

# **Vanleer Elementary**

# **Student Handbook**

2018-19 school year

Dear Family,

Welcome to Vanleer Elementary and a new school year! As we begin this new year, please take time to get to know your child's teacher. A close relationship between the teacher, student and parent will go a long way in helping your child be successful.

This Parent/Teacher Handbook has been put together to provide you important information about student, parent and teacher expectations. Please take time to review the policies, procedures and programs with your child.

Sincerely,

Sue Stringfield

### **Our Beliefs**

\*\*Students are individuals with unique characteristics and interests.

\*\*Students should have an equal opportunity to learn based on his/her needs, interest and abilities.

\*\*All students can meet high academic goals.

\*\*Students learn best when content is relevant to their lives.

\*\*Students learn best in a pleasant environment where the democratic process is modeled in tandem with clear goals and high expectations.

\*\*The role of the classroom teacher is primarily as the facilitator of learning.

\*\*Commitment must be made for the appropriate use of all resources to their fullest extent.

\*\*The school must be safe and child-oriented, while setting high expectations in preparing all students to become productive citizens.

### **Vanleer Pledge**

As a Vanleer student, I will be responsible for my actions at all times. I will strive to be trustworthy and fair in and out of school. I will show respect in everything that I do. I will do my best to show compassion, love, and understanding to those around me because I care. I will use what I've learned to be a good citizen throughout my life.

### **Dress Code**

Student, Faculty and Staff members' dress should be appropriate, clean and neat. Proper dress and personal hygiene are essential elements for appropriate interaction in everyday life. The following expectations have been established:

All hats will be removed upon entering the building.

Clothing must cover the midriff and back as well as being appropriate length. Shorts should be no shorter than credit card length from the knee. Tank tops less than 2 inches in width and spaghetti straps are not acceptable attire for school. **Biking shorts and leggings must be worn with a shirt/sweater that reaches mid-thigh.** Sleeveless shirts and tops must have 2 inches of material

between neck and shoulder and fit snugly around the arm.

Clothes should fit properly-not excessively tight or loose. Droopy or sagging pants are UNACCEPTABLE. At no time should underwear be showing on male or female students.

No clothing or accessories will be allowed which advertise drugs, alcohol, sex, gang activity, violence (all professional wrestling), tobacco, or any clothing or accessories that promote disrespectful attitudes.

No tattoos on the face.

Hair color must be natural color. Hair styles must not distract others. Mohawks or spiked hair cannot be over 1 inch tall.

Flip flops or sandals are **NOT** recommended. If they are worn to school please send another pair for recess and PE.

Consequences will result for students who continually disregard the policy. Quiet room and suspension are possibilities.

### **Field Trips**

Every grade level will take a minimum of one field trip during the school year. Chaperones are not always required for field trips, though in most cases trips are open to parents. All students and teachers will be transported by bus to the location of the visit. Parents will not ride the bus with the students, but need to provide their own transportation. Parents may check out their student at the conclusion of the trip. Checking out at the conclusion of the trip will count as an early checkout.

### **Photographs**

Please be mindful of the privacy of others. If possible limit pictures taken to your child. Do Not post groups of students on social media. Several students have custody concerns and the parents wish not to have students photographs shared without their permission.

### **Parent Concerns**

It is our desire to provide an atmosphere of open communication that encourages parents to share positive comments about their child's education as well as issues and concerns. We request that parents contact their child's teacher if they are uncomfortable with anything taking place in the classroom. We all have our own perceptions of specific situations and feel it is important that child, parent, and teacher have an opportunity to openly discuss these situations before following other avenues. Experience shows that effective communication resolves most issues.

### **Communication**

We believe strongly that communication between school and home is critical for student success. Administration and teachers will make every attempt to keep parents informed and gather parental ideas and input about school activities.

One of the most important and effective methods for keeping parents informed is a folder of information that will be sent home regularly. Please notify your child's teacher if you need more

information about anything sent home.

We also have a InTouch account that will notify you several times a month of happenings at school. If you wish for additional family members be added to or deleted from the account, please send a note with the phone number to the office.

You can request access to the Vanleer Elementary Parent and Teacher Facebook page. The purpose is to spread information. This is not a vehicle to share personal concerns. All posts will be approved before posted. We ask that any photos posted to social media, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, please check with the office before posting. We have several families that request their child not be pictured on social media.

