

# **Verndale**

# **Public School**

## **Elementary**

## **Student Handbook**

### **2020-2021**



**PIRATES TAKE PRIDE IN LEARNING!**

**Verndale Public School ISD 818**  
**411 Southwest Brown Street**  
**Verndale, MN 56481**  
**(218) 445-5184**  
**[www.verndaleschool.org](http://www.verndaleschool.org)**

## MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Dear Students and Families,

We would like to welcome you to Verndale Public School. Students will have many opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed. Student success is best achieved when clear expectations are set and a strong partnership exists between families and the school.

The student handbook explains the policies and procedures that will be used to help promote a safe educational environment at Verndale Public School. Please review the handbook and keep it for future reference. As with any student handbook, every situation a student may encounter during the school year cannot be covered and explained thoroughly in a condensed book.

It is our pleasure to work with the students, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff to ensure each student in the Verndale Public School District receives a high-quality education. Please feel free to contact the school if you have any questions regarding the student handbook or any other school matter.

Mr. Paul Brownlow

Mrs. Katie Bolland

Superintendent

K-12 Principal

District Assessment Coordinator

# **VERNDALE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS**

The mission of the Verndale Public School District is to provide a safe and innovative learning environment where all students are prepared for an ever-changing world through educational excellence.

School District Goals:

1. Optimize Student Achievement
2. Manage an Effective School District Budget
3. Retain Effective Staff Members

The Verndale School Board adopted this handbook on August 10, 2020..

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LEGAL NOTICES</b>	<b>9</b>
Verndale School Compliance with State and Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination	9
Title IX	9
Section 504	9
Notice Concerning Use of Pest Control Materials	9
Verndale School District Annual Asbestos Notification	10
Indoor Air Quality Notification	10
Pledge of Allegiance	10
District #818 Policies	10
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>11</b>
Daily Schedule	11
Breakfast/Hot Lunch Program	11
Health Office	12
Student Immunizations	12
Communicable Diseases	12
Student Insurance	12
Student Obligations	12
Instructional Materials	12
Lockers	12
Fees	13
Safety and Security	13
Door Policy	13
Surveillance Cameras	14
Canine Searches	14

Fire Drill	14
Tornado Drill	14
Lockdown Drill	14
Money/Valuables in School	14
Lost and Found	14
Noon Recess	14
<b>ACADEMIC</b>	<b>15</b>
Grades and Evaluation	15
Marking Period and Report Cards	15
Tutoring Program	15
Retention - Promotion	15
Parent Conferences	15
Teacher Request	15
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>16</b>
Daily Bulletin	16
Announcements	16
School Closings	16
Change of Address/Telephone Number	16
Access to Records	16
Internet/Technology	17
<b>RULES AND REGULATIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
Student Behavior and Expectations	18
Attendance	18
Truancy	18
Reporting an Absence	18
Student Conduct	18

In-School Suspension	19
Out-of-School Suspension	19
Classroom Rules	19
Student Behavior at Games, Assemblies, Concerts, Plays, Etc.	19
Teacher Responsibilities	19
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities	19
Attire and Grooming	19
Transportation	20
School Bus Policy	20
Bus Passes	21
Additional Rules and Regulations	21
Messages and Use of Telephone	21
Visitors	21
Skateboards, Inline Skates, Shoes with Wheels, Bicycles and Scooters	21
Pets	22
Cell Phones, iPods, iPads and Other Electronic Devices	22
School-Sponsored Trips	22
Wednesday Night Activities	22
Treats	22
<b>DISTRICT POLICIES</b>	<b>22</b>
Dangerous and Harmful Substances	22
Alcohol	22
Drugs	22
Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, Electronic-Cigarette	23
Harmful, Dangerous or Nuisance Articles	23
Threats and Harassment	23

Hazing	23
Bullying	23
Harassment and Violence	23
<b>DISTRICT TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b>	<b>25</b>
Administration	25
School Board	25
Office Staff	25
Building and Grounds	25
Food Service	26
Transportation	26
Teaching Assistants	27
Media Assistant	27
Faculty	27
Special Education Evaluation Specialist	27
Instructional Coach	27
School Counselor	27
School Readiness	27
ECFE / Parent Educator	27
Kindergarten	27
First Grade	27
Second Grade	28
Third Grade	28
Fourth Grade	28
5th / 6th Grade	28
Music	28
Physical Education / Health	28

Intervention / Title I	28
Special Education	29
Speech Therapy	29
<b>STATEWIDE TESTING OPT-OUT INFORMATION</b>	<b>30</b>

## **LEGAL NOTICES**

### ***Verndale School Compliance with State and Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination***

Verndale School District #818 does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age. Any person who has a complaint alleging that the school district is not complying with this policy or alleging any actions prohibited by this policy shall present the complaint in writing along with the reasons for the complaint to the school's Superintendent within 30 days. The Superintendent will initiate an investigation and resolve the complaint.

