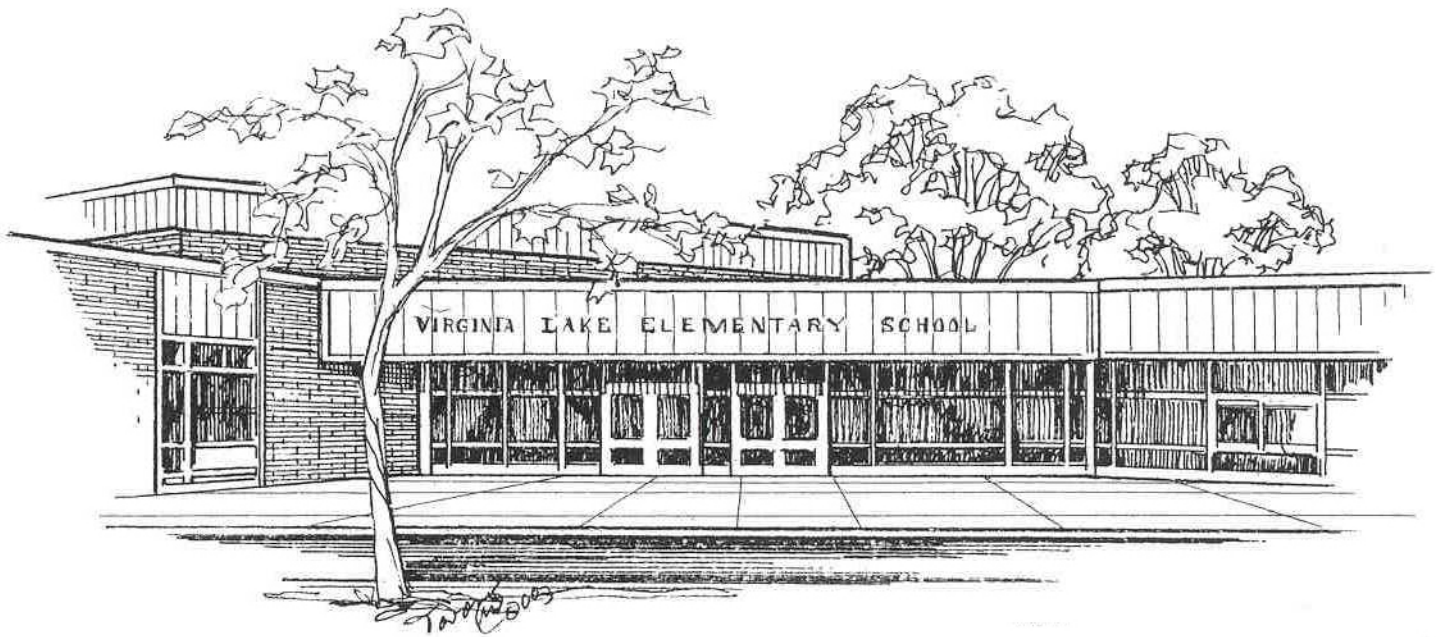


Virginia Lake School

Parent Handbook

2008-09



Virginia Lake School
925 N. Glenn Drive
Palatine, IL 60074-7189

Office: 847-963-7100
Absence Telephone: 847-963-7101
School Nurse: 847-963-7102
Fax: 847-963-7106

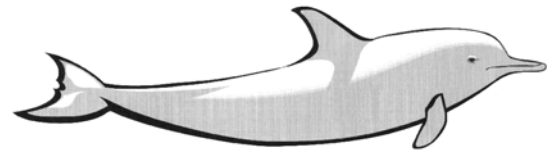
Faith Rivera, Principal
Joanna Byskosh, Assistant Principal
Pat Altergott, Secretary

Message from the Principal

Virginia Lake is a school where learning is the center of all we do. We encourage families to become actively involved in their child's educational journey. Our goal is to assist students reach their

individual maximum potential and to encourage them to produce quality work at all times. The entire staff at Virginia Lake seeks to create a child-centered environment. Our students at Virginia Lake are most successful when they follow our Virginia Lake Rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible. These rules will not only benefit the individual child but the entire Virginia Lake Community.

