

2008 – 2009 Parent/Student Handbook

The information inside should answer your questions concerning school policies and regulations. For issues not here, the office staff will answer your questions or direct you to the person best able to respond; the teacher is your first source of information regarding your child's academic achievement and social adjustment.

VIENNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

128 Center Street, South Vienna, Virginia 22180

Phone: (703) 937-6000; FAX: (703) 937-6097

24-Hour Attendance Line: (703) 937-6066

www.fcps.edu/ViennaES

fcps.blackboard.com

Jeanette M. Black, *Principal*

Melissa A. Tochterman, *Assistant Principal*

Sharon Koerner, Administrative Assistant

Karen Price, Registrar

Donna Yudkin, Office Assistant

Office Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

All visitors must check in at the office. A Visitor or Volunteer badge, provided in the office, is to be worn by every visitor in the building. This procedure assures a safe school and prevents unauthorized persons from being in the school.

Younger children, friends of students, or students from other schools will *not* be permitted in the classroom during the school day; pets are not allowed on the school property. People should not be on school grounds after dark unless there is a school function. Please report suspicious activity around the school property to the school office and the Vienna Police Department.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Vienna Elementary School is to achieve academic excellence and social growth for all students. Values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary for good citizenship are reinforced in a safe, diverse and instructionally rich environment.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The Fairfax County School Board has defined the rights and responsibilities of students. Copies of *FCPS Student Responsibilities and Rights* are distributed and discussed with students at school. **Review the booklet, reinforce the concepts with your child, and return the Parent Signature Form to acknowledge receipt of the information.**

Student responsibility is taught throughout the school; students are expected to exercise consideration and respect for others and to follow rules in each classroom. The **Vienna Valiant Viking (VVV)** program encourages and rewards good citizenship.

INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULE

Grades 1-6

Mondays 8:35 am—12:45 pm

Tuesday-Friday 8:35 am—3:15 pm

Students should not arrive at school before 8:15 am; when the second bell rings at 8:35, all students are expected to be in the classroom.

Kindergarten—morning class

Mondays 8:35 am—10:35 am

Tuesday-Friday 8:35 am—11:55 am

Kindergarten—afternoon class

Mondays 10:35 am—12:45 pm

Tuesday-Friday 11:55 am—3:15 pm

Preschool—morning class

Mondays 9:00—11:00 am

Tuesday-Friday 9:00 am—12:15 pm

Preschool—afternoon class

Mondays 11:00 am—1:00 pm

Tuesday-Friday 12:15 pm—3:30 pm

Attendance

Regular and on-time attendance is expected of each student. Make every effort to schedule doctor/dentist appointments during non-school hours and plan family trips during school holidays. **Notify the principal, in advance, about trips.**

CALL by 8:35 am WHENEVER YOUR CHILD WILL BE LATE OR ABSENT [the 24-hour Attendance Line (703- 937-6066) any time or the school office (703-937-6000) after 8:00 am]. Leave your child's name and teacher, and a specific reason for the absence/tardy (including the symptoms if it is due to illness). If the Attendance Secretary does not know the reason for the absence, she must call to verify it. **Absences that have not been confirmed are considered unexcused;** any student with five or more unexcused absences will be referred to an attendance officer to investigate.

After a child is out **three days or more**, contact the teacher about missed work (by e-mail or call the main number to leave a voice-mail message). *Please do not ask to talk to the teacher during regular classroom hours.*

When you bring your child to school late, you MUST sign your child in. He or she will receive a Tardy Card to present to the teacher. A member of the staff will walk the student to class.

Release of Students

If your child must leave school early, tell the teacher the day and time you will pick up your child **so that the teacher can have the child ready.** Office staff will call the child to the office when you arrive; do not go to your child's classroom. Sign your child out.

Send a note the **first time** your child is staying at school for an after-school program, indicating the duration of the activity.

For 6th-grade students, special permission slips are required to allow them to go to the Community Center's Club Phoenix after school.

Keep *after-school play dates* to a minimum. If it's necessary to arrange one, **both** students must bring notes granting parental permission. If not confirmed, both students go home or to SACC/day care as usual after school.

Bus Riders

Bus transportation is provided for children who live more than one mile from school or when unsafe walking conditions exist. Bus stops & schedules are distributed in August. *Unusually large objects are not permitted on school buses*; on Band/Strings day, the parent will need to deliver large instruments to the office for the student.