**The Vanleer Voice**, the school newsletter, is published and sent home every nine weeks. It contains school news, upcoming dates, events and school information.

If questioning school closing, please call the Snow Line 441-1994. Dickson County Schools has a Twitter account. To get notifications of early dismissals or school closings, follow the school system through Twitter. Directions for following Dickson County Schools via Twitter can be found at <http://dicksoncountyschools.org/parents/emergency.html>

### **Telephone Usage**

The main telephone number for Vanleer Elementary is 615-740-5760. Parents should feel free to call the school at any time. Except in cases of emergency, teachers are not called to the phone during school hours. Staff members return calls during planning times and after-school. Students are allowed to use the phone only for emergencies or as requested by a staff member. We believe students need to learn responsibility and to plan ahead. Students calling home to bring forgotten homework will be at the discretion of the teacher/office. Students will not be permitted to call home to make arrangements for after-school plans. **All plans for after-school activities must be arranged prior to coming to school!** We ask for parental support with this policy. Students who are uncertain as to whether they are to stay for after-school activities will go home their regular way.

### **Student Progress**

Students will receive official notice of progress twice in a nine week period. A mid-nine weeks report will be sent home close to the middle of the grading period. Each student will receive a report card after the end of each nine weeks. Please take time to go over each area of the report card with your student. The report card should be signed and returned to school the following day. In accordance with the policy as set forth by the Dickson County Board of Education, Vanleer Elementary invests the classroom teacher with the responsibility of deciding whether or not a student is to be promoted. The teacher will consider each child's level of ability, achievement, and maturity in making the decision, but the primary measure of the student's achievement will be the teacher's determination of the student's mastery of the basic skills as set forth by Tennessee Department of Education and results from the state testing. Math, Reading/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies TnReady scores will count as fifteen percent of the second semester average.

### **School-wide Discipline**

Our goal is to promote responsible and respectful student behavior. We must provide students with both freedom of choice for making responsible decisions, as well as carefully defined

expectations that allow our school to be a safe and orderly place for learning. *Any type of physical or verbal contact that poses a serious danger or threat to others will not be tolerated. Fighting (whether real or pretend) will not be tolerated. All persons involved in such actions are subject to disciplinary action, regardless of the cause. Even the people defending themselves.*

Each classroom will develop rules and consequences. These will be sent home. Please review these with your child.

### **Office Referrals**

Referrals will be written for severe infractions which involve any of the following: Fighting, destruction of property, possession of controlled substances or weapons, threats, adult defiance, repeated offenses and cursing. Parents will be notified each time a child is seen in the office through a note home, phone call or both.

When it becomes necessary to send a student to the office, the students will receive a verbal reprimand, quietroom time or possibility of suspension. The decision will be at the discretion of the principal or assistant principal.

Students who visit the office regularly will have a behavior plan created. Assignment to New Directions Academy may take place for a child who continues to disrupt the learning environment.

### **School Day**

#### **Arrival**

**The school day will start at 7:50 A.M. each day. Students are expected to be seated in the bus room. If students arrive after 7:50 A.M., parents must accompany their child/children to the office to be checked in.** Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:10 A.M. each day. School personnel will not be responsible in any way for children who arrive prior to 7:10A.M.. Morning bus room is held in the gym from 7:10-7:50 A.M.. Children are seated by home rooms and are not allowed to go to the classroom. If the student arrives by car and eats breakfast, the student must go directly to their designated class area, leave his/her things and go to breakfast. If breakfast is not eaten at school, the student will sit with the class. Please help your child remember to always have a book in their backpack. The book will be read during quiet time, beginning at 7:40A.M.

The tardy bell will ring at 7:50 A.M. On occasion, classes may be picked up prior to 7:50 A.M.. If your child's class is not in the gym he/she is to proceed to the classroom. If your child is dropped off after 7:50 A.M., he/she is considered tardy and must report to the office to check in.

Any parent/guardian who needs to come to school with his/her child must report to the office, check in, and tell the secretary the reason for being at school. The front door is locked for security reasons. The front middle door is equipped with a bell and a speaker by the outside entrance, with a monitor located in the main office. Anyone who would like to enter the school must ring the bell, identify himself/herself and tell the reason for the visit.

