

VANSVILLE ELEMENTARY

Family Handbook

IMAGINE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE



2011-2012

6813 Ammendale Road

Beltsville, MD 20705

301-931-2830

<http://www1.pgcps.org/vansville>



A Letter from the Principal

Dear Vansville Families,

The staff at Vansville Elementary School welcomes you to the 2011-2012 school year. We look forward to the high achievements we know our children are capable of making. Through hard work on the part of our students and staff and support from our families, we have established Vansville as a model of excellence. During the 2011 administration of the Maryland School Assessments, our students exceeded the state mandates with approximately 92% of our children scoring proficient or advanced in reading and 88% in math. We are confident that you will find the school's instructional program rigorous, child centered, challenging, and aligned with the nation, State of Maryland, and Prince George's County Public Schools' educational goals. Our priority is promoting happy, healthy, successful children.

A large part of our success is the partnership we will create with our parents and community. Your support in setting goals for your child's education that meet the demands of today's curriculum enables him/her to see themselves as an achiever. We as a staff are committed to taking that journey with you by providing the best learning possible and communicating regularly. We welcome and encourage all of our children and families to be a proactive part of all that we create and accomplish this year. Our theme is: ***Imagine, Believe, Achieve.*** It entails a determination in making ourselves look toward the future with high goals, optimism and success. To achieve this, we will examine the strengths and weaknesses of each of our learners by prescribing a path to mastery using data, student products, and areas of interest. Our goals:

Academic

- Lay a Strong Foundation in Mathematics
- Accelerate Students in Math
- Explicitly Teach Reading Comprehension Strategies
- Provide Project-Based Learning in All Academic Areas
- Differentiate Lessons to Meet the Needs of Each Learner
- Involve Parents in Lending Support in Learning in the Classroom
- Grow in the Area of Technology

Social

- Create Calm Routines Throughout the Day
- Model Healthy Relationships
- Create Opportunities for Student Leadership
- Hold PTA Sponsored Student/Family Centered Activities

Communication

Monthly Electronic Newsletter
Teacher Webpages
iParent
Vansville Elementary Web page
Agenda Books for Grades 2-5
Family Handbook
Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences
PTA Meetings/School Based Instructional Decision Making Team (SBIDMT)
PTA Committees

This handbook is provided in an effort to inform parents/guardians and students of basic school policies and procedures. Please use it as a reference when questions arise. It advances the child's academic progress by serving as consistent two-way communication between school and home. Please review this document together with your child. We will also communicate with you through email, school web pages, monthly newsletters and periodic updates sent home with the children. Each form of communication will include school information that we hope will be helpful to you.

We are looking forward to a rewarding year working with you and your children. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns. We will do our best to assist you. I look forward to seeing and working with each of you.

Sincerely,

Tom Smith

Principal

Mission

Vansville Elementary, in partnership with parents and community, is committed to providing an academically stimulating, safe, nurturing, and eco-friendly environment.

To accomplish this mission, we will:

- Provide rigorous academic instruction that empowers ALL children to become life-long learners
- Foster an appreciation for living in a diverse and technological society
- Create a school climate that values the relationship between students, parents and the community at large
- Instill a sense of respect for the preservation of our planet and its natural resources

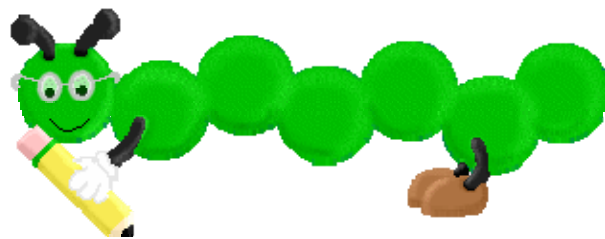




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I. Vansville Elementary School Staff

VANSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2011-2012 7/12/2011		
Position	Name	Room
Principal	Tom Smith	106-D
Assistant Principal	Shawna Holden	104-D
Principal's Secretary	Joy Pinkney	Office
Registrar/Attendance Secretary	Mary Murphy	Office
Head Start	Kelly Taylor	112-B
Pre-kindergarten	Wanda Lester-Wells	117-B
Kindergarten	Yolanda Gonzales	131-B
	Joy Ibrahim	118-B
	Ramona Mitchell	127-B
	Beth Pierce	132-B
	Tina Plue	124-B
	Laura Richards	122-B
Grade One	Jane Beveridge	124-A
	Debbie Creek	115-A
	Tracy Geitner	119-A
	Lauren Kountz	109-A
	Jeanette Rosenberger	113-A
Grade Two	Carmen Bonner-Johnson	126-A
	Kate Cobb	214-A
	Latoya Coleman	217-A
	April Jacobs	121-A
	Jocelyn McGilvery	106-A
	Vanessa Rigaud	212-A
Grade Three	Tracey Brown	221-A
	Brian Lanahan	219-A
	Tamara McRae	205-A
	Amanda Soto	208-A
Grade Four	Jalpurnia Blalock	218-A
	Karen Heilman	208-B
	Melissa Mayhew	211-B
	Pamela Curtis	209-B
Grade Five	Sharon Daugherty	206-B
	Mya Harper	213-B
	Sonia McFadden	207-B
	Dawn Nowlin	212-B
	Vicki Payton	205-B
Special Education	Veronica Davenport	105-A
	Dildra Roane	204-B
ESOL	Karan Barron	114-B
	Rachel Smith	127-A
	Nick Zanin	223-A

