THE VANGUARD SCHOOL

2023-2024

Family Handbook

Important Numbers

Director of Education
Lisa Wood……. .....liwood@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.296.6700 x101

Director of Clinical Services
Darren G. Levin, Ph.D..... dalevin@vfes.net…….....610.296.6725 x102

Assistant Director of Education
Thomas Smith .....thsmith@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.296.6700 x168

Assistant Director of Clinical Services
Annette Brandolini.....anbrandolini@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.296.6700 x296

Elementary School Program Supervisor
Edward Brakoniecki .....edbrakoniecki@vanguardschool-pa.org.....610.296.6700 x112

Elementary School Program Coordinator
Abigail Roberts……abroberts@vanguardschoolpa.org.....610.296.6700 x140

Upper School Program Supervisor
Kimberly King ..... kiking@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.296.6700 x212
Thomas Rzepnicki .....thrzepnicki@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.296.6700 x200

Upper School Program Coordinators
Maria Pasquarello.....mapasquarello@vanguardschoolpa.org.....610.296.6700 x233
Andrea Lyon…….anlyon@vanguardschoolpa.org…….610.296.6700 x266

Vocational and Transition Coordinator
Donna Mazzella .....domazzella@vanguardschool-pa.org……610.896.6700 x145

Administrative Assistants
Brenda Nash, VFES Central….....brnash@vfes.net.....610.296.6725 x104
Monica Miller, Upper School and VTC....momiller@vanguardschool-pa.org.....610. 296.6700 x203
Carolyn Coyle, Elementary School .....cacoyle@vanguardschool-pa.org.....610. 296.6700 x142

Address
1777 North Valley Road**,** Malvern, PA 19355

School Hours
8:30 am – 3:00 pm
Website: www.vfes.net/vanguard

Staff Hours
7:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Vanguard School)
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (VFES)

VFES is an equal opportunity employer and educator and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, or disability in administration of its organizational policies, activities, admissions, programs, financial aid or employment practices. Admission into VFES programs is based upon our ability to meet student needs.

Contents

Valley Forge Educational Services 1-2
2022-23 School Calendar 3

The Vanguard School Program

Elementary School 4
Middle School 4
High School 4
Vanguard Transition Center 3-4

Academic Enhancement Programs

Art 5
Educational Technology 5
Library 5
Music 6
PACE 6
Physical Education 6-7
Reading Services 7

Career Exploration and Development

Community-Based Vocational Training 7
On Campus Work Program 7-8
Work Orientation Readiness Center (WORC) 8

Academic Expectations

Attendance 8-9
Classroom Placement 9
Graduation and Diplomas 9
Homework 9
IEP Meetings 10
Official School Records 10
Progress Reports and Report Cards 10
State-Mandated Testing 10
Reevaluation Process 11

Clinical Services

Behavior Analyst and Behavior Support 11
Occupational Therapy 11
Physical Therapy 12
School Counseling 12
School Psychology 12
Speech-Language Therapy 12-13

Nursing and Health-Related Items

Medical Emergency Information Form 13
Health Requirements and Immunizations 13-14
Illness 14-15
Communicable Diseases 15
Medications and Prescriptions 16
Non-Prescription Medication 16
Screenings 17

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

School-Wide Behavior Support 17-18
Tiered System 18
Vanguard Values 18

Policies

Acceptable Use of Technology 19
Bullying and Cyberbullying 19-20
Bus Transportation 20
Children on Campus 21
Conflicts of Interest 21
Controlled Substances 21
Dress Code 21
Elopement 22
Fighting or Assault 22
Harassment 22
Leaving Campus 22
Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse 22-23
Memo of Understanding with Tredyffrin Police 23
Personal Electronic Devices 23
Pets on Campus 23
Property Damage 23
Public Displays of Affection 23
Smoking and Tobacco Policy 23
Social Media 23-24
Visitors and Observations 24
Volunteers 24-25
Weapons 25

Code of Conduct

Level I-IV Offenses 25-27
Detention & Suspension 27

General Information

Child Custody 28
Communication 28
Dances 28
Directory 28
Emergency Closings, Delays and Dismissals 28-29
Gym Attire 29
Lockers 29
Lost and Found 29
Lunch Programs 29
Lunch and Snack Suggestions 29
Photographs 29-30
Program Trips 30
School Supplies 30
Staff Transporting Students 30
Traffic Safety on Campus 30

Get Involved

Achieve Parent Portal 30-31
Back-to-School Night 31
Classroom Volunteers and Chaperones 31
Curriculum Committee Volunteers 31
New Parent Orientation 31
Parent-Teacher Conferences 31
The Vanguard Voice Newsletter and PTO 31-32
Student Drivers 32

Valley Forge Educational Services (VFES)

Valley Forge Educational Services offers a continuum of educational, summer and employment-related programs for individuals with disabilities. The hallmark of our programs is our collaborative and holistic approach to each child, adolescent and adult, recognizing their unique abilities and needs through team efforts. Individuals of all ages come to learn, share, appreciate and respect one another while developing skills necessary for success. We are committed to helping students and participants develop a strong sense of self-worth to realize their value as contributing members of their communities.

Mission: VFES prepares children and adults with special needs to realize their potential as contributing members of the community.

Vision: VFES, in partnership with the community, will develop and implement comprehensive clinical, educational and social programs for people with special needs so everyone is offered an equal opportunity for an independent and meaningful life.

Programs of VFES

The Vanguard School

The Vanguard School is a state-licensed and approved private day school. We serve children and young adults, 4–21 years of age, who represent more than 55 school districts in a nine-county area in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The Vanguard Transition Center offers opportunities for post-secondary education and the development of vocational, life and social skills. Students up to 21 years of age, receive continuing education, counseling, self- advocacy training as well as career exploration and community-based vocational experience.

Extended School Year (ESY) offers students who qualify, (5–21 years of age) special education and related services beyond the 180-day school year. Our full day program focuses on the retention of skills as well as social and leisure skills

Adult and Recreation Services

Our Adult programming includes Customized Workforce Solutions (CWS), Vocational Immersion Program (VIP), and Adult Social Activities. Our Specialized Recreation Services include year-round respite opportunities for both adults and youth, as well as an annual camp experience for ages 7-21.

Specialized Recreation Services offers a variety of respite opportunities in the form of year-round weekend adventures, travel excursions, and a 2-week day and overnight summer camp for individuals with social challenges. Participants can experience the great outdoors by camping in the Poconos or at a local camp in Schwenksville. They can also catch some rays at one of our trips to Fenwick Island. Each experience offers educational and recreational programming for young people, 7-21, years of age, with specials needs and learning challenges (age group varies per trip). For more information, camp@vfes.net.

Customized Workforce Solutions (CWS) provides person- centered employment-related services to adults with disabilities. CWS works with adults to define their goals, understand their skills and discover their vocational interests and work preferences. Services provide adults with disabilities the customized opportunities and individualized supports necessary to discover career interests and maintain competitive, integrated employment in their home community. Services are provided on both a short-term and long-term basis, depending on each individual's needs and preferences. *vfes.net/cws*

The Vocational Immersion Program (VIP) equips young adults with developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder and related social challenges, 18–24 years of age, with key social and employment-readiness skills through a four-week intensive summer program that includes classroom-based instruction, online learning, workplace internships with job coaches and a week-long supported living experience.

Adult Social Activities are available for participants aged 21+. VFES provides opportunities for adults with special needs to gather, connect, and grow friendships by offering such activities as dances, meet-ups at local establishments, and online meetings.

2023-2024 School Calendar

THE VANGUARD SCHOOL

2023-2024 CALENDAR

APPROVED 03/16/2023

- No School/Offices Closed
- Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- Staff In-Service/No Students Report

JULY 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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					

- 3-4 Closed for Independence Day
- 5 First Day of Extended School Year
- 5 First Day of Vocational Immersion Program
- 28 Last Day of Vocational Immersion Program

ESY PROGRAM
VIP PROGRAM

AUGUST 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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		

- 3 Last Day of Extended School Year
- 13-25 VFES @ Camp Kweebec
- 23-25 New Staff Orientation
- 28-31 Staff In-Service @ 7:45 AM – 3:30 PM

ESY PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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

Student Days: 18

- 1 Staff In-Service @ 7:45 AM – 12:00 PM
  Campus Closes @ 12:30 PM
- 4 Closed for Labor Day
- 5 First Day of School
- 22 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 25 Closed for Yom Kippur

OCTOBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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				

Student Days: 22 / 40

- 5 Back-to-School Night
- 6 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
  Benefit Open Enrollment for Staff @ 2:00 – 3:30 PM
- 18 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 31 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM

NOVEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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		

Student Days: 18 / 58

- 1 Staff In-Service / No Students Report
- 8 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 21 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
  Parent-Teacher Conferences @ 12:30 - 3:30 PM
- 22 Parent-Teacher Conferences @ 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM No Students Report
  Campus Closes @ 12:30 PM
- 23-24 Closed for Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	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						

Student Days: 16 / 74

- 6 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 21 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 22 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
  Campus Closes @ 12:30 PM
- 25 -29 Closed for Winter Break

JANUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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			

Student Days: 21 / 95

- 1 Closed for Winter Break
- 12 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 15 Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 31 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM

FEBRUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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		

Student Days: 20 / 115

- 16 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 19 Closed for Presidents' Day
- 28 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM

MARCH 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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						

Student Days: 16 / 131

- 13 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 22 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 25-29 Closed for Spring Break

APRIL 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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				

Student Days: 21 / 152

- 1 Closed for Spring Break
- *1 Instructional Make-up Day, if needed
- 24 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM

MAY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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	

Student Days: 22 / 174

- 8 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 24 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 27 Closed for Memorial Day

JUNE 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	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						

Student Days: 6 / 180

- 7 Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 10 Last Day of School / Early Dismissal for Students @ 12:00 PM
- 11-12 Staff In-Service
- *11-13 Instructional Make-up Days, if needed
- 19 Closed for Juneteenth National Freedom Day
- 24-29 Summer Staff In-Service

July 1 – August 1, 2024 – 2024 Extended School Year

*The Academic Calendar designates 4 instructional make-up days for Emergency Closings, if needed. The days will be utilized as follows: 6/11, 6/12, 6/13, and 4/1.
The Vanguard School reserves the right to reschedule instructional days as needed to meet the PDE requirement of 180 instructional days. (22 Pa. Code § 51.61.)