- Morning Kindergarten students: walk/are driven TO school if they do not qualify for bus transportation and ride the mid-day bus home.
- Afternoon Kindergarten students: ride the mid-day bus TO school and walk/are driven from school if they do not qualify for the bus.

A parent must meet the bus for all kindergarten students.

Walkers

Walkers should not walk by themselves; they must walk only on the sidewalk and cross only at intersections. School safety patrols and a crossing guard are stationed at major or hazardous intersections; children must listen to crossing guards & safety patrols at all times. Walkers are dismissed with car riders and exit the building at door #12 by the "Kiss N Ride."

Car Riders

When you enter our parking lot, bear right and drive around the outer perimeter of the lot to the *Kiss N Ride* line (near door #12). **PLEASE drive slowly, carefully, and courteously**; pull as far forward in the line as possible to allow several cars to unload/load at once. VES staff members help the children to exit/enter the vehicle. **Do NOT use the circle in front of the main door – it is for FCPS and emergency vehicles only!**

Bicycles

Walkers in Grades 4-6 may ride their bicycles to and from school. Ask for the "Request to Ride Bike to School" Form, map out a safe route, assure the child will use a helmet, and submit form for principal approval BEFORE the child begins bicycling to school.

Students are **NOT** permitted to rollerblade/skateboard, or ride motorized scooters or other powered transportation, to /from school.

Student Safety Patrols ensure that our students are safe at school. The Safety Patrol Sponsor is Mr. Sidilau. If you observe safety violations, contact a patrol member or school staff.

Student Attire

Students are expected to wear tasteful attire. FCPS Regulation 2613.3 details appropriate dress for school; the complete policy is on-line at www.fcps.edu. Hairstyles should not interfere with

vision. Shoes are required and **sneakers are best** for a safe PE program, walking throughout the school and outdoors during fire drills and recess; clogs, flip-flops and sandals are discouraged. Dangling earrings should not be worn during PE.

Emergency Care Card (ECC)

The ECC enables us to locate you in the event of illness or emergency involving your child. Hospitals and private doctors will not give emergency treatment or perform surgery unless the parent or guardian is present. **COMPLETE THE ECC AND RETURN IT TO THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY.** Include all telephone numbers for each parent, plus list relatives/friends/neighbors who are additional emergency contacts (and have authority to pick up your child) in case you can't be reached. Also list any special arrangements you may have for another person (e.g., a babysitter or nanny) to pick up your child *regularly*. **List on the card (in RED ink) any allergies or serious medical problems to which the school should be alerted.** Remember to update the ECC if your contact information changes.

Medical and Accident Insurance

Pamphlets offering low-cost medical and dental accident insurance for students are distributed at the beginning of the school year; read them carefully. If you have questions, contact the Office of Risk Management (571-423-3620). If you choose to participate, **send premiums directly to the insurance companies.** Contact our School Counselor if you are unable to arrange any health insurance for your child.

Health Screening

Each year, all kindergarten students, third-grade students, and students new to FCPS are screened for vision and hearing; it is only a cursory check, so parents should always be alert to any conditions they may observe which may require a doctor's care.

Clinic

Our Clinic Room Aide, who is on duty during school hours, provides routine care for sick and injured students.

If medication is given in the school it must be in accordance with Regulation 2102. The parent delivers medication to the clinic; *do not send medication with your child.*

If your child has a health issue, if you have any questions or to details about allowable OTC/non-prescription products, contact Tracey Paterno-Hardy (Public Health Nurse) at 703-481-4079.

School Lunch Program

Food Service is offered in all FCPS schools. To ensure the nutritional needs of all school-age-children, FCPS provides **free/reduced price meals to children whose families are in need of assistance.** Applications are mailed to families in August, to be completed and *returned to the Office of Food & Nutrition* for processing.

The cafeteria operates under the National School Lunch Program. Monthly menus are distributed so that you and your child know what it offered each day.

Place money on your child's account directly in the cafeteria, sending a check in your child's backpack; or on-line. You may restrict the money for "lunch only" (if not specified, your child can purchase "a la carte" items like pretzels, ice cream, and cookies).

Communication

The weekly **Wednesday Envelope** contains schoolwork, notices from the teacher and the administration, and PTA information. **Please read the Contents of the envelope!** Sign the front and return it – with forms, payments, permission slips, and notes – to school Thursday in your child's backpack. **The principal's newsletter, *The Vienna Times*, goes home once a month.**

If there are expenses that you can't afford to pay, please contact Principal Black or the School Counselor for information and assistance.