(Verndale School District Policy #102 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

### ***Title IX***

Verndale School complies with all regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender in school. The district's Title IX Officer is Katie Bolland, the K-12 Principal. Inquiries regarding compliance with the Title IX may be directed to the Title IX Officer or to the Director at the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, Welfare, Washington D.C.

(Verndale School District Policy #522 – Student Sex Nondiscrimination)

### ***Section 504***

The Verndale School supports Section 504 regulations that eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving federal funds. Katie Bolland is the District 504 Coordinator. (Verndale School District Policy #521 – Student Disability Nondiscrimination)

### ***Notice Concerning Use of Pest Control Materials***

A Minnesota state law went into effect in 2000 that requires schools to inform parents and guardians if they apply certain pesticides on school property. Schools that apply these pesticides are required to maintain an estimated schedule of pesticide applications and to make the schedule available for review or copying at the school office. State law also requires that you be told that the long-term health effects on children from the application of such pesticides or the class chemicals to which they belong may not be fully understood. If you would like to be notified prior to pesticide applications made on days other than those specified in the estimated schedule (excluding emergency applications), please contact Wade Kern at (218) 445-5184.

## **Verndale School District Annual Asbestos Notification**

In accordance with federal regulations, the Verndale School District has an asbestos management plan documenting the location and condition of all known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) in the school building. Every six months, an accredited inspector visually inspects the condition of the ACBM. The management plan is available for public inspection at the school office during normal business hours. Questions related to the plan should be directed to the account manager under contract with the Institute for Environmental Assessment, Inc., Brooklyn Park, MN, at (763) 315-7900.

## **Indoor Air Quality Notification**

The Verndale School District advocates a healthy school environment in which the surroundings contribute to an environment conducive to learning for students and productivity for students and staff. To help accomplish this, we have implemented an IAQ Management Plan using guidelines provided by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the "Tools for Schools" document developed by the U.S EPA. Wade Kern is the IAQ Coordinator for the Verndale School District. He has been trained and certified by the Minnesota Department of Education to fulfill this position. All concerns should be brought to his attention. He can be reached at (218) 445-5184.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance each morning. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice. Students will also receive instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag.

(Verndale School District Policy #531 –  
The Pledge of Allegiance)

## **District #818 Policies**

The Verndale School District #818 Policies are available for inspection at the District Office during regular business hours.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Daily Schedule

Our school day begins at 8:15 a.m. and concludes at 3:09 p.m. The school day is divided into two half-day segments. Half-day segments are determined as follows:

1. The time school starts in the morning until the dismissal for lunch.
2. The time school resumes after lunch/recess until dismissal at the end of the day.

Kindergarten Lunch	10:45 – 11:10
Kindergarten Recess	11:20 – 11:50
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Lunch	10:48 – 11:15
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Recess	11:20 – 11:50
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Lunch	10:51 – 11:15
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Recess	11:20 – 11:50
3 <sup>rd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Recess	10:55 – 11:25
3 <sup>rd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch	11:30 – 12:00
5 <sup>th</sup> / 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lunch	11:20 – 11:45
5 <sup>th</sup> / 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Recess	11:45 – 12:15
School Dismissal	3:09 p.m.
Regular Route Bus Exit	3:15 p.m.
Extra Curricular Bus	3:10-5:30 p.m.
Late Bus (Monday - Thursday)	5:00 p.m.

**Elementary students should not be in the building before 7:45 a.m. or after 3:15 p.m. unless they are under the direct supervision of school personnel. Elementary students entering the building between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. will report to the cafeteria until they are dismissed to their classrooms.**

### Breakfast/Hot Lunch Program

Breakfast and lunch will be served on a daily basis. All students must eat in the cafeteria even if they bring their own lunch.

In order to serve our students with peanut allergies, the Verndale School does not serve products containing nuts or nut products. We also encourage students and parents to follow these same guidelines. The district will also provide an alternate product for students that are lactose-intolerant.

The School Board has determined the following prices:

Breakfast for Kindergarten	Free
Breakfast for 1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	\$0.75
Free & Reduced-Price Breakfast	Free
Breakfast for all Adults	\$1.90
Lunch for Elementary	\$2.25
Lunch for High School (7-12)	\$2.35
Free & Reduced-Price Lunch	Free
Lunch for Adults	\$3.85
Additional Milk - Student	\$0.25
Additional Milk - Adult	\$0.35

*(All visitors - adults and children - are expected to pay the adult price for their meal.)*

Free and reduced meals are available to families that qualify. An application may be picked up from the office.

All meals and extra milk are to be paid for in advance or at the time of service. Students will receive their meal number the first day of school.

If you have any questions, please contact Vickie Thompson at 445-5184 ext. 301.

