



Verda Elementary School

Student Handbook 2024-2025

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MONTGOMERY, LA 71454
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Dear Parent or Guardian,

Thank you for sharing your child with us at VES! Our faculty and staff are excited about another great school year filled with wonderful educational opportunities.

This handbook was designed to inform you of the policies and regulations at Verda Elementary. We ask that you read it carefully. If there is anything in the handbook that you do not understand, do not hesitate to call the school office at 646-3146. In addition to our handbook, parents can stay informed through our school website (verdaelementary.com), our Verda Elementary Facebook page (public setting), and the Have You Heard Facebook page. In partnership with you, we want to provide your child with a rewarding, enriching, and safe educational experience.

Sincerely,

Michael DuBois
Principal

Vision Statement

Verda Elementary will enrich and empower young minds through high quality instruction, research based practices, and collaboration between school, home, and community.

Mission Statements

Enriching/Empowering Young Minds

We are committed to developing our students into confident, independent problem solvers.

Developing Highly Effective Educators

We are committed to growing educators in order to grow students.

Culture of Collaboration

We are committed to collaborating with all stakeholders in order to improve teaching and learning.

MOTTO

EVERYONE MATTERS

EVERYONE LEARNS

EVERY DAY

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

BEE RESPONSIBLE

BEE RESPECTFUL

BEE SAFE

Verda Elementary's Core Beliefs

We believe:

- VES should be a safe learning environment for all.
- All students have the right and ability to grow.
- There is value in collaboration between school and community.
- The VES faculty has a responsibility to not only educate students but also present the best version of themselves.

ABSENCES/TRUANCY

It is very important for students to attend school. We recognize illness, deaths, and other family emergencies will occur. Please remember we have a school nurse or the Montgomery Family School-Based Clinic on campus. Refer to the Grant Parish School Handbook regarding the number of absences a child may have in a year. **All excuses must be turned in within five (5) days of the student's return to school.** Parent notes for illness are excused for the purpose of making up work, but count toward the number of days a student is allowed to miss.

The teacher will assign all makeup work when the student returns to school. If you want to request assignments for your child to have while he/she is recuperating, contact the school office. You must request the work before 10:00 a.m. the day of the child's absence. If you request work; please make sure your student completes the work before returning to school. Upon return, students will have 3 days to make up missed work.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Bus Riders: Bus riders should be at their designated bus stop (your residence) every morning waiting for the bus to arrive. Parish policy requires that if the child is not at the stop, the bus driver cannot wait. Once children arrive at school, they will go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast.

Car Riders: Beginning at 7:20am., students may be dropped off under the awning on the upper playground. Cars are to be in single file. Students are to report directly to the cafeteria unless directed otherwise by the duty teachers. Car riders must arrive between 7:20 – 7:35 in order to be served breakfast. Duty teachers will close the upper playground gates at 7:40. The morning bell rings at 7:40 and your child should be at his/her desk, prepared to work at that time. Any child arriving after 7:40 will be issued a tardy and must be signed in at the office by the transporting parent.

Afternoon Car Riders: If you will be picking up your child from school everyday, you will be required to get in the car rider line that extends from the upper playground down Schoolhouse road. Your child will be waiting in the car rider line corridor. Car riders must be picked up no later than 4:10. The GPSB policy will be followed for students who are not picked up on time. Car riders will be allowed to go to the upper parking lot @ 3:45 (1st bell). Duty teachers will escort students to their parent's car at this time. **Please do not go to the classroom without checking in with the office.**

BELL SCHEDULE

7:20	Buses Unload/Parent Drop off
7:20– 7:35	Breakfast/Bathroom/Attendance
7:40	Morning Bell, tardies are issued
3:45	Load Car Riders & Early bus

3:50
4:00

Load Buses 233-282-251-258-261
Load Late Bus

BUS NOTES

Students riding the bus to a location other than their daily designated drop off must have a written note to do so. Phone calls are not an acceptable method of changing locations/buses. This is a safety concern and must be adhered to. In the case of an emergency, you may email a note to pam.smith@gpsb.org. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to follow-up with a phone call to make sure the school receives the email. Do not assume that the email was received. All transportation changes must be made by 2:00 p.m. in writing.

CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

We are aware that the need arises to occasionally check your child out early. Parents are urged to schedule dental and doctor appointments for after school hours or on non instructional days. Teachers are required to teach until the dismissal bell; therefore, students are missing valuable instruction.

If you must check your child out, you will be required to sign them out at the office. Parents are not permitted to go to the classroom when checking out their child. We want to keep our students safe; therefore, you may be asked to show identification when checking out your child. No child will be released to any person that is not listed on the student contact information sheet.