The Vanguard School Program

The Vanguard School provides programs for and is licensed to accept students who are impacted by autism, speech-language disorders, emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, or intellectual disability. Children who experience developmental disabilities, learning differences or social-emotional or behavioral difficulties are also eligible for our program.

Our programs embrace the concept that each child learns and grows differently. These programs are licensed through the Pennsylvania Department of Education under The Vanguard School license

Elementary School

The elementary school program offers students K-5 the opportunity to thrive in small classes of five to nine students. Each classroom has a certified special education teacher and a classroom aide. The elementary school's academic component differentiates subject areas in content and presentation to meet students' needs. The curriculum is created through research-based programs and aligned with PA core standards. Instruction is paced to accommodate students with language delays, and motor planning and processing difficulties. Instruction is driven by each student's individualized education plan (IEP). The school day consists of focus on language arts, math, science, physical education, health, music, art, social skills, as well as a variety of related services. Instruction is direct as well as delivered in small and large group formats. Within the classroom setting, each teacher is supported by a team of therapists who work with students individually, in small groups or on a consult basis. Other supports and services include school counseling, physical, occupational and speech-language therapies, behavior support, school psychology, reading support, and school nursing.

Middle School

Middle school years are a time when children reach for increased independence from their parents and become more involved with their peers and school for validation. This can be especially difficult for students who may lack the social skills or coping mechanisms to deal with these changes. Increasing the students' awareness of their environment, working towards increasing independence and improving self- advocacy skills are a major focus of the middle school program.

Students are supported through many initiatives across the curriculum and enhancement programs. The middle school implements a modified team-teaching approach, when applicable, with students changing classes about every 45 minutes, when he/she has demonstrated the skills required to successfully transition multiple times throughout the day. Offerings include math, reading, science, social studies, language arts, physical education, daily living skills, computers, music, wood shop, keyboarding, library, health, art, social skills, transition planning, the Work Orientation Readiness Center (WORC) and the Program of Adventure-Based Counseling Experiences (PACE).

High School

In high school, there is a continuing emphasis on the development of academic skills, social skills and student independence. Through community-based instruction, daily living skills, self-determination and interpersonal skills, students work toward a successful transition to work, post-secondary education and community living. Offerings may include curricula geared toward college preparation, career exploration and daily living skills training. In addition, high school programming emphasizes functional skills by targeting specific skills and content within the academic areas. Offerings include math, reading, science, social studies, language arts, physical education, daily living skills, computers, music, wood shop, keyboarding, library, health, art, careers class, transition planning and social skills.

Vanguard Transition Center (VTC)

The Vanguard Transition Center (VTC) offers transition support for students post high school. Students are offered academics, social skills, self-advocacy training, counseling, daily living skills, careers, and on- campus work. Students who are attending college or planning to attend college and students attending Technical College High School can access support for these endeavors. Students may also have current events, physical education,

art, and try out for the talent show and musicals. Students in the VTC engage in Community Based Vocational Training (CBVT) supported by job coaches with Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) Certificates in Community Employment. The emphasis is the soft skills necessary for success in adult life.

Academic Enhancement Programs

Art

The art program nurtures creativity in each student, building skills and self-confidence through the artistic process. The program is taught to all age levels, taking into consideration individual strengths and differences.

Art instruction at the elementary school is geared toward familiarizing students with how to use art materials and have fun doing so. Projects are seasonal and align with classroom curriculum when possible. Students work with a wide variety of media, learning basic art elements such as color, shape and form. They are introduced to famous artists and the art of other cultures. Student work is often displayed throughout the year and showcased in a yearly art show.

Middle school art instruction focuses on developing skills in various art media and learning new techniques. Communication and expression through the creative process are encouraged. Students study artists, their methods and various cultures in-depth. Student projects reflect the styles they learn.

In the high school, the instruction is on an elective basis. Students choose from one of six classes: studio art, sculpture design, floral design, crafts, figure drawing, and drawing and painting. In figure drawing, drawing and painting and studio art, students are expected to complete a sketchbook as a homework assignment. In Figure drawing class, students will learn how to draw human and animal figures from life and pictures. Basic anatomy and body proportions will be studied. The pre- requisite for this class is drawing and painting. In drawing and painting, students are instructed in a different technique and style each quarter and complete a class assignment. In studio art, students complete two projects of their choice: a drawing, painting, sculpture or print project. In sculpture, students create sculptures using various materials. In floral design, students create seasonal wreaths and baskets as well as pressed flower entries for the Philadelphia Flower Show. In crafts, students complete two projects a quarter or a single long- term project. Students choose their own projects and may bring in items from home.

Art instruction at the Vanguard Transition Center is focused on art as a means of enjoyment and expression in adult life. Students may choose from several different projects or create one of their own.

Educational Technology

Students are taught to increase their computer literacy and prepare for a technology-driven world. Computers are available in each classroom, two computer labs and the media center. Lessons align with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. These standards promote technology-based activities in which students can achieve success in communication, daily living skills and learning.

Educational programs engage students through a combination of animation, audio components and interactive activities. Additional lessons teach and reinforce keyboarding, Internet safety and etiquette, computer and social skills, academic concepts and problem-solving abilities. The School also has an interactive SmartBoard in every classroom and students have access to iPads and laptops. This technology allows for computer-based instruction while enabling students to remain engaged in learning.

Library

The Vanguard elementary school has a library which features reading and reference materials as well as computer access to the Follett Destiny Library Catalog, online subscription databases and the Internet. Students come for regularly scheduled library science classes and to exchange books. The Edward L. Reed II Learning Center serves middle school, high school and Vanguard Transition Center students. Middle school students come for regularly scheduled library science classes every six days. High school and VTC students often come for research or special projects and are welcome to check out books and periodicals. The library houses a robust collection of reading, curriculum, reference and professional materials, periodicals and other resources.

Music

The goal of The Vanguard School's music program is to provide a multi-sensory and holistic music environment. Each student can explore their musical creativity, enhance self-esteem and self-awareness, expand knowledge of music concepts and develop performance skills. Students gain a better understanding of various styles of music and integrate academic core curriculum subjects into music activities when appropriate. Students engage in individual and group activities as well as public performances to incorporate learned skills into a positive social environment. Students can participate in the instrumental music elective. Additionally, students in the middle school, high school and VTC can participate in a school musical theater experience. They can choose to be involved in all parts of the production including performance, set creation, prop design and stage crew. This past year, our music department produced the musical, Elf the Musical, Jr.

Program of Adventure-Based Counseling Experiences (PACE)

As an avenue for building personal, social and developmental satisfaction, PACE enhances a student's resilience and ability to cope with peer pressure, manage conflict and gain confidence.

PACE, utilizing an outdoor ropes course, games, group problem-solving and trust activities is founded on a set of behavioral expectations and values that our students are taught at the beginning of each school year. The students leverage communication skills, cooperation and trust to meet the concepts of challenge and adventure.

Using a group model with structured activities, PACE promotes a healthy lifestyle, community involvement and service, self-awareness, positive decision making and engagement in the lifelong learning process, ultimately aiming to prevent high-risk behaviors.

To motivate and stimulate oneself in a team-building effort, each student recognizes an awareness for safety, means of coping with stressful situations, the ability to work effectively in a group, respect for and an enjoyment of being with others, respect for their peers and responsibility for one's actions.

Physical Education

Physical education is a regular part of each student's educational program at The Vanguard School. Classes take place in the Musser Gymnasium which is complete with ample equipment for learning a multitude of physical activities. Our experienced, certified physical education staff plan developmentally appropriate lessons designed to meet the diverse needs of our student population.

Students at The Vanguard School have a broad range of cognitive, motor, sensory, social, emotional and learning differences that may necessitate adaptations in their physical education program. The curriculum, task or environment may be modified so all children can participate fully, regardless of ability.

The staff also works closely with our physical therapists to develop individualized programs when needed. When a child demonstrates specific motor challenges, the types of modifications or specially designed instruction needed is discussed with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and incorporated into the student's IEP.

In addition to the regular physical education curriculum at The Vanguard School, several special activities afford opportunities for our students to practice and enjoy their skills including:

- Intramural sports and games
- Sports and recreational field days
- Roller skating
- Basketball Blast
- Elementary School Gym Show
- Chester County Special Olympics Track Meet
- Iron Man
- Triathlon Games
- World Sport Stacking Association Stack Up!
- Project ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously)

The unique learning opportunities provided through the physical education curriculum emphasize the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to choose and enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle. A physically educated student will regularly participate in physical activities, maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness and demonstrate responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.

When the goals of the physical education curriculum are achieved, students are inclined to choose physical activities for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and social interaction purposes.

Reading Services

Reading specialists at The Vanguard School are responsible for providing corrective and remedial services on an individual basis, in a small group or classroom group-learning situation. Their primary services include assessing students, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, maintaining testing data and developing programs appropriate to student needs. Additionally, consultative services are provided to teachers, other specialists and parents to encourage a multi-disciplinary approach to each child's education.

Students are referred for reading services by teachers, other specialists or members of the IEP team. If a student's progress has been impaired by challenges specifically related to reading, (typically indicated by greater success on non-reading tasks such as listening comprehension), supplemental reading tutorial services may be offered. Along with a reading assessment, specific criteria are assessed to determine need of services as well as when a student will be discharged from reading support.

Career Exploration and Development

Community-Based Vocational Training (CBVT) The Community-Based Vocational Training (CBVT) program is designed to provide a positive introduction to the world of work for students at The Vanguard. CBVT provides personalized support for students during challenging work experiences, while learning to acquire and maintain employment and seek job advancement in their communities.

These work-based experiences are a part of an educational approach that uses the workplace to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities provided in an integrated environment, to the maximum extent possible.

We have partnerships with a variety of local businesses that provide educational on-the-job training. The type of work assigned, and projects completed provide a meaningful learning experience so students may hone a skillset they can carry into future competitive employment opportunities.

Business partner mentors work closely with a VTC job coach to develop a work plan based on the requirements of the job and the abilities of the student. The VTC job coach's role is to support the student and the mentor and ensure the necessary duties of the job are performed satisfactorily.

We work closely with our business partners to understand their needs and work environment. With a thorough understanding of a business, our job coaches start preparing students in classroom situations before they begin working at our community-based business sites.

Students gain valuable experience and critical on-the-job training as well as the opportunity to explore occupations. Students greatly benefit from being trained by a business mentor in a real-world setting that helps our students build the physical, social and employment skills needed to be successful in the world of work.

