

Valley Academy of Learning

FAMILY HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

(updated 3/1/23)

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Office Hours:

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VAL Websites:

Valley Academy's Website: <http://www.wenatcheeschools.org/val/>

Class Registration Website: <https://wenatcheeval.schooldata.net/v2/ale-sis-public/#/>

Office Staff:

- Shelly Jelsing, Program Director
- Emily Wallace, Curriculum Librarian
- Katie Eddy, Secretary
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Certificated Teachers:

- Shawna Hawkins
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- Tammy Lambert
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Welcome to VAL!

On behalf of the Staff and Parents of Valley Academy, Welcome!

Valley Academy (VAL) is here to support families as they lead their students to academic success. We invite you to explore this manual as a one-stop guide to our school's policies, procedures and many resources.

If you're looking for a different perspective, solution, flexibility and integrity in education, you've found it all here. We are an inclusive community of not only teachers and staff, but students and parents too. You, the parent, are taking charge of your child's academic success. Yes, that means added responsibility. But the trade-off is that you've joined a family of people just as committed to the education process, and we're here for you. VAL gives you the freedom and flexibility to design a program unique to your own child and provides the framework to support you in that endeavor.

We encourage you to become involved in our community. Come to school with your child every day, introduce yourself to other parents and volunteer to help out. We're glad you're here!

This program has grown into an excellent example of what a school can become when interested parents and quality staff people work together to provide an outstanding educational opportunity for children.

The Wenatchee School District has been willing to provide this opportunity to our families who want to participate in an innovative and flexible school for our kids. Our students have thrived in this environment and learned in ways that interest them and their parents.

I am proud to be a part of an organization that places such high value on being responsive and service-oriented. If I can be of any assistance to you, please contact me.

Greg Lovercamp
Program Administrator

Introduction

What VAL Is All About

Welcome to Valley Academy where we support families by providing quality educational opportunities and resources. Our commitment is to enhance learning goals and foster a sense of community while recognizing the parent's key role in the child's education.

We operate under the authority of the State of Washington and the laws pursuant to an alternative learning experience (WAC 392-550). As a part of the Wenatchee School District there are no costs to participate.

Our staff is made up of certificated teachers who have made a commitment to our program and its philosophies. Our program is set up around the needs and desires of our families while still meeting the laws that govern us as a public school program. Please read the following handbook and feel free to ask us questions. We welcome you to our community of learners who value education and the many ways and places it can occur.

Because VAL is designed to meet the needs of our families, we are constantly growing and changing along with our families. As a result, all information in our handbook is subject to change.

VAL Founding Principles

We exist to provide support, guidance, and enrichment opportunities that will enhance and encourage each child's educational journey.

We recognize the parent's role in the education of their children and are here to offer support, knowledge, feedback and guidance. State required face to face meetings are held with both parent and child, acknowledging each as an individual. We encourage each parent's active participation, and allow both parents and students a voice in the program development.

We recognize the teacher as a person of many roles including advisor, supporter, observer, learner, and facilitator. Teachers have the unique opportunity to guide and support our families and are always expected to act in the family's best interest.

We also recognize that in order to run our program successfully we need the input, respect, and cooperation of students, parents, teachers, and administrators, as well as any other staff or community members who may participate. Since the program is a partnership, we encourage parent involvement. Also in partnership with parents we are interested in encouraging students to be positive influences both here at Valley Academy and elsewhere.

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The purpose of education is not simply to pass a test, it is to be prepared to be productive members of our community. Current and former Valley Academy students are assets to their employers, schools, interest groups and families.

What VAL Expects From Families

We believe parents have the ultimate responsibility to instruct their children and also have an inherent right to partner with public education programs. The Wenatchee School District is partnering with families to provide a quality education for children in a safe, professional, family-friendly environment. VAL should be seen as a program that enriches the student's learning experience. Parents assume responsibility for the student's education and provide instruction for the indicated number of hours per week according to the Washington State Laws. VAL assumes responsibility for the Written Student Learning Plan and ensuring that progress is being made toward goals. The indicated number of hours of instruction per week according to Washington State Laws is:

Kindergarten: 14 hours

Grades 1-8: 28 hours

Prior to registering for classes, the parent(s) will work in partnership with the consultant to develop a Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP), which is to include goals, objectives, activities, and assessments. Students will meet weekly with a certificated teacher and be enrolled in at least one class with a certificated teacher.

