



K-12

Student Handbook

2025-2026

**Verndale Public School
District 818
411 SW Brown Street
Verndale, MN 56481
218-445-5184**

www.verndaleschool.org

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Message from Principal

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to another exciting school year at Verndale School! As your principal, I am thrilled to embark on this journey with you. Our school is dedicated to fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

At Verndale School, we are committed to excellence in education and the development of well-rounded individuals. We encourage you to take advantage of the diverse opportunities available, from academic programs to extracurricular activities, all designed to enrich your learning experience.

Our dedicated staff is here to support you every step of the way, ensuring that you have the resources and guidance needed to succeed. We believe in the power of collaboration, respect, and community, and we are proud to work together with students, parents, and guardians to create a positive and productive school environment.

Thank you for being a part of the Verndale School family. Let's make this year memorable and filled with achievements!

Sincerely,

Katie Bolland
Principal, Verndale School

Mission Statement, School & District Goals

Verndale Public School Mission Statement

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

School Goals

- All children are ready for school
- All third-graders can read at grade level
- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed
- All students are ready for career and college
- All students graduate from high school

District Goals

- Optimize Student Achievement
- Manage an Effective School Budget
- Retain Effective Staff Members

Verndale Staff

Preschool / ECSE

Kindergarten

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

6th Grade

Intervention / Title I

Agriculture

Career & Technical Education

Driver's Education

English/Language Arts

Instructional Coach

Physical Education / Health

Physical Education / DAPE

Trades & Industry

Mathematics

Music

Science

Social Studies

Special Education

Metier / STEM

Visual Arts

School Counselor

Speech / Language Pathologist

Speech / Language Pathology Assistant

School Nurse / LPN

Technology Coordinator

District Assessment Coordinator

504 Coordinator / Evaluation Specialist

Education Assistants

Kitchen Staff

Maintenance / Custodial Staff

Transportation

Bus Drivers / Van Drivers

Office Staff

Administrators

School Board

Becky Ludovissie, Joni Schwartz
Elizabeth Augustus, Sarah Bendson
Meagan Ferris, Alicia Jones
Autumn Flickinger, Sara Ross
Jennifer Cameron, Kristin Johnson
Angie Erickson, Julia Gwaizdon
Kimberly Pepin, Art Schluttner
Dan Johnson, Alexys Thompson
Heather Arroyo, Jennifer Veronen

Hanna Milligan
Matt Jones
Dan Johnson
Tim Fiskum, Emily Cencer
Matthew Parker
Dillon Card, Brian Hartwig, Kody Van Den Eykel
Brian Hartwig
Dr. Luella Stelck
Alex Anderson, Rachel Bounds
Adam Tervola-Hultberg, Brian Sterricker

Dr. Daniel Stelck, Kelly Youngbauer
Rose Johnson, Samantha Schmitz
Jamie Adams, Jennifer Anderson, Heidi Brandsma, Christy Henry,
Amanda Richter, Andrea Mathison-Valley

Angie Wallin
Amanda Suchy
Heather Lehmkuhl, Katie Tackmann

Matthew Parker
Taylor Mueller
Blair Loscheider
Erin Huebner
Katie Bolland
Tracy Kjeldergaard

Cami Dick, Kayla Kneisel, Tonya Fiskum, Jenny Heldman, Katie
Bounds, Amanda Snyder, Tanya Poster, Sharyl Olson, Kim Snyder,
Sara Imrick, Phyllis Umland, Alicia Goltz, Heather Elbert, Alexandra
Hines, Arianna Schmitz, Dennis Kinser, Trista Fiskum, Michelle
Anson-Stanley

Kelsey Desrocher, Kimberly Hedlund, Kim Kern, Anna Larsen,
Dorene Moe

Erik Ness, Wade Kern, Lisa Cochran, Kim Kern, Mitchell White,
Lester Bain, Heidi Hoemberg

Wade Kern
Deb Hackler, Jason Rurup, Laura Brownlow, Ryan Finck, Shyla Hess,
Travis Lothson, Penny Wolpert, Amanda Snyder, Lloyd Allen, Daryl
Jacobson, Melissa Current, Wayne Stave, Tony Stanley, Nik Wiese

Mary Gronlund, Reagan Mayer, Stacy DeMars, Mackenzie Carsten

Jeannie Mayer, Superintendent, Katie Bolland, Principal,
Greg Johnson, Dean of Students/Activities Director

Scott Veronen, Tahna Rurup, Chris Youngbauer, Tyler Fisher,
Chuck Dick, Tony Stanley

K-12 HANDBOOK INFORMATION PERTAINING TO ALL STUDENTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public address announcements will be restricted to the last three (3) minutes of the school day with further announcements at the discretion of administration or designee. Announcements pertaining to the week will be made after the pledge on the first day of the school week.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are generally held for special programs, lyceums, films, and transactions of business, pep fests, and other entertainment. These meetings are held in the gym, auditorium, or other sites as announced.

ATHLETIC CONTESTS/EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS

Sportsmanship is expected in all activities and is the responsibility of coaches/advisors, participants, students, adult spectators, and officials. Promotion of sportsmanship at activities should include the demonstration of respect for opponents and officials. Rules of the event should be respected and skill and performance should be recognized regardless of school affiliation. The following rules will be adhered to:

- Students/spectators are expected to stand and remove any headgear during the playing of the national anthem.
- Respect the rights of all spectators
- Accept the official's decision as final
- No booing/jeering officials/players at any time
- No use of profane or inappropriate language
- No throwing of objects on the field or playing surface

Attendance at athletic contests and extracurricular events is a privilege and administration/site supervisor reserves the right to remove anyone not adhering to the above rules.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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/guardians and students are expected to cooperate in the matter of attendance.

Students who anticipate being gone for one day or more must first secure an advance notice of absence form from the office and show it to each of their teachers. Failure to do so before leaving may result in the absence being unexcused.

Every absence will be evaluated and determined as excused or unexcused. If a student is absent from a class for ten or more unexcused days in a semester, the student may have to make up time for that class.

Although excusing absenteeism and tardiness 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. A student may be excused for work at home or in a family business only when it is a necessity and cannot be done outside of the normal school day. A written request must be submitted to administration. Work for neighbors or for hire is not excused
8. Educational experiences, such as trips sponsored by the school and visits to post-secondary institutions that are arranged by the counselor
9. Absences because of severe weather conditions, depending on the merits of each case
10. Prearranged absences, by parents/guardians, for a family trip
11. Students who wish to go hunting with their parents, or some responsible adult approved by the parent, will be excused provided:
 - a. The student is passing in all subjects
 - a. The student is up to date in all class work and make-up work

Exceptions are school-sponsored activities or medical appointments, where the student must show the appointment card or doctor's excuse.

Truancy

A student who does not have an excused absence is expected to be in school. Violations of this regulation will result in a student making up time for any additional unexcused absences, being placed on the restricted list, and the matter being referred to the School Attendance Program. Failure to participate in the School Attendance Program will result in a truancy filing.

School Attendance Program

PROCESS

- A. The school office, school counselor, and principal review attendance on a daily basis. If a student is absent and the school office has not been notified, the school office will follow up with an automated phone call from JMC to parent/guardian at home or work notifying them of their child's absence from school. They will also be reminded of the importance of their child being in school on a daily basis.
- B. When a student has three (3) unexcused absences, the student is considered a continuing truant, which is not in violation of the law, however, warrants the school to begin an intervention process.
 - a. The counselor or Principal will send a letter and a Wadena County School Attendance Mediation Program brochure (if the student resides in Wadena County) home to the parents/guardians (required under MS260A.03). A copy of the letter will also be sent to the residential county human services office. This notice must contain the following information:
 - i. that the student is truant;
 - ii. that a parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the student's absence;
 - iii. that a parent or guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school or face criminal prosecution under the compulsory school attendance law (MS 120A.34);
 - iv. that alternative programs and services may be available in the school district and that the parent or guardian has the right to meet with the school officials to discuss possible solutions to the student's truancy;
 - v. that the parent/guardian and student may be subject to court proceedings if attendance does not improve and that the student may face the loss of their driving privileges if the truancy continues (MS 260C.201);
- C. When a student has five (5) or more unexcused absences, they are considered a continual truant and are in violation of MS 260A.03. High school students may also be denied credit for any course with four unexcused absences.
 - a. A letter will be sent home from the school and county indicating that the student is now heading towards truant.
 - b. A mediation meeting will be scheduled with the county attorney, family, school, CCY, and human services to discuss why absences are continuing and work to resolve those barriers.

- D. When a student exceeds seven (7) or more unexcused absences, they are considered habitual truants and are in violation of MS260.007, Subd. 19. A report will be made to the county human services and Child Protective Service report will become involved. At this time, a CHIPS petition will be filed and the student may have to appear in court.

CASE MONITORING

- A. Reviews will be scheduled at the time of the contract meeting to include, county social worker, school officials, parents, and student. Reviews are scheduled every two weeks until the student's attendance improves. The length between reviews is subject to change depending on the student's progress.
- B. Responsibility of counselor and/or Principal
 - a. Check and review daily attendance of student;
 - b. Meet with the student at school frequently (daily if possible) to begin with and decrease contact as the student's attendance and other related behavior improves;
 - c. Meet with the student's teachers and explain that the student is involved in School Attendance Program (SAP). Inquire as to any special needs or classes that need attention;
 - d. Accompany the student to class, as needed;
 - e. Contact the student's parent/guardian at home and/or work to inquire as to the absences of the student
 - f. Document, in detail, all personal, telephone, and collateral contacts made regarding the case;
- C. A student is discharged from SAP when the case is deemed successful or when the, school official, or court has terminated the student's involvement in the program.

FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROGRAM

If there is no improvement in attendance and other related behaviors, a truancy petition will be filed. This decision will be made jointly with school officials. A designated school official will send the following to the Wadena County Attorney's office:

- A. Truancy request form;
- B. Copy of notice sent to parents/guardians (MS 260A.03) and the date it was sent;
- C. All documentation of efforts to intervene:
 - a. copy of all notices/letter to parents/guardians
 - b. list of detentions/suspensions and indicate why they were given
 - c. copy of student's attendance records

APPROPRIATE ACTION AND CONSEQUENCES

The Wadena County Attorney's office may choose one or more of the following actions:

- I. File Educational Neglect charges against parent/guardian if it is determine that they are responsible for the student's absenteeism
- II. Refer back to school for additional efforts and documentation
- III. File a petition against the child for truancy

PROBATION

MS 260C.201, Subd. 1 (b) states: If a child was adjudicate in need of protection or services because the child is a runaway or habitual truant, the court may order any of the following dispositions authorized under paragraph (a):

- I. Counsel the child of the child's parents, guardian, or custodian;
- II. Place the child under the supervision of a probation officer or other suitable person in the child's home under conditions prescribed by the court, including reasonable rules for the child's conduct and well-being and behavior of the child;
- III. Subject to the court's supervision, transfer legal custody of the child to one of the following:

- IV. A reputable person of good moral character. No person may receive custody of two or more unrelated children unless licensed to operate a residential program under sections 245A.01 to 245A.16; or
- V. Require the child to pay a fine of up to \$100. The court shall order payment of the fine in a manner that will not impose undue financial hardship upon the child;
- VI. Require the child to participate in community service project;
- VII. Order the child to undergo a chemical dependency evaluation and if warranted by the evaluation , order participation by the child in a drug awareness program or an inpatient or outpatient chemical dependency treatment program;
- VIII. If the court believes that it is in the best interests of the child and of public safety that the child's driver's license or instruction permit be canceled, the court may order the commissioner of public safety to cancel the child's license or permit for any period up to the child's 18th birthday. If the child does not have a driver's license or permit, the court may order a denial of driving privileges for any period up to the child's 18th birthday. The court shall forward an order issued under this clause to the commissioner, who shall cancel the license or permit or deny driving privileges without a hearing for the period specified by the court. At any time before the expiration of the period of cancellation or denial, the court may, for good cause, order the commissioner of public safety to allow the child to apply for a license or permit, and the commissioner shall so authorize;
- IX. Order that the child's parents or legal guardian deliver the child to school at the beginning of each school day for a period of time specified by the court; or
- X. Require the child to perform any other activities or participate in any other treatment programs deemed appropriate by the court.

****PLEASE NOTE**** According to MS 260C.201, Subd. 1(c): If a child who is 14 years of age or older is adjudicated in need of protection or services because the child is a habitual truant and truancy procedures involving the child were previously dealt with by a school attendance review board or county attorney mediation program under section 260A.06 or 260A.07, the court shall order a cancellation or denial of driving privileges under paragraph (b), clause (7), for any period up to the child's 18th birthday

BACKPACKS

Students may bring backpacks to school, however, for safety reasons, backpacks must be stored in the student's locker. Backpacks and other bags are not allowed in classrooms. Any backpacks, bags, coats, any other items left in the hallway will be brought to the office.

BLANKETS

For safety and to maintain a professional learning environment, blankets are not permitted on school premises. Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather and use designated outerwear to stay warm.

BREAKFAST/HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch will be served on a daily basis. All students will eat in the cafeteria. 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 families to follow these same guidelines. The district will also provide an alternate product for students that are lactose-intolerant.

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

CANINE SEARCHES/STUDENT SEARCHES

The Verndale School strives to maintain a safe school environment. Therefore, random canine searches by a certified detection dog and trainer will be conducted on all locations on school grounds including, but not limited to, student cars, backpacks, outerwear, purses, and lockers. The school will require students to cooperate with the findings of the certified detection dog by a review of possessions and a search of the locker and/or vehicle.

If there is reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of contraband or any unauthorized items, administration has the authority to use a metal detector wand to search the student's person. The wand will be passed over the student's outer clothing without physical contact, conducted discreetly and respectfully by administration. Any unauthorized items found will result in disciplinary action. (Verndale School District Policy #502 – Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person)

CELL PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The purpose of the personal electronic device policy is to create an optimal learning environment free from distractions and ensure the safety and privacy of all students at Verndale Public School. This policy outlines the appropriate use of cell phones, earbuds, smartwatches and electronic devices with the school premises.

DURING SCHOOL HOURS GUIDELINES:

Cell phones and other personal electronic devices capable of communication, such as those used for texting, answering, and receiving calls, are not permitted in classrooms, hallways, during lunch, during recess, or bathrooms during the school day. If students bring cell phones / Bluetooth earbuds / and/or smartwatches capable of communication, such as texting, answering, and receiving calls, to school, they must be placed on silent or turned off and stored in designated cell phone lockers from the beginning of the school day until the end of the school day. These items can and will be confiscated by staff members and taken to the office if they are not stored in the designated cell phone lockers.

DEVICE CHECK-IN:

- **Homeroom/1st Hour:** Students must check their cell phones, earbuds, and smartwatches into designated lockers located in their homerooms or 1st-hour classrooms.
- **Midday Arrival:** Students will check their cell phones, earbuds, and smartwatches in the office upon arrival. Office staff will ensure devices will be stored in the appropriate assigned locker.
- **Storage:** These devices will be securely stored in the lockers and brought to the office for the duration of the school day.

DEVICE RESTRICTIONS:

- **During School Hours:** Students are prohibited from having cell phones, earbuds, smartwatches, and any other personal electronic devices on their person during school hours, including class time, lunch periods, and recess.
- **Field Trips and School Events:** Field trips and school events are extensions of classroom learning during school hours, therefore, cell phones, earbuds, smartwatches, and personal electronic devices are not permitted.

CHECK-OUT PROCESS:

- **End of Day:** Students will return to their homerooms or 1-hour classrooms at the end of the school day to retrieve their devices.
- **Midday Departure:** Any student leaving midday must check out their device from the office. If the student returns to school, they must check their device back into the office.
- **Student Athlete:** Any student leaving early, due to an activity will not be allowed to take their phone in the locker room at any time.
- **Open Campus:** Any junior or senior leaving for open campus must check out their device from the office. Upon return from open campus, students must check their device back into the office.
- **Substitute Teacher:** If the 1st-hour class has a substitute teacher (high school only), students will check out their devices from the office.

TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

Any PSEO or CIHS student needing their cell phone for two-factor authentication, must go to the office, check out their cell phone, and check cell phone back in once authentication is complete. It is recommended that

email is the first choice for two-factor authentication, so students can use their Chromebooks rather than their cell phone.

EMERGENCIES

In case of emergency, students may use the school office phone to contact parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should contact the school office to relay urgent messages to their student(s).

VIOLATIONS:

- **First Violation:** The device will be confiscated by the teacher, brought to the office to be stored in the designated locker, and returned at the end of the day. A warning will be issued to the student and parents/guardians will be notified.
- **Second Violation:** The device will be confiscated by the teacher, brought to the office to be stored in the designated locker, and will be returned only to the parent or guardian. Administration will conference with the student and communicate with parents/guardians about future violations. The student will be assigned a detention and put on the restricted list.
- **Any Further Violations:** The device will be confiscated by the teacher and given to administration. The phone will be returned only to a parent or guardian and a student-parent/guardian meeting will take place to discuss the violation and create a plan for the student. Detention, suspension, and/or MSHSL code of conduct consequences will be discussed and assigned. The student will be put on the restricted list.

EXCEPTIONS

Students with medical conditions requiring device use must provide documentation from a healthcare provider. Other requests for exceptions to this policy, particularly those requiring the use of a device, may be submitted to administration and will be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis.

RESPONSIBILITY

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.

ENFORCEMENT

All staff are responsible for enforcing this policy. Repeated violations will be addressed by administration in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.

Chromebooks are not allowed in the cafeteria during lunch. K-6 students are not allowed to be on Chromebooks before or after school. K-6 students are not allowed to bring Chromebooks home and should check them into their homeroom teacher at the end of the school day. (Verndale School District Policy #524 – Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)

CLASSROOM RULES

Each teacher will have a set of classroom rules/consequences that are specific to their classroom. Students will be expected to follow and respect the teacher's classroom expectations.

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.

COUNSELOR'S OFFICE

The purpose of the school counseling program is to impart specific skills and learning opportunities in a proactive, preventive manner, ensuring all students can achieve school success through academic, career, and

personal/social development experiences. The comprehensive school counseling program targets four main areas of development:

1. Academic
2. Career
3. Personal/Social
4. Community Involvement

DELIVERIES

Any delivery to the school for a student will need to be confirmed that we have permission from the parent/guardian to make the delivery. Without parent/guardian permission/confirmation, the delivery will not be made.

DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

The Verndale School District recognizes the school as a place of learning where dress of employees and students should be attire-appropriate for a quality workplace. The Verndale School District encourages students to take pride in their attire at school. The dress and grooming of students become the concern of the school if it causes disruption of the educational program or is offensive or inappropriate to others. Students should dress in a manner that takes into consideration the educational environment, safety, health and welfare of others. The following guidelines apply to students during regular school hours and school-related activities.

Students' rights to choose their dress and appearance for school and school-related activities will be protected provided that the clothing:

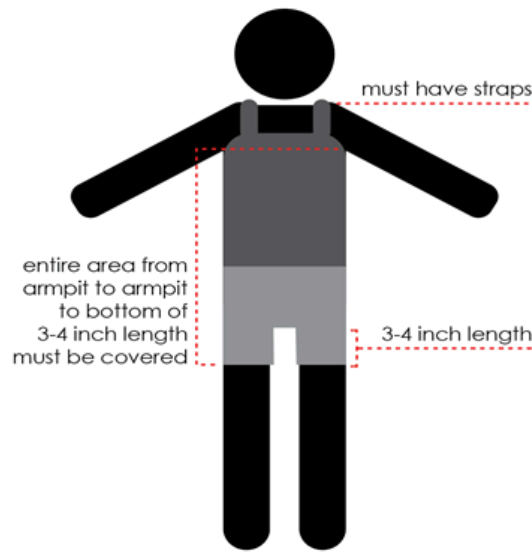
- Does not injure people or damage property;
- Does not materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the education process or classwork;
- Does not interfere with the requirements of discipline in the operation of the school or school activities, material disrupt classwork;
- Does not involve substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others

Such clothing includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Clothing for weather
- Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard
- Clothing for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom)
- Footwear that does not present a safety hazard – footwear with wheels are not allowed to be worn in school
- Hair, including, but not limited to hair texture and hair styles such as braid, locks, and twists

Student clothing may not include the following:

- Clothing (including emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing or jewelry) bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, obscene, libelous, or denigrates, harasses, discriminates against others on the basis of protected class status under the Minnesota Human Rights Act, or violates school district policies prohibit discrimination, violence, harassments, or other harmful activities
- Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors
- Communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, or approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals
- Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property – footwear with wheels are not allowed to be worn in school
- Students may not wear inappropriate clothing; extremely brief garments including crop tops and see-through garments may not be worn; clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately three (3) to four (4) inches on the upper thighs (see image). Verndale School District Policy #504 – Student Dress and Appearance)



Every faculty member will be at liberty to decide what clothing is prohibited. Students not adhering to the dress code will have the following consequences:

- First Incident: Discipline referral, t-shirt to cover or corrected by student, collection of accessories
- Second Incident: Discipline referral, parent/guardian notified, t-shirt to cover or sent home
- Third Incident: Discipline referral, parent/guardian notified, detention as assigned, t-shirt to cover or sent home

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 the dress code policy. This will also result in a parent/guardian meeting with administration.

HEADGEAR

Students in grades 7-12 are permitted to wear headgear as long as the headgear is affiliated with the Verndale School and its related activities. All other headgear is not allowed during school hours, including hoods. This ensures school spirit and unity while maintaining a respectful and distraction-free learning environment.

