

Important Information about Sixth Grade

at Vision Charter School

Mrs. Wafwa

(lucywafwa@visioncsd.org)

Math, Reading, Social Studies

Ms. Wilkins

(teresawilkins@visioncsd.org)

Math, Language Arts, Science

We help students learn how to think and share ideas through group inquiry.

As part of our mission, we seek to help our students develop the following academic and personal habits:

- curiosity;
- lifelong learning;
- clear oral and written communication;
- creative thinking;
- logical thinking and the ability to make informed judgments;
- effective use of technology as a tool;
- adaptability to new situations and new information;
- problem-solving skills;
- the ability to find, select, evaluate, organize, and use information from various sources;
- the ability to make easy and flexible connections among various disciplines of thought; and
- respecting others' individuality and creativity, as well as one's own, while seeking to work within teams to create common solutions.

In addition, we hope to help them develop the following personal habits and actions:

- accepting responsibility for personal decisions and actions;
- academic honesty and the ability to face challenges with courage and integrity;
- a healthy lifestyle;
- empathy and courtesy for others and respect for differences among people and cultures;
- self-confidence and willingness to risk setbacks in order to learn;
- concentration and perseverance;
- managing time in a responsible manner;
- seeking a fair share of the workload; and
- working cooperatively with others, which includes the ability to listen, share opinions, negotiate, compromise, and help a group reach consensus.

No matter how skilled the teacher, or elaborate the classroom, learning takes place in the mind of the student. The ideal educational environment, therefore, is the one that stimulates and engages the mind of the student. The core educational philosophy of Vision Charter School is grounded in the belief that a highly challenging content in a safe environment creates the setting for accelerated learning. Vision Charter School's core educational philosophy is that learning occurs when:

- learners construct meaning;
- learners see the connection between what they learn and the real world;
- learners are actively engaged in purposeful tasks;
- activities are integrated and meaningful;
- learners work individually and as members of a group;
- learners work side by side with community members to develop solutions and opinions on issues that can be presented to local policy makers;
- learners are expected and encouraged to learn;

- learners internalize that what they learn and do in school makes a positive change in the community;
- challenged learners have an individual plan, and support is an intrinsic part of the educational program;
- learners are supported with teachers, mentors, and advocates;
- all learners have advanced learning opportunities; and
- learners see themselves as part of the community and find ways to serve the community.

In 6th Grade, we intend to meet the goal of producing students who possess the academic and personal habits and attitudes desired of an educated citizen in the 21st century. We do this through a positive teaching and learning environment with an emphasis on high expectations of behavior and performance.

Our goal as teachers is to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment. In order to do this, there is a reliable and consistent discipline system enforced in our classrooms. We feel that a good discipline system reinforces positive behaviors and discourages behaviors that are negative to your child and his/her classmates.

In our classroom, we have the following rules:

- Rule 1: Follow directions quickly
- Rule 2: Raise your hand for permission to speak
- Rule 3: Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
- Rule 4: Make smart choices
- Rule 5: Keep your dear teacher happy

Students have been practicing these rules and the accompanying gestures to learn the "signs" we will be using to remind them of the expectations. If, however, your child is having difficulty following the rules, he/she will be given extra time to practice during recess. Should that happen, he/she will bring home a detention form that will need to be signed and returned the next day.

Birthdays

Due to hurt feelings, party invitations of any kind can NOT be distributed at school unless the student hands them out to all students or all students of their same gender. Because we protect instructional time from interruptions, flowers or balloons will not be delivered to classrooms until the last thirty minutes of the day.

Birthday Parties

Students interested in having their birthday celebrated while at school may bring **non food** treats to the classroom to share with all students during the **fifteen minutes prior to lunch**. Birthday parties will not be held during the regular academic day and may be allowed during lunchtime or recess time if prearranged with the teacher.

Blogs

We post newsletters, class happenings, and all assignments on the VCS website daily that students should have listed in their agendas. Please be sure to check this on a daily basis as we do not send a lot of things home via paper.

Cell Phone/IPODS

Cell phones, IPODS, and other similar electronic items are prohibited from being **on** or **visible** in any form during school hours which extend from 8:15-3:10. If these devices must be brought to school they should be kept in their locker. A student who has his/her cell phone or IPOD ON or out of his/her backpack during school hours will have his/her cell phone or IPOD confiscated, a zero for all assignments during that class period, parents will be called and must pick the item up from the office. Additional incidents will result in the item being confiscated, zeros for all assignments during that class period, and a discipline referral for defiance. No exceptions will be made to this policy as it is created to protect the learning environment and the integrity of the courses offered at VCS. This policy applies to extracurricular activities before and after school.

Checkout Procedure for Bus Line

If a parent wants to take a child out of the bus line or off the bus, the parent must go to the office and sign the student out and show proper identification. This is for student safety so we know who is picking up the children. The office will call the administrator on the radio and the child will be removed out of the bus line. If the administrator is not available, a staff member must get the child off of the bus.

Checking Students Out of Class Early

For safety purposes, students may not be released to any person other than the parent/guardian listed on the enrollment form without written authorization from the parent/guardian. Parents will be asked to sign students out at the office and the student will be called to the office. Parents may be asked to provide identification (driver's license).