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in our program by volunteering in the classrooms and in other ways that will promote the learning of our students and the development of the program.

Full-time VAL students participate in Washington State and Wenatchee School District testing. A detailed outline of our testing schedule is included in this manual.

Parents must notify VAL if their child enrolls in any courses at another school. The office manager must ensure proper financial arrangements are made with the other school. It is of vital importance that a record of the arrangement be completed within state guidelines. The maximum classes a student takes cannot exceed one full-time equivalent (FTE). In other words, if a student is enrolled in two schools at the same time neither school can be under the impression that the student is enrolled only in their school.

Parents will read and sign a Statement of Understanding outlining the differences in Washington State law between home-based students and those enrolled in

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VAL, which is an Alternative Learning Experience and a public school program.

Parents will also sign the "Handbook Agreement" declaring that they have read the information included in this booklet and agree to the requirements of the program. A sample is included at the back of this booklet.

Getting Started

Enrollment at VAL

We encourage parents to come for a visit to talk to the program administrator, talk to teachers and tour the building. Greg Lovercamp, the Program Administrator is available to meet with families who have questions about VAL. Enrollment registration information is emailed to interested families.

Parents need to understand that there is a difference in Washington State law between home-based students and those enrolled in VAL, which is an Alternative

Learning Experience and a public school program.

The number of “instructional hours” is what determines enrollment status. When enrolled in a Parent Partnership Program (PPP) full-time, the classes on-site and the instructional hours completed at home fulfill the required numbers of hours according to Washington State Laws. VAL is a contract-learning program designed to allow families of K-8 students to combine the best of public and home education. The role and responsibility of the PPP is to oversee the WSLP, provide support, provide assessment, and determine if the student is making progress.

Enrollment Options

Please review the following enrollment options carefully.

Option A—Full-Time Student Learning Plan

The student is considered by law to be a public school student.

- A WSLP is completed for each student prior to enrollment.
- Student is required to have weekly contact with certificated staff.
- Students in 3rd-8th grade participate in district assessments
- Curriculum materials are provided by VAL and are returned when the course ends.
- Educational material provided by VAL: Resources in the library are available for checkout.
- Students may register in 1-12 on-site VAL classes.

Option B—Partial Student Learning Plan

Student is considered by law a part-time home-school student and is required to file a “Declaration of Intent to Provide Home-Based Instruction” with the district in

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which the family resides and also the one which the student has been enrolled. •

A partial WSLP is completed for each student prior to enrollment based on the subjects overseen by their teacher/consultant.

- Student is required to have weekly contact with certificated staff. • Students in 3rd – 8th grade are strongly encouraged or required to participate in fall and spring assessments (see chart).
- Curriculum materials are provided by VAL and are returned when the course ends.
- Educational material provided by VAL: Resources in the library are available for checkout.
- Students may register in a reduced number of on-site VAL classes per year.

Steps For Enrolling at VAL

Orientation Meeting to discuss:

- Interest in program
- Tour of site and review of onsite class options available
- Expectations for participation
- Curriculum & materials
- Written Student Learning Plans (WSLP) created during a second meeting with a certificated teacher

Complete the following Enrollment Forms:

- Wenatchee School District Enrollment Form - This form contains parent and student information including addresses, phone numbers, emergency contacts, grade, birth date, etc.
- Student Health History Form - Brief history of health.
- Certificate of Immunization Status - A current record of the immunizations the student has had to date. If you do not immunize, you must provide a certificate of exemption. Students will not be allowed to attend classes until the form is complete.
- Birth Certificate – Needed for all students new to Wenatchee School District.
- Records Request (as needed) - If your child has previously attended a public or private school, this form allows the child’s records to be transferred to VAL.
- Out-of-District Transfer Request (Choice) - If you do not live within the Wenatchee School District, you must initiate a choice transfer request at your resident school district office.
- Parent Disclosure of Student History Form.
- Wenatchee School District Volunteer Application at <http://www.wenatcheeschools.org/wl>
- Declaration of Intent to Provide Home-based Instruction if the child is

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part-time.

