, and every five thereafter, will result in Saturday School

The Board shall adhere to the North Carolina General Statutes pertaining to student attendance except to the extent this policy imposes stricter regulations. Furthermore, the Board is committed to the implementation of a student attendance policy that is nondiscriminatory, discourages dropouts, and encourages regular attendance.

Middle School Attendance Grades 7-8

Middle school students in grades 7-8 may only have a maximum combined total of fourteen (14) excused and unexcused absences per school year. Any absences over fourteen (14) must be made up in accordance with the school's Attendance Make-up Program (see 4400-R). Students must be in attendance one half (1/2) of the day to be counted present for the day. For any courses resulting in high school credit, students must follow attendance rules for high school grades 9-12.

LAWFUL (EXCUSED) ABSENCES

When a student must miss school, the parent or legal guardian must supply documentation regarding the reason for the absence to the school upon the student's return to school. Absences are listed as unexcused until documentation is received. Absences due to extended illnesses generally require a statement from a physician if there is a history of chronic absences. As soon as a parent anticipates a student's extended absence because of a severe, prolonged, or

chronic illness under a physician's care, the parent shall notify the principal. The principal shall make arrangements for homebound/hospital-bound, or other appropriate instruction following procedures outlined by Special Services homebound guidelines. In the case of excused absences and short-term out-of-school suspensions, the student will be permitted to make up any tests or other work missed (see also policy 4351, Short-Term Suspension.). The teacher will determine when work is to be made up. The student is responsible for finding out what assignments are due and completing them within the specified time period. An absence may be excused for any of the following reasons.

1. Personal illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school.
2. Isolation ordered by the local health officer or the State Board of Health.
3. Death in the immediate family.
4. Medical or dental appointment.
5. Participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding.
6. At least two (2) days of excused absences must be allowed each academic year for religious observances required by the faith of a student or a student's parents.
7. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel or service as a legislative or Governor's page, with prior approval from the principal.
8. Pregnancy and related conditions or parenting, when medically necessary.
9. A student whose parent or legal guardian (a) is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined by policy 4050, Children of Military Families; and (b) has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting will be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the principal or designee to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian.

Student absences will be marked excused with a written note from the doctor or parent. However, after the third consecutive absence, a doctor's note is required to excuse the absence. If a doctor's note is not given, the fourth absence onward will be marked as unexcused.

There will be some Saturday attendance session and/or Attendance Summer School for students who miss 15 or more days of school. There is a fee for both Saturday sessions and summer school and no transportation is provided. During the attendance summer school, absences, tardiness, or disruptive behavior will result in dismissal from the summer school program and no credit will be given.

Tardy to Class/School Policy and Procedures

If a student is tardy to school for any reason, the they must go to the office to sign in. Excessive tardies will result in referral to the office and appropriate corrective action. Tardies of 15 or more will result in Saturday School.

Students who are tardy to class disrupt teaching and learning. If it is determined that the student is present at school with adequate time to be in attendance for first block, this will be treated as a tardy to class. Students tardy to school will receive a timed/dated Lobby Guard slip and will be admitted to class.

There are five minutes between all classes. Students are encouraged to plan and think ahead as to not be tardy.

When the bell rings, teachers begin teaching immediately. Some of the most critical instruction is in the first ten minutes of class. Tardy students not only miss this critical instructional time but disrupt the flow of the class.

Parents and guardians, please read and discuss this policy with your child. Homeroom and classroom teachers will thoroughly cover the policy with students.

- ❖ All students arriving to school after 7:45 must sign in at the front desk. The student will be given an admission slip.

Administration will discipline as follows:

- ❖ On every fifth tardy, a student will be assigned either an hour before or after school detention. School transportation will not be provided.
- ❖ If a student does not serve their hour detention, the student will have to serve a full day of ISS.
- ❖ On a student's 15th tardy, and every five tardies thereafter, the student must serve a Saturday School detention.
- ❖ **Administration reserves the right to require attendance summer school to make up time for abuse of the tardy policy.**

BUS REGULATIONS

Our primary concern is to get students to and from school safely. To maintain student safety, the following rules must always be followed:

- ❖ Always stay off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- ❖ Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before loading or unloading. Be sure the stop arm and stop sign are extended and the driver has given permission.
- ❖ Leave the bus only with the consent of the driver.
- ❖ Always enter or leave the bus at the front door; except in cases of emergency.