Vocal Music	Heather Delaney	132-D
	Michael Wehinger	135-D
Instrumental Music	Jennifer Murray	Stage
Physical Education	Cindy Donn	129-D
	Jason Monjes	
School Psychologist	Donna Christy	101-A
Speech Pathologist	Patricia Gager	102-A
Occupational Therapist	Jodi Kaseff	101-A
Pupil Personnel Worker		114-D
Media Specialist	Rebecca Cavallo	Media
Reading Specialist	Rhonda Hawkins	225-A
Counselor	Diane Hopkins	113-D
School Nurse 3) 931-2835	Cookie Maxfield, R.N.	Health Suite
Instructional Assistants	Natalie Nunez	112-B
	Pedetin Ezeigbo	117-B
Before/After School Care 3) 931-2860	TBD	Office Stage
Cafeteria Staff 3) 931-2855	Maria Berkley, Manager	Cafeteria
Building Supervisor 3) 931-2845	Brian Cauley	
Night Lead	Angelo Rossi	
Custodial Staff	Rosa Guevara	
	Carlethia McDaniel	
	Marcus Ross	



PLEASE NOTE....DURING TIMES OF INSTRUCTION, PHONE MESSAGES WILL BE TAKEN BY THE FRONT OFFICE STAFF AND PLACED IN THE TEACHERS' MAILBOXES AS NOT TO INTERFERE WITH INSTRUCTION. NO PHONE CALLS WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE CLASSROOM DURING INSTRUCTIONAL TIMES.



II. Arrival and Dismissal

School Hours for Students are 7:45 AM to 1:55 PM.

School Office Hours are 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM M-Th

7:30 AM to 2:30 PM F

A. Arrival. Students are expected to arrive at school between 7:25 AM and 7:45 AM. Children who walk to school or ride in private cars should not arrive at school before 7:25 AM, as supervision is not available. Students should be in their seats and ready to learn at 7:50 AM. Breakfast service for non-bus riders ends at 7:45 AM. You are tardy at 7:45 AM!!! Parents are expected to let children enter the school independently.

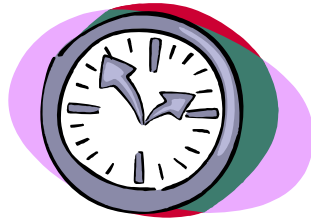


B. Dismissal. Afternoon announcements begin at 1:50 PM. At 1:55 PM., dismissal of walkers and car riders begins. Following walkers and car riders, bus riders will be dismissed. Children that are picked up by an after care service will be dismissed to the media center. The after care provider will need to report to the Media Center to pick the students up. No students may return to class for items or materials after dismissal. Students must listen to the announcements as bus colors/letters are called in the order that the buses arrive.

If a child is to be dismissed to a different location, parents must send a note indicating the date and the change to take place. A child may not visit another child's home after school or be transported by a person not in your family without prior parent approval. This rule is for all children's safety. If a student does not bring a note to school, we will insist that he/she follows the normal dismissal routine. Once a student has boarded the bus, the student will not be removed from the bus. If you do not wish for your child to ride the bus on a particular day, a note or phone call must be received by 1:30 PM. Again, this regulation is for all children's safety.

Dismissal Expectations

- Get ready to go home at 1:50.
- Remember the items and materials which must be taken home and have them ready. You may not return to the room after dismissal.
- Walk quietly in a single line during dismissal. Stay to the right of the hallway.
- Go directly home—not to a friend's house.



C. Early Dismissal. No child is permitted to leave the building during the school day without written permission from home and approval from the school office. If it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early from school, parents are asked to send a note to the child's teacher. The note will be given to the school office for verification. When arriving to pick up children for early dismissal, parents must report to the front office. Office staff will notify the teacher that you have arrived and your child will meet you in the office. If a child is being picked up by an adult outside the family, that person must be designated in writing. This precaution is in the interest of maintaining your child's security. Early dismissals are only permitted prior to 1:45 PM. Following that time, you will have to wait for normal dismissal procedures. This helps ensure a smooth dismissal for all.

Unless the office has been notified in writing, no changes will be made to a student's regular dismissal routine. When possible, if you alter your child's dismissal routine, please discuss the changes with your child in advance. Since we have an early afternoon dismissal of 1:55 PM, we encourage parents to schedule most of your child's medical and dental appointments after school.

D. Change in Dismissal Routine. In cases of poor weather conditions or other local emergencies, changes in the dismissal routine may be modified. Local school personnel are not responsible for the final decision to close school. The Superintendent or designee will make such decisions. These decisions concerning early morning closings are generally made prior to 5 AM. An announcement is then provided by 38 radio stations and eight (8) television stations within the Washington metropolitan area. The goal is to contact the stations in time for early morning broadcasts that begin between 5 and 6 AM. This information may also be accessed on the Prince George's County Public Schools web page at www.pgcps.org. Parents can sign up to receive e-mails about delayed openings and early closings at www.schoolsout.com. In addition, the school system's cable television station, Channel 96, will broadcast a "crawl" message.



Decisions regarding early dismissal (when schools close half-day or one or two hours early) are also communicated to area radio and television stations for broadcast. During emergency weather conditions, parents should monitor the weather reports on television or radio and listen for announcements concerning school operations. Please make sure you are aware of your child's after care provider policy regarding early closing of schools.

E. Changes in School Hours. When schools are closed early or all day, all evening activities are cancelled, and school buildings are not available for after-school activities by other public or private organizations.



1. **Delayed Openings.** Delayed openings will be either one or two hrs.

One-hour delay – All buses run one hour later than normal.
School begins one hour later, 8:45 AM.

Two-hour delay – All buses run two hours later than normal.
School begins two hours later, 9:45 AM.

2. **Early Closing.** Early closing decisions are made by the Superintendent of Prince George's County Schools, not the individual school. Please do not call the school or area office for information.

It is most imperative that you make plans **in advance** for your child's care in case schools are dismissed early. You could possibly be away from your home at the time an emergency occurs. Make decisions now, before the emergency, so that your child will know where to go when you are not home. Be sure to keep the emergency cards you sent in the first week of school up to date. Childcare providers should be made aware of any changes as well. **If your emergency/early dismissal plan for your child changes, please be certain to notify the school of the change immediately.**

Please do not call and ask school personnel to make personal arrangements for your child. When a change in dismissal has been announced, the school staff is busy trying to accommodate needs that result from the emergency.