Instructional Program

Standards adopted by the Virginia State Board of Education define the basic elementary program of study. A planned, balanced program of instruction commensurate with the abilities, interests, and educational needs of children includes instruction in the following areas: Art, Health, Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Social Studies, and Science. The curriculum of FCPS is the Program of Studies (POS). Instructional materials have been selected from a county-approved list and are coordinated with the POS. Parents are welcome to view curriculum documents in the school library. Use of textbooks and workbooks is provided without charge. You must pay for books that are lost or damaged. Teachers may encourage the purchase of a news magazine or other optional materials, for which money will be requested as needed.

Special Services

FCPS provides special services for the individual needs and differences of children. Children may receive additional support from a reading specialist, learning disabilities resource teacher, speech/language pathologist, and/or itinerant hearing or vision teacher. An individual evaluation is required before a child may receive any of these services (with the exception of reading). Written parental permission is required prior to any evaluation.

Gifted/Talented (GT) Program

A center-based GT program (Level 4) for identified gifted and talented students who meet the established criteria is available for grades 3-6 in each of the FCPS clusters at specific schools (Vienna ES does not have a GT Center). **A school-based program for children identified as gifted and talented is available at *each* elementary school, including Vienna.** The FCPS Gifted and Talented Program is divided into four levels of service. Every student in the school has access to Level 1 Services. Please refer to www.fcps.edu for more information.

Band/Strings/Chorus Instruction

Band instruction is available to 5th and 6th graders. Strings instruction is available to 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Participation in the school chorus is open to 5th and 6th graders.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be sent home approximately one week after the end of each grading period. This report identifies the student's strengths and weaknesses and enables the teacher to evaluate each child and plan instruction accordingly. Teachers will request conferences with parents at the end of the first grading period; additional conferences may be requested by either the parent or the teacher. Interim reports are sent home *when necessary*.

When assessing student progress, teachers utilize: observations, discussions/conferences, work samples, verbal/nonverbal participation, assessments and tests, student evaluation, and other records.

Retention

At the end of the 3rd grading period, or as soon as the teacher feels consideration is warranted, parents will be informed if it seems that a child will benefit from another year at the present grade. After parents have been notified and acknowledge they understand the implications, a final decision is made by the principal of the school. Parents may appeal the decision to the Cluster II Director.

Library Time

Each class visits the library on a weekly basis. Students may borrow books as follows: Kindergarten – 1 book; First Grade – 2 books; Second Grade – 3 books; and Third Grade through Sixth Grade – 5 books.

Field Trips

Classes will have opportunities to participate in educational activities outside the school setting. **WRITTEN PARENTAL PERMISSION IS REQUIRED** in order for a child to participate in a field trip. Please sign the permission form and return it to the school as soon as possible. If your child is not going on the field trip, he or she should still attend school for the day.

School Pictures/Yearbook

Individual pictures of each student are taken in the fall and pre-paid packages are available for purchase; make-up pictures will be taken for students absent on the fall Picture Day. Individual and class pictures are also offered in the spring; make-up pictures are **not** offered for spring pictures. Pre-paid orders for the school yearbook are also offered in the spring and are distributed at the end of the school year.

Identifying the Responsible Parent for a Student

Regulation 2240 describes accommodations and limitations that school personnel will afford a custodial, joint custodial, or non-custodial parent with whom a student does not live or with whom a student lives less than a preponderance of the time.

The enrolling parent shall be the parent responsible for the student and matters pertaining to communication between home and school. If the student is not residing with both parents in the same household, the enrolling parent shall have the authority and responsibility for making all school decisions on the student's behalf. Under a joint custody arrangement, it shall be the responsibility of the enrolling parent to secure consensus in the decision-making process.

Student Records

In response to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, FCPS adopted a policy which:

1. affirms parents' right to inspect any and all records relating directly to their dependents;
2. authorizes students, with written parental permission, to inspect their records;
3. allows for release of information to others only under carefully described conditions,
4. establishes fees for the duplication of records;
5. establishes procedures for challenge of the contents of a student's record by parents or adult students.

Educational records are forwarded on request to a school to which a student has applied for admission. Refer to the FCPS web site for more information regarding student records.