### **Health Office**

A health assistant is located in the office and can provide first aid and administer medications as needed. Students who leave school due to illness or injury must obtain a Permit to Leave from the office.

If a student needs to take prescription medication during school hours, the school requires the following:

1. Parents must bring the medication to the health office in the original container from the pharmacy. The label should include the student's name, name and dose of the drug, and time the drug should be administered.
2. A signed order from the parent and prescribing medical professional, which should include the student's name, name and dose of the medication, time the drug should be administered, for what condition the drug is being prescribed, as well as possible side effects.
3. Students needing prescriptions drugs that can be self-administered (inhalers, Epi-Pens) must have a written order from the doctor and should include the information listed in number 2.

If a student needs over-the-counter medication/non-prescription medication during the school day, the school requires the following:

1. Parents must bring the medication to the health office in the original container.
2. Parents must provide written consent, indicating what medication should be given, for what purpose, dosage instructions and the time the medication should be administered.  
(Verndale School District Policy # 516 – Student Medication)

### **Student Immunizations**

Each student attending Verndale School must be in compliance with the current Minnesota Immunization Law.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Students who have been diagnosed with a communicable disease (Pinkeye, Chickenpox, Diarrhea, Fever, Head Lice, Impetigo, Influenza, Pneumonia, Ringworm, Scabies, Strep Throat and Vomiting) must be excluded from attending school until the communicability period has ended. The school office has a list of the recommended exclusion periods for communicable diseases.

### **Student Insurance**

Parents/guardians should consider taking out student insurance if their insurance policy does not cover accidents (including dental) that occur in the school. Parents/guardians should also check their policy to determine if their student is covered when he/she participates in athletics. The school carries liability insurance that applies only if the school district is declared legally responsible by a court of law.

### **Student Obligations**

### **Instructional Materials**

Textbooks and workbooks will be furnished to the students of the Verndale School. Personal items, such as notebooks, pencils, colors, rulers, pens, glue, scissors and Kleenex, are the responsibility of the student and parent.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are issued to each student. The care of these lockers is the student's responsibility. **Any damage to the locker will be assessed to the student.** The administration may at any time search a student's locker, desk, personal possessions or person if administration has

reasonable suspicion to believe unauthorized objects are present. (Verndale School District Policy # 502 – Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person)

## **Fees**

Public education in Minnesota is free to all students who are residents. However, fees may be charged to students under the following circumstances:

- Rental charge on school-owned music instruments
- Cost of school equipment or material destroyed or broken or unduly damaged through carelessness or failure to follow instructions, in the amount necessary to restore the item involved to service
- Costs of field trips, which are made available from time to time but are not required as a part of a course, should the student elect to participate in the field trip
- Admission fees for concerts, plays, athletic events and other programs or activities which the student may attend at his/her discretion. Deposit for padlocks supplied by the school for use on lockers. Deposit will be returned when padlock is returned at the end of each school year

Students are required to furnish their own paper, pencils, pens, notebooks, graph paper, sketch pads, gym suits, tennis and athletic shoes, and other items of personal equipment.

Fees unpaid within thirty days of the end of the school year may be collected through action in a small claims court or other appropriate means.

Fees may be charged for personal equipment and apparel issued to students. Students are requested to make their payment to the school

secretary. Students will be allowed one week to pay fees.

The fee requirement may be waived under special circumstances.

These procedures are in accordance with and governed by the Minnesota Public School Law, MSA 120.71-120.76

## **Safety and Security**

### **Door Policy**

Parents and students should always use the main entrance (door 1) to access our school during the school day. All external doors, except the main entrance (door 1) will remain locked during school hours (from 8:15 a.m. to 3:09 p.m.). For safety precautions, individuals entering must use the security system and identify themselves to the office staff in order to enter the building during this time.

Parents/guardians picking up students are required to enter the building through the main office and remain in the office or in the commons area by the new gymnasium.

Elementary students getting picked up will be brought to the office for pickup at the end of the school day.

Students arriving late to school or leaving early must check in and out through the main office.

## ***Surveillance Cameras***

The Verndale School uses surveillance cameras twenty-four hours per day. The administration and school staff will view the camera's footage when necessary. Parents WILL NOT be allowed to view the camera's footage unless only their child is visible.

## ***Canine Searches***

Verndale Public School strives to maintain a safe school environment. Therefore, random canine searches by a certified detection dog and trainer will be conducted on school premises.

## ***Fire Drill***

During the school year, the school will conduct at least five fire drills. Follow the following safety precautions:

1. Walk quietly and orderly out of the building.
2. Keep a safe distance from the building when outside.
3. Directions for exits are posted in each classroom in the building.

## ***Tornado Drill***

There will be one tornado drill each spring. An announcement will be made over the intercom system that all students and staff should follow the tornado drill procedure and report to their designated shelter area.