On Campus Work Program

The work program offers our middle school, high school and VTC students the opportunity to learn new job skills, reinforce already established work skills, practice social skills, and gain valuable work experience in familiar surroundings with support and guidance.

Students in the program learn and practice job skills under the guidance of staff mentors. Some of the jobs offered include assisting in elementary school classes, working in the maintenance department, helping in office spaces (e.g., typing, sorting, copying, performing data entry and filing), assisting in the library and delivering mail, announcements and newspapers on campus, and working in the cafeteria or Phin's Café.

Each day, you will find a variety of students working on campus. The enthusiasm and commitment that our student workers bring to the program each day is a reminder of the program's success. As the school year progresses, the student workers begin to demonstrate independence and the general work and social skills necessary to succeed at off-campus worksites.

As part of the program, we host an annual Career Day where various presenters join us on campus to speak to our students in small-group settings about their careers and how they came to be in their positions.

Work Orientation Readiness Center (WORC)

Students attending WORC participate in vocational skills training that utilizes a combination of direct classroom instruction and hands on learning activities to teach and reinforce important soft skills and perform meaningful jobs across campus including copying, binding, data entry and mailing projects. Our professionals work with students to teach the importance of being on time, communicating politely with co-workers and supervisors, maintaining proper hygiene and grooming and other skills critical in the workforce.

Academic Expectations

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important factor in educational success. The Vanguard School abides by all compulsory attendance state and federal laws and supports a comprehensive approach to supporting student attendance.
Reporting Absences: If your child will be absent from school please call the main office of the school building before 8:30 am. When a student's absence is known ahead of time, please inform the front office as early as possible.
If your child has been assigned a one-to-one aide through an outside agency, it is your responsibility to inform the aide of your child's absence prior to the start of their school day.

Excused Absences: Student absences shall be considered excused/lawful for the following reasons:

- Illness or factor related to the student's disability, including if a student is dismissed during school hours for health-related reasons by a certified school nurse, RN, LPN, school administrator, or designee
- Obtaining professional health care or therapy rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts
- Quarantine
- Family emergency
- Recovery from accident
- Required court attendance
- Death in the family
- Observance of a religious holiday observed by a religious group
- Non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips
- College or post-secondary institution visit

In order for an absence to be excused it must meet one of the above-mentioned criteria **AND** a parent/guardian must submit an absence note prior to or within 5 days of the absence. Written notice can include an email to teacher, administrator or supervisor. ****Reporting an absence is not the same as submitting an excusal note****

Truancy: Defined as 3 or more unexcused absences during the current school year by a child who is of compulsory school age (6 years old).
When a student is truant the student's parents or legal guardians and school district of residence will be notified.

Accumulating **six or more unexcused absences** in the current school year is considered **Habitually Truant.** When a student is habitually truant the school must hold a school attendance improvement conference to create an attendance improvement plan. The student's parents/guardian will be invited to the conference although attendance is not mandatory in order to hold the conference. Students and parents of students who accumulate more than six unexcused absences may be subject to prosecution under Pennsylvania's truancy laws.

Excessive Absences: The Vanguard School will hold a school attendance improvement conference when a student of compulsory age is absent more than 20 school days in the current school year (excused & unexcused)

Early Dismissal: Parents who need to have a student dismissed early or excused from school for a period of time during the day must send a note and call the appropriate office. The student must be picked up and signed out at the school office by an authorized adult whose name is on file. Proper identification is required.

Tardiness: If your child misses the bus or arrives late, they should report to the school office upon arrival. The student should not go directly to the classroom.

If your child did not take the morning bus, you must call your school district of residence transportation office if you want them to transport your child home.

Classroom Placement

Teachers, specialists, therapists, school counselors, psychologists and program supervisors discuss classroom placement for each student. A student's learning style, social and developmental maturity; academic strengths and other abilities and needs are considered, as are group dynamics and balance. Class groupings change every year and are finalized in late August. Changes may occur during the year, if necessary. While The Vanguard School values the opinions of parents/guardians regarding class placement however we cannot honor parental requests.

Graduation and Diplomas

Federal and state special education laws permit students to continue their right to a free, appropriate publicly funded education through the academic year in which they turn 21 years of age.

Graduation and transition planning are the responsibility of the IEP team and should begin no later than the school year in which the student turns 14 years of age. These plans should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised at least once per year at the IEP meeting.

Students who successfully complete their final IEP and are at least 17 years of age may receive a high school diploma from their school districts of residence at the time of their graduation. The graduation date for each student younger than 21 years of age is determined by the IEP team.

Homework

Homework can be an integral part of a student's learning experience and one that may require parental assistance and support. Homework serves many purposes including practicing learned skills, developing independent work skills, building healthy study habits and employing effective time-management skills.

Not all students may receive homework, but can be request by parent and discussed with teacher/IEP Team. If your child spends an excessive amount of time doing homework or is struggling with getting their work done for any reason, please contact their teacher or school counselor. Our staff will work with you to adjust expectations to alleviate any homework problems.

Do not complete homework for your child or spend an undue amount of time guiding them through homework. Teachers need to know if there are difficulties with completing homework so they may intervene accordingly.

Support and encourage homework completion from the elementary school program through graduation. Healthy study habits foster feelings of competence and a positive attitude toward school as well as lay the groundwork for adopting successful work habits as an adult.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings

The purpose of the annual IEP meeting is to determine whether the goals for your child are being achieved and to revise the IEP when appropriate. Parents and legal guardians are critical members of the IEP team and are expected to attend their child's meetings. Parents and legal guardians are welcome to bring a friend, advocate or agency representative to the meeting. Please call our IEP Specialist at 610.296.6700 x134, if you plan to invite other individuals to these meetings so we may plan accordingly.

An IEP meeting can be requested during the year if a teacher, parent, legal guardian or other individual involved feels a student's IEP is not meeting their needs. This happens if the goals set out for the student are no longer deemed appropriate. If you are concerned about your child's IEP, it is best to discuss your thoughts with his or her teacher or school counselor to determine the best course of action.

The IEP team includes the parents or legal guardians of the student; at least one special education teacher of the student or, if appropriate, one special education provider of the student; a representative of the public agency who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially-designed instruction and knowledgeable about the general curriculum and availability of resources of the public agency; and, at the discretion of the parents or legal guardians or agency, other individuals who have knowledge of or special expertise regarding the student.

The IEP must include a statement of the student's present levels of educational performance; measurable annual goals including benchmarks or short-term objectives; the special education, related services and supplementary aids to be provided to the student; an explanation of the extent to which the student cannot participate with children in more traditional education classrooms; any individual modifications in the administration of state- or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed for the student to participate in the assessment; the projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications along with the frequency, location and duration of the services and modifications; and a statement of how progress toward the annual goals will be measured and how the parents will be regularly informed of this progress. For students who have reached 14 years of age, the IEP also must address transition needs. The IEP team will also determine a student's eligibility for Extended School Year services.

An IEP meeting will be scheduled if a student requires the use of a physical management intervention due to concerns of safety. In such cases, the team collectively addresses the behavioral needs of the student and a positive behavior support plan is added to the IEP or reviewed if there already is a plan.

Official School Records

The Vanguard School maintains an official school record for each student. This record is confidential and available only to the parents, legal guardians, educational officials, those who a parent or legal guardian designates in writing and, the student after reaching 18 years of age. Parents or legal guardians have the right to see their student's record and request changes if there are factual errors.
The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 outline this process in detail. If you have any questions regarding FERPA, please contact VFES' Quality Assurance Office at 610.296.6725.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

IEP progress reports and report cards are provided four times a year at the conclusion of each marking period. These reports are designed to update parents and legal guardians on the monitored progress regarding a student's IEP goals and share information about student performance in academic subjects and enrichment classes as well as social, work and behavioral areas. The report cards also include a record of student attendance. Report cards and progress reports can be found in the Parent Portal of our Student Information System.

State-Mandated Testing

The Vanguard School is responsible for the administration of state-mandated testing and must comply with the requirements presented by the Department of Education. Testing varies by grade and ability
level and may include The Keystone Exams, Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and Pennsylvania's Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).

Reevaluation Process

Reevaluations are conducted at least once every two years. The reevaluation process begins with a review of existing data about the student (e.g., previous goals, progress monitoring reports, the current level of performance and other relevant data) by the student's IEP team. The team must decide if any additional information is needed to determine: 1) if the student continues to have a disability and the student's corresponding educational needs; 2) the present levels of academic achievement and related developmental and functional needs; 3) whether the student continues to need special education and related services; and 4) whether any additions or changes to special education and related services.

Clinical Services

Clinical services may be offered to support students' curriculum progression towards his/her IEP goals, including speech-language, occupational and physical therapies, school psychology, school counseling, behavior support, and nursing. All therapists and specialists have the advantage of being involved actively in the child's educational day; our clinicians can co-treat across disciplines and consult with teachers and other professionals on a regular basis. Our clinical staff have extensive experience with populations that have unique educational, therapeutic and behavioral-management needs.

Behavior Analysis and Behavior Support

When student behavior adversely interferes with academic or vocational progress, a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) may assess environmental variables that contribute to those behaviors. In collaboration with students' IEP teams and parents, those environmental variables are targeted for change.
Treatments are drawn from principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) and documented in the positive behavior support plan of the IEP. The focus of the behavior support plan is to identify: A) ways to prevent target behaviors, B) methods to teach and reinforce replacement behaviors, and C) safe ways to manage students' target behaviors.

Behavior support specialists work across all programs and are part of an overall interdisciplinary team. They are highly trained in crisis management through a vetted training program. They also help create a positive, inclusive school culture.

Sometimes students demonstrate unsafe behaviors toward themselves, peers or staff. When this occurs, our staff members use the least restrictive interventions to maintain safety (e.g., prompts to safe behaviors and redirection). If these measures prove unsuccessful, physical management or use of a safe, protective room may be temporarily needed to ensure safety. Parents and legal guardians are immediately notified in these situations. These procedures are not used as a punishment, but rather only to maintain safety for students and staff. If a student's behavior is unsafe to the point that Vanguard staff cannot ensure his/her safety or the safety of others, despite proactive and supportive interventions, it may be necessary to call for outside emotional/behavioral support (e.g., 911, crisis intervention services) to ensure safety services are needed to allow the student to meet the measurable annual goals. The IEP team may make a recommendation for additional testing. If it is determined that additional data is needed, parental consent will be obtained, and appropriate tests and other evaluation instruments will be administered.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

We offer occupational therapy that focuses on improving students' academic success and social, functional, vocational and adaptive skills. Our occupational therapy model emphasizes collaboration and support between OTs and other educators (e.g., teachers, aides, job coaches and therapists) when students are learning in their natural educational settings including the classroom, gym, cafeteria, social, and pre-vocational settings. Direct OT services are also offered for students with more significant challenges, for example, in fine motor, motor planning, visual-spatial or sensory domains.