This handbook will assist families with questions that may arise throughout the school year.



School Mission Statement

"Where Learning and Friendship Count"

As part of an interdependent community, we at Virginia Lake School dedicate ourselves to providing an environment rich in opportunities that challenge and inspire every child to be a world-class, lifelong learner and a productive, self-confident community member. To foster the development of responsible, lifelong learners we:

- maintain a safe, orderly, and nurturing community
- encourage a cooperative partnership of families, staff, and community members
- accept diversity as an asset and celebrate individuality
- encourage the development of creative and academic talents
- provide a joyful, child-centered environment
- utilize available technology and research-based curriculums
- implement instructional strategies that accommodate individual learning styles.

Our School Is a No Excuses University (NEU) School

No Excuses University schools are a network of K-8 schools across the nation dedicated to aggressively promoting college readiness for all students and universal academic achievement. Becoming an NEU school requires completion of an extensive application, including a video, documenting the school's emphasis on student achievement.

NEU schools are committed to three key approaches:

- Promoting a culture of universal achievement by creating student and class goals that support high academic expectations for every student
- Developing exceptional core systems in the areas of collaboration, curriculum aligned to academic standards, assessment, data management, and academic/social interventions
- Involving and engaging students by prominently displaying university and college symbolism throughout the school—clothing, banners, flags, sports teams, and other college-related items. Each classroom in an NEU school selects a college or university to "adopt."



Virginia Lake celebrates being a No Excuses School by wearing No Excuses t-shirts on Mondays, which can be purchased for \$5. Students are also encouraged to wear college gear on Fridays.

School Phone Numbers You Should Know

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Office Phone Number | 847-963-7100 |
| Absence Phone Line..... | 847-963-7101 |
| School Nurse | 847-963-7102 |

School Closings

When severe weather conditions such as snow, ice, or dangerously cold temperatures exist, District 15 administrators will decide whether to close the schools. On these days, parents are encouraged to check the District 15 Web site (www.ccsd15.net) for up-to-date information on school closings or to listen to major radio and television stations for emergency school closing information. Parents may also call the school district's main number (847-963-3000) for a recorded message. In addition, the PTA will use its telephone chain to attempt to notify all parents of school closings.

Parents should review their own situation and decide whether to send their children to school if the schools remain open. If a parent decides to keep the children at home, the absence will be considered "excused," and all work may be completed on the return to school.

Parents should not rely on the Virginia Lake emergency phone chain as their source of information for school closings. This is a courtesy and is designed to be used if there is an emergency closing during the school day. If school is closed, all evening events are canceled.

Change in Address or Phone Number

It is very important that parents notify the school promptly in writing of any change of address, phone number, emergency contact information, or other information that might be pertinent to school records. Parents reporting address changes will be asked to provide two forms of identification that show both the parent/guardian name and the new address.

Withdrawal from School

Parents are asked to call the school office at least one week in advance of a move outside the school's attendance area. This will allow the school and parents adequate time to complete the necessary forms to ensure a timely transfer of school records.

Permission Slips

Written permission from parents is required for:

- Field trips
- Participation in intramurals
- Emergency release to a specific person other than a parent
- Bussed students who walk or ride a bike home
- Early dismissal from school
- Children going home with another student after school or for lunch.

A Student Name/Photo Release form must be on file for each student, and is valid as long as your child attends any District 15 school. If you choose to change your child's release status, you must submit a new form. Forms may be obtained from your child's school. Checking "yes" gives permission for your child's name and/or photo to be used in publications, presentations, videos, Web pages, or news releases produced by District 15 or by agencies working with the district. Checking "no" means that your child's name and/or

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photograph may not be used in any publication, presentation, video, Web site, or news release that is distributed outside of the school community. If parents do not return the form, it will be considered a “no” response.

Annual school yearbooks are considered internal school publications and are not subject to these restrictions. If you don't want your child's name/photo included in the annual school yearbook, please notify the school principal in writing.