FCPS's **Annual Notice** defines what constitutes directory information and if it may be released to others without parental consent; **read the Annual Notice very carefully!**

2008-2009 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Sept. 2	School Begins
Oct. 13	Columbus Day Holiday
Oct. 31	1st Grading Period Ends*+
Nov. 3-4	Student Holidays
Nov. 26	Released Two Hours Early
Nov. 27-28	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec. 24 – Jan. 2	Winter Vacation
Jan. 19	MLK Jr.'s Holiday
Jan. 20	Inauguration Day Holiday
Jan. 23	2nd Grading Period Ends*+
Jan. 26-27	Student Holiday
Feb. 16	President's Day Holiday#
Apr. 2	3rd Grading Period Ends*+
Apr. 3	Student Holiday
Apr. 6-10	Spring Vacation
May 25	Memorial Day Holiday
June 18	Last Day of School*+#N

* Schools are open.

+ Report cards are provided to parents at the end of each grading period and at the end of the school year.

Date subject to change if more than three school days are lost because of inclement weather.

N Early release on the last official day of school.

DELAYED OPENING/EARLY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

For announcements of late opening, early closing, or cancellation of school due to bad weather or other emergencies, use any of the following sources of information: **radio; television; cable**

TV Channel 21; FCPS Weather Hotline (703-246-2500); and www.fcps.edu. These sites may have information before the school does, so it is better to use the media rather than to call the office. *Note that early closing decisions are made by 11:00 am.*

Two-hour Delayed Opening *

AM Preschool cancelled
PM Preschool 12:15 – 3:30 pm
AM Kindergarten: 10:35 am – 12:50 pm

PM Kindergarten: 12:50 pm – 3:15 pm
Grades 1 – 6: 10:35 am – 3:15 pm

Two-hour Early Closing

AM Preschool: 9:00 am – 11:00 am
PM Preschool cancelled
AM Kindergarten: 8:35 am – 1:10 pm

Lunch will be served

PM Kindergarten cancelled
Grades 1 – 6: 8:35 am – 1:10 pm

*** In the event of a late opening on MONDAY, students will attend until the usual Tuesday-Friday dismissal time of 3:15 pm.**

When PM kindergarten classes are cancelled due to emergency early closing, parents will be notified regarding make-up plans. All after-school activities, adult classes, and recreation programs are cancelled when schools are closed.

PLAN WITH YOUR CHILD WHAT TO DO OR WHERE TO GO SHOULD SCHOOL CLOSE EARLY. Expect transportation delays in bad weather.

VES PTA

PTA meetings – great sources of information about what’s happening at school -- are open to all parents; they are generally held the first Monday of the month, beginning at 7:00 pm, in the Library. The PTA publishes a directory each fall that is distributed to each family via the Wednesday Envelope. Families wishing to own more than one may purchase additional copies from the PTA.

Volunteering/Getting Involved

Our children receive many enriching and worthwhile experiences through the volunteer help of parents. With this support, teachers are able to provide more direct instruction. Volunteering through the PTA is a great way to meet other parents, learn more about the school and become part of the school community.

Parents interested in volunteering time or services are asked to contact the PTA Volunteer Coordinator or their child’s teacher. **All volunteers must have a TB test or X-ray.**

Parties/Celebrations

- Since the instructional program is the first priority, each class will be limited to two parties during the school year.
- Most teachers allow a treat in the classroom for a child's birthday, but balloons are not allowed.
- *Invitations for a child's birthday party may NOT be distributed at school; use the Directory to locate addresses and mail them to children's homes.*

Personal Property

Per Regulation 5725.3, FCPS does not assume responsibility for the personal property of students and does not purchase insurance for their property; there is limited storage and security available in schools. Children may **not** bring electronic devices, toys, or sports equipment to school unless specifically given permission by a teacher for a particular day or purpose. **Please clearly label all clothes, backpacks, and lunchboxes with your child's name; many children have identical possessions.**

Lost and Found

A rack in the back of the Cafeteria holds all the unclaimed clothing, lunch boxes and other items left behind. Valuables such as eyeglasses and jewelry are held in the office. For items left on the bus, most bus drivers will return the item(s) to the student when they next ride the bus; eventually, they bring unclaimed items to the office.

VES Student Council (SCA)

Our SCA is the central student organization at school; its aim is to encourage good citizenship, health and safety, recreation, and personal and community improvements. All children have an opportunity to be elected to a committee. The SCA sponsors fun Spirit Days throughout the school year.

2008-2009 SCA Officers

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

School-Age Child Care (SACC)

Sponsored by the Fairfax County Office for Children, SACC offers professional care during non-school hours for children attending Kindergarten through sixth grade. To get more information and to register for SACC, call 703-449-8989.