Physical Therapy (PT)

Physical therapy at The Vanguard School takes place in our state-of-the-art clinic, throughout the campus, in the community and at off-campus work sites as needed. Activities are designed to build the skills needed for meaningful and beneficial movement as well as to integrate students into the community. Flexibility, balance, coordination, posture, strength and endurance are developed to enable the student to participate successfully in educational programs and activities. Therapy goals are integrated into the curriculum and individualized to meet the strengths and needs of each student. PT programs are coordinated with teachers and other specialists, working closely with the adaptive physical education program and PACE to develop gross motor skills and lifetime leisure interests.

School Counseling

To promote the educational, social and emotional development of our students, the school maintains a comprehensive clinical staff of school counselors. Through comprehensive school counseling programs, The Vanguard School follows guidelines approved by the American School Counselor Association to guide students through social, academic and pre-vocational programs.

Although the specific roles played by school counselors vary slightly from program to program, counselors at all levels strive to coordinate the developmental, preventative and responsive services that address a student's academic, behavioral, career, personal and social development.

In our elementary school program, the school counselor provides individual and small-group counseling on an as needed basis for all students. Our elementary school students participate in planned classroom guidance sessions that emphasize social thinking in areas such as conflict resolution, appreciating the perspectives of others, understanding feelings, self-advocacy, problem- solving and coping skills.

For our older students, school counselors assume the role of transition coordinator. In this position, they work in conjunction with students, parents and legal guardians, teachers and other school and community personnel to assist in meeting the students' needs. The middle school, high school and VTC counselors also assist students in reaching their academic, personal and social goals.

School Psychology

School psychologists help students succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Evaluations, observations and consultation at all levels within The Vanguard School generate the development of interventions conducive to student growth and confidence.

Our psychologists coordinate and contribute to a multidisciplinary evaluation of each student's current performance and progress every two years. This evaluation focuses on the strengths and needs of each student in the areas of cognition, social-emotional functioning, behavior and executive functioning so that appropriate interventions can be implemented. The evaluation also contributes to the actualization and success of IEP goals.

Speech-Language Therapy

Speech-language pathologists focus on promoting academic skills, fundamental receptive and expressive language skills and speech intelligibility. As the students get older, therapists prepare them for vocational and community interactions.

A therapy plan is developed based on observations in the classroom and other school environments, consultation with parents, teachers, assistants and specialists and formal and informal testing. Types of therapy include individual, small group, classroom and co-treatment with other specialists. The primary goal is the generalization of appropriate speech-language skills into educational and vocational settings. The speech-language pathologists have the advantage of actively being involved in the student's entire day including bus time, program trips, lunch, special activities and on-site job training. Well- trained, experienced therapists work to design programs to target the following areas:

- Voice
- Fluency
- Articulation
- Auditory processing, memory and language comprehension
- Social communication
- Expressive language
- Compensatory strategies
- Effective use of assistive technology
- Clarity and precision of verbal expression
- Vocabulary and grammar
- Verbal reasoning and problem solving
- Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)

Nursing and Health-Related Items

A therapy plan is developed based on observations in the classroom and other school environments, consultation with parents, teachers, assistants and specialists and formal and informal testing. Types of therapy include individual, small group, classroom and co-treatment with other specialists. The primary goal is the generalization of appropriate speech-language skills into educational and vocational settings. The speech-language pathologists have the advantage of actively being involved in the student's entire day including bus time, program trips, lunch, special activities and on-site job training. Well- trained, experienced therapists work to design programs to target the following areas:

Medical Emergency Information Form

A parent or legal guardian completes medical Emergency Information at the beginning of each school year. This information is necessary for immediate use in the event of illness or accident. If a child becomes ill while at school, the staff will make every effort to reach you or the emergency contact person you have designated. Your emergency contact person must be someone who can pick up a child who is too ill or otherwise unable to remain at school. If you or your emergency contact changes any pertinent contact information during the year, please notify your child's school as soon as possible with the new information.

Health Requirements and Immunizations

Pennsylvania School Health Law requires periodic medical, dental and scoliosis examinations as well as immunization updates and possible tuberculosis (TB) screenings. These should be completed by your family doctor and dentist.

If these examinations are needed this year, please update your MAGNUS profile (HIPAA/FERPA-compliant web-based portal) by the start of the new school year.

Students are required by law to have the following:

- Kindergarten/Grade 1 Physical Exam by a doctor
- Kindergarten/Grade 1 Dental Exam
- Grade 3 (ages 8–9) Dental Exam
- Grade 6 (ages 11–12) Physical Exam by a doctor
- Grade 7 (ages 12–13) Dental Exam
- Grade 11 (ages 16–17) Physical Exam by a doctor

Your school district of residence may be of assistance in providing these required examinations free of charge. Periodic testing for TB may be required and The Vanguard School will notify you when such testing is needed. In accordance with education law, students receive, at no cost to families, an annual vision and hearing screening. Height and weight also are taken and recorded.

Students who have not submitted a school physical for the current year receive a scoliosis screening between 11 and 13 years of age (grades 6 and 7). If the results of these evaluations indicate the need for follow up by your family physician or pediatrician, you will be notified in writing.
We request that a report of this follow-up visit be sent to the school nurse for inclusion in your child's records.

Pennsylvania state law requires that all children enrolled in a school in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania be protected against serious communicable diseases. In accordance with state law, The Vanguard School requires proof of the following immunizations prior to school entry:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis* (1 dose on or after the child's fourth birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (fourth dose on or after fourth birthday and at least six months after previous dose given
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella**
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

Usually given as DTP or DTaP or DT or Td

** Usually given as MMR

Students entering Grade 7 (ages 12 – 13) require the following by the first day of school:

- 1 dose of Tdap
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
- Students entering Grade 12 (ages 16 – 18) require the following by the first day of school:
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). If a dose was given at 16 years of age, that shall count.

As of August 1, 2017, new regulations by the Pennsylvania Department of Health require families to provide proof of immunization on or before the first day of school or risk their child's exclusion.

These requirements allow exemptions for medical and religious beliefs. Written proof of the reason for exemptions must be provided. If your child is exempt from immunization, he or she may be removed from school should a communicable disease present itself on campus.

All immunizations and exemptions are kept on file at The Vanguard School.

If there are any changes in your child's health status during the year, please inform us as soon as possible.

Please update MAGNUS for any health-related evaluations and updated immunizations so we can maintain current health records.

Illness

Students with symptoms of illness should not be sent to school. If a student is ill, please keep them home until the student is completely recovered (i.e., their temperature is normal for 24-48 hours without medication) with no signs of illness (e.g., fever, persistent cough, sores, rash, chills, upset stomach, diarrhea, sore throat, swollen glands, ear or eye discharge, etc.). This is not only best for the student but will help to control the spread of any of these illnesses.

Please inform the school nurse if the illness is due to a communicable disease (e.g., measles, chicken pox, etc.).

Children will be sent home with symptoms of fever (100° or above), vomiting, diarrhea, excessive coughing, discharging eyes, sores, etc. All students should be free of symptoms for at least 24 hours before coming back to school. If your doctor has prescribed an antibiotic, your child should be kept home for 24 hours after starting the medication, after which the student is not considered contagious.

Any student suspected of having any of the communicable diseases outlined below must remain out of school for the timeframe indicated. If a student is to be readmitted in less than the required days listed below, a doctor's certificate must be presented to the school nurse.

Disease	Incubation Period	Exclusion from School
Chicken Pox	14-21 days	6 days from the last crop of vesicles
Bacterial Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	24-72 hours	until the eyes are free of discharge or 24 hours after the start of treatment
Scarlet Fever or Strep Throat	1-3 days	24 hours after start of treatment
Impetigo	4-10 days	until skin is clear or 24 hours after start of treatment
Pinworms	none	until the first dose of prescription treatment
Pertussis	5 days	until 5 days of antibiotic treatment
Ringworm and Ringworm of scalp	4-10 days	until skin is clear of all scabs and crusts or treatment has been started and area is covered
Any undiagnosed rash or fever (over 100°)	N/A	until diagnosis is established or symptoms have not displayed for 24 hours

Communicable Diseases

When a student is diagnosed with a life-threatening or highly-contagious communicable disease, parents and legal guardians should notify the school nurse immediately to inform them of their student's medical condition and diagnosis.

The school nurse gathers data and information pertaining to the medical and environmental management of the disease from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the local County Health Department, the CDC and/or the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Based on the guidelines and recommendations gathered from local, state and federal agencies, the Leadership team will develop a campus-wide plan regarding how to communicate with parents and staff, which environmental precautions to take for sanitizing, how to maintain the physical plant and furnishings and whether or not to close the school or relevant school program.

It is the responsibility of the attending physician who has diagnosed and is treating the student to report necessary information to the County Health Department based on where the student resides.

Head Lice

Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. If head lice or nits are confirmed by a school nurse, we will notify the parent and request that they take their child home as soon as possible to be treated with a lice-killing treatment. Upon return to school, the student will be re-examined by the school nurse. In-school transmission is considered to be rare, and no child should be excluded from school, school- related activities or educational programming.

Medications and Prescriptions

We recognize that parents and legal guardians have the primary responsibility for ensuring the health of their children. We recommend that all medication be given at home but realize that the health and well-being of some children require that they receive medication during school hours.

When it is necessary to administer medication during school hours only, the student's parent, legal guardian or authorized representative may deliver prescription and non-prescription medications along with the completed Medication Administration Form to the school nurse. All medication will be administered by the school nurse.

Also, please provide us (through MAGNUS) with any necessary Emergency Action Plans (e.g., for seizure disorders or severe allergies) signed by your child's healthcare provider.