FACULTY 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. Teachers will also update their online grade books on a weekly basis.

FEE SCHEDULE

STUDENT MEAL PRICES

Per 2023 legislative action, all meals for the 2023-2024 school year, and beyond, will be free to all students. This includes breakfast and lunch. Milk prices will continue to be \$.35 each. Milk prices will be charged for snack time, for students that wish to have milk.

ADULT AND VISITOR MEAL PRICES

Breakfast: \$3.00; Lunch: \$5.00 (or MDE Minimum)

SHOP FEES (TRADES & INDUSTRY)

7th Grade: \$60.00; 8th Grade: \$60.00

TECHNOLOGY FEE (SEE CHROMEBOOK HANDBOOK)

\$30.00 per student with a family cap of \$100.

This fee WILL be waived by filling out the 2025-2026 Application for Educational Benefits form.

ACTIVITY ADMISSION PRICES

Type of Admission		FY25
Student	Single Admission (Verndale Student)	Free
	Single Admission (Other Students)	\$5
Adult	Single Admission	\$5
	Season Pass	\$50 for the first one, and \$35 for each additional pass
Senior Citizen	Senior Citizen	Free

FIELD TRIPS

Each year teachers may plan field trips to places of interest that relate to studies or lessons taught. These trips may vary from trips downtown to trips outside the district. These trips are to enrich the learning experiences of the students. All rules of student conduct and student discipline apply to field trips. Field trip fees “may be” charged.

Field trip information and permission slips will be sent home for parent/guardian approval for all trips that occur outside the Verndale community. If a parent/guardian specifies that their child is not to attend a field trip, the child is expected to attend school and a supervisor will be provided.

FIRE DRILLS

During the school year, the school will conduct at least five (5) fire drills. Each student is responsible for knowing the rules and procedures for all locations in the building. The signal for returning will be the silence of the fire alarm and an announcement over the intercom system. Here are some general rules to be observed:

- Leave belongings where they are when the alarm sounds
- Instructor leads the group out of the room
- Doors should be closed on the way out of the classroom
- Be alert to any commands in case an exit is blocked off
- Walk quietly and orderly out of the building
- Running, pushing, crowding is not necessary
- No loitering – do not stop at the water fountains or enter bathrooms
- Keep a safe distance from the building when outside
- Directions for exits are posted in each classroom in the building

HEALTH SERVICES

Inform the school health office of any health related concerns you may have for your child. We will be glad to help monitor your child’s health status. Students who become ill during the school day will report to the health office and the school nurse will contact parents/guardians. You will be asked to pick up your child from school as soon as possible if your child has any of the following health related concerns:

- Temperature of 100.0 Fahrenheit or greater
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Live head lice

A child should have a temperature of less than 99.0 Fahrenheit, without medication, and not have vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.

Parents/guardians may also be contacted if there are concerns about skin rashes or signs of conjunctivitis (pink-eye). Rashes may appear for a variety of reasons. It may be a contagious bacteria or fungal infection, or a harmless skin sensitivity. In any case, the health office may need to contact you for further information. If a rash has opened sores associated with it that have oozing or discharge, you may be asked to bring your child home until it is healed or the child has been seen by your health care provider to determine the cause of the rash.

Students who leave school without checking with the Health Office/Principal will be considered truant.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Students who have been diagnosed with a communicable disease (pink-eye, chickenpox, diarrhea, fever, head lice, impetigo, influenza, pneumonia, ringworm, scabies, strep throat, vomiting) must be excluded from attending school until the communicability period has ended. The Health Office has a list of the recommended exclusion periods for communicable diseases.

SUICIDE PREVENTION INFORMATION

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988

We can help prevent suicide.

Dial or text **988** for 24 / 7, free, confidential support if you or someone else needs support. 988lifeline.org

You can also call or text the Crisis Help Line at (800) 422-0045 or Text "MN" to 741741

HEALTH RECORDS/STUDENT IMMUNIZATIONS

Minnesota State Regulations (Statute 121A.15) include keeping a health record on each student, kindergarten through 12th grade. This record contains the student's immunizations and results of hearing and vision screening. If a student moves to a different school, the immunizations are forwarded to that school. A physical and/or dental exam is not required for school entrance, however, it is highly recommended. **Medical Emergency information must be updated in JMC.** Please inform the school of any changes in address, telephone number, medical, or emergency information. This information is vital to reaching parents in an emergency.

Minnesota State School Law requires that prior to a child's initial enrollment in school in this state, the parent/guardian shall submit to the Principal one of the following statements:

- A statement signed by a physician that the child has received the required immunizations as approved by the state board of health and that such immunizations are currently effective.
- A statement signed by a physician that the physical condition of the child is such that immunization would seriously endanger their life or health, or that lab tests indicate adequate immunity exists.
- A notarized statement signed by the child's parent/guardian that there is conscientiously exempting the child from immunization(s).

A child must be excluded from school if the immunizations are not completed by October 15th or a notarized conscientious exemption is not on record in the health office.

HOME BAKED 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. The Minnesota Department of Health prohibits bringing home-baked treats to school for distribution purposes. This regulation was developed in order to have sanitary control on foods eaten by children at school. If candy is brought to school, each piece must be individually wrapped.

HOME SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Verndale High School will award graduation credits to students who transfer in from a home school or private school. The home school or private school must document the curriculum covered and number of hours of instruction received by the student and submit a signed copy of the home school transcript to the high school. Verndale Public Schools may request to examine any course syllabus, portfolios of student work, and administer an assessment(s) to determine student proficiency. The high school reserves the right to award credits on a pass/fail basis based on proficiency level. A home schooled student must be enrolled with the Verndale High School full-time by the beginning of their eleventh (11th) grade year to be eligible for class ranking.

INCOMPLETES AND MAKEUP POLICY

Students who have been absent from school will have twice the length of time missed to make up daily work or tests they were assigned when they were absent. (Example: If a student is gone two (2) days, they have four (4) days to make up the work). At the end of the allotted time, the teacher, at their own discretion, will award either a letter grade or give an incomplete for the assignment. An assignment not turned in by the end of the allotted time may result in a zero (0).

In the case of both excuse and unexcused absence, the teacher may assign different or additional material to cover the material missed during the absence, not to exceed proof of mastery for missed assignments. The student is responsible for work assigned previous to their absence. (Example: Tests or paper assigned weeks in advance are due on the date students return from absence).

LOCKED DOOR POLICY

The Verndale School will be completely locked during school hours. For safety precautions, visitors must use the security system and identify themselves at the District Office (Main Entrance/Door 1) before being admitted into the building.

If parents/guardians come to pick up their child during the school day, they should check in at the District Office, notify the office personnel that they are here to pick up their child, and sign them out on a sign in/sign out sheet.

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)

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

The school will follow at a minimum the number of lockdown drills required by the state. During these drills, students and staff will practice the procedures that will be used during a crisis situation. The following actions will occur:

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

LOST AND FOUND

Please check the cabinet in the commons area for lost items. All items in the lost and found will be donated to a community organization two times per year (December and May).

MEDICAL AWARENESS AND DISPENSING OF MEDICATION

A school nurse (LPN) is located in the health office and can provide first aid and administer medications as needed. Students who leave school due to illness or injury must check out through the health office.

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

- Parents/guardians 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 medication, and time the medication should be administered
- A signed order from the parent/guardian and prescribing medical professional, which include the student's name, name and dose of medication, time the medication should be administered, for what condition the medication is being prescribed, as well as possible side effects
- Students needing prescription medications that can be self-administered (inhalers, Epi-Pens) must have a written order form the doctor and should include the information listed in the previous bullet statement

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

- Parents/guardians must bring the medication to the health office in the **original container**
- Parents/guardians must provide written consent, indication 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)

PARTICIPATION IN JUNIOR HIGH ACTIVITIES

Sixth grade students who have the privilege to participate in junior high activities will be held to a high standard. Sixth graders will follow the same Academic Eligibility Policy as students in grades 7-12. (Refer to Page 29 for more information)

REPORT CARDS

Student grade reports are sent home electronically at the end of each semester. Paper copies are available upon request from the District Office. The faculty and administration encourage parents/guardians to contact them at any time for a conference. Please call the school or send a message with your child to arrange a conference time. Regular conferences are set on the school calendar.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Parents/guardians must notify the school by 8:30 am if their student is going to be absent for the day. If the school does not receive a call by 8:30 am, an automated call will be made through JMC and it will be marked as an unexcused absence until appropriate documentation is approved by the Principal.

RESOURCE ROOM PASSES

If a student has classwork or a test to complete in the resource room (located in the library), the student must obtain a pass from the instructor who assigned the work or test. The student must report to their assigned class before reporting to the resource room. The student must sign in with the resource room supervisor and show them their pass from their classroom teacher. Failure to provide a pass will result in being sent back to scheduled class.

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 parents/guardians. 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.

SCHOOL BUS PASSES

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

SCHOOL CLOSING FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER

School will be closed when buses are unable to safely complete their routes because of inclement weather. The announcement of school closings will be communicated through the JMC instant alert system, which will notify our school families directly through a phone call, text message, and/or email. It is the families' responsibility to register in the program, which can be done through the JMC Family App or online through the JMC Family Portal found on the school's website. The announcement will also be posted on the school's Facebook and Instagram pages and communicated through the following means: KSTP, KARE 11, FOX 9, WCCO, KWAD RADIO, BRAINERD DISPATCH, and WADENA PIONEER JOURNAL.

SCHOOL 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 they participate in athletics. The school carries liability insurance that applies only if the school district is declared legally responsible by a court of law.

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 (detention, suspension, police reports, absenteeism, truancy, etc.), the activity supervisor and administration will determine if the student may attend the event.

SCHOOL 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, SKATES, SHOES W/WHEELS, BIKES & SCOOTERS

Skateboards, in-line skates, shoes with wheels, bicycles, and scooters are prohibited inside the school building.

SKIPPING SCHOOL/CLASS

Skipping school or class is treated differently than receiving an unexcused absence. When a student skips school or class, the school and/or parents/guardians do not know where the student is and have not given the student permission to be anywhere else. Consequences will be determined according to each situation, however, a minimum will make up for an equal amount of time missed. When a student skips school or class, they will receive a zero (0) for any assignment given by the teacher for each class period missed. The student may be referred to the School Attendance Program if skipping class becomes excessive.

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.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Without discipline in schools, learning cannot occur, therefore, disciplinary action may be taken against students for their behavior, which is disruptive 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, will be deemed as insubordination. Swearing 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 Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) procedures may use 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 School Board, may result in removal of a student from class. (Verndale School District Policy #506 – Student Discipline and Notice of Suspension.

DISCIPLINE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Students, parents/guardians, and school staff may file a complaint and seek corrective action when the requirements of the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, including the implementation of the local behavior and discipline policies, are not being implemented appropriately or are being discriminately applied. This form can be found in the district office.