At this point all information is reviewed by VAL staff, and then parents are notified of acceptance or denial to the program. After acceptance into the program, the parent will finish the following steps to complete the student’s enrollment.

1. Meeting will be held with a certificated teacher to discuss the WSLP.
2. The parent will work with a certificated teacher to create a WSLP for each student.

Progress Assistance and Withdrawing from VAL

If a student fails to make satisfactory progress, a plan will be developed to clarify expectations and support student learning. Subsequently the administrator,

teacher and parent will determine together if progress is being made according to the revised WSLP. Additional staff time may be assigned to help students who are not making satisfactory progress on their WSLP.

If at anytime during the school year it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from VAL, please notify his or her teacher and the VAL Office, return your library items and all items that have been purchased by VAL. Records will be forwarded after the student's file is complete.

Class Information

A variety of classes are offered on-site Monday through Thursday. Class registration is limited by age and by class size, however if it's appropriate for your child you may sign him/her up for a class outside their grade level in collaboration with the Program Administrator. .

Student Learning Plans

A Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP) outlines yearly goals for the student.

Teachers

A certificated teacher meets with enrolled families to provide the following services:

- Discuss curriculum and goals and formulate WSLP
- Help in developing learning activities/teaching strategies
- Assist parent in assessing student progress
- Offer encouragement and insight from their own teaching experiences.

School Data

School Data is the internet-based program that VAL uses for class registration, WSLP's, and monthly reviews. Families are given a user name and password when the registration process is complete.

Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance is important and expected. Please keep absences and tardiness to a minimum. Unless it is a normal arrival or departure time for your child, check in and out at the office.

Attendance calls should be made the morning of the absence. It is imperative that if your child is ill and cannot attend his or her on-site classes that you call

and inform us. (*WSD School Board Policy #3122*)

Parents are responsible to teach their children safe habits regarding leaving school. Students who are not driving or catching the Link bus should stay on the raised sidewalk outside the front door while waiting for their parent's arrival. Younger kids may be better off waiting inside the building.

Monthly Progress Reports

Certificated teachers will review and approve student progress and submit a report each month. These reports are the basis for our required monthly reporting to the state to determine our funding.

General School Information

VAL's Location

VAL is located at 1911 N. Wenatchee Ave. behind Wendy's and Claudio's Mexican Restaurant. It is between Holiday Inn Express and LaQuinta Inn. This is a facility the school district purchased for our use. It that has been our home since 2005.

VAL Visitor Policy

The presence of parents on-campus is key in maintaining a family-friendly environment. We encourage all of our parents to attend classes as often as possible. At the beginning of the year all parents fill out a clearance form from our school district that is checked against a database to make sure those on-site are safe. This is intended to be proactive in the area of student safety. This practice ensures that those who are near your children are safe to be here.

Weather Related Closures

VAL will follow the Wenatchee School District schedule for bad weather days. Closure information is available from local radio stations and on the school district homepage. If there is a late start in the district we will begin at 9:30 with whatever is on the schedule.

VAL Office Hours

The office is open Mondays through Thursdays from 8:00 - 4:00 and Fridays from 8:30 - 2:30. We are closed from late-June to mid-August for summer break. The copy machine and library are available for parent use during office hours. The VAL copy machine is available to parents for documents related to their child's WSLP. Please honor our office hours.

Instructors at Valley Academy

There are eleven certificated staff members at Valley Academy. They have expertise in a topic of study to share with our students.

Library and Testing

VAL Library

VAL has a library of various teaching materials, workbooks, reading books, reference materials, CD's, videos, games, manipulatives, etc. available for check-out. Please come to the Library to receive more information on our checkout procedures and to view the material available.

Curriculum

Valley Academy typically purchases curriculum for subjects on the learning plan to be used according to our guidelines. A brief summary of our guidelines is as follows:

- A review process is in place to determine if curriculum requested by parents may be purchased by the school district. Curriculum choices are to be coordinated with and approved by WSLP teachers.
- Curriculum purchased needs to be identified in the Student Learning Plan. • No public money is appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious establishment in accordance with the Washington State Constitution.
- Parents and WSLP teachers may submit a request found on WINGS for purchase. We may use curriculum that meets the same standards as all curriculum purchased by the Wenatchee School District.
- All material purchased with district dollars must be returned after it is used. It goes back to the resource room for the next family to use.