Please arrange with the school nurse to deliver the medication and review instructions for taking the medication. Provide all medication in the original bottle or package. Prescription medications must be in the original labeled prescription bottle with the student's name, the date, the physician's name and clear directions for administration. Prescription or non-prescription medication in packaging or bottles from which pharmacist's instructions or manufacturer's labeling has been removed will not be accepted. Prescription or non- prescription medications that are more than one year old or contain an expiration date that has passed will not be administered.

Please send no more than a 30-day supply of medication. All controlled medication such as stimulants, antidepressants and tranquillizers should have the number of pills being sent to school marked by the parent or legal guardian on the outside label of the bottle or package. The school nurse will keep a written record of the number of pills sent in and the date they were received.

Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet in the school nurse's office and will be accessible only by authorized school personnel. Students shall not carry or otherwise possess prescription or non-prescription medication on school property or at any school-sponsored activity unless permission has been granted by the school nurse.

Unless otherwise provided in writing or determined in the professional judgment of the school nurse that medications should be administered in another location, students will be responsible for reporting to the school nurse's office at the time medications are given. Whenever necessary, teachers and school staff will provide verbal reminders to a student to go to the school nurse's office for medication.

High School and VTC age students are permitted to carry inhalers or EpiPens ordered by their licensed provider and authorized by their parents or legal guardians and the school nurse. The school nurse will maintain a record of the name of the student to whom the medication is to be administered, the prescribing physician, the dosage and time of medication and notations of each instance of administration. If a student refuses to take the medication, this refusal will be charted, and the parent or legal guardian will be notified by phone or in writing.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for maintaining the necessary supply of medication (both prescription and non-prescription) and any necessary medical equipment for administration. No medications or medical supplies, even when they are identical, may be borrowed from one student's supply and given to another student.

Non-Prescription Medication

If parents or legal guardians provide consent via MAGNUS, the school nurse will provide non- prescription medication to students during school, including: Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Advil), Diphenhydramine (Benadryl - all forms), Antacid (Tums), insect sting swabs, eyewash solution, lubricating eye drops, petroleum jelly, non-antibiotic first aid cream and Pramoxine (Caladryl).

Screenings

Growth Screening: Program 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.7 states "height and weight measurement shall be conducted at least once annually. Every effort shall be made to determine the pattern of growth for each child so that his height and weight can be interpreted in light of his own growth pattern rather than those of his classmates."

Vision Screen: 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.4 states "Vision screening tests will be conducted annually by a school nurse."

Hearing Screen: The Pennsylvania Public School Code, Article XIV School Health Services, Section 1402. Health Services requires children in K, 1, 2, 3, 7 and 11 grades be screened by a school nurse or medical technician using methods established by the Advisory Health Board.

The hearing screen requirement is further defined in regulation, 28 PA Code, Chapter 23, Section 23.5. Hearing screening tests:

(a) Identity. A hearing screening test determines the response to discrete frequencies presented at a specified decibel level.

(b) Test equipment. An individual pure tone audiometer or other screening equipment approved by the Department of Health will be utilized for hearing screening tests.

(c) Screening testing. Screening results are provided to parents in the Parent Portal.

(d) Frequencies employed. Frequencies of 250, 500, 1,000, 2,000, and 4,000 cycles per second will be employed in screen testing.

Also, please provide us (through MAGNUS) with any necessary Emergency Action Plans (e.g., for seizure disorders or severe allergies) signed by your child's healthcare provider.

All discontinued or outdated medications will be returned to the parent or legal guardian immediately. At the end of each school year (or ESY if your child receives such services), all unused medications will be returned to the parent or legal guardian. If the parent or legal guardian does not come to school to retrieve the medication at the end of the school year, we will dispose of the medication and document the disposal.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

In our effort to establish The Vanguard School as a safe and effective learning environment, we have implemented a School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) program that actively encourages students to achieve their academic potential while simultaneously reinforcing their social and emotional learning skills. The underlying theme is teaching behavioral expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject.

SWPBS includes strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting expected behavior across environments. Routines are taught to students at the beginning of the school year and reviewed until it is evident that students understand expected routines and can perform them. The goal is to establish a predictable, consistent, and positive school culture for all students and staff.

Characteristics of SWPBS include:

- Interventions are planned and positive rather than reactive and punitive.

- Conditions (antecedents) contributing to inappropriate behavior are carefully managed or eliminated.
- Multiple opportunities for positive, corrective feedback are created while negative critical feedback is limited or
- eliminated.
- Appropriate social behaviors are taught directly, practiced frequently and made routine so they become automatic.

Tiered System

In order to tailor our interventions to meet the needs of all students, we operate in a tiered system. There are three tiers in the system, and each serves a certain percentage of our students. Moving among tiers is always based on data and must be communicated with the entire team (including parents). Read on for a more detailed description of each tier.

Tier 1

Tier 1 is for ALL students (including those in tiers 2 and 3). Tier 1 supports vary across programs, but may include daily point sheets, scheduled reward periods, group social skills instruction. Tier 1 supports also include consistent teaching of behavioral expectations and recommended responses to unwanted behaviors. If a student is not successful when tier 1 supports are implemented with consistency, the student can be moved to tier 2.

Tier 2

Some students require additional interventions and supports to successfully follow the behavioral expectations. These students may meet the criteria to move into tier 2. In addition to tier 1 supports, these students receive additional interventions, such as modified point sheets, counseling, token boards, break cards and scheduled breaks. These additional interventions will be used if the data supports their need. If the collected behavioral data show that students can be successful with only tier 1 supports, they can return to tier 1 status. If more individualized interventions are required, students may be moved up to tier 3.

Tier 3

A few students may require more intensive, individualized supports. These supports include an FBA (Functional Behavior Analysis) and creation of a PBSP (Positive Behavior Support Plan). Initiation of tier 3 supports requires an IEP team meeting. These tier 3 supports aid in the development of a plan that meets that student's individual behavioral needs.

Vanguard Values

Respect, Responsibility, Readiness and Safety Our goal at The Vanguard School is to teach and encourage appropriate behavior in all areas of school through concentrated instruction of The Vanguard Values: Respect, Responsibility, Readiness and Safety. We believe students who reflect these core values maximize not only their learning opportunities but also those of their peers.

Students are actively involved in learning about The Vanguard Values and how they apply to all areas of school through activities, lessons, demonstrations, videos and role playing.

At The Vanguard School, the focus is on teaching and encouraging appropriate behavior that reflects these core values. In addition to learning The Vanguard Values, teachers and staff recognize and reward students when they engage in expected appropriate behavior.

Policies

Acceptable Use of Technology

The purpose of The Vanguard School Internet connection is to support research and education by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. Each student and parent or legal guardian must agree to an Acceptable Use Agreement before the student can use VFES computers and access the Internet. The use of an Internet account must support education and research as well as be consistent with the educational objectives of the organization. Subscription to list servers must be pre-approved by the Director of Technology.

Transmission or acquisition of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted infringement and viewing or distributing threatening or obscene material. Additionally, use of the Internet for personal or commercial use, product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited. The use of the Internet is a privilege. Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary actions that can include, but are not limited to, loss of Internet privileges, suspension, and possible expulsion. The Director of Education will deem what is inappropriate use.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from a safe environment necessary for successful learning and may lead to more serious issues. Students shall be expected to respect the rights of others and ensure the atmosphere is free from bullying.

Cognitive limitations, communication difficulties or behavioral and mental health concerns shall not exclude an individual from these expectations. An act of bullying by either an individual or a group of individuals is expressly prohibited on school property and at school functions. This policy applies not only to individuals who directly engage in the act of bullying but also to individuals who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another individual's act of bullying as a bystander.

Bullying: an **intentional** electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students within the VFES setting, or that has substantial impact on the daily operation of a VFES setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive, and that may result in any of the following:

- Substantial **interference** with an individual's education, treatment, or service.
- Creation of a **threatening environment** resulting from an **imbalance of power** in the relationship such that the person who is targeted has difficulty defending himself or herself.
- Substantial **disruption** of the orderly operation of the school/program.

Cyber Bullying — Electronically sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices, including cell phones and other PDA's (personal digital assistants).
Cyber bullying can include:

- Sending cruel, vicious, or threatening e-mails.
- Creating Web sites that have stories, pictures and jokes ridiculing others.
- Posting pictures of other individuals online with derogatory phrases or questions attached to them.
- Using someone else's e-mail to send vicious or incriminating e-mails to others.
- Using instant messaging tools and/or social media to harass others.

Staff members and students are responsible for immediately reporting any acts of possible bullying they have observed or been made aware. Parents, legal guardians, and any other individual may also report possible bullying to any staff member.

Staff members report possible bullying to the behavior support staff or a school based mental health professional as soon as possible after witnessing, becoming aware of or receiving a report of an alleged act. The report is made in writing using the appropriate program-specific form. The staff member is responsible for writing a detailed

description of the incident that includes the sequence of events, phrases or language used and parties involved. The behavior support staff informs the school counselor, program supervisor and psychologist that a report of possible bullying has been made.

The program supervisor shall promptly take interim action to prevent bullying during an investigation, if appropriate. Behavior support staff or a designee initiates an interview or investigation process and notifies

school counselor(s) or designee(s) that an investigation has been started. The program supervisor contacts parents by phone immediately after the initial interviews to inform them there is an allegation of bullying and that staff members currently are conducting interviews and gathering facts from all participants involved.

A report outlining the results of the initial investigation will be passed on to the school counselor and appropriate program supervisor. Upon receiving the report, the program supervisor works with appropriate members of the participant's or participants' team(s), including school counselor(s), psychologist(s) and behavior support staff or a designee, to further investigate and interview the individuals involved in the incident to determine whether the allegation is founded or unfounded.

Once the investigation is completed, the program supervisor will contact the parents or legal guardians with the results. The parents or legal guardians are also sent a follow-up letter outlining the action plan to be taken and will list a contact person for questions or concerns.

If it is determined that the accusation is founded, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary action includes but is not limited to school counseling; a conference with parents or legal guardians; positive behavioral interventions; loss of program privileges; transfer to another group or means of transportation; exclusion from school-sponsored activities; in-school detention; out-of-school suspension; referral for counseling, therapy, or hospitalization in the community; and referral to law enforcement officials.

Once the appropriate disciplinary and corrective action has been determined, a letter is sent to the accused student's school district of residence reporting both the disciplinary- and corrective-action plans along with a timeline for delivery.

If problems persist and a participant continues to engage in bullying behaviors and incidents, The Vanguard School will schedule a meeting with the parents or legal guardians, the school district of residence and the participant to develop a more intense plan.