## ***Lockdown Drill***

A Lockdown Drill will be called five times during the school year. During these drills, students and staff will practice the procedures that will be used

during a crisis situation. The following actions will occur:

1. All exterior doors will be locked and all exterior window shades will be closed.
2. All classroom doors will be locked, with students moving away from windows.
3. Classroom doors will remain locked until notification by designated school personnel.
4. Lockdown status will be removed once it has been determined to be appropriate.

## ***Money/Valuables in School***

It is not advisable for students to carry large sums of money or valuables to school. Money for lunches should be sent in a sealed envelope clearly marked with the student's name and classroom. The school assumes no responsibility for the loss of money or valuables.

## ***Lost and Found***

Please be sure to label your child's boots, gym shoes, caps, scarves, mittens, etc., so we can return them if found. Remind your child to check the lost and found box when something is lost at school. All items in the lost and found will be donated to a community organization two times per year (December and May).

## ***Noon Recess***

The students will go outside for noon recess unless the temperature is below zero (0) degrees. Temperatures with a wind chill below 0 degrees will be at the discretion of the administration. Students should have a hat, winter coat, gloves and winter boots during the winter season.

## **ACADEMIC**

### ***Grades and Evaluation***

The following letter grades will be used to evaluate a student's progress:

A	Superior
B	Above Average
C	Average
D	Below Average
F	Failure
H	Exceptional Quality
S+	Above Satisfactory
S	Satisfactory
S-	Below Satisfactory
IM	Improving
NI	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

### ***Marking Period and Report Cards***

The elementary has four (4) nine-week grading periods. Because the nine-week grading period is rather long, communication will be made with parents/guardians of students who are having difficulty.

### ***Tutoring Program***

The Verndale School will offer the Targeted Services tutoring program to students in first through sixth grade. The Targeted Services program will be held after school on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 3:10 to 5:00 p.m. Please contact the school office for more information.

### ***Retention - Promotion***

The Verndale School may retain students. The decision to retain a student will be made by a team including the classroom teacher(s), administration or designee and the parent(s). Several factors will be considered including, but not limited to: academic aptitude and progress; social, emotional and behavior readiness; age; conduct and attendance. Students that do not meet these academic, social or attendance levels may be retained. When a student is retained, a plan will be developed to assist the student to be successful.

### ***Parent Conferences***

Parents/guardians may make appointments for conferences with teachers or the principal by contacting the school office. Regular conferences are set on the school calendar.

### ***Teacher Request***

Parents/guardians may make a request for a specific classroom teacher for their child for the following school year by submitting a Teacher Request Form to the school office by the first Friday in May.

# **COMMUNICATION**

## ***Daily Bulletin***

School activities will be announced in the daily bulletin and are to be submitted to the high school secretary before 8:15 a.m. Items for the bulletin may be omitted at the discretion of administration or designee.

## ***Announcements***

Public address announcements will be restricted to the last three minutes of the school day with further announcements at the discretion of the principal or designee.

## ***School Closings***

All school closings will be announced on the instant alert system and over the following radio stations: KWAD (920 AM), KKWS (105.9 FM) and KSKK (94.7 FM); and television stations: KSAX (Channel 5), WCCO (Channel 4), KMSP (Channel 9) and KARE (Channel 11).

## ***Change of Address/Telephone Number***

Please notify the office of any change in address or telephone number as soon as possible.

## ***Access to Records***

The school has student grades, attendance and standardized test scores on file. Students and/or their parent/guardian may see the contents of these records by making an appointment with the principal or designee. All student records will be treated in accordance with the provisions of Public Law 93-380, passed by Congress in 1974, and Chapter 479 of the 1974 Sessions Laws of the State of Minnesota.

All school information regarding a student is considered private and confidential except directory information.

Directory information for a student includes:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Email address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Enrollment status
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors and awards
- Most recent institution attended
- Parent(s) name, address, telephone number

Directory information does not include personally identifiable data; which references religion, race, color, social position or nationality.

The district considers names and birthdates of students, eligible for special education, as directory information and will share the information with DHS (Minnesota Dept. of Human Services) to determine which students are currently enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Program. If a parent/guardian does not

want this information shared, please contact the school office.

If a student/parent/guardian wishes to have his/her name or picture omitted from any or all school publications, a written request must be made.  
(Verndale School District Policy # 515 – Protection and Privacy of Student Records)

### ***Internet/Technology***

The Verndale School is equipped with many technology items that are educationally valuable to students and faculty. When used properly, this technology can be a wonderful source of information and connection to worldwide communication. Because this technology provides a worldwide fluid environment, the information available to students and staff is constantly changing. Therefore, it is impossible to predict what information might be located. Making electronic information available does not imply endorsement of all content accessible. Technology tools, such as Internet and e-mail, must be used responsibly. The Internet and e-mail are extensions of Verndale School just as if it is a classroom, library, hallway, gymnasium or bus. The use of these tools in school is a privilege, not a right. Students who misuse these tools will be denied the privilege of access.