Home/School Communication

Ongoing parent/teacher communication is important for each child's educational success. Parents who have questions or concerns are encouraged to contact teachers, the school office, or school administrators. All teachers have phones in their classrooms equipped with voice mail so parents can leave messages. The best time to call is before or after school or during your child's lunch period. Calls made to teachers during instruction time will go into voice mail. Parents may also e-mail teachers, using the first seven letters of the last name and the first name initial (up to eight characters)@ccsd15.net.

Early in the school year, a parent orientation is scheduled to give parents an opportunity to meet their child's teacher and learn about subject matter to be covered in the school year. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled for November 24 and 25, 2008. Please try to avoid scheduling vacations during this time so you can meet with your child's teacher on one of these designated conference days. In the event that you will be unable to attend November 24 or 25, your child's teacher will contact you for a phone conference.

In the spring, an open house showcases students' work throughout the school year. Parents and students are invited to visit classrooms together.

Emergencies

It is extremely important that the school office have up-to-date home and work telephone numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts on file. Parents will be contacted in the event a child becomes sick or is injured.

Children will be released only to their parents or legal guardians during an emergency, such as a tornado warning. No child will be released to a non-family member unless the school has a letter from parents on file and then only with the principal's approval.

To ensure the safety of our students and staff, District 15 schools perform various safety drills during the school year. During fire drills, each classroom has a prescribed fire emergency evacuation route and an alternate route for exiting the building. Children should follow directions, walk quickly to the assigned location, and wait quietly for further direction from teachers or administrators. At least once a year, schools also conduct tornado drills. Teachers will lead the children to the designated emergency shelter area. Schools also conduct lock-down drills to practice procedures which would be implemented in circumstances such as an environmental hazard, an intruder in the building, or other emergency situation. During lock-down drills, students will remain in their classrooms until an all-clear is given. In addition, twice a year students will participate in bus evacuation drills. Please discuss the seriousness of these drills with your child.

Parent/Visitor Procedures

For the safety of students and staff, exterior doors of the school building will be locked at all times except when children are entering or exiting. Parents and other visitors must ring the doorbell, and a staff member will release the lock. Visitors must enter the office, sign in, and wear an identification badge at all times while in the building. Parents and visitors are welcome at the school. Because unannounced visits can be disruptive and interfere with instructional time, all visits must be arranged through an appointment with the classroom teacher. Younger siblings in the classroom are a distraction; please make other arrangements for them if you plan to visit.

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Items dropped off for students, such as lunches, notes, homework, keys, or musical instruments, will be delivered from the office before lunch or before dismissal.

Occasionally, parents ask if they can bring in a child's pet to show to the rest of the class. Unfortunately, because of the high number of allergies and potential for disease, we cannot allow that. In the interest and well being of all our students, please leave your pets at home and invite your child's friends to come visit your dog, cat, rabbit, guinea pig, hamster, turtle, or ferret in the comfort of your own home.

Visitors are welcome to use the washrooms located in the office area. Please ask someone to direct you to them should you need one.

Attendance

Regular, on-time attendance is very important. Children who are absent unnecessarily miss vital classroom instruction time. Repeated absences may have a negative effect on a student's progress, work habits, and attitude.

The Illinois State Board of Education dictates what adds up to a full day of school vs. a half day of school, as well as tardies and trancies. District 15 follows the standard shown below:

- Any student who is late for school 30 minutes or less will be marked tardy. (We understand that school buses sometimes run late due to unforeseeable circumstances and in these instances students will not be marked tardy.)
- Any student who leaves 30 minutes or less before the end of the school day will be marked with an early pick-up.
- Any student who is in attendance for more than 150 class-time minutes (the lunch/recess hour does not count) but less than 300 class-time minutes will be marked absent for a half-day.
- Any student who is in attendance for less than 150 class-time minutes (the lunch/recess hour does not count) will be marked absent for the full day.

Our first concern when a child is absent is to verify the child's safety. For that reason, it is very important that the school office knows the whereabouts of your child(ren) when they are absent or will be late arriving at school. When your child is absent, it is your responsibility to call the school absence line or the school office to notify the staff of your child's absence. Please state your child's full name, the teacher's name, the date of the absence, and the reason for the absence.

If your child's whereabouts are unknown, every effort will be made to reach you using the phone numbers you have provided. Please make sure that your child's school office has all current phone numbers on record. If you have not notified the school with the reason of an absence and the school office has exhausted all attempts to reach you, your child will be marked truant for that school day and any other school day that your child is unaccounted for.