Bus Transportation

In most cases, daily transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the school district in which your child resides unless other arrangements have been made. The Vanguard School works closely with the school districts to ensure arrival and departure times are consistent with the school's daily schedule and calendar.

Students must observe the following rules and regulations:

- Remain seated.
- Always keep hands and feet inside the bus.
- Obey all directions given by the driver and/or bus aide.
- Refrain from eating and drinking on the bus.
- Use emergency exit for emergencies only.
- Do not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- Refrain from offensive language and behavior.
- Do not throw things out of the window.

Any problems or concerns you have with your child's transportation should be brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel in your school district of residence. The Vanguard School's Transportation Coordinator, available at 610.296.6725 x104, can assist you with any questions you may have. If it is necessary to change the schedule or means of transportation for your child, please let The Vanguard School and your school district's transportation office know in advance. Transportation during program trips or other school- sponsored events is the responsibility of The Vanguard School.

Children on Campus

Siblings of VFES students and other children should not be on campus during program hours unless they are on campus for a family event. If a parent or legal guardian needs to bring a child to campus, the child must be with that parent or legal guardian at all times, the VFES Visitor Policy must be followed, and parent and child must remain in areas designated for visitors.

For family events and activities that occur outside program hours (e.g., Bingo Night, musicals, Community Day, Back-to-School Picnic, parent-teacher conferences), parents are responsible for the supervision of their children at all times. Children may use playground equipment when supervised; however, children are not permitted to use any equipment in program areas including, but not limited to, the gym, PACE, Education Center, OT/PT clinic and Murphy Lobby without authorization from VFES.

Parents and legal guardians are responsible and liable for any and all injuries or damage sustained to or by their child while on the VFES campus. All visitors are expected to comply with the VFES Visitor Policy.

Conflicts of Interest

As a 501(c)(3) corporation, VFES must adhere to all federal and state guidelines, regulations and statutes governing the operation of non-profit organizations. Staff members will neither give nor accept gifts or business courtesies that would violate any federal or state law or VFES' Conflict of Interest Agreement, cause embarrassment or reflect negatively on VFES' reputation.

VFES staff members may not give/accept compensation or items of substantial monetary value, directly or indirectly, to or from any person or organization that is seeking to conduct or currently conducting business with VFES.

Controlled Substances

Vanguard is a drug-free zone. Possession, sharing, selling, using, or displaying illegal and controlled substances including alcohol, firecrackers, illegal drugs, and paraphernalia are prohibited from all school property and school-sponsored events. Abuse or violation of this rule will result in any or all of the following:

- Required assessment by a physician or professional recommended or approved by the school
- Counseling or other interventions indicated in the assessment
- Required chemical screening
- Suspension or expulsion
- Legal consequence

Dress Code

The Vanguard School respects the unique opportunity for students to express themselves through clothing and accessories. The following points are expected to be adhered to our students may be asked to change into different clothing.

- All clothing must be free of holes, cuts, tears, or rips that expose undergarments. Undergarments must be concealed under clothing.
- Clothing with any printed message, graphic or phrase referencing alcohol, profanity, illegal activity, or violence is unacceptable.
- Clothing should represent inclusivity and diversity. Anything deemed offensive to a group of individuals is prohibited.
- Length of clothing should appropriately cover all parts of the body considered personal and private.
- Shirts must have a strap that goes over shoulders. For example, no tube tops.
- Long pants and warm jackets must be worn outside when the temperature is below 40 degrees unless a parent or legal guardian has provided written permission.
- Costumes and sleepwear are permitted on special theme days only and must maintain a neat appearance. Animal accessories, capes and crowns are unacceptable on days that are not special theme days.

Elopement

Elopement is defined as leaving a designated area without permission. If a student elopes outside of school boundaries and we believe is in imminent danger, a school supervisor will call law enforcement immediately. If 911 is called, the supervisor will contact the student's parent or legal guardian immediately.

Fighting or Assault

Physical and verbal assault of any kind is strictly prohibited. This includes threatening to hurt or physically harm another person in any way on school grounds or during any school-sponsored activity. Under Pennsylvania state law, a person has committed aggravated assault if they attempt to cause or intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to another student or school employee.

Harassment

It is the goal of VFES to provide an environment that is free from all forms of harassment for all staff and students. The law does not permit, nor will VFES tolerate, harassment of staff members or students by staff, students or third parties associated with the school.

Unlawful harassment is defined as verbal, visual, written, graphic or physical conduct that is related to an individual's race, color, national origin or ethnicity, gender, gender-identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion. Such conduct could be sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another person's performance. Examples of unlawful harassment include, but are not limited to physical contact, slurs, derogatory comments, jokes or other verbal statements, written or graphic materials (including electronic) relating to an individual's race, color, national origin or ethnicity, gender, gender-identity age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Sexual harassment is defined as a specific form of unlawful harassment that constitutes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or display of materials that evoke responses incongruent with maintaining the atmosphere of an educational environment.

If a student believes he or she is a target of unlawful harassment or physical or verbal assault, the student should report this to any staff member. If staff member believes he or she is a target of unlawful harassment or physical or verbal assault from a student, the staff member must immediately report the incident to a supervisor.

A member of the behavior support staff also must be notified. The student or students involved in the incident are moved to the behavior area by the behavior support staff and remain under supervision until a determination has been made and/or the student or students' parents or legal guardians have been notified.

Leaving Campus

Students may not leave the campus grounds during the school day or during school-sponsored activities without parent or legal guardian and program supervisor approval. Students who have permission to drive to school are not allowed to leave campus before the end of the school day. Violations will result in the loss of driving privileges on campus.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

VFES adheres to the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (Act 126) for reporting instances of suspected child abuse and neglect. The Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law states that anyone may report suspected child abuse and mandated reporters must report child abuse and neglect. All staff members are mandated reporters and may be faced with the task of reporting the suspected child abuse and neglect of one of our students.

When child abuse or neglect is suspected, the law requires mandated reporters immediately make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect via ChildLine, a statewide system. ChildLine forwards the report to the appropriate county child welfare agency which investigates the circumstances. They will conduct a safety and risk assessment and proceed with whatever action is needed to ensure the safety of the children.

VFES does not take the responsibility of reporting suspected child abuse or neglect lightly. We recognize the personal and family stress and turmoil that may be created in filing an allegation of abuse report. At the same

time, we also understand our role as mandated reporters as dictated by law and, more critically, the importance of our role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our students.

Memorandum of Understanding with Tredyffrin Township Police Department

VFES adheres to the policies and procedures contained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tredyffrin Township Police Department. The MOU sets forth procedures to be followed for incidents occurring on school property that could include, but are not limited to, incidents involving a threat or act of violence; possession of a weapon; or use or sale of controlled substance on school property. VFES and the police department have a shared understanding of the role and responsibilities of each in maintaining safe schools. This MOU complies with the requirements of the Safe Schools Act, 24 P.S. §§ 13- 1303-A et seq.

Personal Electronic Devices (Including Cell Phones)

All VFES Acceptable Use Policies must be followed when utilizing personal electronic devices, including cell phones, on VFES property or when attending VFES sponsored activities. VFES is not responsible for any personal electronic devices that are lost, damaged or stolen.

Personal cell phones and gaming devices are not to be used during the school day. Cell phones must be turned off and secured. Each program will determine the placement of cell phones throughout the school day and at any VFES-sponsored activities. Misuse or violations may result in the confiscation of the device.

Use of personal electronic devices or cell phones to photograph, videotape, record or post images or sounds of VFES-sponsored activities is strictly forbidden. Students may use electronic devices other than cell phones for educational purposes as determined by the educational team. In addition, students may use electronic devices other than cell phones at designated times (i.e., special academic or therapeutic activity, earned reward time and bus time) as determined by the supervisor.

Exceptions to this policy may be made for educational, health, safety or emergency reasons, with program approval or when identified in a student's individualized educational program (IEP).

Pets on Campus

Apart from certified service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pets are not permitted on campus at any time. An exception would be made if a therapy animal is included in a child's IEP. Please leave pets at home or in the car when dropping off or picking up students.

Property Damage

Students are expected to act responsibly with school property and the property of others. Students who cause damage or destruction to VFES property, materials, textbooks or the personal property of others because of negligence, malice or during an altercation will be held financially responsible for their actions. This may include compensation for the cost of the item replacement or repair. The school will not assume responsibility for loss or damage to personal items.

Public Displays of Affection

Students should refrain from inappropriate intimate behaviors which invade an individual's personal space or environment. This behavior is not allowed on campus or at school-related events. Inappropriate behavior will not be allowed and may result in disciplinary action.

Smoking and Tobacco Policy

The use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, lighters and nicotine products are prohibited on school property and during school-sponsored events in the community. If students are found with banned substances in their possession, the products will be confiscated and parents and legal guardians will be notified.

Social Media

When outside of school, students should be held responsible for their own behavior when communicating on social media. Students will be held accountable for the content of the communications they post on any social media outlet that directly addresses any event, person or policy sponsored or represented by VFES.

Students may not disrupt the learning atmosphere, educational programs, school activities or the rights of others. Students must use good judgment; if actions impact the learning environment, our policies pertaining to bullying and harassment will be enforced.

Students may be personally liable for any electronic posts that are considered defamatory, proprietary, pornographic, harassing, libelous, copyright infringement, creating a hostile learning environment or otherwise unlawful. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy for information posted on social networking sites.

During the school day, as well as during all VFES- sponsored activities, students are not to access social media outlets using any personal electronic device in accordance with the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. Noncompliance will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, confiscation of the device as well as program supervisor and parent or legal guardian notification.

Visitors and Observations (Including Parents and Legal Guardians)

All visitors, including parents and legal guardians, who come to campus for classroom activities, IEP meetings or conferences must provide valid, government- issued photo identification as a condition of access to any campus-based building. The visitor management system provides VFES with a current list of visitors on campus should an emergency occur. Additionally, this system checks against certain criteria in a national database that is already available to the public. Sign-in locations include VFES Central Administration, elementary school main entrance and the middle and high school main entrance.

Once authorized, a visitor will receive a visitor badge that must be worn and visible at all times while on campus. The visitor must return the badge to the office upon leaving the premises. After a visitor is cleared, only their name remains in the system; no personal information, such as address or license number is stored.