*Please note that if Vansville has an emergency in which the electricity is off, our telephones will not ring.

3. **Half Day.** Several times during the school year, the students will have a half day of school. At Vansville, this means that the school day will end for students at 10:55 AM. Parents are expected to make appropriate arrangements for children as no provision exists for children to be cared for at school.



III. Attendance

A. Attendance. All students are expected to attend school regularly in accordance with The Public Schools Laws and Bylaws of Maryland 1984. According to Bylaw 13A.08.01.02, "Absence from school, including absence for any portion of the day, of students who are presently enrolled in public schools shall be considered lawful only under the following conditions: death in the immediate family, illness of the child, quarantine, court summons, violent storms, work or activity approved or sponsored by the school or the local school system, or the state education agency, observance of a religious holiday, or state emergency." Excessive absences will result in a referral to the Pupil Personnel Worker for further investigation.

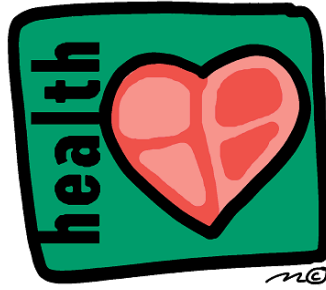
PLEASE NOTE: Family vacations and babysitting younger children are NOT lawful reasons for absenteeism.



B. Tardiness. Children may enter the school building beginning at 7:25 AM each day. They are expected to be seated and ready for the school day to begin at 7:45 AM. The beginning of the day is extremely important for students and teachers. When a child arrives late, the class and teacher are inconvenienced and the late student is unaware of announcements and instruction that has already been given. In addition, arriving on time is a habit that we work to establish with all children at a young age. We urge parents to make every effort to have your child at school on time each day. Students arriving late, after 7:50 AM, must report with their parent/guardian to the office to obtain a late pass to take to their teacher. Excessive tardies may result in a referral to the Pupil Personnel Worker for further action.

C. Absence. When a child is absent, you will receive an automated call from us via the School Communication System (SCS).

When the child returns to school after an absence, you must send a note to the teacher explaining the reason for the child's absence. Teachers will review missed work when a child returns to school after an excused lawful absence. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher to obtain missed assignments.



IV. Health and Safety

A. Health Room. The Health Room is located adjacent to the school office. A nurse is available during the school day to handle minor injuries and illnesses that occur. If an injury or illness requires parental and/or medical attention, the School Nurse (or other school personnel) will notify the parent/guardian or designated emergency contact. **We must have a current, working emergency contact phone number.** If this number changes, please inform the office immediately.

Minor cuts and scratches are washed with soap and water. Baking soda may be applied to insect bites and stings. (This is the prescribed treatment used in all Prince George's County Public Schools.)



B. Absence for Illness. Attendance at school is very important – if a child is not present, he/she cannot learn. However, if your child has a fever, is vomiting, coughing, sneezing, ill with a bacterial or viral infection, or is extremely uncomfortable from other symptoms, please keep him/her at home until he/she is fever free for 24 hours.

Certain medical conditions require **proof of treatment** before your child can be readmitted to school. Please use the following guidelines before sending your child back to school.

1. Pink eye or ringworm of the scalp requires a doctor's note indicating that treatment is in progress and the student may return to school.
2. Ringworm of the body or extremities requires proof of treatment (such as sales receipt and packaging from treatment product, or a doctor's note); lesions must be covered while at school.
3. Head lice require proof of treatment as stated above, and the student **must be free of all nits** before returning to school.



C. Medications at School. The Board of Education has a policy regarding the administration of medication at school. Please read the following information carefully. As much as possible, you are urged to give medications at home before and after school. If a student must take any medication (prescription or non-prescription) during the school day, or must keep medication at school for an emergency situation (e.g., severe reaction to insect bites, asthma) a completed Physician's Authorization for Medication form must be submitted to the office and retained on file at the school. These forms are available in the Health Room.

All medications sent to school must be in a sealed container, which is properly labeled by a pharmacist with the student's name, the name of the medication, the physician's name, the date, and the directions for administration. An over-the-counter medication must be in the original container with the proper labeling attached. All medications that are controlled substances (e.g., Ritalin, Dexedrine, Adderall) must be brought to the Health Room by the parent, guardian, or other designated adult. **NO medications** may be in the possession of the student. The only exception to this is students with a medical doctor's permission to keep inhalers in their possession at all times. It will be the responsibility of the parent to pick up any medication at the end of the school year. No medication will be sent home with a student. Any medication left after the last day of school will be discarded.

It is very important for the safety of all of our students that we have your complete cooperation in following these guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact our nurse, Cookie Maxfield at 301-931-2835.



D. Vaccinations. Since September 1992, the State of Maryland began requiring a second dose of measles/mumps vaccine for all students entering kindergarten through sixth grade. Parents must present proof of this immunization date to the school. Since a child's second measles shot will most likely be given as MMR, written proof of the second MMR is also considered as having at least one mumps shot.

All students must be in compliance with current immunization requirements. All preschoolers, kindergartners, and first graders through tenth graders must have proof of the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or month and year of the illness and 3 doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine. All first time students enrolled in Pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade must have a lead certificate completed by a parent or physician where applicable.



E. Safety Patrols. Vansville Elementary is very proud of our safety patrols and feels that we are fortunate to have a well-organized, efficient, and dependable Patrol Program. Staff sponsors select the patrols on the basis of willingness to respect authority, reliability, academic performance, and serving as role models for peers. The patrols serve as the staff's eyes and ears on the buses. They also assist with dismissal of our Head Start, Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten children. Please encourage your children to obey and respect the patrols as they help to promote safety in our school community.