- ❖ Always keep head and hands inside the bus window.
- ❖ Cross the roadway in front of the bus and within sight and sound of the driver. Students are expected to obey the driver promptly and respectfully. **Always look both ways. Never assume that drivers of cars see you. Remove earbuds/headphones when boarding and exiting the bus to hear oncoming traffic.**
- ❖ Students should act appropriately on the school bus; listening to the driver; and staying seated until their stop.
- ❖ Students are expected to occupy the seat assigned by the driver or administration.
- ❖ Pens, pencils, and other sharp objects must always be stored in book bags or pockets.
- ❖ Food or drinks are not allowed.
- ❖ Avoid delaying the bus schedule by always arriving to your designated stop on time.
- ❖ Fighting, smoking, tobacco, and alcohol are not allowed.
- ❖ Do not tamper with or vandalize the bus.
- ❖ Do not play, throw any objects, or distract the driver's attention.
- ❖ Observe established safety rules and regulations made by the State Department of Public Instruction.

Any student found to be in violation of any of the expectations for bus riders will receive bus suspension or out of school suspension (OSS). Please refer to the discipline matrix chart at the end of this handbook.

Please remember that bus service is a privilege, not a right. You must follow the rules of proper conduct or you will be suspended from the bus and your parents will have to provide transportation for you. Depending upon the severity of the incident, you could also be suspended from school. Per General Statute 14-132.2: (a) No person shall unlawfully and willfully demolish, destroy, deface, injure, burn or damage any public-school bus or public-school activity bus.

(b) No person shall enter a public-school bus or public-school activity bus after being forbidden to do so by the authorized school bus driver or the school principal.

(c) Any occupant of a public-school bus or public-school activity bus who refuses to leave upon demand of the authorized driver or school principal of the school shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person who unlawfully and willfully stops, impedes, delays, or detains any public-school bus or public-school activity bus shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

You are to ride the bus to which you are assigned. If an emergency arises and you need to ride a different

bus or get off at a different stop, your parent/guardian must send a note. The note must be taken to the office in the morning to be approved. Bus changes will not be accepted unless they are submitted in writing. Valley Springs students are not allowed on campus of Koontz Intermediate before or after school. If a student is on a discretionary release (DAR), bus transportation is not provided.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast is served from 7:00 a.m. to 7:35 a.m. If participating in school breakfast, students are to report to the cafeteria upon arrival to school. Lunch is served daily at assigned times. If a student has in school suspension (ISS) and purchases a lunch from school, it will be a bagged lunch containing a sandwich, fruit, and milk.

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

The Valley Springs Cafeteria Staff works hard to provide students with nutritious food. We ask that students always be polite and considerate of our Nutrition Staff.

The following guidelines will help all students and school personnel enjoy the cafeteria:

- ❖ Students should remain seated in their designated area unless instructed otherwise by the teacher.
- ❖ Running, throwing objects, talking loudly, or noise making are not allowed.
- ❖ Students should not leave the cafeteria except in case of an emergency.
- ❖ Students may only enter the cafeteria line once.
- ❖ Students are responsible for returning trays, dishes, and trash to the appropriate areas.
- ❖ Students should report to the back of the line upon entering the cafeteria.
- ❖ Classes – and thereby the students in those classes - are responsible for cleaning the tables and sweeping their area.
- ❖ **No outside food is allowed in the cafeteria.**
- ❖ **STUDENTS MAY NOT RECEIVE LUNCH FROM DELIVERY SERVICES.**

Lunch Procedures: Students will use their student number to purchase lunch. This individual student number is for the sole use of that student only. Use of another student's number is not acceptable and will result in disciplinary action.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in our athletic programs, club programs, and other school activities will add richness

to students' middle school experience. Students will have opportunities to interact with teachers, coaches, and fellow students in cooperative, team activities. Students who are involved in co-curricular activities enjoy school more. Equally, because of special skills learned through teamwork and shared goals, students tend to be more successful in their careers later in life.

ATHLETICS

Baseball
Basketball
Cheerleading
Cross Country
Golf
Soccer
Softball
Tennis
Track
Football
Volleyball
Wrestling

ACTIVITIES

Battle of the Books
Chess Club
Forensics Club
Latin Club
Math Counts
Spanish Club
Student Council
Yearbook

If involved in these activities, students will be told in advance by the staff member in charge exactly what time that activity will end. **Parents are asked to be at Valley Springs to promptly pick up their students.** Teachers, much like parents, will have already worked a full eight-hour day prior to the after-school activity. Likewise, teachers also have their own family responsibilities. It is unfair for teachers to miss time away from their families to accommodate students when parents do not arrive on-time for pick up.