The following examples are provided to guide users but do not necessarily cover all areas of proper behavior:

- Users will not send, display, download or copy sexually explicit, pornographic, obscene, lewd or other inappropriate messages or pictures. If access to these areas is gained accidentally, the user will exit immediately.

- Users should not expect that files on district servers would always be private. Passwords are not to be shared.
- Users must not interfere with others' work, or with the performance of the network, by attempting to "hack" passwords, gain entry to closed areas of the network or by knowingly or inadvertently introducing computer "viruses". Illegal activities are prohibited and subject to prosecution.
- Students are not to load any software or download any files without permission from the instructor.

Student's use of the Internet should be for educational purposes. Students that use the Internet (in-school or off-school property) for inappropriate use directed at students, staff or faculty will be disciplined according to school district policies. The discipline could range from detention, suspension, expulsion or the matter could be turned over to law enforcement.  
(Verndale School District Policy # 524 – Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)

### ***Distance Learning***

Students and families should refer to the [Distance Learning Family & Student Handbook](#) for guidance and expectations during Distance Learning.

# RULES AND REGULATIONS

## ***Student Behavior and Expectations***

Every school must have rules and regulations, but no written rules and regulations can possibly cover all situations. It should be understood that it is not practical or necessary to attempt to put all possible regulations into this handbook. Students are here to receive an education in a positive and productive atmosphere. The school has the right to expect students to have good attendance, respect all students, school personnel and school property, and be groomed and dressed appropriately.

## ***Attendance***

Regular attendance is absolutely essential for progress in a student's schoolwork. Students should develop the habit of being on time and prepared for the day's work. Parents and students are expected to cooperate in the matter of attendance.

Although excusing absenteeism is at the discretion of administration, the following reasons are considered valid and should be used by parents and students as guidelines:

1. Illness of the student
2. Serious illness in the student's immediate family
3. Attending a funeral for a relative, friend or neighbor will be excused with a prearranged parental permission slip
4. Family emergency
5. Medical, dental, orthodontic or counseling appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day
6. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action
7. Absences because of severe weather conditions, depending on the merits of each case
8. Prearranged absences, by parents/guardians, for a family trip

## ***Truancy***

A student who does not have an excused absence is expected to be in school. Excessive unexcused absences will result in a student being considered truant. Violations of this regulation will result in the matter being referred to the county attorney.

## ***Reporting an Absence***

Parents/guardians must call the school by 8:30 a.m. if their student is going to be absent. If we have not received a call, we will call home to find out the status of your student.

## ***Student Conduct***

Without discipline in schools, learning cannot occur; therefore, disciplinary action may be taken against students for any behavior, which is disruptive of good order or violates the rights of others. The following types of conduct are never permissible: truancy, threats, assault (physical, verbal or written), fighting, defiance of school staff, the use of profanity, refusal to prepare assignments, academic dishonesty, gambling, vandalism, and possession of weapons, dangerous objects, tobacco, alcohol or drugs.

Every student is required to carry out the reasonable direction, assignment and request of any teacher, paraprofessional, custodian, bus driver or school employee at any time during the school day or school-sponsored activity. Refusal by the student orally, by action or inaction, may be determined as insubordination. Cursing at or about a school employee will be considered as an act of defiance.

Consequences for inappropriate behaviors take many forms and the effectiveness of a consequence varies by student. Common consequences will be used until it is determined that alternative methods are necessary. Administration may impose or recommend longer suspension, expulsion, restitution or other

discipline as appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Students and parents/guardians should also realize that teachers and administrators who are trained in CPI procedures may use these techniques in situations where the need arises.

Willful conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the rights of others to an education; endangers school district employees, the student or other students, or the property of the school; or violates any rule of conduct specified in the discipline policy adopted by the board may result in removal of a student from class. (Verndale School District Policy # 506 – Student Discipline and Notice of Suspension)

### ***In-School Suspension***

Students on in-school suspension will be assigned to an area from 8:15 a.m. to 3:09 p.m. The student will be isolated from other students and must be doing the work that was assigned to them, as the work will be due upon the student's return to class. The student will not be allowed to participate in breaks or leave the building and will eat in an area determined by administration.

### ***Out-of-School Suspension***

In some cases, the interest of the school and/or the student may be best served if a suspension is served out of school. For these circumstances the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act will be followed. The school will rely on the parent/guardian to support the suspension effort by supervising their child who is temporarily removed from school.

The work missed during the suspension is to be completed upon return to school. No extra time will be given for this type of absence.