F. Bus Riders. If your child rides a school bus, please discuss with him/her the following Student Bus Rider Responsibilities as determined by the school system:

1. Be at designated stop ten minutes prior to pick-up time.
2. Ride **only** the bus you are assigned to by PGCPD Department of Transportation.
3. Get on and off the bus at your assigned stop.
4. Remain seated while the bus is in motion; keep noise down by talking in normal conversational tones only; maintain normal classroom standard of conduct.
5. No eating or drinking on the bus; no animals or other non-school related objects should be taken onto the bus.
6. Do not extend arms, hands, head, or any object from windows, or throw any object from the bus.
7. **A responsible adult or designee is expected to meet Head Start, Pre-kindergarten or Kindergarten children at the bus stop. If the bus driver is uncertain if the child will have a responsible escort at the stop, they may choose to return the child to school.**

Riding the school bus is a privilege that will be denied if a child's behavior is unacceptable and endangers the safety of other students. Fighting of any nature or vandalism to the bus WILL result in a bus suspension. It will then be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to get the child to school.



The Department of Transportation will assign each child a route number. This route number will be on cardboard posted in the right side window of the bus. After bus routes and routines are finalized, each bus is assigned a color or letter for easy identification within the school. Please ensure that your child learns the correct route number to avoid getting on the wrong bus.

According to regulations issued by the Board of Education, students who are not bus riders may not ride a bus. In addition, students may not ride a bus different from the one they are assigned. If your child is to go home with a bus rider, please contact the school administration for authorization. Regulations prohibit parents from riding the buses to and from school.



G. Walkers. Students who walk to school must use the available sidewalks and keep away from all traffic. We encourage all parents to discuss the safety concerns of children walking in the street and on other people's property. Discourage your child from walking through any wooded areas.

Parents are urged to discuss the safety of the route which walkers use and encourage children to walk along the route recommended by school personnel. Patrols are provided only on the routes that are approved by the school system.

All parents/guardians are asked to wait at the far left of the building when meeting children at the end of the day. Students will be dismissed through the door at the end of this wing.

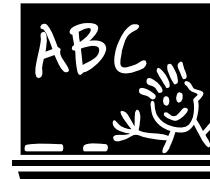
H. Bicycle Riders. Parents are encouraged to review bicycle safety rules with children before allowing them to ride bikes to school. In addition, all children riding a bicycle should have a bicycle lock and a helmet. State law requires children of elementary age to wear helmets. School personnel cannot be responsible for bikes on the bike rack. If you are permitting your child to ride his/her bike to school, please notify the office so we can monitor their arrival.



I. Car Riders. Only school buses are permitted in the bus circle between 7:00 AM – 8:15 AM and from 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM. No cars may enter during these times. Proper signage will direct all traffic and your cooperation obeying these directives is appreciated and expected. When dropping your child off, please make sure you are mindful of all traffic patterns and speed limit. The speed limit is 5 mph. It is essential that we all take responsibility for safety of all families. Parking is not permitted curb side. When dropping your child off, please pull past the cross walk. You are discouraged from dropping your child at the entrance on Ammendale Road due to safety concerns. Be patient and be polite for we are all in this together.



J. Accident Insurance. School accident insurance is available to all students on a voluntary basis. Payment is made directly to the insurance company. Forms are sent home with all students in August. Claim forms are available in the office. Students have 30 days after entry in school to enroll in the program.



V. Student Life

A. Student Rights. Prince George's County Public Schools does not discriminate in admissions, access, treatment or employment in its programs and activities on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, or handicapping conditions. Vansville Elementary respects the rights of students and will ensure that all students will be treated equally and fairly. Some of the student rights in the PGCPs Code of Student Conduct include:

- An education in a safe learning environment
- Freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion
- Due process of academic, attendance, and disciplinary measures

B. Student Responsibilities. Along with rights come responsibilities. Each student is expected to:

- Help create and maintain a safe and orderly school conducive to learning. Vansville Elementary has a zero-tolerance for fighting of any kind regardless of who is the aggressor.
- Know and obey all school rules and regulations.
- Come to school each day on time and ready to learn.
- Work to achieve potential in all activities.
- Obey all instructions from all school employees in a positive manner.
- Ask questions to ensure understanding.
- Dress according with school dress code.
- Accept responsibility for actions.

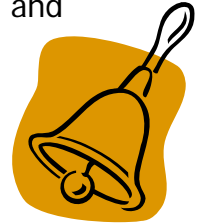
1. Code of Student Conduct. The basic policy of the Board of Education regarding student conduct and discipline is found in the Administrative Procedure 10101 Code of Student Conduct. This publication can be found on the PGCPs web site at www.pgcp.org/~beltsvac/conducteng.pdf. This Code is used by all personnel in the Prince George's County Public Schools as they work with children.

The staff at Vansville works with children in a positive manner in order to maintain good order and discipline at all times. Students understand that rules are made so that they will be able to learn and function well in a safe environment. Staff members communicate with



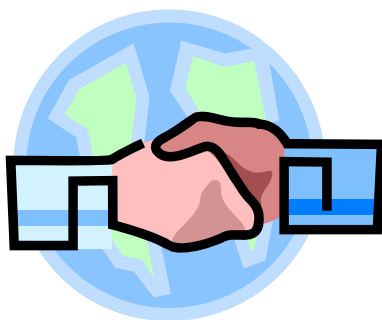
parents regarding problems that a child may be having with discipline. Parents are encouraged to provide as much support as possible in this area. It is extremely important for students to realize that school personnel and parents are working cooperatively. With your support for the guidelines, which we have established for our students, all children at Vansville will have the opportunity to get an excellent education in a very safe, secure environment.

2. General School Guidelines. If all students understand and follow these guidelines, we can make Vansville a safe and pleasant place to be. If everyone respects the rights of others to get a good education, we can all work and learn in a positive learning environment. Show everyone that we are the BEST!