STUDENT RECORDS

The school has student grades, attendance, and standardized test scores on file. Students and/or their parents/guardians 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 Law 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 list
- 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
- Parents/Guardians 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 district office.

If a student/parent/guardian wishes to have their 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)

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Occasionally it becomes necessary to suspend or expel a student from school. In this event, all procedures will be governed by 121A.45, Subd. 1 & 2 (a,b,c), more commonly known as the Minnesota Fair Pupil Dismissal Act.

The school district shall not dismiss any student without attempting to use nonexclusionary disciplinary policies and procedures before dismissal proceedings or pupil withdrawal agreements, except where it appears that the student will create an immediate and substantial danger to self or to surrounding persons or property

Violations leading to suspension, based upon severity, may also be grounds for actions leading to expulsion, and/or exclusion. A student may be suspended or expelled from school for any of the following:

- Willful violation of any reasonable school board regulation, including those found in this policy
- Willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, or the ability of school personnel to perform their duties or school-sponsored extracurricular activities
- Willful conduct that endangers the student or other students, or surrounding persons, including school district employees, or property of the school

SUSPENSION

“Suspension” means an action by the school administration, under rules promulgated by the School Board, prohibiting a student from attending school for a period of no more than ten (10) school days; provided, however, if a suspension is longer than five (5) school days, the suspending administrator shall provide the superintendent with a reason for the longer term of suspension. This definition does not apply to dismissal for one (1) school day or less where a student with a disability does not receive regular or special education instruction during that dismissal period. The purpose of suspension is to remove the student from the school environment and to provide time for the professional staff, parent/guardian, and student to discuss the matter and bring about an agreement on future conduct and also enable the student to make appropriate behavioral adjustments.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-school suspension is the same as suspension except the student is kept in school under supervision. Students assigned to in-school suspension will be assigned to an area from 8:15 am to 3:09 pm. The student will be isolated from other students and is expected to complete their assignments and may have an opportunity to receive full credit for their work. The student will not be able to leave the building and will eat in an area determined by administration. Students assigned to in-school suspension may not have electronic devices.

EXPULSION AND EXCLUSION

“Expulsion” means a school board action to prohibit an enrolled student from further attendance for up to twelve (12) months from the date the student is expelled. The authority to expel rests with the school board.

“Exclusion” means an action taken by the school board to prevent enrollment or re-enrollment of a student for a period that shall not extend beyond the school year. The authority to exclude rest with the school board. (Verndale School District Policy # 506 – Student Discipline)

TELEPHONE USAGE

In emergencies, students may use any school phone. Incoming calls for students will not be accepted unless it is an urgent call from a parent/guardian. Do not ask for passes to use the phone during or between classes. Its primary use is for emergencies, after school, after practices, or at noon. Information called into the school for a student will be relayed to the student to eliminate classroom disruption. Students will not be called out of class unless it is an emergency.

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.

TRANSPORTATION/SCHOOL BUS POLICY

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

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. (M.S. 123.801) The school district's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses, including nonpublic and charter school students.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

CONSEQUENCES

- Elementary (K-6)
 - 1st offense – written warning
 - 2nd offense – 3 school-day suspension from riding the bus
 - 3rd offense – 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
 - 4th offense – 10 school-day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent/guardian
 - Further offenses – individually considered. Students may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the school year.
- Secondary (7-12)
 - 1st offense – written warning
 - 2nd offense – 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
 - 3rd offense – 10 school-day suspension from riding the bus
 - 4th offense – 20 school-day suspension from riding the bus
 - 5th offense – suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year

Note: When any student goes 60 transportation days without a report, the student's consequences may start over at the first offense.

VALUABLES IN SCHOOL

A method of safekeeping for those students who may find it necessary to bring large sums of money or other valuable items to school is provided. It is strongly recommended that money or other items of high value be brought to the office as soon as the student arrives at school in the morning. If the item is lost or stolen, the school will do its due diligence in locating the item, however, will not be responsible for the loss of money or valuables.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The Verndale School uses surveillance cameras in the school building and on school buses. Administration and school staff will view surveillance footage when necessary. Due to data privacy, parents/guardians will not be allowed to view the surveillance footage unless only their child is visible. (Verndale School District Policy

#711 – Video Recording on School Buses; Verndale School District Policy #712 – Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

VIDEOS

Videos shown in class should be for educational purposes tied to course curriculum and learning targets. At times, videos will be shown for special occasions. Students in grades K-3 will be limited to videos rated “G”. Students in grades 4-6 will be limited to videos rated “PG”. Students in grades 7-12 will be limited to videos rated “PG-13”. *Any video that is rated above the grade level criteria requires parent/guardian permission for students to view.*

VISITORS

All visitors must register at the district office upon entering the building or grounds. To avoid interrupting lesson that are in progress PLEASE LEAVE MESSAGES AND ITEMS FORGOTTEN AT HOME WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT IN THE OFFICE. The administrative assistant will deliver the item or get a message to your child as soon as possible.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

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

ELEMENTARY

ANIMAL VISITORS

All animals are prohibited from being brought into school. The creation of a safe learning environment for all our students is our first priority.

BICYCLE RIDING

Bicycles must remain near the designated area during the school day. The school district is not responsible for bicycles parked at school.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Please do not distribute birthday invitations during school time. Doing this causes hurt feelings for those who are not included. Students may bring treats (other than homemade) for the class in observance of a birthday. This practice is on a voluntary basis and they are not required to bring treats for their birthday.

DOCTOR/MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Please try to schedule appointments at times other than the school day. However, when it is necessary, please inform the health office with a signed message or phone call from the parent/guardian. If the child is gone for ½ day, they are counted absent for that half of the day. Students are responsible for making up any work missed.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at 8:10 am and ends at 3:09 pm, which is four (4) minutes earlier than the high school dismissal time. This allows the elementary students time to board buses before the dismissal of the high school students. Students may enter the building at 7:45 am and must leave by 3:30 pm unless supervised. Students will not be supervised before 7:45 am or after 3:30 pm.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

When corrective actions (including nonexclusionary discipline) taken by school staff have failed or the rule infraction is of serious nature, the incident shall be referred to the Dean of Students or the Principal for investigation and action. The severity of the consequence applied by the Dean of Students or the Principal depends on the following factors:

1. The seriousness of the offense
2. The previous disciplinary record of the student (repeated offenses)

In an effort to take both into account, the Elementary Disciplinary Response to Student Behavior Guide has been adopted. The levels of behavior and possible disciplinary response are as follows, and in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act:

Levels of Behavior and Possible Disciplinary Response(s):

- Level 3 – Behaviors that should be addressed in the classroom
 - Disrupting or interfering with teaching and learning (talking out of turn, excessive noise, or movement, distracting behavior, etc.)
 - Disrespectful communication with staff or peers (including teasing, name calling, insults, exclusion, etc.)
 - Not following instructions, classroom rules, or school rules
 - Off-task behavior (sleeping, writing notes, social networking, etc.)
 - Unauthorized use of electronic devices during class
 - Dishonesty (lying, cheating, etc.)
 - Violating adult's personal space/property
 - Violating dress code policy
 - Inappropriate behavior (running, pushing, slamming lockers, loud noise, etc.)
 - Unprepared for class

- o Misuse of school property
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Teacher/Student conference
 - Teacher/Parent conference
 - Temporary removal from class
 - Lunch detention assigned by teacher
- Level 4 – Teacher assigned consequences with documentation
 - o Persistent or Elevated Level 3 behavior (documented)
 - o Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between peers (pushing, shoving, etc.)
 - o Leaving class or designate area without permission
 - o Violation of internet/technology policy
 - o Using profanity or obscene/offensive gestures
 - o Theft
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Teacher/Student conference
 - Teacher/Parent conference
 - Admin/Student conference
 - Admin/Parent/Guardian conference
 - Temporary removal from class
 - In-school disciplinary action (detention, in school suspension)
 - Behavior contract
- Level 5 – Automatic referral to administration
 - o Persistent or Elevated Level 4 behavior (documented)
 - o Physical violence (hitting, kicking, biting, throwing dangerous items, etc.)
 - o Using profanity or obscene/offensive gestures towards adults
 - o Leaving school without permission
 - o Possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
 - o Possession of a weapon, imitation of a weapon, or illegal substance
 - o Verbal, written, or physical threats to peers or staff
 - o Posting or distributing material that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to peers or staff (including on social media or other electronic means)
 - o Serious safety violations
 - o Violation of Harassment Policy (race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability)
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Admin/Student conference
 - Admin/Parent/Guardian conference
 - Temporary removal from class
 - In-school disciplinary action (detention, etc.)
 - Behavior contract
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Expulsion
 - Exclusion

GRADES AND EVALUATION

The following grades and markings will be used to evaluate student progress:

A Superior
B Above Average
C Average
D Below Average
F Failure

H Exceptional Quality
S+ Above Average
S Satisfactory
S- Below Satisfactory
IM Improving
NI Needs Improvement
U Unsatisfactory

Some elementary classrooms use standards-based grading to represent student grades which assess student performance against a set of predetermined standards, rather than comparing students to each other. A common scale ranges 1 to 4, where each number represents a different level of mastery.

1-4 Scale and Explanation

1- Beginning

- a. Description: Student demonstrates a limited understanding of the standard and requires significant support to complete tasks.
 - i. Example: The student can recognize basic concepts, but struggles to apply them without constant assistance.

2- Developing

- a. Description: Student shows partial understanding and is beginning to apply concepts with some support.
 - i. Example: The student can complete parts of the task independently, but often needs guidance to complete more complex aspects.

3- Proficient

- a. Description: Student meets the standard, demonstrating a solid understanding and the ability to apply concepts independently
 - i. Example: The student consistently completes tasks correctly and can explain their reasoning without help.

4- Advanced

- a. Description: Student exceeds the standard, showing deep understanding and the ability to apply concepts in more complex or novel situations.
 - i. Example: The student not only completes tasks independently, but also extends their learning by making connections beyond the standard.

LEAVING THE BUILDING

Elementary students who must leave the building before the afternoon dismissal time for appointments or emergencies must have written/verbal notification or be picked up by parent/guardian and must be checked out in the district office.

PARENTAL CONCERNS

Concerns that parents/guardians may have regarding their child's program should be discussed with the teacher as soon as possible. Please call or make arrangements with the classroom teacher to work together to solve potential problems. Concerns will be referred to the classroom teacher if brought to the Principal first. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit school during events and to volunteer their time and talents. Arrangements must be made with teachers.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please label, with the child's name, all personal belongings that are brought to school. This includes clothing, school supplies, and teacher approved educational items brought for sharing with other students such as rock collections, special toys, etc.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Tennis shoes are required for active involvement in all physical education activities. It is a good idea to have two pairs of tennis shoes. The best pair can be used on the hard surfaces of the gym and the other pair for outdoor activities. If your child wears a dress to school, please supply them with sweat pants, leggings, shorts (under the dress), jeans, or slacks so they can put them on during their PE time. This allows them to fully participate in all physical activities during the school day.