CONFERENCES

Parent conferences with administration, counselor, teachers, specialists, and others are welcomed. Parents can arrange conferences by calling the Valley Springs Main Office (828-654-1785). If you are scheduled for a conference, please call if you are delayed or find that you cannot attend.

COUNSELING

There are two school counselors: Mrs. Anthony, 7th Grade; Mrs. Bush, 8th Grade. Equally Mrs. Bonanno serves as our school Social Worker. The Counseling Department is located near the PEP Wing. Counselors are available to all students in the school. Listed below are some of the services provided by the counseling department at Valley Springs:

- ❖ Individual and group counseling to students with a variety of concerns.
- ❖ Classroom lessons on topics such as: bullying, tolerance, and career exploration.

- ❖ Consultation with parents, teachers, and community agencies to help students.
- ❖ Planning school-wide activities.
- ❖ Assist in crisis situations.
- ❖ Facilitate transition from intermediate school and prepare students for high school.
- ❖ Social and emotional learning.

Any student that needs support from the counselors, should obtain a pass from their teacher and report to the counseling office.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

Parents have the right to view their student's cumulative record at a mutually convenient time with the appropriate grade level school counselor or administrator. For parents interested in doing this, please call and make an appointment.

Parents also have the right to challenge what they feel is unfair information found in the cumulative record. This challenge should be made in writing directly to the principal.

DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING

In cases of inclement weather, please listen to the radio or television for instructions or visit the BCS Webpage.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is conducive to learning. While many types of clothing are appropriate for more casual settings, we expect all students to dress appropriately during school and school sponsored activities.

1. Undergarments must always be covered.
2. Cleavage may not be exposed; tops must fit appropriately.
3. Straps on shirts must be at least two inches wide. Tube tops, halter tops, crop tops, backless tops, and strapless off the shoulder tops are not permitted.
4. Shorts/skirts must be at least mid-thigh. It is a violation if the shorts/skirts rise higher than fingertips when standing with arms by side.
5. Pajama type clothing is not permitted.
6. Students are prohibited from wearing any metal chains or metal-spiked apparel and accessories.
7. Proper footwear must always be worn. Shoes must be laced and tied properly. Gym shoes specifically for PE must be worn during PE. Heelys are not permitted.
8. (A) Pants **must** be worn around the waist and not "sag" below the **top** of the hip bone.
(B) Pants that are excessively baggy, which could be used to conceal contraband, are not permitted.
(C) Holes/Slits are not permitted above fingertips when standing with arms by side.

9. Excessively long shirts/outerwear can conceal sagging pants and contraband and are not permitted.
10. Hat, scarves, headbands, sweatbands, bandannas, and picks are not permitted unless for legitimate religious observances (note required). Hood sweatshirts are not allowed to be worn with the hood up.
11. No item of clothing, emblems, insignias, or badges, may be worn that is suggestive of hate, violence, inappropriate language, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or connected in any way to gang dress, or is sexual in nature, or that defames or insults any person(s) or groups.
12. Sunglasses may not be worn inside the building.

Consequences:

Dress code violations are disruptive to our purpose, which is education. When forced to address violations of the dress code, students miss class and valuable learning.

Teachers and administrators will write a referral for dress code violations. Consequences for repeated violations increase with each offense.

1st Offense - Student must correct the violation prior to returning to class.* Students will always be offered the opportunity to correct the violation on each offense before moving to the 2nd Offense.

2nd Offense – 1 Day ISS AND Student must change into PE Uniform or picked up by their parent (this will be an unexcused absence).

3rd Offense – 1 Day OSS; Parent Pick-Up

***Students will be given the option to change into P.E. uniform the school has available or to be picked up by their parent.**

EARLY DISMISSALS

Students will be allowed to leave school early with parental permission for such things as doctor and dental appointments, or for other excusable reasons.

For a student to be excused early, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Parent/guardian should send a note for the homeroom teacher with the following information:
 - The time and reason for early dismissal.
 - The name of the person picking the student up.
 - A telephone number where they can be reached to answer questions/verify a note.
 - Parent must come in to sign student out.
2. **If a student becomes ill at school**, they are to advise their teacher and secure a hall pass to go to the office. There, the student may call their parent(s) and ask to be picked up.