- Everyone should show respect for all people at school. This respect can be demonstrated by the way we act towards others, the way we speak, and consider others.
- Everyone should show respect for property to include: books, furniture, and lavatories. Vandalism of our school will not be tolerated. Such acts may result in suspension and/or monetary cost for repairs.
- Accept responsibility to come to school prepared with books, homework, lunch money, instruments, etc.
- Come to school on time and be ready to work. Accept responsibility, and do one's work to the best of one's ability when it is assigned.
- Cooperation should be shown as we work together in small or large groups; taking turns is important and needs to be developed; class jobs are important in this area.
- Our school should be a calm building—we work calmly in class and do not disturb others; we come into school calmly in the morning and leave calmly in the afternoon; we are quiet when entering the lunch room, sit down and then we talk softly for the rest of the lunch period; we are quiet again when it its time to throw our trash away; we are quiet when we go to the multi-purpose room for an assembly and we sit quietly until it begins.
- We use proper language and good manners—foul language is unacceptable.
- Only appropriate items for instruction should be brought to school. Toys should only be brought to school when the teacher permits. No toy weapons of any kind are acceptable.
- Appropriate clothing should be worn (no sandals or flip-flops; only soft-soled, close toed shoes)
- Fighting is not permitted at Vansville under any circumstances. If it occurs, a phone call will be made to parents. A fight may result in suspension of at least one day from school. Disagreements can be settled without fighting. We must teach our children to handle disagreements with our minds not our fists!!! Fighting is a suspendable offense regardless who starts the fight!!!
- Found items do not become the finder's property, but should be turned in to the teacher.





3. Bullying/Conflict Resolution. Based on national, state, and local interest, all students at Vansville Elementary School will be educated on bullying and conflict resolution. Through classroom guidance lessons and classroom discussions, they will learn the definition of bullying and various strategies needed to deal with conflict at school. If a student has a problem with a conflict at school, they will be able to utilize peer mediation or small group counseling with the School Counselor. At certain times, conflict becomes a disciplinary matter. When this happens, the Assistant Principal or Principal will investigate the situation and render disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis. This comprehensive program will ensure students learn the life skills needed to solve problems with peers while understanding that adults will be available to intervene when needed.

4. Dress Code.

- No hats or “skull-caps” are to be worn at any time. Headdresses can be worn indoors for religious or health reasons only.
- Shirts and blouses should be continuous from neckline to waist. The entire mid-section should not show. No spaghetti strap tops, tank tops or muscle shirts.
- No clothing with vulgar language, obscene pictures, weapons, drugs/alcohol, drug paraphernalia and/or tobacco products.
- No identifiable gang/crew clothing or paraphernalia.
- No see-through clothing.
- Skirts, dresses, shorts, and spandex skirts should be approximately six (6) inches below the buttocks, or no shorter than fingertip level.
- Pants should be secured at the waist; no sagging below waist to expose undergarments.
- Tights, stretch pants, leggings, and spandex body suits must be worn with clothing long enough to extend six (6) below the buttocks or no shorter than fingertip level. This is for all age levels.
- Soft-soled, close toed shoes must be worn. “Healies” (shoes with skates built in) are not permitted. Flip-flops are prohibited.



Students violating the dress code will have their parents contacted to secure proper clothing. If the parent is unable to provide proper clothing, the child will not be permitted in class and will be kept in the front office for the entire school day to complete assigned work.



5. Portable Communication Devices. Students are allowed to be in possession of a cellular telephone or pager. However, students may not use such a device in a manner that will disrupt the school environment. **All portable communication devices must be turned off while the student is riding a school bus and during the school day.** Should such device be used or remain on during these times, the administration will secure the device and return it to the parent. Students are discouraged from bringing such devices to school. **The school is not responsible for such devices if they are lost, stolen or damaged.**

6. Computer Technology. Students using technology (computers and the Internet) on the school premises must adhere to the following guidelines:

- No illegal activity.
- No “chat rooms” or “chat lines”
- No Internet sites that promote activities or opinions inappropriate to a school setting (as determined by a staff member).
- No use of equipment for commercial purposes.
- Must not impede network operations.
- Must not interfere with others’ work or use another’s account.
- Must not misrepresent one’s own identity.
- Must not disclose one’s identity on the Internet.



7. Banned Substances and Items.

No student may possess alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or weapons/weapon look a-likes while on school premises, on a school bus, or under the care of school staff.

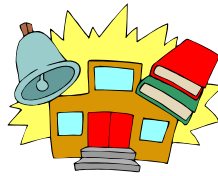
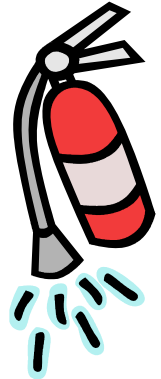
Possession implies having a substance or item on one’s person, with one’s personal property, or under one’s control.

According to the PGCPSS Code of Conduct paragraph XIII.1., “For students enrolled in grades K through 5, the Principal may use discretion as to consequences for possession or use of a weapon.” Consequences may include suspensions. The Code also describes a weapon as any firearm, knife, razor, defensive weapon, martial arts device, tool, or instrument which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude as being capable of inflicting bodily harm or one that gives the appearance of such an item.



8. Fire Drill Expectations.

- Walk SILENTLY in a single line.
- Remain silent during the entire drill.
- Be prepared to answer when your teacher calls your name for attendance once outside.
- If you are away from your class when the alarm rings, go out with the class that is nearest the area where you are.
- If a fire drill occurs during recess, line up by class and follow the directive of the recess monitor.



9. Hallway Expectations.

- Walk on the right side of the hall.
- Students must always be silent in the hall.
- Show respect for others that are learning.
- Walk at all times.
- Stay away from classroom doors so that you do not disturb teaching and learning.
- Respect artwork, bulletin board work, and other personal items as you go through the hall by keeping your hands off.



10. Classroom Expectations

- Treat teachers and classmates with respect at all times.
- Keep voices at an appropriate level.
- Walk (do not run) in your classroom.
- Keep your desk and the area around your desk clean. Do not write on your desk.
- Keep your chair flat on the floor for safety, no rocking or leaning back.
- Cover textbooks.
- No outside jackets, coats, or hats are to be worn in the classroom, bring layers to wear.
- Follow the rules of your classroom at all times.