SCHOOL AND PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

COURTESY RULES:

- Be Kind – Have good manners, clean up equipment used during recess, include others so no one feels left out, practice good sportsmanship, respect yourself, other students and adults, and the property of others and the school
- Share School Equipment – This includes bringing balls, bases, and so forth back into the building. The team or person kicking a ball out of play should return it to the game or field.
- Respect Other People and Their Property – This includes snow forts, lockers, bathrooms, classrooms, the school building and grounds

PLAYGROUND SAFETY:

Safe use of playground equipment is an expectation. The rules for safe play are reviewed with students often. Failure to follow the playground safety guidelines will result in disciplinary action per the Elementary Disciplinary Response Guide.

1. Students are not to be verbally or physically abusive (punching, pushing, fighting, etc.).
2. Students should not stand on swings or swing two to a swing. Swings are meant for sitting and swinging.
3. Student spacing on the equipment is necessary
4. Feet first down the slides. Climbing up the slides is prohibited.
5. Throwing snowballs, ice chunks, woodchips, and rocks is strictly prohibited on school grounds and the area near the school.
6. Touch or flag football should be played. Tackle football is prohibited.
7. No hanging on basketball hoops.
8. Students must not leave the school grounds without permission.
9. Listen to ALL playground supervisors.
10. Line up in specified lines when the lineup whistle is sounded.

Elementary students must stay at school during the lunch hour. The office must receive written permission signed by a parent/guardian to allow the student to leave the school grounds. This request must indicate the date and time the student has permission to leave and the student must sign out in the office.

TEACHER REQUEST

If you are making a request for placement in grades K-6 for the following school year, please complete the Teacher Request Form and return it to the principal's office no later than April 15 (forms are located on the district website under Parents tab). **Reasons for request must be based on educational needs (academic, behavioral, social/emotional, etc.).**

WINTER CLOTHING

Students are expected to go outdoors at recess unless the temperature is -11 degrees below Fahrenheit (real feel) or greater, or it is raining. Students will go outside if it is misting rain or snowing. Therefore, clothing

suitable for weather conditions is necessary. Winter apparel must include snow pants, caps, boots, gloves, and winter coat. If students are too ill to go outside for recess, we suggest you keep your child home.

During the winter months, students may be required to wear their jackets, boots, hats, and gloves when being dismissed at the end of the day.

The office staff will notify the student body on the days that recess will be inside due to inclement weather (rain, hail, storm, cold temperature, etc.).

HIGH SCHOOL

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY

A restricted list will be composed of students who have unserved detention(s) and/or are placed on academic suspension.

Teachers shall report failing grades to the Principal on Tuesday by 5:00 pm of each school week to determine student eligibility. A student will be placed on **Academic Probation** if they receive a failing (F) grade in any class. A student will be placed on **Academic Suspension** if they receive a failing (F) grade in any class the following week (two consecutive weeks with a failing grade). A student placed on **Academic Suspension** will be **ineligible** to participate in any school activity for one (1) week. The weekly ineligibility period will run from Wednesday at 8:00 am to the following Wednesday at 8:00 am.

A student on **Academic Suspension** will remain **ineligible** until they are “cleared” by having a passing grade in all classes when grades are reported.

ACADEMIC LETTERING

Academic letters will be issued to qualifying students starting with the 9th grade. Academic lettering will be based on the cumulative grade point average for each year of a student's high school career. To qualify for an academic letter, a student must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.67 or higher on a 4.0 scale at the time of determination. Qualifying seniors will receive their awards during Senior Award Night. All other students will receive their awards from the previous school year during the back to school assembly.

B'S OR BETTER BREAKFAST

Each year in May, the Verndale School will host the B's or Better Breakfast for students in grades 7-12 (along with parents/guardians) who meet eligibility requirements on the day of review which is the 1st Monday in May.

- All grades in Verndale School courses must be at a B- or higher for the current school year
- No incomplete grades

CAFETERIA AND LUNCH HOUR/OPEN CAMPUS

All Verndale High School juniors and seniors who meet the eligibility requirements will be allowed to take advantage of the open campus opportunity. The campus is closed for students in grades 7-10 during the lunch period.

OPEN CAMPUS RULES

Open campus will take place every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday during the high school lunch period from 12:00-12:40 (except when required meetings are scheduled ahead of time).

- No open campus on Wednesdays. Wednesdays will be reserved for meetings.
- No open campus on late start days.
- No open campus for students with unserved detentions.
- Students **MUST** have a signed permission slip submitted to the office before participating in open campus.
- Students **MUST** have a signed “Open Campus Transportation Agreement & Waiver” submitted to the office before participating in open campus.
- Students **MUST** sign out and sign in through the office.
- Students **MUST** be on time for 5th hour.
- Students must **NOT** be on the academic suspension list in order to participate in open campus.

VIOLATIONS OF OPEN CAMPUS RULES

- **1st Offense** - Warning
- **2nd Offense** - Ineligible for open campus for one (1) week
- **3rd Offense** - Ineligible for open campus for two (2) weeks
- **4th Offense** - Ineligible for open campus for four (4) weeks

Any further offenses will result in further consequences. All school behavior expectations are required while participating in open campus. Student misbehavior while on open campus may result in the loss of open campus privilege and/or appropriate consequences will be assigned.

Students not participating in open campus or the school lunch program, may bring a sack lunch, which must be eaten in the cafeteria or designated area. Containers for waste will be provided for student use. All food items must be consumed in areas designated by the Principal. Students are not allowed access to their vehicles (unless for open campus) during the school day without permission from the Principal.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

Concurrent enrollment courses are made possible by partnerships with area colleges to offer college-level courses taught at the high school by qualified high school teachers. Concurrent enrollment courses are taught in many departments, and many meet the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) requirements. Each college has their own enrollment procedure, policies, and deadlines. If a student doesn't meet the eligibility requirements, but the school supports their enrollment to a concurrent course, an Eligibility Appeal Form may be submitted. For more information contact a school counselor or the specific college website for concurrent enrollment student handbooks. The following concurrent enrollment courses are offered in Verndale.

Eligibility: varies by college, the following are for courses taught at VPS:

MState Community & Technical College: Juniors- 3.2 GPA, Seniors 2.8 GPA, College Algebra requires a C or better in Algebra II.

- General Psychology, College Algebra, Trig/Functions, Intro to Statistics, Calculus I

Central Lakes College: Juniors- 3.0 GPA, Seniors 2.5 GPA

- Human Biology, Environmental Biology

Southwest MN State University: Students must meet one of the following: Juniors - 3.0 GPA, top third of class, score in the 70th percentile on a nationally standardized test. Seniors - 3.0 GPA, top 50% of class, score in the 50th percentile on a nationally standardized test.

- Academic Writing, Global Perspectives

***9th and 10th-grade students are allowed to take concurrent enrollment courses with a waiver request from the school.**

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Whenever a student is guilty of cheating/plagiarism, the teacher shall mark a zero (0) for the work, and notify the parent/guardian and office immediately as to the action taken. A student's academic standing can be severely damaged by an incident involving cheating/plagiarism. Detention or suspension will be assigned depending on the student's reaction to the teacher's action. If persistent cheating/plagiarism continues, it may result in a failing grade for the semester grade for that class. If a student is taking a PSEO, CIHS, or purchased online course, the academic consequence may be more severe from the host institution.

DETENTION RULES

Detention will be assigned for various violations. A teacher or administration may issue detention. Failure to report for detention is justification for doubling detention time. If detention is not served twice by a student, the student may be referred to CCY (Community Concerned for Youth). Regular detention time will be scheduled on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays after school from 3:15-4:15 pm in the Principal's office or at another

pre-arranged time and location. Detention will have a priority over other activities. Parents/guardians may make arrangements with the Principal to have their student serve after-school detention on the next scheduled date, however, students will be placed on the restricted list and not allowed to participate in any school activity until the detention has been served. The arrangements will allow for one extension date. If a parent/guardian refuses to allow their student to serve their discipline, the discipline will follow the progression of being doubled, advancing levels, and being placed on the restricted list.

RULES FOR DETENTION:

1. Students failing to serve assigned detention will receive double detention and be placed on the restricted list
2. Students must read and do academic work in detention.
3. Students will not be allowed to talk or interact with other students during detention unless directed to do so by administration or teacher in charge of detention.
4. Students will not be allowed to leave the room or space for any reason during their assigned detention time.
5. Students are not permitted to have cell phones or other personal electronic devices during detention.
6. Late students will not be permitted to attend.
7. No food or drink is allowed for students in detention.
8. No sleeping. Students will be removed and assigned extra detention time.
9. Students must complete after-school detention within one (1) week of assignment or they will be put on the restricted list and not be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities.
10. Chromebooks are allowed to be used to complete classwork and will be monitored by GoGuardian by the supervising adult.

DRIVING AND PARKING LOT RULES

Students are not allowed to drive or ride in any motorized vehicle during school hours without permission from administration and student's parents/guardians. Students are to park only in designated and marked parking spots in the student parking lot. Students must obtain a parking pass and register their license plate number with the office in order to park in the student parking lot. If a student drives a vehicle to school that is not registered in the office, they must provide the license plate number to the office as soon as they enter the building. The student parking pass must be visible at all times in the student vehicle in the student parking lot. Violations of these rules will result in loss of privilege to park in the student parking lot and students will be required to park off school grounds on the street. If student drivers fail to follow MN driving laws within the parking lot and corresponding school streets, their parking pass will be revoked and the student will not be allowed to park in the student parking lot for the remainder of the school year. Failure to comply with the parking lot rules may result in further consequences.

eCOLLEGE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL (eCHS)

Eligible juniors, and seniors have the opportunity to take online college courses through an agreement with Minnesota State Community & Technical College. This program allows eligible students to take college-level general education and career & technical education courses online during their regular scheduled school day. Students taking online courses will use the library to work on their courses. All eCHS courses are regular college-level courses, with college students, and college instructors. Registration for eCHS courses are done through the school counselors. All books and supplies will be ordered and paid for by the school district. They are VPS property and will be returned at the end of the semester. Any materials that the student keeps (ex. Tools, computers, etc.) the student will need to purchase.

Most eCHS courses follow the traditional college schedule and calendar. However, each semester, Mstate has "late start" courses which follow the high school semester start dates. If you are interested in late start courses, talk to your school counselor to see which courses follow the high school semester start dates.

The following eligibility requirements are must be met for the eCHS program:

Eligibility: Juniors 3.2 GPA, Seniors 2.8 GPA

Courses: Any online course on the MState course schedule.

EDUCATIONAL AIDES

The purpose of an educational aide is to provide support to a teacher or staff member during an assigned class period. Educational aides have rules and policies they must follow in order to continue as an educational aide. Educational aides will be required to report to their assigned area each day for attendance.