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- Emily Wallace works in the library to take care of all curriculum ordering. When you and your WSLP teacher locate what will work for your child complete the curriculum request form. You will need title, author, ISBN#, and WSLP information for the title listed.

VAL Testing Information

It takes more than a yardstick to measure a child's growth. We measure in many different ways at home—a bathroom scale, school pictures, or outgrown clothes and shoes. At school, we also use different measures to chart your child's progress in learning. No single test can give a full accounting of a student's knowledge and skills. Each test that we use provides one part of the picture of

your child's learning needs.

VAL participates in all testing required by Washington State and Wenatchee School District policy. Please see short descriptions of each test given by the Wenatchee School District along with the grades tested, timeline for testing, and the purpose of each test in the next section of this handbook.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child and the testing at VAL, please contact the Program Administrator. We are more than happy to help in any way possible.

The Wenatchee School District Assessment Calendar can be found on the district homepage at <http://home.wsd.wednet.edu/>. Follow the links to Calendars/Schedules and District Calendars.

District Assessment Descriptions

Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC)

(Grades 3 – 8; March - May)

This is a measurement of the state academic standards in Reading and Mathematics for grades 3- 8. Students also are tested in Science for grades 5 and 8. The tests include multiple choice items and short answer/extended response items.

Purpose: To measure individual student achievement in Washington State against a standard of achievement. Students are not compared against each other, but against a standard.

iReading & iMath)

(Grades 3 - 8; Reading and Math in Fall and Spring)

This computerized achievement test measures student growth in Reading and

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Math. Mid-year testing may be appropriate for some students.

Purpose: To measure student growth.

On-Site Helpful Information

Attendance

Faithful attendance is a priority for all students enrolled in VAL. We ask parents

to make a commitment to have each child at all scheduled classes unless there is an illness. Parents are asked to call Katie at the VAL Office at 662-6417 the day of the absence. Three unexcused absences in a row may warrant withdrawal from VAL. *(WSD School Board Policy #3122)*

Drop Off and Pick Up

Even though it's the cultural norm in Wenatchee to be several minutes late to most everything, PLEASE make every effort to have students in the building 10 minutes before the start of their first class. We also ask parents to notify the office if someone other than a parent will be picking up their child. Please pick up students promptly after classes. Students who use the Link Bus System are asked to check with a VAL staff member before leaving campus.

Family Mail Boxes

Each family has a box in the office for school communication. Check it regularly.

Class List

Locate the schedule at <https://wenatcheeval.schooldata.net/v2/ale-sis-public/#/> You will not need to log in to see the class list. You may narrow your search by grade level, day, teacher etc. Be careful of narrowing it too much or you may not find some of the classes.

Closed Campus

Valley Academy has a closed campus, which means that students are not free to leave the building unless their parent is taking them out personally. Walking across the parking lot is grounds for a 3-day suspension from school. Leaving the building by a back door is only acceptable during a fire drill. This is a safety and liability issue. *(WSD School Board Policy #3242)*

Electronic Devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be brought to school at the owner's risk and expense; the school assumes no liability for lost or stolen items. Such devices may be used in the office to call a parent or in class with teacher permission to photograph school related information. Devices visible or used during class including study hall will be confiscated and turned in to the office where they will be held until a parent comes in to pick them up. *(WSD School Board Policy #3245)*

Be a Positive Influence

Students are expected to attend class, be on time, and participate positively in class. The student's parent and the administrator will deal with sidebar conversations or distracting behavior that is not easily corrected in the classroom. A student consistently attending class without supplies or adequate preparation for the lesson will be referred to the administrator who will address the situation. *(WSD School Board Policy #3240)*

Fire Drills & Lockdown Drills

Practice drills occur on a regular basis at Valley Academy. Full cooperation and orderly movement as directed by staff or other responsible adults is expected from all students.

Student Behavior

All conduct and interactions should promote our goals in this area to have all students be safe, kind to one another and productive participants in the program at Valley Academy. *(WSD School Board Policy #3240)* General guidelines for our expectations will be communicated clearly. Our plan is founded on the principles from PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports).

Lunch Room

1. Students must clean their area and put chairs back before doing anything else.
2. Please use inside voices.
3. Students may eat in the gym, and with permission other areas to be determined.
4. Lunches need to be ordered in advance.