11. Books and Materials. Board of Education Policy 616.1 states that pupils must return textbooks and/or other educational materials as were originally assigned to appropriate school personnel in a satisfactory condition, or reimburse the school for lost or damaged textbooks and/or other education materials, or make other satisfactory arrangements with the principal concerning the textbooks and/or other education materials.



When books are assigned by a number to your child, he/she is given the opportunity to examine the text, record its condition, and sign a textbook assignment form that is kept on file until the book is returned. If the book is not returned in satisfactory condition, the student must pay for this book.

All textbooks that are used by students for homework on a regular basis should be covered throughout the school year. Please DO NOT use contact paper on textbooks! This includes mathematics, reading, spelling, science, and social studies. Any type of book cover or sturdy paper may be used. Because of the increase in textbook costs and the budget restrictions, we urge parents to help us as we attempt to teach our students responsibility in taking care of school property.



12. Homework. The Board of Education recognizes homework as an integral and necessary part of the educational program for each student. Homework is a learning activity related to instruction presented within the school. The purposes of homework are to reinforce, supplement, and enrich work done in the classroom, provide for individual interests, promote competency in skills and content learning, help students to manage time effectively, apply acquired knowledge, and enable students to use a variety of sources of information.

At the beginning of the school year the teacher will send home a copy of the homework policy for his/her class. Students are expected to write down their daily homework assignments. When the homework is completed each day, parents should sign the assignment sheet to verify that all work has been done. Parents are urged to provide support for their children as they do their homework. Suggestions to help promote good homework habits are to:

- Provide a quiet place to study (without the TV, cell phone, Ipad, etc).
- Set a specific study time.
- Follow through with the homework assignment.
- Maintain a supply of pencils, paper, and other supplies at home.
- Check the work assigned.
- Encourage your child to do his or her best.

Please be sure that the work your child hands in is his or her own work - not that of an assistant. If your child indicates that he or she has no homework for several days, please contact his/her teacher.



C. Breakfast/Lunch. The price of a student breakfast is \$1.60. Students have a choice to bring a lunch or purchase a lunch at school for \$2.60, including milk. Children who bring lunch from home may purchase a carton of milk or juice for \$0.55 during the lunch period.

Free and reduced lunch applications will be mailed directly home. Additional forms may be requested from the front office. Parents who believe their child(ren) qualify for the free or reduced lunch program should return the applications as soon as possible. Once verified, the reduced student lunch price is \$0.40 and reduced student breakfast price is \$0.30.

1. Lunch Accounts. Vansville Elementary uses a computerized meal program. All enrolled students are issued a 4 or 5-digit PIN# and a corresponding meal account. It is important that each student memorize his/her PIN#. This number is confidential; therefore the number must not be given to other students. At mealtime, the students enter their PIN# on a keypad located next to the cashier. Meal, milk, and *a la carte* costs for purchased items are deducted from the account at the time of purchase.

Money can be deposited in a student's account at any time in any amount up to \$99.99 (cash or check made payable to Prince George's County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services). Parents are encouraged to maintain money in their child's account. This ensures that each student account has sufficient money in case a lunch is forgotten or misplaced. Students may bring money to school to add to their account. However, we strongly encourage parents to take advantage of the online system found at www.pgcps.org.



If you have any questions call our Cafeteria Manager at 301-931-2855

2. Lost / Forgotten Lunch. No child will have to go without lunch. If a child has not brought a lunch from home and does not have sufficient money in his or her account to cover the cost of lunch, that child will be served a cheese sandwich, milk, and fruit at no cost. We simply ask that parents reimburse the school \$.55 for milk the following day. This is PGCPS policy. Please notify the office if your child is allergic to cheese/milk.

3. Lunchroom Behavior

- a. Everyone is quiet entering the cafeteria and remains quiet until all of their classmates are seated. When on your feet, you do not speak.
- b. When talking, use soft, inside voices.
- c. Sit at your table until dismissed to get milk or lunch.
- d. Sit flat on your seat with feet on the floor to avoid accidents and maintain a calm setting.
- e. Inside the lunch line, conversations are only with the cafeteria staff, not friends.

- f. **Never share food.**
- g. The blowing of a whistle, or a countdown of 3-2-1, signals immediate silence.
- h. When adults speak, please listen instantly.
- i. Helpers are selected by teachers to clean tables and pick up trash.
- j. Helpers wring out rags before wiping tables.
- k. Each class should clean up the floor before leaving the cafeteria.
- l. Student lines must leave the cafeteria in silence and remain silent.



D. Recess. The Recess period is a regular part of the school program for grades Pre-kindergarten through five. It consists of a daily, supervised, period of free play on the playground. All children are expected to participate in recess unless they have a medical problem which prevents them from doing so. If a medical condition exists, it should be substantiated by a **doctor's certificate**, which should be sent to the teacher. If a teacher does not receive such a note, the student will participate in the recess program. There may be some days that a student loses their recess time due to inappropriate behavior.

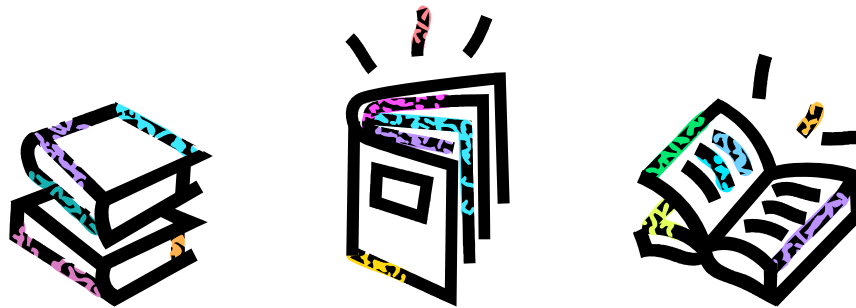
During inclement weather, recess is held in the classrooms.