### ***Classroom Rules***

Each teacher will have a set of classroom rules/consequences that are specific to his/her

classroom. The student will be expected to follow each teacher's rules/consequences.

### ***Student Behavior at Games, Assemblies, Concerts, Plays, Etc.***

Students must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Students must stay off the playing field and court at all times.
2. Students may show their appreciation with appropriate applause and cheering.

### ***Teacher Responsibilities***

It is the teacher's responsibility to follow all school district policies, ensure equal educational opportunities for all students, notify students of general classroom rules and procedures, provide fair discipline for all students and make attempts to resolve classroom management issues prior to involving administration.

### ***Parent/Guardian Responsibilities***

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to read and discuss this policy with students/children who will be attending school. Parents/Guardians are urged to call the school if there are any questions or problems about the discipline policy.

Parents/Guardians are financially responsible for their students. If a student has been caught vandalizing, stealing, or destroying school property, a bill will be sent home for repair or replacement of said property.

### ***Attire and Grooming***

Students are expected to observe standards of dress and grooming which emphasize neatness and appropriateness. Any dress that is determined by staff or administration as disruptive to the educational process is considered inappropriate.

Any clothing that contains drugs, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, pictures of weapons, pornographic material or double entendre is prohibited. Any clothing that is

vulgar, offensive and/or contrary to the mission of the Verndale School will be prohibited.

All shirts worn by students must cover their beltline and cleavage area, such that no skin is visible at any time. Tank tops (straps must be over the shoulder) must have straps that are at least 2 inches wide. Shirts with cutoff sleeves cannot be ripped down the side and must still have an underarm seam.

**Shirt lines covering cleavage and back area must form a straight line from underarm to underarm. All shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no more than 4 inches above the knees. No holes in pants, dresses, skirts, or shorts will be allowed 4 inches above the knee.**

No undergarments of any sort should be visible at any time.

Hats, bandanas, backpacks, winter jackets, and blankets are not to be worn during school hours.

A student may not have both ears covered by any item that could restrict the ability to hear verbal directions or safety warnings. These items include, but are not limited to headphones, earbuds, ear muffs, hoods, etc.

Every faculty member will be at liberty to decide what clothing is inappropriate. Students not adhering to this dress code will be asked to change into appropriate clothing.

If a student refuses to correct their attire, thus acting in an insubordinate manner, they will be escorted to the office where they will remain until they are able to meet dress code policy. The student will then be required to make up any time missed.

## **COVID-19 Related Items**

### **Face Coverings**

As of July 25, 2021, per the Governor's Executive Order 20-81, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face

covering in all indoor businesses and public indoor spaces, unless alone. All students and staff, and other people present in the building and district offices or riding on school transportation vehicles are required to wear a face covering. Refer to the [2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools](#) for more information regarding masks.

Face coverings that contain any reference to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, pictures of weapons, pornographic material or double entendre is prohibited. Any face coverings that are vulgar, offensive, and/or contrary to the mission of the Verndale School will be prohibited.

## **Transportation**

### **School Bus Policy**

The Verndale School has established a school bus safety program to ensure that its students have a safe ride to and from school. (Verndale School District Policy # 709 – Student Transportation Safety Policy)

Transportation is a privilege not a right. M.S. 123.801

1. A student's eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of bus safety or conduct policies.
2. The bus is an extension of the classroom.
3. District conduct and discipline policies apply to the school bus and bus stop areas as well as to school buildings and grounds.
4. Students are expected to follow these basic rules:
  - a. Immediately follow the directions of the driver.
  - b. Sit in your seat facing forward.
  - c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.

- d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
  - e. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
  - f. No fighting, harassment, intimidation or horseplay.
  - g. Do not throw any object.
  - h. No eating, drinking or use of tobacco or drugs.
  - i. Do not bring any weapon or dangerous object on the school bus.
  - j. Do not damage the school bus.
5. Consequences for school bus misconduct will apply to all regular, late routes, and extracurricular trips.
- a. First Offense – warning and notify parent/guardian.
  - b. Second Offense – Three (3) school-day suspension from bus and meet with parent/guardian.
  - c. Third Offense – Five (5) school-day suspension from bus and meet with parent/guardian.
  - d. Fourth Offense – Ten (10) school-day suspension from bus and meet with parent/guardian.
  - e. Further offenses may result in a suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year.
  - f. A more stringent suspension may be imposed at any time if administration deems the offense to be extremely serious.

*When a student goes sixty (60) calendar days without a report, the student's consequences may start over at the first offense.*

## **Bus Passes**

Students riding a school bus anywhere other than home must secure a bus pass from the school office. A signed note or a phone call from a parent/guardian must be presented prior to the issuance of a bus pass. If a student does not have a bus pass, he/she will be sent home on the regular bus.