#### **Dismissal**

**Dismissal begins at 3:05 P.M. with Car Riders and dismissed.** Bus Riders will be dismissed to the back hallway beginning at 3:10 P.M.

If your child is a car rider, he/she will be walked to the vehicle when you drive up. Every effort will be made to get your child to the car quickly to avoid delays. **Please remain in your car in line.** To ensure the safety of all students, a limited number of students will be released to cars at one time. **Car riders must be picked up by 3:20 P.M. Car riders not picked up by this time will be sent to the bus area to ride their regular bus home or to After-School Care. Parents will be charged appropriate fees for After-School Care.**

Please understand the safety of you and your child is our concern. The school will not disrupt the flow of traffic to allow people to walk through the car rider line to pick up their student. Please remain in line to pick up your student who is a car rider.

Any change in the regular routine requires a note from the parent. If we do not have a note, we will send the child home the way they normally go home. If anyone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up the child, a note giving permission or a phone call to the school is necessary. **Any changes to the method for going home must be made by 2:30.** Please be aware that whoever picks up your child other than you will be required to show identification. This is not meant to be an inconvenience, but a safety precaution.

Bus riders will wait in the back hallway and the cafeteria. Buses will be loaded by 3:30 P.M. At times buses may be delayed; students will not be allowed to call for other rides.

### **Tardy/Early Check Out Policy**

School begins promptly at 7:50 A.M.. Any student arriving after the 7:50 bell is considered tardy and issued a tardy slip. Parents must bring the students into the office and sign them in after the starting time of 7:50 A.M.

School ends at 3:05 P.M. Students leaving before this time will be documented as checking out early. Tardy and early checkouts are filed and maintained in the office. Students who are chronically late or checked out early will be assigned the following consequence:

3 Tardy/Early Check Outs: Written reminder of the policy

4 Tardy/Early Check Outs: Second reminder

5 Tardy/Early Check Outs: 30 minutes student recovery time, phone call from Principal

(Optional 1 hour parent volunteer)

6 Tardy/Early Check Outs: 30 minutes recovery time.

Students who miss more than 9 days in a semester or 18 days in a school year will be required to recover the missed days, even if all the absences are excused. Two afterschool meetings will make up one absence. Parents will be notified if a student misses more than 10% of instruction per nine weeks.

### **Attendance and Reporting Absences**

Regular attendance is an important ingredient for a student's overall success. Student's attendance is carefully monitored and parents will be contacted if a pattern of frequent tardy/check outs or absences occur. If you child has a medical problem that may hinder his or her school attendance, a

note from your doctor can be requested and kept on file. All days absent from school along with late check in and early check out require a note explaining the absence. The note should include the following information:

| Student Name              | Homeroom Teacher | Date(s) of absence | Reason for absence |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Parent/guardian signature |                  |                    |                    |

If a doctor's note is on file, a note explaining absence is still necessary. Students who accrue three (3) absences without a note excusing the absences will receive a letter from the office as a reminder that reason(s) for the absence is needed. Parents will be called to sign an Attendance Agreement. Any student accruing five (5) unexcused absences will be petitioned to court. This is a computer generated document from the state attendance program reminding parents of unexcused absences. Please send a note for the days requested in the letter. Students who miss in excess of 10 days will require doctor's notes for all following absences.

### **School Closure/Delayed Opening/Early Dismissal**

The Director of School determines whether school will be opening late, closing early or out for the day. In the event of severe weather, listen to the radio or television for notification of school closing, delayed opening or early dismissal. You can also check the Dickson County website, Channels 2, 4, or 5 for the same information.

If concerned about school closing, please call the Snow Line 441-1994. Dickson County Schools has a Twitter account. To get notifications of early dismissals or school closings, follow the school system through Twitter. Directions for following Dickson County Schools via Twitter can be found at <http://dicksoncountyschools.org/parents/emergency.html>

Elementary students should be prepared in advance in the event of early dismissal. Please work out a plan and discuss it with your child. Information sheets will be sent home at the beginning of the year to document special instructions if school closes early. If changes are made to the plan later, be sure to update the information with the teacher. These plans should be made in advance rather than calling school on that day.