Playground Expectations. The playground should be a fun, safe place for everyone.

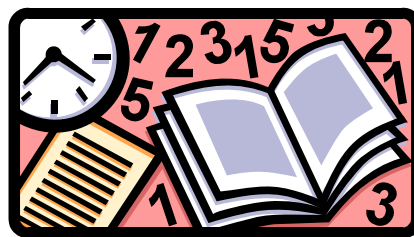


- Always play within the sight of the Recess Monitor.
- Do not come into the building without permission from the Recess Monitor on duty.
- Follow safety rules on equipment.
- Do not throw or pick up anything other than a ball (e.g., sand, rocks, sticks).
- Play away from physical education classes.
- Play away from all classroom windows.
- All wooded areas are off limits.
- Games that involve bodily contact may not be played (especially no tackle games).
- Freeze as soon as the first whistle blows.
- Get in line immediately when the second whistle blows.
- Wait for your teacher to dismiss you.
- Enter the building silently at the end of recess.





E. Library. The mission of the media center is to ensure that all students and staff acquire the informational literacy skills necessary to become life-long learners. The Media Center has a wide collection of books, videos, and CD-ROMs that correlate with and enhance the curriculum. Students are encouraged to visit this interesting learning area on a regular basis in addition to their scheduled class times (by teacher permission, only). Parents are asked to remind their children about book care and the responsibility to return all books on time. Prince George's County School Policy states that students must return all books and materials or pay for them before the end of the school year.



F. Before and After School Care Program. The school system provides a Before and After School Extended Learning Program here at Vansville. The cost of the program is \$3,000 per child per year. Activities that are provided include homework time, arts and crafts, physical education, snacks, games, and science. For registration information, call the BASELP office at 301-805-2717 OR The Central Office at 301-408-5593. To contact the Vansville Before and After School Care Program, please call 301-931-2860.





G. Reporting Student Progress.

1. Weekly Evaluations. Each of our students at Vansville has a Friday Folder which is used to bring home graded papers, classwork, and a weekly evaluation from the teacher. Parents are requested to review your child's work, discuss the evaluation with him/her, sign the evaluation form, and make certain that it is returned to school every Monday morning. This is a good opportunity to write your child's teacher a note if you have any questions. The interest you show in this weekly report will convey to your child the importance you place on his/her daily performance and will have a definite influence on his/her achievement.

2. Progress Reports. A progress report will be sent home with all students at the midpoint of each grading period or as soon thereafter. All progress reports should be signed by a parent and returned to the teacher to verify that the parent has received them.



3. Report Cards. Our county reporting system for grades K-6 provides for four contacts (report cards) to report pupil progress during the school year. Pre-k students will receive reports cards in January and June. In addition, at least one parent-teacher conference will be scheduled during the year. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time to discuss a child's progress in school. Please do not hesitate to notify your child's teacher with any praise or concerns that you may have. At any time during the year, parents may access their child's grades through the SchoolMAX Parent Portal. Please contact the main office for additional information.

Students up through first grade will receive letter grades PR (Proficient), IP (In Process), ND (Needs Development) or TL (To Be Taught Later). Students in grades 2-5 will receive letter grades of A, B, C, D, or E based upon individual performance according to the teacher's calculation of the students' performance each quarter. Guidelines established by PGCPs for the determination of these grades will be distributed to you at the beginning of the school year.



Please see the PGCPs Calendar on page for grading period windows and report card distribution dates.

Parents are reminded to speak to the teacher directly about all concerns.

H. Student Recognition.

1. **Honor Roll.** Grade 1 students must receive all 1's in Work Habits and Social Skills and have no check marks in order to make the Honor Roll. Students in grades 2-6 must achieve at least a B in all subjects, including Work Habits and Social Skills, to qualify for Honor Roll. Students who achieve all A's will comprise the Principal's Honor Roll.

Student Stars

2. **Student of the Month.** Every month, each classroom teacher will select students to be recognized as Students of the Month. A certificate will be issued to the student and his or her picture will be taken and displayed in the showcase in the media center. Look for these students to also be recognized in our monthly newsletter.



I. **Student Council.** Student Council Officers and Representatives are elected by each of our classes from grades one to five. The Student Council meets regularly throughout the school year to plan special activities and events. Participation in this group helps students learn about democracy and good citizenship as they set their own goals and projects.



J. Birthdays in School.

Birthdays are a special day. Parents should make arrangements with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance. Students are invited to bring in a small treat that can be shared at lunch with all classmates or at a time designated by the teacher. Please send individually packed items for your child to hand out to ALL classmates. No cakes please – they are too much to handle at lunchtime. Store bought cupcakes may be brought. Please remember that many of our students have food allergies...plan for this as well for we do not want any child left out. Balloons and decorations are not permitted.



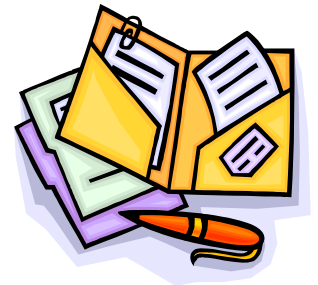
VI. Parent Involvement

A. Communication. The staff at Vansville strives to maintain clear paths of communication among the school, the students, and our students' families.



1. Vansville Newsletter. To keep families abreast of school events, our newsletter will be available to view on the school's web site www.pgcps.org/vansville. The newsletter will list important dates and all activities related to our school community. In addition, students will be highlighted and policies will be reviewed from time to time. Please post the newsletter in a convenient place and/or mark important dates on your calendar.

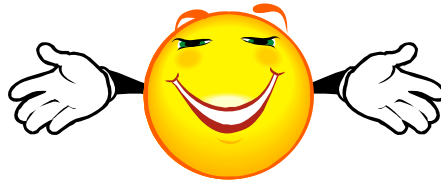
2. Friday Folder. Each Friday, your child will bring home a Friday Folder. It will contain classwork, information from your child's teacher, important dates, and a weekly evaluation to keep you informed of your child's progress.