Eligibility: Junior or Senior with a 3.0 GPA, must be a good example for students

Credits/Grading: students will receive .75 credit/semester, they will receive a pass/fail grade.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY POLICY

All students participating in extra-curricular activities sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) must follow the rules of the league. Students must be in attendance all day in order to participate in, or attend, any extra-curricular activity that day or evening. Exceptions to this are excused absences approved by the Principal. Furthermore, eligibility for participation may be limited by academic standing, disciplinary matters, and enrollment status. If students have any questions or concerns about eligibility for participation, they should contact administration.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR TRANSPORTATION

Students taking part in school activities are to travel to and from events on school-sponsored transportation. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action. The activity sponsor may grant the participant permission to travel home with their parents/guardians after their parent/guardian has contacted the activity sponsor in writing and/or in person. Exceptions must be approved by administration prior to the event.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activities are part of the curriculum at the Verndale Public School. The school board, administration, coaches, and advisors feel that participating students must follow the rules established by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) and the Verndale Public School.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council provides an important opportunity for students to have input in some of the decision making of the school. The student council not only provides a forum for expressing ideas regarding our school, but also provides an opportunity for greater interaction between students, faculty, and administration. Representatives are elected from each class to attend meetings and report council action to the classes. The council sponsors various activities during the school year.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are available to students (academics, arts, social, vocational, extra-curricular) respecting and including all cultural and gender differences and disability limitations. As a general guideline, students will not be required to attend practices, games, or contests during school vacation days. At times during the summer or during the school year, the school gymnasium is open for use. The following open gym policy has been adopted to ensure the school's liability responsibilities:

- The school facilities are open for students to participate in a variety of activities.
- The recreational activities are open to all students and no students are excluded from play.
- There is no coaching, by anyone, of any skills and techniques of activities provided in the school MSHSL interscholastic athletic program.

- There is no requirement for students to attend open gym activities as a prerequisite for team membership.
- School hired coaches may not participate in games, pickup games, provide instruction in the skills of any sport or otherwise influence a high school athlete's participation in open gym.
- Open gym implies that a number of activities are available to the students. Open volleyball or open basketball occurs when the gym is only open for those activities. Open volleyball, basketball, wrestling, etc., constitutes a violation of MSHSL bylaws.
- High school coaches may supervise open gym, provided the district has hired them to do so and that all the characteristics of open gym are met. A district hired coach may not supervise an open gym where their sport activity is offered for participants.
- Since open gym is not sanctioned by the MSHSL there is no restriction on when it may be offered. (See MSHSL policy dealing with the two weeks prior to start of sport season)
- Open gyms must be adequately supervised. One responsible adult, who has agreed to follow open gym guidelines as previously listed and is not involved in playing activities in an open gym, must supervise the facility area.
- Open gym is available to district residents and Verndale Public School enrolled students. Students 12 and younger who wish to participate, must be accompanied by an adult.
- After open gym is concluded, all equipment must be properly stored and locked, facilities pick up, lights off, and a final walkthrough of the facility must be conducted.
- Any broken equipment or unusual circumstances must be reported to the Activities Director or Community Ed Director no later than the following morning.

GRADING SYSTEM

The evaluation of student achievement is one of the most important functions of the teacher. The accepted marking system is as follows:

A – Excellent	D – Below Average
B – Above Average	F – Failure
C – Average	I – Incomplete

The grade point average (GPA) appears on each report card and is computed by the following procedure: multiply the number of grades by their value sum and divide by the number of credits. A student's class rank is their standing according to their GPA.

GRADING SCALE:

A = 4.0	C- = 1.667
A- = 3.667	D+ = 1.333
B+ = 3.333	D = 1.00
B = 3.00	D- = 0.667
B- = 2.667	F = 0.00
C+ = 2.333	P = Pass
C = 2.00	I – Incomplete

INCOMPLETE POLICY

Any student who is given an incomplete grade at the end of the grading period has **ten (10) school days** to get that incomplete grade made up. If it does not occur, the student may lose credit for any missing assignments during that grading period and will be graded accordingly. If as a result of this, a student fails a required course for graduation, they will be required to take the course again.

GRADUATION DRESS CODE

The occasion of graduation calls for students to look their best. Students are not only representing themselves and their class, but are also representing the Verndale Public School. The district expects all seniors to dress appropriately for graduation and related events. To provide a sense of dignity and honor to the commencement ceremony, students must follow the graduation dress code. If a soon-to-be graduate does not wish to abide by the dress code, they are not welcome to participate in the ceremony. The graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a requirement or right.

Seniors must dress up for graduation. Dress pants (khakis are fine), dresses, and blouse/collared shirt. Blue jeans, shorts, and sweatpants are not to be worn. All students must wear dress shoes/boots. Tennis shoes, flip-flops/sandals, and hiking/work boots are NOT allowed. All clothing and shoes will be checked prior to the graduation walk; seniors choosing to ignore the dress code will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

All seniors participating in the graduation ceremony are required to wear an approved cap and gown provided by the district over their clothes. The altering or decorating of the graduation attire (cap and gown) is strictly prohibited.

The dress code is not meant to cause financial hardship, please do not feel you must purchase new clothes. Please contact the Principal if you have any questions.

GRADUATION HONORS

Graduating seniors will earn honor student status at graduation if they have taken 14 of the following 21 electives and have a GPA of 3.5 or higher at midterm of the second semester of their senior year:

College English I – Academic Writing	College Environmental Biology
College English II – Global Literature Perspectives	College Human Biology
Poetry/Shakespeare	Chemistry
Applications of Psychology	Physics
Psychology	Computer Science
Lifespan Psychology	Culinary Science
College Algebra	Agriculture Sciences
College Trigonometry & Special Functions	Entrepreneurship
Intro to College Statistics	Creative Design
College Calculus I	Outdoor STEM
Two (2) years of Band or Two (2) Years of Choir	

GRADUATION PARTICIPATION

In order to participate in the graduation ceremony at the Verndale High School, a student must have completed the number of credits required by the Verndale School Board. Requests for participation in the graduation ceremony of students who have not been full-time members of the school should be submitted to the administration. Participation will be at the discretion of the administration.

A student can participate in the graduation ceremony if they are within 7.5 credits (2026-2027 seniors) or 2.5 credits (2028-2029 seniors) of meeting the graduation requirements. A student that is short credits will not be recognized as graduating with any honors status that they have maintained. A student must be making progress towards meeting those requirements by registering for programming that Verndale High School utilizes for credit recovery. A certificate of attendance will be issued in lieu of a diploma. The certificate of attendance should be designated only for students who are not eligible for a diploma because they have not met the requirements established by the Minnesota Department of Education and the Verndale School Board. A diploma will be issued once the graduation requirements have been met and the school has received the official transcript.

At minimum, a student must have been a full-time member of the Verndale High School for the last semester of their senior year, or have their family or guardian/guardianship move into the district boundaries or be a Verndale High School student participating in a Post-Secondary Enrollment Option program as a full-time student.

The school will provide cap, gown, and tassel to all participants. Students are to keep these items after the graduation ceremony.

A student will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony if they have any disciplinary infractions that have not been served, including but not limited to any consequences due to misconduct prior to the graduation ceremony.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate from Verndale High School, a student must have the minimum of seventy-six point five (76.5) credits for 2026, 2027 seniors and twenty-five point five (25.5) credits for 2028 seniors and beyond. These credits are to be earned in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. The course requirements for 2026, 2027 seniors are as follows:

English/Language Arts Required classes: English 9, English 10, Research & Composition, American Literature, two (2) Electives	12 credits / 4 years / 8 semesters
Social Studies Required classes: Civics, US History, Economics, US Government, two (2) Electives	12 credits / 4 years / 8 semesters
Mathematics Required classes: Algebra I Nonlinear, Geometry, Algebra II	9 credits / 3 years / 6 semesters
Science Required classes: Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry or Beginning Chemistry or Physics	9 credits / 3 years / 6 semesters
Physical Education & Health Required classes: Physical Education 9, Senior High Health, one (1) Physical Education Elective	4 credits
Fine Arts Choices: Senior High Band, Senior High Choir, Creative Design I & II, Creative Design Careers I & II	3 credits / 1 year / 2 semesters
Other Required Electives: Personal Finance, Microsoft Office, Agriculture Elective, Careers & Life Skills, Auto & Home Maintenance	6.5 credits
Other Electives Total Credits	21 credits 76.5 credits

The course requirements for 2028 seniors and beyond are as follows:

English/Language Arts **4 credits / 4 years / 8 semesters**

Required classes: English 9, English 10,
Research & Composition, American Literature,
two (2) Electives

Social Studies **4 credits / 4 years / 8 semesters**

Required classes: Civics, US History,
Economics, US Government, two (2) Electives

Mathematics **3 credits / 3 years / 6 semesters**

Required classes: Algebra I Nonlinear,
Geometry, Algebra II

Science **3 credits / 3 years / 6 semesters**

Required classes: Earth Science, Biology,
Chemistry or Beginning Chemistry or Physics

Physical Education & Health **1.33 credits**

Required classes: Physical Education 9, Senior
High Health, one (1) Physical Education Elective

Fine Arts **1 credit / 1 year / 2 semesters**

Choices: Senior High Band, Senior High Choir,
Creative Design I & II, Creative Design Careers I
& II

2.17 credits

Other Required Electives:

Personal Finance, Microsoft Office, Agriculture
Elective, Careers & Life Skills, Auto & Home
Maintenance

7 credits

Other Electives **25.5 credits**

Total Credits

Any student that has a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at the end of their senior year will be acknowledged as a "Distinguished Student".

Students in grades 7 and 8 that fail three out of the four core subjects (English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science) throughout the academic year will be retained to complete the full curriculum the following year. There will be a team meeting consisting of teacher(s), school counselor, principal, and parent/guardian to discuss the retention plan. Students failing fewer than three core subjects will be required to repeat the subjects until they are able to show competency.

HALLWAYS

Students should be in the hallways only at the beginning and close of school and while moving from one class to another. Exceptions are if they have special permission or special duties that require them to be in the hallway. Students in the hallways during class time must present teacher permission through the use of a classroom pass designating their destination (restroom, nurse, locker, library, office, etc.). Students are asked

to be courteous at all times and keep to the right when moving in the hallways. Running and shouting in the hallways is strictly prohibited and may result in consequences. The eating of snacks will be permitted in the hallways. All cafeteria food must be eaten in the cafeteria or commons area.

HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

When corrective actions (including nonexclusionary discipline) taken by school staff have failed or the rule infraction is of serious nature, the incident shall be referred to the Dean of Students or the Principal for investigation and action. The severity of the consequence applied by the Dean of Students or the Principal depends on the following factors:

1. The seriousness of the offense
2. The previous disciplinary record of the student (repeated offenses)

In an effort to take both into account, the High School Disciplinary Response to Student Behavior Guide has been adopted. The levels of behavior and possible disciplinary response are as follows, and in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act:

Levels of Behavior and Possible Disciplinary Response(s):

- Level 3 – Behaviors that should be addressed in the classroom
 - Disrupting or interfering with teaching and learning (talking out of turn, excessive noise, or movement, distracting behavior, horseplay, etc.)
 - Disrespectful communication with staff or peers (including teasing, name calling, insults, exclusion, etc.)
 - Noncompliance with instructions, classroom rules, or school rules
 - Inattentive behavior (sleeping, off-task, writing notes, social networking, etc.)
 - Unauthorized use of electronic devices during class
 - Academic Dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.)
 - Violating adult's personal space/property
 - Noncompliance with dress code policy
 - Using profanity or obscene/offensive gestures
 - Inappropriate displays of affection (kissing, hugging, etc.)
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Teacher/Student conference
 - Teacher/Parent conference
 - Temporary removal from class
- Level 4 – Teacher assigned consequences with documentation
 - Persistent or Elevated Level 3 behavior (documented)
 - Inappropriate or disruptive physical contact between peers (pushing, shoving, etc.)
 - Leaving class or designated area without permission, failing to return in a timely manner
 - Violation of internet/technology policy
 - Intentional misuse of school equipment/supplies/facilities or damaging property
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Teacher/Student conference
 - Teacher/Parent conference
 - Admin/Student conference
 - Admin/Parent/Guardian conference
 - Temporary removal from class
 - Lunch detention assigned by teacher
 - In-school disciplinary action (detention, in school suspension)
 - Behavior contract
- Level 5 – Automatic referral to administration
 - Persistent or Elevated Level 4 behavior (documented)

- o Physical violence (hitting, kicking, biting, throwing dangerous items, etc.)
- o Obscene, seriously offensive, or abusive language or gestures towards staff
- o Leaving school without permission
- o Possession of drugs, marijuana, alcohol, or tobacco
- o Possession of a weapon, imitation of a weapon, or illegal substance
- o Verbal, written, or physical threats to peers or staff
- o Posting or distributing material that is disrespectful, demeaning, humiliating, or damaging to peers or staff (including on social media or other electronic means)
- o Serious violations of safety rules (false alarms, vandalism, theft of school property, rioting, malicious pranks)
- o Violation of Harassment Policy (race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability)
- o Lewd or indecent public behavior or sexual misconduct
- o Tampering with, changing, or altering an official record of school
- o Arson, hazing, assault, biohazard, bomb threat, or releasing malware
 - Possible Disciplinary Response(s)
 - Redirection
 - Loss of privilege
 - Admin/Student conference
 - Admin/Parent/Guardian conference
 - Temporary removal from class
 - In-school disciplinary action (detention, etc.)
 - Behavior contract
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Expulsion
 - Exclusion

HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Regular Schedule			Two-Hour Late Start Schedule		
	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>		<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>
1st Period	8:10	8:58	1st Period	10:10	10:45
2nd Period	9:01	9:49	2nd Period	10:48	11:23
PT2	9:52	10:18	3rd Period	11:26	12:01
3rd Period	10:21	11:09			
4th Period	11:12	12:00			
Lunch (7-12)	12:00	12:40	Lunch (7-12)	12:01	12:41
11-12	12:00	12:40	11-12	12:01	12:41
9-10	12:05	12:40	9-10	12:06	12:41
7-8	12:10	12:40	7-8	12:11	12:41
5th Period	12:43	1:31	4th Period	12:44	1:19
6th Period	1:34	2:22	5th Period	1:22	1:57
7th Period	2:25	3:13	6th Period	2:00	2:35
			7th Period	2:38	3:13

The school day begins at 8:10 am. Elementary students are dismissed at 3:09 pm to allow them to board the buses before high school students.

No students should be in the building before 7:45 am or after 3:30 pm, unless under the direct supervision of a faculty member. All handbook rules and procedures are enforced at the time students enter school grounds or school transportation.

HONOR ROLL

Honor roll is calculated and prepared for publication two weeks after the end of the marking period (semester). Students who do NOT wish to have their name(s) published in the Verndale Sun or the school's Facebook and Instagram page, should notify the office one week prior to publication. A student who receives a failing or incomplete grade, regardless of GPA, is not eligible for Honor Roll status. A 4-point scale will be used to determine honor roll recognition, with 4.0 being straight A's. A grade point average of 3.67-4.0 will be recognized as A Honor Roll and a grade point average of 3.00-3.66 will be recognized as B Honor Roll. A student earning any grade lower than a C- will automatically be disqualified from the honor roll recognition for the semester.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students in grades 11-12 are allowed to take one independent study course per semester with teacher/staff approval. Students who are in an independent study course will be assigned to the library or other workspace during their assigned hour to work on their course. Independent study courses vary in nature and parameters are set on a case by case basis. For more information contact the school counselor.

NOTE TO 18 YEAR OLD STUDENTS

State law requires schools to enforce the same rules on all students regardless of their age, with few exceptions:

- Students who are 18 years old or older need not seek consent of their parents/guardian to exercise their rights of access, control, and transfer of their school records.
- Students who are 18 years old may write their own passes if they do not live at home. Students who are 18 and live at home will not be allowed to write their own notes. Students must verify their age and home status with administration before being granted this privilege.

ONLINE CLASSES

Students have the opportunity to take online high school level courses for credit towards graduation. In order to be successful, students must have a good work ethic, good time management skills, and a desire to learn. Online students will be assigned to the library during the class period of their online class. Student progress will be monitored by the principal. Because there is an additional cost for online courses, students may not drop an online course after the add/drop date set by the school. Online courses can be discussed with the school counselor or principal.

Eligibility: Junior or Senior with a 3.0 GPA

Credits/Grading: Students will receive a letter grade and 1.5 credit/semester course.

PASSES

Students will be permitted to leave the classroom after securing a pass from the teacher. Off-campus passes will be issued through the district office only. A sign-out form will be used to record leaving and returning to campus. Before a student is permitted to leave campus and an off-campus pass is provided, the office must have verbal/written communication from parent/guardian.

PETS

Administration must grant prior approval before any pet can be brought to school for school projects, such as demonstration speeches. Pets must be brought to and from school by parent/guardian.

PIRATE TUTOR TIME (PT2) PROCEDURES

All students are to be seated when the class is scheduled to begin. Students must work quietly or as directed by the instructor. In order to leave and go to another classroom, the student must be on the PT2 list for the classroom they wish to go to. Students must go directly to their destination without stopping at the restroom or their locker, etc. Teachers and administration will institute any rules or regulations necessary to create an atmosphere conducive to productive study.

POST-SECONDARY CLASSES

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is a program that allows 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade students to earn both high school and college credit while still in high school, through enrollment in and successful completion of college nonsectarian courses at eligible participating postsecondary institutions. Most PSEO courses are offered on the campus of the postsecondary institution; some courses are offered online. Each participating college or university sets its own admissions requirements for enrollment into the PSEO courses. Eleventh and 12th-grade students may take PSEO courses on a full- or part-time basis; 10th-graders are eligible to enroll in PSEO on a more limited basis (see note below). Students must meet the PSEO residency and eligibility requirements and abide by participation limits specified in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09. If a school district determines a pupil is not on track to graduate, she/he may continue to participate in PSEO on a term-by-term basis.

By March 1 of each year or three weeks prior to the date a student registers for courses for the following school year (whichever is earlier), schools must provide PSEO information to all students in grades 8-11 and their families. To assist the district in planning, a student must inform the district by May 30 of each year of their intent to enroll in postsecondary courses during the following school year.

There is no charge to PSEO students for tuition, books, or fees for items that are required to participate in a course; however, students may incur fees for equipment that becomes their property when the course or program is completed, textbooks that are not returned to the postsecondary institution according to their policies, or for tuition costs, if they do not notify the district by May 30 and the district does not waive this date requirement.

Funds are available to help pay transportation expenses for qualifying students to participate in PSEO courses on college campuses. For more information on these funds, [access the PSEO Mileage Reimbursement Program Instructions](#).

Enrolling in a PSEO course does not prohibit a student from participating in activities sponsored by the high school. School districts must allow a PSEO student reasonable access to the high school building, computers and/or other technology resources during regular school hours to participate in PSEO courses, whether online or on campus.

Each year, districts must publish their grade-weighting policy on their website, including a list of courses for which students can earn weighted grades.

All courses taken through the PSEO program must meet graduation requirements. Districts must transcript credits earned in PSEO by a ratio prescribed in statute. Districts have the authority to decide which subject area and standards the PSEO course meets. If there is a dispute between the district and the student regarding the number of credits granted for a particular course, the student may appeal the board's decision to the commissioner. The commissioner's decision regarding the number of credits will be final.

Postsecondary institutions are required to allow PSEO students to enroll in online courses consistent with the institution's policy regarding postsecondary student enrollment in online courses.

Tenth-grade students may initially enroll in one Career and Technical Education (CTE) PSEO course if they receive a reading proficiency score of "meets" or "exceeds" on the 8th grade MCA. If 10th graders taking a CTE PSEO course earn at least a grade C in that class, they may take additional postsecondary courses. If the student did not take the MCA in 8th grade, another reading assessment accepted by the enrolling postsecondary institution can be substituted. For students with disabilities, there is an alternative option to demonstrate reading proficiency.

For current information about the PSEO program, [visit the Minnesota Department of Education's Postsecondary Enrollment Options \(PSEO\) webpage.](#)

Application Process: Each postsecondary education institution has their own application process. A college application, high school transcript, and MDE Notice of Student Registration form will be required for most PSEO programs.

Each spring, school counselors present information to students on concurrent enrollment, eCollege in the High School, and PSEO courses. Students who are interested in taking college courses must meet all eligibility requirements and standards for taking college courses.

Students must notify the school district by May 30 if they wish to participate in postsecondary courses for the following school year. Planning early and often helps the application and registration process go smoothly.

Credits/Grading: Students will receive a letter grade for each course. Students will receive the following credit allotments:

<u>College Credit</u>	<u>VHS Credit</u>
1 credit	1 credit
2 credits	1.5 credit
3 credits	2 credits
4 credits	3 credits
5 credits	3.33 credits

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students in grades 9-12 will have through Friday after the start of the semester to make schedule changes. For the fall semester, this is the first four (4) days of the semester and for the spring semester, this is the first five (5) days of the semester. After this add/drop timeframe, students can only make schedule changes for the next semester. Any additional schedule changes are made on a case-by-case basis as permitted by administration.

Students in grades 7-8 are only allowed to change their music course. Changes made to core or elective courses are made on a case-by-case basis given special circumstances.

All students requesting to drop band must have a signed drop form before the schedule change will be finalized. This form requires parent/guardian permission and a conversation with the band instructor.