3. Students leaving between 2:15-2:30 creates disruption to the educational learning environment. Students will not be dismissed from the lobby after 2:30. Students will be called to the lobby when afternoon announcements are made.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/CELL PHONES

Students must keep their electronic devices including, cell phones, **turned off** during the instructional day and in their bookbag.

Valley Springs Middle School staff are not responsible for any lost electronic devices.

Failure to abide by these rules at Valley Springs Middle School will result in the following consequences: A discipline referral will be written for each offense.

1st Offense - The device is confiscated and will be returned to the parent/guardian only.

2nd Offense - The device is confiscated and will be returned to the parent/guardian only.

3rd Offense - The device is confiscated and kept in the office to be returned to the parent/guardian only and the student will be assigned one days of ISS.

4th Offense - The device is confiscated and kept in the office to be returned to the parent/guardian. The student will serve 1 day of out of school suspension for this 4th offense and each additional offense hereafter.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) information can be found on the Valley Springs website or www.buncombeschools.org.

FIELD TRIPS

When students attend field trips or any other school activities, they are expected to abide by the same policies enforced during the regular school day. Students must always turn in a signed parental consent form before going on field trips. Administration reserves the right to revoke any student's field trip privileges for any length of time at any point during the academic year.

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

Fire and tornado drills take place at regular intervals as required by law. They are an important safety precaution. The fire drill will be signaled by a repeated ringing of the fire bell. The school will be notified of a tornado drill via the intercom system. It is

essential that all students and school personnel obey administrative instructions promptly.

During a fire drill, it is essential that all students obey their teachers and clear the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible once the signal is given. Students are to exit the building in an orderly fashion and in a single file to their designated area. There is **NO TALKING** from the time the signal is given until students return to their classroom. If a student talks or acts inappropriately during mandatory drills, consequences will be assigned.

Administration will announce an all clear signal via the intercom at which point students and school personnel may return to the building.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Students are expected to be prepared for each day's activities. Students are responsible for checking the office to see if forgotten items have been brought to school. This includes homework, lunch, PE uniforms, athletic equipment, money, projects, band instruments, etc. **CLASSES WILL NOT BE INTERRUPTED** for forgotten items. All lunch money brought to school must be brought to the Main Office where it will be sealed in an envelope and taken to the cafeteria by office staff.

FUND RAISING

Money generated from fund raising allows student organizations to do many things, which otherwise they would be unable to do. Part of the money each student raises goes into the team account of which that student is a member. The money is then spent in ways that return that money to students through field trip costs, incentives for grades and attendance, guest speakers, supplementary materials, etc.

GRADES

Grades are reported each nine weeks. Progress reports are sent home midway through each grading period.

90 - 100	=	A
80 - 89	=	B
70 - 79	=	C
60 - 69	=	D
0 - 59	=	F

HONOR CODE

The following are honor code violations:

- Using or possessing, as well as giving or receiving unauthorized materials (notes, textbook, cheat sheet, electronic devices) in a testing situation.

- Roving eyes or talking of any kind during a testing situation.
- Giving or sharing information on a test, quiz, homework, project, etc.
- Copying another student's work of any kind or allowing students to copy your work.
- Passing on or receiving questions and/or definite answers to tests or quizzes.
- Tampering with teachers' grades or records.
- Stealing and or selling quizzes or exams.
- Turning in work for credit that is not one's own (this includes, but is not limited to, information from the internet).
- Submitting text that has been cut-and-pasted from the internet without attribution.
- Sharing or copying information from another student's computer or mobile device.
- Plagiarism of any kind is strictly prohibited.
- Paraphrasing without attribution is also considered plagiarism.

The following consequence will apply when an honor code violation occurs across all classes:

- All parties involved will receive a zero for the assignment without the opportunity to retake. Parents will be notified, and a note will be placed in the teacher PowerSchool gradebook indicating cheating occurred to explain the zero.

IMMUNIZATIONS

General Statute requires that every student be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, red measles, mumps, rubella, hemophilus, hepatitis B and varicella. No student may attend any grade (PreK-12) without presenting a certificate of immunization. The parent has 30 calendar days from the student's first day of attendance to show proof of the required immunizations.

A booster dose of Tdap vaccine is required of all children before entering 7th grade that are enrolled in public school, on or after August 1, 2008 if 5 years or more have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine. The Meningococcal vaccine is required of all 7th grade students on or after July 1, 2015.