3. Telephone Calls to School. If you have information, questions, or concerns, feel free to call the school. Teachers are available to take telephone calls after school between 2:10 PM and 3:00 PM and time permitting, during their planning period. They are usually not available before school as they are preparing to receive their students. You may call and leave a message or e-mail your child's teacher.



4. Telephone Calls from School. Due to the limited number of telephone lines, students will be allowed to use the telephone only for emergencies. Students may use the telephone only after permission has been obtained from the front office staff.



B. Visitors. Visitors (including parents) to Vansville must report to the main office immediately upon entering the building. Visitors must sign in and obtain a pass before proceeding throughout the building. This pass must remain visible at all times. Visitors should not go to the classrooms without an appointment set by the teacher or administration. Upon leaving the school, all visitors must report to the office and sign out.

If a court has ordered restrictions against any persons regarding visitations with your child, please provide the office with copies of the court orders.

If you bring something to your child during the day, please come to the office for assistance.

C. Classroom Visitation. Classroom visitation provides parents with an opportunity to observe the great things happening within the classrooms and to view your child in his or her daily setting. It is vital that you make an appointment with the office prior to your visit in order to eliminate interruptions to instruction and/or classroom schedules and to ensure safety. The classroom visit is for observation purposes. It is not the time to have a parent/teacher conference for this is instructional time for all. Please refrain from using cell phones while in the building. No laptops or other electrical devices should be used during your visit unless authorized by the school's administration.



D. Volunteers. Students feel a sense of pride when they see their parents and other familiar adults helping in their school. Parent volunteers are eagerly sought at Vansville. We can use support in any capacity you feel comfortable with providing. Working with students to support learning, practice, and mastery can be very rewarding for both the child and the volunteer. Working at home to type, cut, organize, and design, saves teachers a lot of time that would otherwise keep them from directly working with students. Shopping for events, copying at work, organizing outside activities, and even participating in fundraising is a big support to the children and our school. Working with our PTA committees to provide experiences for our children and raise funds for much needed materials not only supports our children's learning, but also brings our school community together. We encourage ALL of our families to be a part of all that we do – We can't do it without you! Vansville has a large parent Volunteer room with resources and space to assist the school with projects.



Board of Education Policy now requires that volunteers undergo a background check and fingerprinting to ensure the safety of students, staff, and fellow volunteers at all school sites. Volunteers and mentors working on a regular basis with students, in an unsupervised capacity, must undergo a criminal background check with fingerprinting. A criminal background check with fingerprinting is required only one time. The fee is currently \$61.00

for a criminal background check with fingerprinting. This fee lasts a lifetime and does not have to be renewed from year to year; however, it does require a minimum of 1 volunteer visit each year in order to remain active.

Chaperones who will participate in a day field trip or an overnight school trip must undergo a commercial background check. This does not require fingerprinting. The fee is currently \$7.00 (subject to change) for a commercial background check. This fee is required annually.



Parents who participate in a Career Day, a book fair, a school dance, or another one-time school activity, will not be required to undergo a criminal background check.

All background checks must be obtained through the Prince George's County Public Schools Fingerprinting Office. All volunteers and chaperones are responsible for the cost of a background check and fingerprinting. Call the Fingerprinting Office at 301-952-6775 for additional information.

This policy will be in effect for all parents and members of the school community that volunteer or chaperone the students at Vansville Elementary School. Evidence of a receipt documenting completion of the requisite background check and fingerprinting must be presented to the school. It will be kept on file.

All visitors to the school are required to come directly to the front office when entering the school and be prepared to present photo identification. We appreciate your support in keeping our children safe. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.



E. PTA. We are proud to have a very active PTA. Financial assistance from PTA may provide supplements to our instructional, music, physical education, art, media center, computer, and safety programs. In addition, it is our hope that a special monthly Cultural Arts program be provided. PTA financial resources could support supplies for the teacher sponsors of such events.

The PTA meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

All parents are encouraged to show their support for the outstanding work done by joining the PTA and attending regular meetings. Information regarding PTA functions will be included in our monthly newsletters and on our Vansville website.

Vansville Elementary would like to acknowledge the assistance of Rockledge Elementary School, Pam Landry, Retired Principal, with the preparation of this document.

VII. School Calendar 2011-2012

Prince George's County Public Schools 2011-2012 School Calendar

2011

August 22	Monday	First day of School for Students
September 5	Monday	Holiday – Labor Day – Schools Closed
September 29	Thursday	Holiday – Rosh Hashanah – Schools Closed
September 30	Friday	Professional Development Day – Schools Closed for Students
October 21	Friday	MSEA Convention – Schools Closed
October 28	Friday	End of First Quarter (46 days)
October 31	Monday	Grading Day – Schools Closed for Students
November 11	Friday	Parent/Teacher Conferences – Schools Closed for Students
November 23-25	Wed.-Fri.	Holidays – Thanksgiving – Schools Closed
Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Thurs.-Tues.	Holiday – Christmas/Winter Break – Schools Closed

2012

January 16	Monday	Holiday* – Martin L. King, Jr., Day – Schools Closed
January 20	Friday	End of Second Quarter (46 days)
January 23	Monday	Grading Day – Schools Closed
February 13	Friday	Professional Development Day – Schools Closed for Students
February 20	Monday	Holiday – Presidents' Day – Schools Closed
March 29	Thursday	End of Third Quarter (46 days)
March 30	Friday	Grading Day – Schools Closed for Students
April 2-9	Mon.-Mon.	Holiday/Spring Break – Schools Closed
May 28	Monday	Holiday – Memorial Day – Schools Closed
June 8	Friday	Last Day for Students End of Fourth Quarter (43 days)***
June 11	Monday	Last Day for Teachers**
***June 11-14	Mon-Thurs	Inclement weather make-up days