All students requesting an alternative course (Independent Study, Ed Aide, Work-Based Learning) will need to get a permission form from the school counselor. This form needs to be signed by the student and discussed with the teacher before it is added to the student's schedule.

Not all schedule change requests will be granted. Many factors play a role in schedules, including class sizes, graduation requirements, and prerequisites.

SCHOOL DANCES

There will be no dances open to the general public. Students at the dance shall not be allowed to leave the building and re-enter. Students must indicate by Wednesday of the week of the dance who their guest will be by submitting a Dance Permission Form for Guests to the Principal. An invited guest to a dance may be a non-student, but must not be older than 20 years of age. If the guest is approved, the Verndale student must accompany their guest to the dance and will be responsible for the guest's conduct. A list of guests will be at the ticket seller's table and only registered guests will be admitted. No exceptions. All persons attending must enter the building within one hour of the starting time of the dance unless prior approval has been granted by the Principal.

The organization advisor and the Principal must approve all dances. A list of chaperones must be presented to the Principal before approval will be given.

These rules will apply to any school-sponsored dance, regardless of the location. Administration shall use discretion in enforcing this policy.

SENIOR PRIVILEGE

Seniors with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher at the end of the spring semester of their junior year, qualify to have one (1) free period during the school day. During this period, students do not need to take a course and they may leave the building with parent/guardian approval. If they choose to stay in the building, they must be in a location designated by the Principal. Students violating this policy will lose their senior privilege and be assigned to a class per discretion of the Principal.

Any student receiving a progress report or incomplete shall lose this privilege until satisfactory progress is made on their grade. The teacher giving the report will provide notification when progress has been made. Students that lose their senior privilege must report to the office during their free period.

SENIOR PRANK/SKIP DAY POLICY

There is no excused skip day for seniors. Any attempt to have an organized skip day will result in the student(s) receiving an unexcused absence, detention, in-school suspension, and/or other appropriate consequences.

Any student who, under the notion of a Senior Prank, entered and/or vandalized the school grounds will be referred to law enforcement. Any senior involved in this type of activity may not be permitted to participate in any graduation activities.

TARDINESS

Being on time for class is very important. Students are expected to be in class when the bell rings. Tardiness related to school is defined as being late for class after the scheduled start time (usually signified by the bell system). If a student is late for school/class, the student **must** report to the district office to sign in and obtain a pass for admittance to class. If a student is tardy for more than 15 minutes, the tardy will be considered an absence (unexcused or excused). Excessive tardiness may result in a referral to the School Attendance Program.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are loaned to students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Please be sure your name, grade, and school are written on the book label in case the book is misplaced. Students/parents/guardians will be required to pay for lost or damaged books.

WORK-BASED LEARNING

In order to take work-based learning, students must be employed at least five hours a week to earn one class period of work-based learning. For two class periods of work-based learning, students must work ten hours during the week. Students must be in good academic standing and on track to graduate to qualify for work-based learning. Students are allowed to take up to two class periods of work-based learning. Additional hours are on a student-by-student basis and must be approved by the administration.

Eligibility: Junior or Senior with a 2.5 GPA and, passing grade in the Careers/Lifeskills

Credits/Grading: Students will receive a letter grade and 1.5 credit/semester course.

2025-2026 DISTRICT POLICY SUMMARIES

COMPLETE POLICIES CAN BE FOUND ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE (ABOUT VPS, SCHOOL BOARD, SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES)

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO, TOBACCO-RELATED DEVICES, ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES, VAPE POLICY

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages and/or 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. (Verndale School District Policy #417 – Chemical Use and Abuse Policy)

Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes 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 Policy)

BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

Bullying means intimidation, 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 or bullying occurs, it must be reported to an appropriate school official. After a report is made, the **Bullying and Harassment Intake Form** must be filled out and turned in to the Principal. Any person denying or lying about an act of bullying or hazing or instigating any other person to do so violates this policy.

Malicious and sadistic conduct refers to behavior that is intentionally harmful, cruel, and driven by a desire to inflict pain, suffering, or humiliation on others. This type of conduct is often associated with a lack of empathy and strong inclination toward causing harm for personal pleasure or satisfaction.

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

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE POLICY

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 SW Brown Street, Verndale, MN 56481 or 218-445-5184. (Verndale School District Policy #413 – Harassment and Violence)

HAZING PROHIBITION POLICY

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)

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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 US 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.

Lead-in-Water Notification – Verndale Public School is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment for employees and students. The District maintains a lead-in-water management plan that was developed to reduce the potential for exposure to lead in water and to comply with Minnesota State Statute 121A.335. Minnesota State Statute 121A.335 requires public school buildings serving pre-kindergarten and kindergarten through grade 12 to establish a plan to accurately and efficiently test for lead in potable water sources every five years. In addition to testing, the District has also implemented water management practices as well. Our water testing is completed by a third-party vendor, utilizing an accredited laboratory and was last completed in 2023, therefore, testing is required again in 2028. Please find our lead-in-water management plan on the school website under the <Reports> tab.

Should you want more information, have questions or concerns relating to the Districts processes, please contact the Building and Grounds Director. If you have questions regarding your personal health concerns, please contact your healthcare provider.

Pesticide Notification – A Minnesota state law went into effect in 2000 that requires schools to inform parents and guardians if the school applies 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 chemical 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 District Policy #807 – Health and Safety)

INTERNET, TECHNOLOGY, AND CELL PHONE ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

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 the internet and e-mail, must be used responsibly. The internet and e-mail are extensions of Verndale School just as if it is in 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 expected 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 unintentionally, the user will exit immediately.
- Users should not expect that files on district servers are always 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 discipline 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, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety)

EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND CHECKS POLICY

Verndale School District #818 will seek criminal history background checks for all applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district. The school district also will seek criminal history background checks for all individuals, except enrolled student volunteers, who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services to the school district, regardless of whether compensation is paid. These positions include, but are not limited to, all athletic coaches, extracurricular academic coaches, assistant, and advisors. The school district may elect to seek criminal history background checks for other volunteers, independent contractors, and student employees. (Verndale School District Policy #404 – Employment Background Checks)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

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 Superintendent within 30 days. The Superintendent will initiate an investigation and resolve the complaint. (Verndale School District Policy #102 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

HARMFUL, DANGEROUS, OR NUISANCE ITEMS

The possession or use of items that are nuisances, illegal, or potentially harmful to individuals (including guns and knives) or property is prohibited at school, on school grounds, or during school-sponsored activities. The administration has the discretion to determine whether an item is harmful or a nuisance. District policies address most situations. (Verndale Public School Policy #501 – School Weapons)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE POLICY

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 Public District Policy #531 – The Pledge of Allegiance)

STUDENT DISABILITY NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

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

STUDENT SEX NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Verndale School complies with all regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender in school. The district's Title IX Officer is the Principal, Katie Bolland. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to the Title IX Officer of the Director at the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, Welfare, Washington D.C. (Verndale School District Policy #522 – Student Sex Nondiscrimination)

2025-2026 STUDENT HANDBOOK

This statement is to be signed by the student and the student's parent/guardian.

This form needs to be returned to the Principal's office (for each child) or a family (parent/guardian and students) are required to complete the Electronic Signature Verification Form of the 2025-2026 Verndale School Student Handbook.

I have read, understood, and acknowledge receiving the Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook for the 2025-2026 School Year, which contains the policies and procedures for operation of the Verndale School as it pertains to students. I understand that each district employee has a copy of the Handbook.

I further understand that a student of Verndale School must adhere to all rules and regulations set forth in the Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook.

e-signature in JMC Student Portal

Student Signature	Grade Level	Date
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e-signature in JMC Parent/Guardian Portal

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Verndale SCHOOL DISTRICT #818 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

July 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Summer Office Hours	
The office will be open Mondays-Wednesdays from June 9th-August 8th, from 8-3:30 pm	
4	Office Closed- Independence Day

January 2026	
1-2	No School
5	School Resumes
7	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
16	End of 1st Semester- 82 days
19	No School- Staff Development

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
				S-19	T-20	

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31					S-0	T-4

5	NEW Teacher Workshop
14	NEW Teacher Workshop
25	Teacher Workshop
26	Teacher Workshop
27	Teacher Workshop
27	Open House
28	Teacher Workshop

February 2026	
4	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
16	No School- President's Day

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
				S-19	T-19	

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
				S-20/21	T-21	

1	No School- Labor Day
2	First day for K-7, and 12
3	First day for 8-11
TBA	Homecoming Week

March 2026	
4	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
TBA	Spring Concert (5-12)
19	Evening Staff Development
20	No School- Staff Development

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
				S-21	T-22	5

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
				S-21	T-21	

1	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
16	No School- MEA Break
17	No School- MEA Break

April 2026	
1	No School-Staff Dev./ Regional Music Contest
2-3	No School- Easter/Spring Break
27	No School- Staff Development

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
				S-18	T-20	

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30				S-15	T-17	5

5	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
6	No School- Staff Development/PT Conf.
7	No School- Staff Development
10	No School
27	No School- Thanksgiving Break
28	No School- Thanksgiving Break

May 2026	
6	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
21	Seniors Last Day
22	Graduation
25	No School- Memorial Day
28	Last Day of School K-12 (Term 2- 86 days)
28	Early Release 12:30
29	Staff Development

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31				S-19	T-20	

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31		S-15	T-15

3	Late Start- School begins at 10:15
TBA	High School Band & Choir Concert
TBA	Elementary Christmas Concert
22-31	No School- Winter Break

June 2026	
1	Staff Development (Flex PD Day)
19	School Closed- Juneteenth

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30			S-0	T-1

Student Days = 167/168
Teacher Days = 181

Key:			
School Resumes	Parent Teacher Conferences	Graduation	
Late Start	No School/ Office Closed	Music Program	
Special Note	Teacher Staff Development	Last Day of School- Early Release	

Statewide Assessments:

Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) or the [WIDA English Language Development Standards](#). These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 public and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments gives educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

MCA and MTAS are the annual assessments in reading, mathematics and science that measure a snapshot of student learning of the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments helps families see a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students can use MCA results:

- For course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.
- For Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and College in the Schools programs.

English learners who take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from English learner programs.

Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions about how to use money and resources to support all students.

Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the form. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the student would not have the opportunity to exit their English learner program.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Since all eligible students are included in some calculations even when they do not participate, school and district accountability results are impacted. This may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any other consequences for not participating.

Explore the
Statewide
Testing page
for more
information.

[education.mn.gov > Students
and Families > Programs and
Initiatives > Statewide Testing](https://education.mn.gov/Students-and-Families/Programs-and-Initiatives/Statewide-Testing)

Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1 percent of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by the beginning of each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20____ to 20____ school year.)



By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. This form must be returned to your student's school before the applicable test administration.

Statewide Assessment: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

Student Information

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Current Grade in School: _____

School: _____ District: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

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

Contact your school or district for more information on how to opt out of local assessments.

Updated April 21, 2022

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