### **Health and Medical**

Vanleer Elementary has been assigned a fulltime nurse. She is concerned with any health related aspect of the students' education and well being. When an illness occurs, parents will be notified and the student will be made as comfortable as possible until someone comes to pick up the student. If any contact numbers should change or need to be added during the school year, please send a note to the office so the contacts can be updated. In case of a serious injury, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the hospital listed on the emergency card. At the same time, parents or guardian will be notified.

### **Medication**

It is recommended, when possible, that students take medicines before and after school. All medications administered at school must be kept in the nurse's office and dispensed from there. *Medication will be administered following doctors' orders.* The office keeps written records of all medications given at school and will notify parents when a child's prescription is running low.

**Students should NOT bring prescription or non-prescription medicine to school.** Parents should bring the medicine to school, fill out the proper form and leave it with the nurse or in the office. If over-the-counter medicine is being brought to school, the medicine should be *new and unopened*. Please make sure prescription medicine is in its original container. If you need one for school, most pharmacies will provide you with a second labeled bottle for school.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Any student suspected of having any of the following diseases: measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, head lice, influenza will be sent home. Please keep your child home until they are fever free for 24 hours to prevent the spread of the illness.

### **Lunch Program**

#### **Cafeteria Procedures**

Classes are given 30 minutes for lunch. Parents are welcome to eat with their child at a special table. Students eating with their parents must follow the same rules as others. A cafeteria monitor is present to assure order and to provide help. Students will be expected to complete their meal in the allotted time and not be allowed to take food out of the cafeteria.

#### **Lunch Money**

Lunch is \$2.50 a day for students or \$12.50 a week. Breakfast is \$1.25 a day or \$6.25 a week. If a student qualifies for reduced meal prices, lunch is \$.40 a day or \$2.00 a week, breakfast is \$.30 a day or \$1.50. Please talk to the office if you did not receive a form to apply for free/reduced lunch.

Dickson County Policy allows only one lunch charge. After one charge and a delinquent account, the cafeteria staff reserves the right to serve the student a peanut butter sandwich and milk. There will be no charges for breakfast. If you are having difficulty with your student's account, please contact Frances Self, Cafeteria Manager at 740-5761.

You may send lunch and breakfast money for all your children in one check. Please put this check in an envelope with the names of all the children on the front of the envelope.

Breakfast is served from 7:10-7:40 A.M. each morning. Lunch begins at 10:30 A.M. and ends at 12:45 P.M.

### **\*\*Release of Children\*\***

Written authorization is required for release of all students. All authorized persons able to pick up a student should be listed on the back of the school information card. If an individual arrives to remove a student from school, his/her name must be on the form. If a name needs to be added to the pick-up list, you may write a letter stating that the school has permission to release your child to that individual. Please remember that visitors may be asked to show their ID upon requesting to check out a student. Parents/Guardians will be contacted if the person checking out the student is not on the information card and a note about the checkout has not been received by the office staff.



**\*\*Custody Issues\*\***

If custody papers have been issued regarding a student, the school **MUST** receive a copy of the **LEGAL DOCUMENT**. Court Orders will be followed regarding access or denial access of a child and/or their records. The custodial parent/guardian will be contacted if a noncustodial parent/guardian contacts the school for visitation/checkout.

All parents, unless parental rights have been given up, have the right to know about their child's education. They have the right to report cards, conferences, and behavior reports of their child.

Please remember that the school setting is not the place to work out conflicts of interest regarding custody of your child. The school will follow custody expectations as documented in parenting plan or other court document. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this matter!!

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Student Handbook

2018-19

Statement:

My child and I have received a copy of the Vanleer Student Handbook.

My child and I have read and discussed the contents of the handbook.

Vanleer Elementary expects students who are able to read this handbook to do so and that parents/guardians will review this handbook with students who are unable to read. The school also has an obligation to go over these policies with students. Parents/Guardian please discuss student expectations as well as inappropriate behaviors and their consequences with all students.

***All threats will be taken seriously. Please advise your child not to make jokes about safety issues.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Teacher Date

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT wish to have my child's name or picture released for honor roll, academic or other school related functions.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_, date \_\_\_\_\_