LOCKERS

Lockers will not be used for the 2021-2022 academic year. For the past several years, students have carried their bookbag with them throughout the day. This has resulted in better academic outcomes and less behavioral infractions than when lockers were used.

LOST AND FOUND

Items found on the buses and at school should be turned in to the Lost and Found Area in the cafeteria. Every Friday unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization.

MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to be respectful of all school property. Students may be financially responsible for damage done to school and school property.

Library

The library provides access to a variety of resources including books, AV, online databases, and video production. Teachers schedule classes in the library and allow students to check out books on a flexible schedule. The library is available for student and faculty use before, during and after school. Students should follow these guidelines when visiting the media center:

- Before School – students need a pass.
- During the School Day - Students need a pass.
- After School - Students need a pass.

Circulation

- 3 books for up to 2 weeks.
- Renewals allowed unless book is on hold.

BCS Student Device

The overriding goal of the Digital Learning Initiative is to prepare students for their tomorrow by leveling the playing field and creating a highly collaborative and engaging learning experience for students and teachers. Students are wholly responsible for their BCS student devices. If students damage their device, they are financially responsible. Students are also financially responsible for lost devices and lost chargers.

Procedures and Information for Students and Parents

The Buncombe County Schools (BCS) 1:1 device will allow student access to educational applications, web-based tools, and many other useful resources. All users will be expected to follow Buncombe County Schools' **Technology Responsible Use policy** (3225/4312/7320) and **Internet Safety policy** (3226/4205) as well as all other state and federal laws, board policies and school rules.

The **Student Device User Guide** provides students and families with information about the general use of technology, ownership of the BCS 1:1 device, rights and responsibilities for possession of the device, care of the BCS 1:1 device, its educational use, and digital citizenship.

Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship refers to the use of digital and information literacy skills to interact with society.

T - Take care of your equipment

H - Hide your password

I - Internet safety

N - Netiquette

K - Kind

Student Email Account - Google

- Google Apps accounts are created for school related assignments only.
- Student email accounts are monitored.
- Student log-in information will be distributed by teachers and the media center.
- Students are not to share their password with any other student.

1:1 Student Devices

Student Responsibilities:

- Bring a charged device to school each day prepared to learn. Loaner devices will **NOT** be given out.
- Always keep the device with you and/or in a secure location.
- Do not apply stickers to, alter the appearance of, or otherwise modify the device.
- Only clean the screen with a soft anti-static cloth.
- Adhere to BCS policies: Technology Use - 3225/4312/7320 and Internet Safety - 3226/4205
- Always transport the device inside a backpack or sleeve.
- Additional requirements as they become necessary.
- Do not share your charger with other students.
- Replacement chargers are \$25.00.

MEDICATION

If your student has a prescription drug or over the counter drug to be taken during school hours, please read, sign, have a licensed health care provider sign and return the Parental Request to Administer Medication form to the office. This form can be obtained in the office. The office does not keep any medication other than that which is brought from home along with the proper paperwork from the parent.

Office staff will not accept medication without the proper paperwork filled out.

MESSAGES

The office staff are unable to deliver messages to students, except in cases of emergency. We understand that parents may feel the need to get in touch with students during the school day. However, we cannot stop instruction of students in class for any reason other than an emergency.

The nature of the emergency must be specified to a school official before classroom activities will be interrupted. Under normal circumstances, emergencies exist when conditions arise that make it impossible or impractical to delay the message until later.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ROUTINE MATTERS, such as rides to and from school, house keys, delivery and pick up, meeting places, etc. SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE STUDENTS ARRIVE AT SCHOOL.

OPT-OUT PROCEDURE REGARDING USE OF STUDENT LIKENESS

Buncombe County Schools does not require parent permission for students to be photographed, videotaped, and/or interviewed by system employees or media on routine school topics, activities for public information, awards and honors, instructional and promotional purposes.

Parent permission must be given, however, to photograph, videotape and/or interview children with physical or mental disabilities if they will be identified as children with physical or mental disabilities. Parents, guardians, or eligible students may request not to be photographed, videotaped and/or interviewed by notifying the school in writing within ten (10) days of publication of this policy in the Student Code of Conduct (or by the 10th day of the start of school each year).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE uniforms are for sale at the beginning of the school year. Students are required to dress out each day which includes wearing shorts, shirt, socks, and athletic shoes.