## ***Additional Rules and Regulations***

### **Messages and Use of Telephone**

Students will not be allowed to use the phone in the office, except when taking a call from a parent. There is student phone in the hallway near the gym, and teachers may allow students to use the phone in their classrooms for emergency calls. Students will not be taken from class to answer the phone unless it is an emergency. Messages will be delivered to the classroom at a time when it is convenient and will not disturb the classroom. These messages should be called into the office by 1:45 p.m. to ensure the student receives the message before the end of the day.

### **Visitors**

Any person other than a Verndale student, staff, or Board of Education member is regarded as a visitor and must report to the office for clearance before going anywhere in the building. For safety reasons, student visitors are not allowed during the school day.

### **Skateboards, Inline Skates, Shoes with Wheels, Bicycles and Scooters**

Skateboards, inline skates, shoes with wheels, scooters and bicycles cannot be used in the school building.

## **Pets**

The administration must grant prior approval before any pet can be brought to school for school projects. Pets must be brought to and from school by a parent or guardian.

## ***Cell Phones, iPods, iPads and Other Electronic Devices***

Students are encouraged to keep their cell phones and other electronic devices at home. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Classroom use is prohibited (devices should not be seen or heard) unless the instructor has given permission to use for academic purposes. Students that violate the cell phone/electronic device policy will face the following consequences:

### **1. First Offense:**

The device will be taken away from the student and returned by the classroom teacher at the end of the day.

### **2. Second Offense:**

The device will be taken away from the student and brought to the office. The device can be picked up from the office at the end of the day.

### **3. Third Offense:**

The device will be taken away from the student and the parent must pick up the device in the office.

Any additional violations will result in additional consequences for each subsequent offense.

Taking pictures and/or recording video clips with electronic devices is strictly prohibited and could result in suspension/expulsion.

## ***School-Sponsored Trips***

Any student attending a school-sponsored trip will be expected to follow the Verndale Discipline Policy. If a student has discipline or attendance issues and/or is not making satisfactory progress, the teacher and administration will determine if the student may attend the event.

## ***Wednesday Night Activities***

Wednesday night is designated as family night. All student activities are to be completed by 6:00 p.m. Any exceptions will be handled by the administration.

## **Treats**

If a child wants to bring treats to school to share with other students, the treats must be pre-packaged and purchased from a store.

# **DISTRICT POLICIES**

## ***Dangerous and Harmful Substances***

### **Alcohol**

Students are prohibited from using, possessing or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages at school, on school grounds, in school vehicles or

at school-sponsored activities. Law enforcement will be notified immediately.

### **Drugs**

Students are prohibited from using, possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs at school, on school grounds, in school vehicles or at school-sponsored activities. This includes drug

paraphernalia. Law enforcement will be notified immediately.

## **Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, Electronic-Cigarette**

Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarette at school, on school grounds, in school vehicles or at school-sponsored activities. The Verndale School building, grounds and vehicles are tobacco-free. (Verndale School District Policy #419 – Tobacco-Free Environment)

## **Harmful, Dangerous or Nuisance Articles**

The possession or use of articles that are nuisances, illegal, or that may cause harm to persons (including guns and knives) or property is prohibited at school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Administration will have the discretion in determining whether an item may be harmful or a nuisance. District policies cover most circumstances. (Verndale School District Policy #501 Schools Weapons Policy)

## **Threats and Harassment**

### **Hazing**

“Hazing” means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, student group or for any other purpose. (Verndale School District Policy #526 – Hazing Prohibition)

### **Bullying**

“Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

- an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
- materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services or privileges.

(Verndale School District Policy #514 – Bullying Prohibition Policy)

If an act of hazing/bullying occurs it must be reported to an appropriate school official. Any person denying or lying about an act of hazing/bullying or instigating any other person to do so offends this policy.

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any person, including district employees, who retaliates against any person who reports, testifies, assists or helps to investigate in any act of hazing/bullying.

The school district will also take and authorize any action necessary to investigate any case of hazing/bullying and to discipline all persons responsible.

### **Harassment and Violence**

It is the policy of the Verndale School District to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital

status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation or disability.

To report an act of harassment and/or violence contact Mrs. Katie Tackmann, Human Rights Officer, at 411 Southwest Brown Street, Vernale, MN 56481 or (218)445-5184 (Vernale School District Policy #413 - Harassment and Violence)

## DISTRICT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### ***Administration***

Paul Brownlow	Superintendent	316
Katie Bolland	Principal	313
Greg Johnson	Dean of Students / Activities Director	308

### ***School Board***

Marcus Edin	Chairperson	445-5200
Bill Blaha	Vice-Chair	445-5458
Scott Veronen	Treasurer	445-5230
Tony Stanley	Clerk	445-5898
Shyla Hess	Director	445-5369
Chris Youngbauer	Director	445-1218