Food/Drink/Gum

GUM IS NOT ALLOWED in the building, on the playground or on the bus.

Please send lunches that will contribute to your child's academic and behavioral success. Fruits, vegetables, and proteins all help our children have the energy they need to be successful learners throughout their entire learning day. Do not send energy drinks to school with your child. These drinks can cause a normally well mannered child to be a disruption to the learning environment.

Homework Policy

Reading homework will consist of a minimum of twenty five minutes of reading per night for all students. Students will be held accountable for monthly reading logs to verify home reading time.

Math homework is part of our charter and will be assigned daily, or weekly, based on the teacher's professional judgment. However, every student is required to complete 45 minutes a week of homework via www.ixl.com

Homework will be of the highest learning value and an extension of the classroom. Students who do not complete work at school will be required to complete assignments at home, during a portion of their recess, or in place of attending an enrichment club. New homework will not be assigned over weekends, holidays, or breaks.

Additional homework may be assigned for any of the following reasons:

1. As make up work due to excused absences.
2. Finishing work not completed at school for which time has been given to do so in class.
3. To help students master specific skills which have been presented in class.
4. To help students prepare for the next step in a unit or study for a quiz or test.
5. To complete research projects or other occasional projects.
6. To gather personal information.

Homework helps children develop good study habits and responsibility. It also reinforces learning of simple skills introduced in class.

Late Work Policy (First Semester)

Unexcused late work will be assigned as homework or assigned for completion during recess or in place of attending an enrichment club. Unexcused late work will not be accepted for full credit, and will lose **25% credit per each day late**.

Students who score less than a "C" on a test will be able to retake a test one time, within one week of the original test. The student will be given the new score; however, the final score assigned to the student for the makeup test will not exceed 85%.

Late Work Policy (Second Semester)

Unexcused late work **will NOT be accepted** and will be an **automatic zero**.

Students who score less than a 75% on a test may be offered an alternative form of mastery of the teacher's choosing.

Quarterly, Semester, and End of Course exams will be required for evidence of mastery and no additional options for showing mastery will be provided. 6th graders will follow this policy second semester.

Mastery of Grade Level Expectations for Sixth Grade and higher

Vision Charter School report cards, in addition to the ISAT test scores, are used to determine mastery of grade level material. Both are based on Idaho State Standards.

Students who have not shown mastery of grade level expectations in all core subject areas will not be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Mastery is defined as a 2.0 average or above for the entire year. Core subject area classes include Math, Reading, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

Students who have not shown mastery of grade level material will be able to be eligible for promotion in the event that they attend 96% of summer school during scheduled summer school days with no make-up day options available and show mastery of the content. The fifty dollar fee assessed from IDLA for each course in question will be the responsibility of the parent.

Parents and students may appeal the decision of the staff for retention or mandatory summer school. The appeal will be made in writing within fifteen days of the notice for retention or mandatory summer school to be eligible for promotion. The written appeal must outline any evidence, argument, or extenuating circumstances impacting the student's academic progress throughout the year. The appeals committee will be made up of the administrator, two staff members, and two board members. The decision of the appeals board will be considered final. The parent and student may be requested to appear before the appeals board if determined necessary by the appeals board.

Missing Work

Students who do not turn in work on time will be required to work on it during lunch time detention and will bring home a detention form for a parent signature. The form must be returned to school the next day to avoid additional consequences.

Picking students up prior to the close of learning time

Parents are discouraged from picking up students prior to the close of school and learning. It disrupts the classroom and shows disrespect for the teacher and students. Learning extends to the very end of the day. Even cleaning up the room is part of learning to be a citizen leader and taking responsibility for his/her surroundings. This portion of the day is pivotal for your child to receive important information about assignments and filling out their agenda. All VCS students have responsibilities and jobs at the end of the day as contributing members of our community. Therefore, parents who pick up their children early from school on a regular basis will need to meet with the administrator and teacher to discuss these concerns and work to remedy the situation to protect the integrity of the classroom learning environment and minimize disruptions. If remedies are not realized, the student's early withdrawals from class will be treated as absences and the child will be bound by the attendance policy and responsible to the Attendance Review Committee in the same manner afforded to excessive absences.

Prohibited Items

- Radios, Walkman type headphones, tape or CD players, cameras
- Gambling devices
- Drugs, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, cigarettes, cigarette lighters, matches, and look alikes.
- Explosive devices, firecrackers, fireballs, cherry bombs, etc.
- Toys, specifically those which are realistic simulations of guns and knives
- Gang identification paraphernalia including but not limited to beepers, gloves, rags or bandanas.
- Laser pointers: Laser pointers are not allowed on the bus or on the school grounds or at school functions.
- Toys, games, and recess equipment (unless a student is bringing it for class purposes with the approval of the teacher). Playground equipment is provided at school.

Quarterly Celebrations

Each quarter we will have a celebration for those students who have passing grades in all subjects, no missing/late work, no detentions, and no discipline referrals. The class officers will help us plan these celebrations.