Schedule Changes

All schedule changes must go through the office. This allows us to be in compliance with "weekly cert. contact" requirements.

Open Time Blocks

Request student schedule changes in the office. The Program Director will review on-site schedules and discuss with parents any open class periods/time blocks. If a student has open time between classes, the parent should be here to supervise. A mature student may have work sent from home or work on VAL class homework unsupervised. Schedules that have excessive open time during which the parents have not assigned work or provided supervision will not be allowed. Perhaps one open block a day with no more than two per week may be allowed. Students will be assigned to a study hall during open time blocks.

Students are not free to roam during class time.

Personal Belongings/Backpacks

Please discourage students from bringing toys, trading cards, etc. to VAL. They or electronic devices may be taken away if they become a problem and will be kept in the VAL office for parents to retrieve. Valley Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings. Backpacks need to be placed against the wall or on a hook outside the classroom unless the teacher asks students to bring them in the classroom. Students are not to get into or move someone else's backpack or other belongings under any circumstances. *(WSD School Board Policy #3240)*

Weapons

The Wenatchee School District has a zero-tolerance for weapons violations, violence, threats, acts that could result in bodily harm, or any other conduct that results in a disruption of the educational process. As a matter of practice, law enforcement may be called anytime a student possesses a weapon at school. *(WSD School Board Policy #3240)*

Handbook Agreement Valley Academy of Learning

I have read the VAL Handbook and agree to follow VAL guidelines and procedures. I have read the school rules and agree to abide by them and require my student to abide by them. I have read and understand VAL policy on testing and assessments. I have read and understand VAL policies regarding the acquisition of learning materials for educational expenditures. I understand the

following:

- All items purchased by VAL must be specifically stated in the Student Learning Plan of the student for which they are used and shall be used for the current school year.
- Parents must become familiar with and sign the “Acknowledgement of Responsibilities” form.

Parent Agreement

Revisions to the VAL Handbook may be made as necessary at the discretion of the Program Director. I will receive written notification of any such revisions. I have read the VAL Handbook and agree to the VAL policies.

Date: _____

Parent Signature Parent Name (Please print.)

Student Agreement

I agree to follow VAL rules and the instructions of my teacher (s). I will treat other VAL students, office staff, teachers, and guests with courtesy and respect.

_____ Student Signature
Student Signature Student Signature

Student Signature Student Signature



NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT FOR SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Wenatchee School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of

sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Title IX Coordinator, Section 504/ADA Coordinator

Kory Kalahar, Executive Director of Student Services

kalahar.k@wenatcheeschools.org

235 Sunset Ave, Wenatchee WA, 98801 509.663.8161

Civil Rights Compliance Coordinators

Kory Kalahar, Executive Director of Student Services (students)

kalahar.k@wenatcheeschools.org

Kelly Lopez, Executive Director of Human Resources (staff)

lopez.k@wenatcheeschools.org

235 Sunset Ave, Wenatchee WA, 98801 509.663.8161

**DECLARACIÓN DE NO DISCRIMINACIÓN PARA PUBLICACIONES
ESCOLARES Y ANUNCIOS PÚBLICOS**

El Distrito Escolar de Wenatchee no discrimina en ningún programa o actividades basado en sexo, raza, credo, color, religión, origen nacional, edad, estatus militar o veterano, orientación sexual, expresión o identidad de género, discapacidad, o el uso de un perro guía o animal de servicio y proporciona igualdad de acceso a los Boy Scouts y otros grupos de jóvenes designados. Los siguientes empleados han sido designados para manejar las preguntas y quejas de supuesta discriminación:

Coordinador de Título IX, Coordinador de Sección 504/ADA

Kory Kalahar, Director Ejecutivo de Servicios Estudiantil

kalahar.k@wenatcheeschools.org

235 Sunset Ave, Wenatchee WA, 98801 509.663.8161

Coordinadores de Cumplimiento de Derechos Civiles

Kory Kalahar, Director Ejecutivo de Servicios Estudiantil (estudiantes)

kalahar.k@wenatcheeschools.org

Kelly Lopez, Directora Ejecutiva de Recursos Humanos (empleados)

lopez.k@wenatcheeschools.org

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