### ***Office Staff***

Jordan Anderson	Business Manager	310
Kim Moske	Human Resources / Payroll	305
Mary Gronlund	Secretary / MARSS	300
Amy Thompson	Secretary / Accounts Payable	302
Vickie Thompson	Secretary	301
Jill Davis	School Nurse	312
Amber Geis	Health Aide	312

### ***Building and Grounds***

Wade Kern	Buildings and Grounds Supervisor	304
Jeff Springer	Head Custodian	314
Lisa Cochran	Custodian	
Kim Kern	Custodian	

Ed Pudwill	Custodian
Mitchell White	Custodian
Jeff Braith	Custodian

### ***Food Service***

Vickie Thompson	Food Service Supervisor	315
Sue Johnson	Head Cook	
Kim Kern	Assistant Cook	
Lucinda Wegscheid	Assistant Cook	

### ***Transportation***

Wade Kern	Transportation Supervisor	304
Tanner Anderson	Bus Driver	
Michael Maroney	Bus Driver	
Brad Cottrell	Bus Driver	
Deb Hackler	Bus Driver	
Justin Hiltner	Bus Driver	
Kenny Kjeldergaard	Bus Driver	
Dale Schmith	Bus Driver	
Dan Schmitz	Bus Driver	
Tony Stanley	Bus Driver	
Rita Weishalla	Substitute Bus Driver	
Daryl Jacobson	Substitute Bus Driver	
Steve Techam	Substitute Bus Driver	
Loran Hackler	Van Driver	
Laura Brownlow	Van Driver	
Tami Merk	Bus Aide	

### ***Teaching Assistants***

Cami Dick	Jennifer Heldman	Sharyl Olson	Christine Conger
Jeannie Engebretson	Keri Leeseberg	Amanda Richter	Val Nanik
Tonya Fiskum	Tami Merk	Kim Snyder	Angela Varela
Ronelle Hanson	Tanya Merk	Phyllis Umland	

### ***Media Assistant***

Charlene Orlando

### ***Faculty***

#### **Special Education Evaluation Specialist**

Tracy Kjeldergaard 228

#### **Instructional Coach**

Matthew Parker 181

#### **School Counselor**

Katie Tackmann 321

#### **School Readiness**

Becky Ludovissie 260

#### **ECFE / Parent Educator**

Becky Ludovissie 260

#### **Kindergarten**

Alicia Strayer 102

Kelli Marquardt 108

#### **First Grade**

Meagan Ferris 116

Alicia Jones		119
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## **Second Grade**

Lisa Paulson		136
Sara Ross		138

## **Third Grade**

Kristin Johnson		140
Jennifer Cameron		142

## **Fourth Grade**

Angie Erickson		144
Angie Wallin		146

## **5th / 6th Grade**

Rachel Beard	Reading / Language Arts	148
Dan Johnson	Mathematics	152
Art Schluttner	Science / Health	154
Diane Gillespie	Social Studies / Technology	158

## **Music**

Nick Bunio	Vocal Music	184
Deb Hutson	Vocal / Instrumental Music	190
Stephanie Brownlow	Vocal / Instrumental Music	194

## **Physical Education / Health**

Kody Van Den Eykel	Physical Education / Health	334
Brian Hartwig	Physical Education / DAPE	334
Dillon Card	Physical Education / Health	267

## **Intervention / Title I**

Heather Arroyo	Intervention	115
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Jennifer Veronen                    Title I                    121

Alex Anderson                    Title I                    117

## **Special Education**

Cody Cox                            176

Heidi Brandsma                    172

Valerie Schmitz                    173

Jamie Adams                            171

## **Speech Therapy**

Matthew Parker                    Speech-Language Pathologist                    181

Erin Judd                            Speech-Language Pathologist Assistant                    180

# STATEWIDE TESTING OPT-OUT INFORMATION



## Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

### Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academic standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

### Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student's achievement, but your student's participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student's school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota's implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered "proficient."
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

### Academic Standards and Assessments

#### What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

#### What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science.</li><li>• Majority of students take the MCA.</li><li>• MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.</li><li>• Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.</li><li>• Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs.</li><li>• Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li></ul>

### **Why are these assessments effective?**

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

### **Are there limits on local testing?**

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

### **What if I choose not to have my student participate?**

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

### **When do students take the assessments?**

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

### **When do I receive my student's results?**

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

### **How much time is spent on testing?**

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

### **Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?**

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

### **Where do I get more information?**

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](#) ([education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

## Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

*To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required each year parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (This form is **only** applicable for the 20 \_\_\_ to 20 \_\_\_ school year.)

Student's Legal First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Legal Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Legal Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Student's District/School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](#) ([education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

MCA/MTAS Reading       MCA/MTAS Science

MCA/MTAS Mathematics       ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered "proficient."

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed by school or district staff only.      Student ID or MARSS Number \_\_\_\_\_

Posted May 2019