Visitors who fail to provide acceptable identification and visitors who refuse to allow a government-issued photo ID to be processed through the visitor management system may be denied access. An administrator will speak with the individual to determine the purpose of the visit and whether entry to particular buildings will be allowed. If entry is approved, the individual will be escorted at all times during their visit.

Observations: VFES welcomes observations to our school, classrooms and programs by parents and legal guardians, community members and other interested educators.
VFES recognizes the value of observing students; however, to minimize disruptions and not impact the learning process or environment, we have established procedures governing classroom observations. The paramount concern is for student safety and confidentiality.

To observe, parents and legal guardians must submit a request in writing to the student's program supervisor at least five program days in advance. Parent or legal guardian observations (including parent representatives) are limited to one 45-minute observation per quarter. The parent or legal guardian must be accompanied by a supervisor or their designee during the entire observation visit. No children may accompany the observer. All observers are required to follow our Visitor Policy and the Confidentiality and Conduct Agreement.

Volunteers

VFES values the contributions of volunteers and welcomes volunteers to assist in program activities and special events. To ensure the safety of all students, VFES abides by all clearance requirements established by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) for adult volunteers working with children. This includes parents volunteering directly with VFES **and** parents volunteering at VFES through The Vanguard School's Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO).

All adult volunteers (18 years of age or older), both VFES volunteers and PTO volunteers, must comply with the DHS clearance requirements. This includes parents and legal guardians who volunteer in the school, at special events, on field trips or as a half-day activity chaperone. No adult will be eligible to volunteer in any capacity until

VFES Human Resources has received the following documents (dated within the last 12 months). Documents must be updated every five years:

- ***PA Access to Criminal History (PATCH)*** from the Pennsylvania State Police
- ***PA Child Abuse History Clearance*** from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- A FBI fingerprint-based ***Federal Criminal History*** from the Pennsylvania State Police and Pennsylvania Department of Education is required if the volunteer has lived outside Pennsylvania at any time during the last 10 years

When an adult interested in volunteering has obtained the required clearances, he or she must bring the original of each clearance to the VFES Central Administration building where VFES Human Resources will make a copy of each clearance to retain on file. The adult also will be required to sign a disclaimer form affirming there are no charges pending that would prohibit selection as a volunteer. The VFES Human Resources office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. To schedule an appointment, please call 610.296.6725 x161.

Prospective volunteers who have a conviction or an arrest pending final adjudication of a sex offense, controlled substance offense, crime of violence or serious violent felony will not be eligible to provide volunteer services at VFES.

Weapons

The possession, use or display of weapons or potential weapons are not permitted on the VFES campus or at any VFES-sponsored activity and will result in serious consequences including suspension and police involvement.

Consequence Progression

1. Reminder of rule
2. Verbal or nonverbal warning
3. Behavior misconduct slip
4. Lunch detention
5. Contact parents or legal guardians
6. In-school detention (half or full)

Code of Conduct

This code applies to Elementary School, Middle School, High School & VTC students. The Code of Conduct helps guide team decision making on an individual basis and in accordance with the student's IEP.

Goals of the Vanguard School Code of Conduct

- Establish and maintain a positive school climate in which learning can take place and rules and regulations are necessary.
- Help the students develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility in the school community.
- Protect the basic rights of all members of the VFES community.
- Ensure all students receive a sound educational experience.

Minor violations of this code of conduct will be handled by the classroom teacher, program supervisor or a person in authority.

Level I Offenses

- Late to class without a valid excuse
- Inappropriate language including teasing, putdowns, name calling and unsolicited comments
- Violation of the dress code
- Public displays of affection including kissing, extensive hugging, inappropriate touching, sitting on laps, lying on the floor next to each other and back massages
- Eating or drinking outside of designated areas
- Littering

- Misbehavior in or taking food from the cafeteria
- Unauthorized use of electronic equipment
- Eating during class or in the hallways
- Refusal to place personal belongings in lockers
- Defacing or failure to return library books and materials
- Entering an unassigned area without permission

Level II Offenses

- Defacing or abusing school property including textbooks, furniture, walls and lockers. Graffiti on school property. Tearing posted materials off bulletin boards and walls. Misuse of VFES equipment.
- Profanity, vulgar language, obscene gestures, inappropriate dress or comments or possession of pornographic materials
- Disrespect toward staff or student
- Possession of a laser pen
- Cheating or other serious acts of dishonesty
- Disruptive behavior including loudness, disrespect, defiance, rough housing, running in hallway, sleeping in class and refusal to take direction
- Willful fighting
- Inappropriate use of a hall pass
- Cutting class or detention
- Leaving class without permission (walk out)
- Violation of school Internet policy
- Active or unauthorized use of wireless devices
- Throwing snowballs, stones, etc.
- Misbehavior for a substitute teacher
- Bus misconduct
- Driving to school without proper authorization
- Riding to or from school in a motor vehicle without proper authorization
- Gambling
- Tampering with school equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, intercom, computers, telephones)
- Use of water pistols or other shooting devices
- Selling unauthorized items
- Chronic or continuous Level I behavior

Consequence Progression:

1. Automatic behavior misconduct slip
2. Lunch detention
3. Lunch detention (includes loss of homeroom)
4. In-school detention (half or full day)

Level III Offenses

- Theft of school or personal property
- Physical assault including spitting, throwing objects, attacking, pushing and shoving with intent to fight
- Verbal assault
- Leading or participating in a riot: behavior of one or more students with the intention of causing disruption of the school environment.
- Insubordination: resisting redirection, leaving time- out, classroom or building, refusal to serve lunch detention and failure to accept consequences
- Extreme disrespect to staff including abusive language, threats and inappropriate remarks
- Vandalism
- Racial or ethnic intimidation
- Use or possession of tobacco products
- Threatening the safety of others
- Disruptive behavior on the bus resulting in possible harm to driver, passengers or destruction of property
- Bullying or harassment (verbal, sexual, physical threats)

- Intimidation
- Inappropriate behavior toward another person
- Forging signatures
- Truancy
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Continuation of Level II misconduct

Consequence Progression:

1. Automatic incident report submission
2. Discipline referral, contact parents or legal guardians and/or suspension
3. IEP meeting, behavior plan and possible recommendation for alternative placement
4. Notification of Township Police, possible civil citation

Level IV Offenses

- Possession, use and transfer of weapons, firearms, knives and explosive devices
- Arson, false alarms or false 911 calls
- Bomb threats
- Possession, use, selling of alcohol or illegal controlled substances
- Extortion
- Tampering with the alarm system
- Commission of any other act punishable under the Pennsylvania Crime Code

Consequence Progression

1. Automatic incident report submission
2. Discipline referral, parent or legal guardian conference and/or suspension
3. Notification of Township Police, possible civil citation
4. Recommendation for alternative placement

Any student subjected to disciplinary action that necessitates removal from the normal classroom environment is still required to complete all classroom assignments.
Parents or legal guardians of a student shall be notified immediately by phone, if possible, or in writing, when a student has been suspended internally or externally.

A student who warranted a suspension cannot participate in or attend any extracurricular school activity during the suspension period. The suspension shall be effective immediately upon verbal notification to the student, with written notification to the parents or legal guardians to follow. The suspension will continue until the start of the first school day a student is eligible to return to program. A student returning to school from a suspension, and who is a member of an extracurricular activity must have permission from the program supervisor's office in order to participate on that day.

The Vanguard School reserves the right to give consequences to infraction not specifically covered in the Student Code of Conduct.

In-School Detention (ISD) may be issued because of a serious safety or compliance misconduct. Assignment to in-school detention means that the student is removed from the classroom but not from the educational expectation. The student will report to an assigned location at a designated time where the student, with support from staff, will work on classroom assignments or other assigned tasks. If ISD expectations are met, the student returns to their regular scheduled program. ISD duration can range from one period to a full day, depending on the severity or frequency of the violation and compliance during the extent of the detention.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) may be issued when a student's actions violate law, school policies or school rules; the student may be suspended by the program supervisor. OSS shall be the temporary exclusion of a student from the school's program for a period not to exceed ten school days. A student who is suspended shall not be allowed to attend school or school-sponsored activities for a prescribed number of days. The program supervisor may suspend a student from riding the school bus for a prescribed number of days not to exceed ten. Parents and legal guardians of students suspended from the school bus have the obligation to provide transportation to and from school. If bus transportation is a related service on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), a bus suspension must be counted towards the ten days of suspension.

General Information

Child Custody

The Vanguard School will presume that both natural, adoptive or foster parents and legal guardians have equal custody of the student and therefore equal rights to visit the student at school and access school-related information and official school records. If there is a different custody arrangement for your child, we must be notified in writing and have a copy of a court decree or similar legal document for your child's record. The school must be notified of changes in custody or visitation rights the date they become effective.

Communication

Our primary means of communication is through Vanguard School's student information system, Achieve. The Achieve "Parent Portal" gives parents and legal guardians access to information about their children, as well as The Vanguard School. Parents also use the portal to update information and complete annual forms.

To access to the Parent Portal, use the username and password that is sent in an email in August to all Vanguard families. Please be sure we have your correct email address in our system. If you need assistance with signing into the system, please contact the Educational Technology Coordinator at 610.296.6725 x167 or achieve@vfes.net.

Additionally, please ensure the Central Office has your most current e-mail address. If there's been a change, please contact the Central Office at 610.296.6725 x104 to update your information.

Dances

On occasion The Vanguard School may sponsor dances that are held after school hours. Dances are for current high school and VTC students only. Students must be present in school the day of the dance in order to attend. Each program has specific eligibility requirements to participate in dances. Parents will be notified of criteria by the program supervisor. No outside guests are permitted. The prom, held each June, is for high school. Students who wish to bring a guest to The Vanguard School Prom must obtain permission from the Director of The Vanguard School.

Directory

The Vanguard School directory can be found in the Achieve Parent Portal. All parents are encouraged to include their student in the directory to facilitate communication, promote inclusion in social activities outside of school and as an aid for students seeking assistance with school assignments.

If you have been in the directory in the past, you are not included automatically in future directories. If there is a change in address, e-mail, phone number, etc. during the school year, please contact the Central Office at 610.296.6725 x104.

Emergency Closings, Delays and Dismissals Serious weather conditions or other emergencies may make it necessary to close, delay the opening of school or dismiss school early. Once a decision is made, an automated message will be sent to parents and legal guardians through the Valley Forge Educational Services phone notification system.