It is the parent's responsibility to see that appropriate persons are listed. If there is a custody judgment or restraining order in place in regards to who can have access to/check out your student, it is your responsibility to provide a copy of the appropriate legal documentation signed by a judge to the school.

If you are going to pick up your child everyday, you must be in the car rider line. Parents will not be allowed to check out their child from the office on a daily basis.

Excessive student checkouts can become a truancy issue. Please refrain from checking out early if at all possible. Students checking out early must be signed out in the office. ***We ask that you refrain from checking students out between 3:30 pm and 3:45 pm in the office,*** because increased traffic in the office during this time creates congestion around the bus loading dock.

CONFERENCES

Parent Teacher Conference Dates:

September 23rd

February 10th

If a parent is unhappy or concerned about any occurrence at school, he/she should contact the child's teacher first. Parents should always check with the child's teacher before going to administration. Most of the time, issues can be resolved by speaking with the teacher. Conferences with teachers may be scheduled during the teacher's planning time. Conferences cannot be held during instructional time. You may contact the teacher or call the school office to schedule an appointment.

During the school day, the principal or assistant principal may not be in the office to receive a phone call. If this is the case, please leave a message and the administrator will return the call as soon as possible. If you wish to have a conference with the principal or assistant principal, call the school office to schedule an appointment. While the administrators will make every effort to talk with you if you come to the school without an appointment, our first obligation is to take care of our students. Many times the administrators are observing in classrooms, on duty in the halls, or meeting with children, other parents, or teachers. An

administrator may not be available to meet with you without an appointment.

DISCIPLINE

Parents are held responsible for their child's behavior and are expected to cooperate with the school if a problem arises. When formal disciplinary action is taken, the child's teacher or administration will contact parents. The Grant Parish Discipline Policy will be followed in all situations that occur at Verda Elementary. For information regarding bullying, refer to the Grant Parish Handbook.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to follow the dress code as found in the Grant Parish School Board Handbook. Students who do not follow the dress code will be disciplined according to the policies found in the Grant Parish School Board Handbook.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Schools have developed crisis plans for emergency situations. Drills are conducted regularly to ensure that all children and school personnel know and are able to follow the appropriate safety procedures.

When school is closed or dismissed early due to inclement weather or emergency situations, an official announcement will be issued through the news media. Listen to the local media outlets for information. When possible, the WebPams message system will be used to notify parents. Please have a plan of action for your child to follow should he/she arrive home before normal, as contacting each parent is impossible. **In this event, each student will follow his/her regular after school transportation routine.**

EVACUATION OF SCHOOL - In the event Verda Elementary School must be evacuated to an alternate site, students will be brought to Verda Baptist Church. Only persons on the student's pickup list will be allowed to check out a student from this location.

Verda Baptist Church Ph # 646-3292

Secondary Evacuation Site will be the Verda Ballpark.

SEVERE WEATHER - In the case of severe weather, students will be housed in the building hallways for their safety. Students will remain in the building until the severe weather warning has been cleared.

LOCKDOWN - In the event that Verda Elementary School must be placed in lockdown due to a threat, all students will remain in their room with the doors locked. Students will remain in the classroom for the duration of the lockdown and will not be released until the proper authorities have cleared the lockdown.

FAMILY EVENTS

It is the goal of Verda Elementary to involve our parents as much as possible. Our desire is for parents, students, and teachers to work together as a team to ensure your child has a very successful educational

career. Each school year, Verda Elementary hosts an Open House, a Family Literacy/Math Night, Field Day, and various other events. Families are invited to join us for these events. Notes will be sent home giving the exact dates and times.

FEES

School Fee - \$25/student, Due by Oct. 1st each year

Student school fees (grades K-5) are payable to Verda Elementary and should be turned into the homeroom teacher. We accept cash, checks or money orders. A receipt will be provided once the fee is paid. \$10 of this fee provides for classroom materials and supplies for the students. \$10 of this fee is used for maintenance of technology and \$5 of each fee is assessed through the office for copier expenses, paper, etc.

Chromebook Insurance Fee-\$23 or \$28/student

Insurance is \$23 for non-touch and \$28 for touch. Chromebook repairs will be through a company called Chromecare and the insurance will cover all repairs for the entire year, but it still does not cover lost or stolen devices or chargers. Those who do not purchase the insurance will be charged a flat fee of \$50 for each incident that includes avoidable damages. We accept cash, check or money orders paid to the school for this fee. This fee is due when the Chromebook is issued to the student at the start of the year.