Students are required to participate in PE classes. If there are medical problems, students are expected to participate within the limits of that problem and to contribute to the class. A doctor's note should be submitted for any medical reasons for nonparticipation in PE. The doctor's note needs to explain what you students can and cannot do. Every effort is made to help students be successful in Physical Education.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

The school setting is not an appropriate place for public displays of affection. Students may not hold hands, kiss, hug, etc., while on campus, on the bus, or any other school sponsored activity.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

Valley Springs Middle School is fortunate to have the service of a School Resource Office (SRO). Though this position is an arm of the Buncombe County Sheriff's Department, Valley Springs considers the SRO to be a vital part of the school's resources in helping students solve problems. The SRO role is to help students become better problem solvers and help maintain student safety. They are in a unique situation due to their dual roles. When an SRO counsel's students, this in no way means students are in legal jeopardy. If a situation necessitates legal action by the SRO, parents will be contacted.

SELLING ITEMS

Students are not to sell or trade items to other students during school hours. The only exceptions are those items that receive prior approval by administration for fundraisers within the school.

STUDENT-TO-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Students have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as all other students, regardless of their grade level, sex, race, family, color, national origin, creed, socioeconomics, or handicap(s). Students can expect to be treated fairly by teachers and administrators.

Constant harassment of other students or acts of intentional harm is considered a serious offense.

Students need not fear another student or group(s) of students for any reason. Students have no right which allows them to threaten, harass, intimidate, or annoy students in any manner. If a student encounters this, they are to report the event to the nearest teacher, counselor, or administrator. Valley Springs will make every attempt to stop this behavior.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The use of tobacco products on school grounds, in school buildings and facilities, on school property or at school-related or school-sponsored events is prohibited. The School Board acknowledges that adult employees and visitors serve as role models for students.

1. Enforcement for Students

Consequences for students engaging in the prohibited

behavior may be assigned OSS, bus suspension, and/or exclusion from extracurricular activities.

2. Enforcement for Visitors

Visitors using tobacco products will be asked to refrain while on school property or leave the premises. If they refuse, law enforcement officers will be contacted to escort the visitor off campus and the visitor will be charged with trespassing and banned from returning.

TEXTBOOKS

Should a textbook be lost, destroyed, or damaged, students will be required to pay a pro-rata share of the full purchase price of that textbook. A new textbook will not be issued until the fees have been paid for the lost or damaged book. Students will also be required to pay a pro-rata share of the full purchase price whenever theft is claimed. Textbook care is a student's responsibility. No textbooks will be issued until the student has paid all outstanding textbook debts for the previous year.

VISITATION

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit our school. The more parents/guardians know about us, the more they will understand our daily routine, expectations, and experiences. Please call first so arrangements for a visit can be made.

Students' friends are not allowed to visit during the school day for any reason. We value our instructional time and find it is disrupted by students' visitors. This also applies to the time immediately before school and after school.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Volunteer Program is a vital part in helping our school prepare each student for their tomorrow. In previous years, over 1500 hours were supplied by volunteers. The Valley Springs Middle School PTA organizes volunteers and works closely with each team of teachers as needs arise. All volunteers MUST complete and be cleared by the Volunteer Tracker System. The Head Secretary can assist with this.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

You are asked to withdraw formally from school if your student is moving elsewhere. This will

enable the school to collect books and other school property and send a student's school records promptly to their new school.

YEARBOOKS

Our Yearbook Staff works hard each year to publish our yearbook. This publication contains pictures of each student. It also has many pictures of our students in club groups, teams, and candid shots.

The yearbook is sold on a pre-sale basis. Students place their order online only for the yearbook by paying an advertised amount before the book is published. This pre-sale tells the Yearbook Staff exactly how many copies need to be printed. Very few extras are ordered. It is important that students place orders for their individual copies of the yearbook when they are pre-sold. The yearbook is distributed in late spring.