From time to time, technical issues beyond our control may cause some calls generated by this system to not be received by the recipient. If the weather is inclement and you have not received a call, you should check the announcements section of our website at vfes.net. An e-mail notification also will be sent to the address on file. You may also obtain information on the radio or television.

It is important to listen for the status of both The Vanguard School and your school district of residence. In some cases, The Vanguard School may be open, but your district is not providing transportation. If that is the case, your child is not expected to attend school that day but may be transported privately both to and from school. If it is necessary for the school to dismiss early or for your district to pick up the students early, please plan for an adult to be home to greet them.

Please be aware that because of school closings, there may be changes in the school calendar especially concerning Spring Break and the last day of school in June. Contact the Central Office at 610.296.6725 x104 if you need to add or change one of your contact numbers for automated calls and email notifications.

Gym Attire

It is required that all students have non-marring sneakers for gym. They should bring them or wear them to school on days they have gym, or they may not be allowed to participate. For safety reasons, items such as dangling jewelry or loose-fitting clothes should not be worn.

Lockers

Middle and high school students are provided a locker in which they can keep their belongings. Parents and legal guardians may provide a lock with a key or a combination lock. If parents provide the lock, the combination or/ copy of the key must be given the program supervisor. If not provided and a supervisor needs to gain access the lock may be cut off. If that presents a problem, a lock will be provided by The Vanguard School.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found areas are located at the school office of each program. If your child has lost something of value, please report it to the appropriate school office immediately. Please be sure to label all clothing. Articles found at school with no identification are displayed periodically on tables in the halls for student inspection.

Lunch Programs

For a nominal fee, The Vanguard School provides students a choice of healthy prepared lunches daily. The cafeteria offers menu selections every day with items that students can buy. A menu can be found on our website and is sent home monthly with the students so they can decide beforehand if they want to bring money to buy lunch. Students may also bring their lunch. Microwaves are available for students to heat their food. Supervision by staff is constant, and help is always available.

Lunch and Snack Recommendations

Current research states that healthy eating and physical movement result in improved focus and academic success. With weight related concerns impacting many children across the United States, The Vanguard School provides the following recommendations regarding healthy lunch and snack choices for your child.

Beverage Suggestions: juice, milk, water, or low-calorie sports drinks

Snack Suggestions: fruits, vegetables, popcorn, pretzels, crackers, yogurt, cheese, or healthy baked goods

Lunch Suggestions: foods that contain whole grains, fruits, dairy, vegetables, or protein (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, etc.). Consider avoiding foods that are deep fried, high in fat or high in sugars.

Treats for Special Events & Parties: Consider treating the class to special items such as bubbles, gel pens, decorative pencils, stickers, games or activities.

Dietary Restrictions: Occasionally, snacks and treats are provided at school. Please alert your child's teacher of any dietary restrictions or allergies. The Vanguard School is aware that many students have strong food preferences. If your family needs help with nutritional resources or the introduction of healthier foods to your child's diet, please contact the Vanguard School nurses. We appreciate your careful consideration of the snack and lunch items your child brings to school. The Vanguard School is invested in creating a positive learning environment and promoting healthy choices in the classroom and cafeteria.

Photographs

The school arranges for individual photographs each year. Information will be sent home with your child prior to the date. Look for dates in The Vanguard Voice and on the school calendar on the website. Official IDs for older students are produced after pictures have been completed. These IDs enable the older students to get discounts

at area stores and movie theaters or to attend school functions at their school districts of residence.

Our department of Marketing and Communications also will take photographs throughout the year to use in promotional materials, publications, social media and the school yearbook. Please complete the Annual Media and Publication Release verification so that we may include your child or young adult.

Program Trips

Program trips are intended to supplement and enrich classroom instruction by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the school. These trips are designed to help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world and study tangible topics and real processes in their natural environment. Additionally, program trips have the potential to solicit new interests among students as well as bring the resources of the community—natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental or otherwise educational—into the student's learning experience.

Program trips and other off-campus activities require written approval before your child or young adult may participate. Before each scheduled trip, you will receive a request form outlining the destination and the educational purpose for each activity. Please return the completed form to school by the stated deadlines to ensure that your student will be able to participate in these valuable learning experiences.

School Supplies

In August, parents and legal guardians will receive information in a back-to-school packet indicating specific supplies your child will need. Your child's classroom teacher will let you know if additional supplies are needed during the school year.

Staff Transporting Students

Staff members are prohibited from transporting Vanguard School students in their private vehicles. This prohibition extends to program trips and community outings.

Traffic Safety on Campus

There are three entrances to VFES:
Entrance A is used to access the Elementary School, Vanguard Transition Center and Activities Center
Entrance B is used to access VFES Central Administration
Entrance C is used to access the Vanguard Middle and High Schools

For traffic and safety, please use entrance A or C when entering the campus between 8:00 and 9:30 am and between 2:30 and 3:30 pm. We have a circular one-way traffic pattern during those hours. On early dismissal days, the traffic pattern is in effect until after dismissal. Once buses have started moving at arrival and dismissal times, other vehicles will not be able to pass or drive around the buses.

Get Involved

The Vanguard School's primary means of communication is through e-mail. Please ensure the Central Office has your most current e-mail address on file. If there is a change, please contact the Central Office at 610.296.6725 x104 to update your information.

Your interest and involvement in your child's education is key to their academic success. Parents and legal guardians who participate in school activities and events will have additional opportunities to communicate with teachers and staff.

Achieve Parent Portal

Achieve is The Vanguard School's student information system (SIS). The Portal is the doorway into our system, giving parents and legal guardians access to information about their children and The Vanguard School as well as the student directory. Parents will also use the portal to update information and complete required annual verifications.

To gain access to the Parent Portal, you will need the username and password provided to you in an email sent out in August to all our Vanguard families. Please be sure we have your correct email address in our system. If you need assistance with signing into the system, please contact the Educational Technology Coordinator at 610.296.6725 x167 or achieve@vfes.net.

Back-to-School Night

Held in October, Back-to-School Night is an important tradition marking the beginning of the new school year. On this night, you will meet your student's teachers and clinical service team members. They will explain goals for the class and your student. Additionally, they will share information about their teaching and treatment styles.

Classroom Volunteers and Chaperones

Volunteers are an integral part of our school culture. There are various opportunities that include chaperoning an event or assisting with a classroom party. Please ask your child or young adult's classroom teacher or program supervisor how you can help. If you have something to offer or want to help out in whatever way you can, please discuss the possibilities with your student's teachers or the Director of The Vanguard School.

VFES requires individuals who wish to serve as a volunteer, without exception, to obtain the required clearances. Parents and legal guardians who volunteer in the school, at special events, on field trips or as a half-day activity chaperone must obtain clearances in advance and submit them to the VFES Human Resources department.

Curriculum Committee Volunteers

The Vanguard School offers the opportunity to serve in a volunteer capacity on several curriculum and program committees throughout the school year. If you are interested in joining, please contact The Assistant Director of Education at 610.296.6725 x168.

New Parent Orientation

new parent orientation is an opportunity for you to get acquainted with our campus, meet our staff and hear from our directors. You will have the opportunity to get answers to your questions and connect with other new parents and legal guardians.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall for all students and again in the spring for the elementary school. This is a critical opportunity for parents and legal guardians to join The Vanguard School team on behalf of their child. Additional conferences throughout the school year may be scheduled by contacting your child's school counselor or classroom teacher.

The Vanguard Voice Newsletter

The Vanguard Voice is a bi-weekly e-newsletter for parents published during the school year. Important information is shared through this biweekly email publication including information about our programs, news, events and important announcements. Parents and legal guardians are strongly encouraged to submit an e- mail address in their child's household profile on the Parent Portal, so they receive this important publication.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Vanguard School values each parent and legal guardian's commitment to our school. We recognize you as key partners in helping our students reach their potential and prepare them for life. Participation in the PTO is critical, and we welcome and encourage participation.

The PTO offers parents and legal guardians of The Vanguard School students a chance to contribute to the school through volunteer work, special projects and activities. It also provides an opportunity for interacting with staff outside of the usual day-to-day routine, and a forum for furthering their education about their child's special needs and the field of special education in general. The Vanguard School PTO meets on a monthly basis at the school. All parents, legal guardians, grandparents and relatives are invited to join!

PTO-Sponsored Half-Day Events

The PTO sponsors a number of family friendly activities on half-day Wednesdays. Activities include Arnold's Family Fun Spot, swimming at a local pool and more! Please watch The Vanguard Voice and check your email for notices throughout the year.

Join our PTO Facebook Group

The Vanguard School PTO has a Facebook group to help keep parents up-to-date with the most current PTO information. We will post reminders about spirit days, PTO events, and other important information. You can find us at The Vanguard School PTO.

2023-24 PTO Meetings

Meeting are held via Zoom AND in-person. Visit vfes.net/PTO to view current meeting date, time and location information.

Student Drivers

The Vanguard School is a privilege that needs to be respected. For a student to be eligible to drive to school he/she must acquire a Driving Permission Form from the High School or VTC Program Supervisor and complete the form with his/her parent or legal guardian. A copy of the student's driver's license, owner's card and Insurance card must be provided with the completed application. Permits will be granted on a first come, first served basis and are subject to availability related to faculty parking needs. In order to maintain driving privileges, eligible students must observe the following regulations:

- Student will follow all school rules as described in the Vanguard School Code of Conduct while at Vanguard or driving on school property.
- Student must arrive at school by the designated school arrival time and report on time to homeroom.
- Student is prohibited from visiting or returning to his/her car without administrator approval until the end of the scheduled
- school day.
- Students are required to drive 5 miles per hour or less in the parking lot. Speed limits on surrounding streets must be strictly observed.
- Students are expected to park in designated areas based on parking availability.
- Students are required to report any accident immediately to a staff member, who will then contact local authorities if appropriate.
- If a staff member is unavailable, students must contact the local authorities and provide a written report to the Program Supervisor within one school day of an accident.
- Student will not transport any other student to or from Vanguard.
- Student must dismiss promptly at his/her assigned dismissal time.
- Student is not permitted to use his/her cell phones or smoke while on school property.
- Student must maintain his/her academic workload as describe in the High School Behavioral Plan.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in disciplinary consequences including revoking driving privileges. If a student loses his/her driving privilege the student and his/her parent/ legal guardian will be notified by a Program Supervisor.

Valley Forge Educational Services