Beta Fees (optional based on eligibility for grades 4-5)- \$20/student, Due by Oct. 31st

The Beta fee is payable to Verda Elementary and should be turned into the Beta sponsor. We accept cash, checks or money orders. A receipt will be provided once the fee is paid. Beta fees pay for dues to the National Beta Club and for graduation materials (ex. Beta pin).

4-H Fees (optional based on eligibility for grades 4-5)- \$20/student, Due by Sept. 27th

4-H fees are payable to Verda Elementary and should be turned into the 4-H sponsor. A receipt will be provided once the fee is paid. This fee covers the cost of the National 4-H Club dues, a 4-H T-shirt, and transportation to Achievement Day.

*Unpaid fees may result in the student not being able to participate in a particular club. Parents will be sent a letter stating that a fee is late. Students will not be allowed to bring home classroom subscriptions until the supply fee is collected.

Parents/Guardians may request an economic hardship waiver for supply fees. A form may be picked up from the school or printed off of the website: www.gpsb.org. After receiving the request, the principal will determine the approval of the hardship. If denied, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Superintendent of Grant Parish Schools by written letter.

All requests for economic hardship waivers of student fees and any and all supporting documentation used in considering the validity of and request for waiver shall be **confidential**.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

We encourage your child to participate in field trips. In the event that your child does not attend a field trip, he/she will be placed in another classroom to complete alternate assignments. Keeping your child home will result in an unexcused absence.

Only a parent or a legal guardian may check out a student from the off-campus field trip site. This is parish policy.

GRADES

The Grant Parish Pupil Progression Policy will be followed for grading. Teachers send graded papers home every Wednesday. Please go over these papers with your child. The graded papers must be signed and returned to school before we can send the next set of graded papers. The teacher will send home a note with an explanation if papers are not being sent for a particular week.

Parents may access grades online via the Parent Command Center. There is a link on the “parent tab” on the Grant Parish School Board website. The website is www.gpsb.org. More information concerning the Parent Command Center will be sent home within the first few weeks of school. The Parent Command Center is an excellent resource for parents to monitor your child’s progress.

ILLNESS

If a child becomes seriously ill or is seriously injured at school, the school will seek emergency treatment. It is imperative that each parent provide emergency numbers (student contact information sheet) where he/she can be reached in case such an event should occur. If your phone number changes during the year, send a note to the office with the new number. Parents will be contacted to pick up children who become ill during the school day. Students running a temperature of more than 100.4 degrees should remain home and be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school.

LITERACY SCREENER

The Grant Parish School System recognizes that reading is a vitally important academic skill and the foundation for all academic learning. The Grant Parish School System administers the K-3 Literacy Screener to each kindergarten through third grade student three times a year. The K-3 Literacy Screener consists of a set of measures for assessing reading skills. This universal screening identifies which students may be at risk for experiencing reading difficulties. Teachers use this data to set and monitor literacy goals, as well as provide instructional support. Progress is monitored and reported to parents. **Act 422 of the 2023 Legislative Session prohibits the promotion to fourth grade if the student scores at the lowest level of the literacy screener with the exception of students who meet the criteria for a good- cause exemption.**

LOST & FOUND

Found items are placed in the school office in a designated box. Found items that are identified with the child’s name will be returned. Parents are encouraged to label student jackets/coats with the student’s name. Students are encouraged to check the Lost and Found for missing items. Items not claimed will be given to a charitable organization at the end of each semester (December and May).

LUNCH

This year, all schools in Grant Parish will be eligible for the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), a USDA program. The program allows schools to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students. All kids eat free. Paper applications will no longer be used to determine eligibility for meal services in participating schools. Other measures will be used to determine eligibility at the school level. If you wish your child to have extras, you must send money for their account. This includes the additional items (ex. ice cream).

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

To be considered for perfect attendance recognition, a student must attend 100% of all school days from bell to bell each and every day. Exceptions are not made for medical, extenuating circumstances, etc. A student who is tardy is not to be considered as in attendance for 100% of the school day.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are discouraged from bringing toys, electronic games, and other types of personal belongings to school. Verda Elementary School will not be responsible for loss, theft, or damage to any property brought to school by a student.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It is required that children wear tennis shoes with a rubber sole for P.E. This safety measure allows your child to perform at their maximum physical ability. Children may change into athletic shoes at P. E. if they wish. Any child that does not have proper shoes will sit out at P.E. and receive a NP (not participating) for the day. When a child receives the 4th NP, their grade will drop to an N for the 9 weeks. After the 6th NP, the student will receive a U for the nine weeks grading period. A "U" on a report card makes a student ineligible for honor roll.