Valley Springs Student Discipline Reference Chart

Infraction	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Aggressive Language/Gestures/Behavior Toward Other Student	1 Days ISS	2 Days ISS	3 Days OSS
Aggressive language/Gestures/Behavior Toward Faculty	2 Days OSS	5 Days OSS	10 Days OSS & Possible Hearing Board
Cutting / Skipping Class	1 Day ISS	2 Days ISS	1 Day OSS
Cheating/Plagiarism	Zero on Assignment; Parent Notified; Grade Noted in PowerSchool	Zero on Assignment; Parent Notified; Grade Noted in PowerSchool	Zero on Assignment; Parent Notified; Grade Noted in PowerSchool
Dress Code Violation (see Valley Springs Student Handbook)	Change in P.E. Uniforms (or student picked up)	1 Day ISS; Change in P.E. Uniforms (or student picked up)	1 Day OSS; Parent Picked Up
Cell Phones	Parent Pick-Up (Minor Referral)	Parent Pick-Up (Major Office Referral)	Parent Pick-Up Major Office Referral; 1 Day ISS
Failure to Wear Required Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)	Warning / Reminder of Appropriate PPE	Reminder of Appropriate PPE / Parent Contact	Remote Learning Until Compliance
Insubordination (Repeated Refusal to Follow a Reasonable Request)	1 Day ISS	2 Days ISS	2 Days OSS
Excessive Tardiness (Per 5th Occurrence)	1 Hour Before/After School Detention (1 Day ISS if not able to attend detention)	1 Hour Before/After School Detention (1 Day ISS if not able to attend detention)	1 Hour Before/After School Detention (1 Day ISS if not able to attend detention)
Failure to Serve Tardy Detention	1 Day ISS	1 Day ISS	1 Day ISS
Refusal to Identify Self/ False Name Given	1 Days ISS	2 Days OSS	5 Days OSS
Fighting	3 Days OSS & Legal Investigation & Repercussions	5 Days OSS Legal Investigation & Repercussions	10 Days OSS & Possible Hearing Board
Bus Discipline	<p>Riding the school bus is a privilege not a right. Students that receive a bus referral will be assigned the following consequences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Referral: 3 Day Bus Suspension ● Second Referral: 5 Day Bus Suspension ● Third Referral: 10 Day Bus Suspension ● Fourth Referral: Long-Term Suspension from Bus (10-185 Day Bus Suspension) <p>Students may still come to school while serving a bus suspension; however, the bus cannot transport the student.</p>		

Tobacco, E-cigarettes, Juuls Use and/or Possession	2 Days OSS	3 Days OSS	5 Days OSS and Cessation Class
Bullying/Cyber-Bullying	1 Day ISS and Referral to Counselors	2 Days ISS and Referral to Counselors	2 Days OSS and Referral to Counselors
Undesignated Area (Before/After School or During Lunches)	1 Days ISS	2 Days ISS	1 Day OSS
Forged Notes/Signatures	2 Days ISS	2 Days ISS	1 Day OSS
Throwing Trash Out of Windows	1 Day ISS	1 Day ISS	2 Days ISS
Behavior Contract Violation (i.e. Chronic Minor Offenses)	2 Days ISS	2 Days ISS	2 Days ISS
Communicating Threats to Other Students and Teachers	2 Days OSS & Potential Threat Assessment & Legal Action	5 Days OSS & Potential Threat Assessment & Legal Action	10 Days OSS & Hearing Board & Legal Action
Drugs or Alcohol (under the influence, use or possession)	3 Days OSS & Legal Action	5 Days OSS & Legal Action	10 Days OSS & Legal Action & Hearing Board
Theft or Vandalism (< \$100)	2 Days ISS & Pay/Repair	2 Days OSS & Legal Action & Pay/Repair	5 Days OSS & Legal Action & Pay/Repair
Theft or Vandalism (≥\$100)	2 Days OSS & Legal & Pay/Repair	5 Days OSS & Legal & Pay/ Repair	10 Days & Pay/Repair
Knife/Weapon Possession	3 Days OSS	5 Days OSS	10 Days OSS & Hearing Board
Knife/Weapon Brandishing Aggressively	LTS & Legal Action		
Assaulting a Faculty Member	Hearing Board & Legal Action		
Firearm Possession	Immediate Hearing Board & Legal Action		

- LTS = Long Term Suspension
- HB = Hearing Board

Note:

- Students who are absent on a day which they are assigned ISS will make up their ISS upon returning to school. Students sent home from ISS due to misbehavior will make up their ISS upon returning.
- OSS is not an option when assigned ISS.
- ISS assignment will be all day unless a conference is held with the teacher, administrator, and student to discuss alternative arrangements.
- There are special rules surrounding the suspension of students with IEPs and 504s.
- *Any student reported by anyone for bullying will automatically be referred to the counseling office. The counseling office will then follow appropriate procedures for the investigation and subsequent handling of the behavior in question.

Administration Can Alter Any of the Above Consequences