PLANNERS/NEWSLETTERS/FOLDERS

Student planners/newsletters/folders are provided for students in grades 1- 5. Students are expected to get a parent signature on a daily basis. This keeps parents informed of homework, special events, etc. Teachers will provide test information, upcoming events, vocabulary and other information. Many use the form of a weekly newsletter. If you are not receiving this information, please contact the teacher.

READING INTERVENTION

The Grant Parish School System administers a literacy screener to each student in grades K-3 each year in the Fall. In the Winter and Spring, the school will monitor student progress and report that data to parents. In the event students are not making adequate progress, the school will develop a literacy plan for interventions.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 7:40 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. each day. **SCHOOL GATES/DOORS WILL NOT OPEN UNTIL 7:20 EACH DAY.** Students should not be dropped off earlier than 7:20 a.m. These procedures are designed for the safety of the children. The window for students to eat breakfast in the VES Cafeteria will be from 7:20-7:35. Students that are dropped off after 7:35 will be directed to their classroom. It is important that

we start class at 7:40 each morning.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

At Verda Elementary, we take pride in recognizing the achievements and activities of our students and teachers. We share these achievements and activities with the community in a variety of platforms including newspaper articles, the VES Yearbook, VES website, GPSB website, and our Verda Elementary Facebook Page (public setting). If you do not wish for your child to be included in one or more of the above mentioned platforms, please request a **Do Not Photograph Form** from your child's homeroom teacher.

TARDINESS

Students are required to be at their desk ready to work at 7:40. Tardy students (arriving at 7:40 or after) must be signed in at the office by the transporting adult. Be sure to read the Grant Parish School Board's policy on tardiness. This policy will be followed. **Tardies and early check-out affect perfect attendance.**

VISITORS

All visitors must check-in at the office. All visitors must wear a Visitor's badge. This is a safety concern. Please do not go to the classrooms without proper notification.

General Information/Contact Information

- Party invitations may be sent to school only if **each child** in the class receives an invitation.
- Rolling backpacks are not allowed due to storage and safety issues.
- All visitors, students, and employees are subject to metal detector screening.
- School Nurse: Kim Sanders, kim.sanders@gpsb.org, 318-646-3146.
- SBLC Coordinator: Shannon Johnson, shannon.johnson@gpsb.org, 318-646-3146.

NOTICE OF THE TITLE IX COORDINATOR

The District's Title IX Coordinator is Mrs. Shana Delrie. Any individual may make a report of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment directly to the Title IX Coordinator using any one, or multiple, of the following points of contact :

Shana Delrie
512 Main Street
P.O. Box 208
Colfax, LA 71417
Phone: (318) 627-3274
Email: sdelrie@gpsb.org

KIDS MATTER 2 WEBSITE

KidsMatter2.org is a **SAFE** and **CONFIDENTIAL** website for students of all ages in **GRANT PARISH** to utilize. Parents are encouraged to access the website for information and resources. Any issue of concern can be reported. However, **PLEASE** report any potentially dangerous situations that may harm someone **IMMEDIATELY**.

VERDA ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND RULES

At Verda Elementary, we are fortunate to have made some terrific additions to our playground equipment. For the safety of students, they must follow the playground rules. Read over the rules with your child. In addition, the teacher will review the rules with all students.

Slide

- One student is to slide at a time.
- Sit on your bottom with your feet in front of you.
- Only one student may slide at a time.
- Do not climb back up the slide.
- No standing in front of the slide.
- No pushing while waiting in line.

Swings

- Students must be sitting on his/her bottom while swinging.
- Do not jump off of the swing.
- People are not allowed to push one another on the swings.
- Keep the chains separated. Do not wrap them. If the chains are wrapped, report it to a teacher.
- Take turns.

Dome

- Do not hang from the dome.
- No one may stand at the top of the dome.
- Never jump from the dome, climb down until you are touching the ground.

General Rules

- You should never be on a piece of equipment unless a duty teacher is at his/her post.
- Do not pick up the gravel/rocks.
- No running in the areas with gravel/rocks.



VERDA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
A TITLE I SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK

Parent/Guardian:

My signature below indicates that I have received and reviewed all policies, rules, and general information contained in the Verda Elementary School Handbook, and I commit to do at least all of the following:

1. Encourage my child to follow all school rules and reasonable requests.
2. Ensure my child attends school regularly.
3. Ensure my child is properly dressed.
4. Attend all conferences required by parent/teacher/principal.

Parent/Guardian(s) Signature

Date

Student(s) Signature

Date