Parents who have children who missed 10 school days without documentation may receive notification of truancy.

Vacations

Taking students out of school for vacations is discouraged and is considered an unexcused absence. If a student is to be absent because of a family vacation, parents should notify the school office in writing at least one week before the planned absence.

Tardies

Students are expected to arrive on time for school, because late arrivals cause unnecessary disruption in the classroom and result in lost instruction time. Late arrivals must get a pass from the school office to ensure that

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the student is not marked absent for the day and to enable us to notify School Nutrition Services if a hot lunch is needed. We closely monitor students who are frequently absent or tardy. If truancy or tardiness becomes a problem, parents will be contacted to resolve the issue.

Missed Homework

When students are absent, make-up work will be allowed. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing missing assignments or parents may contact their child's teacher directly regarding homework assignments. After returning to school, students will have three days to complete missing work. Teachers are not required to provide homework assignments in advance of an absence.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Arrival

Students should not arrive before 8:30 a.m. There is no staff supervision available for children until that time and students will not be permitted in the building.

Students who walk to school or are dropped off by parents should enter the building through the southwest door (off Rohlwing Road).

Students arriving on buses will enter the building through the main entrance doors, just off the bus loop (off Glenn Drive).

School hours:

- School begins8:40 a.m.
- A.M. kindergarten8:40–11:10 a.m.
- P.M. kindergarten..... 12:40–3:10 p.m.
- Lunch hours 11:15 a.m.– 12:15 p.m. and 12:15 p.m.– 1:15 p.m.
- Dismissal.....3:10 p.m.
- Office hours:.....7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Student Drop Off/Pick Up

Procedures for student drop off and pick up were established because student safety is our primary concern. Please observe and follow these procedures for the benefit of all children.

- No cars are permitted to enter/exit at Glenn Drive between 8:15–8:45 a.m. and 2:45–3:15 p.m. This area is reserved for buses only during these times.
- Please do not park or leave your vehicle unattended either in the Rohlwing Road lot pull-off or in the parking lot. The west side of Rohlwing is posted as no parking between 8-9 a.m. and 2:30-3 p.m. Cars parked there can be ticketed.
- Students should enter the building through the appropriate door and at the appropriate time.
- Students arriving late (after 8:40 a.m.) must enter through the main school entrance, as other entrances will be locked. They must check in with the school office to obtain a tardy slip before reporting to the classroom.
- Drop off and pick up your child northbound from the east side of Rohlwing Road only. This ensures that your child does not have to cross Rohlwing. This will also help to keep traffic moving smoothly past our school.

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- Parents may also drop off children in the morning only by entering the school parking lot off Rohlwing Road and circling around to the sidewalk on the south side of the school. Please pull up as far as you can so morning drop-off traffic on Rohlwing road does not backup. Never park your car here as this is a designated fire lane.
- If you must leave your car to assist your child, please park in available parking lot spaces or use street parking on the east side of Rohlwing Road. You may then walk your child to the school entrance. The Rohlwing Road parking lot is closed between 2:45 and 3:15 p.m. on school days. Cars cannot stop or park in the designated fire lane (the north side of the parking lot). On Market Days, cars may park in the Rohlwing Road parking lot for Market Day pick-up only.
- Designate a location where you will pick up your child. For example, you might want to always pick up your child just north of the school where there is less congestion.
- You may park in the Palatine Stadium Parking Lot and walk over to the school. This is allowable in the a.m. and the p.m.
- If you are detained and have not picked up your child by 3:20 p.m., your child will wait for you in the main office. At that time, you can pick up your child from the bus loop at the main entrance. A call to school would be most appreciated so we can reassure your child that you are coming. Remember that this should be the exception rather than the rule.
- Kindergarten a.m. pickup is from 11:10–11:15 a.m.
- Kindergarten p.m. drop-off is from 12:30–12:40 p.m. at the front of the building.
- Any changes in your child's transportation schedule must be brought to the assistant principal's attention in writing or by calling the school.

All exterior doors except the main entrance of the building will be locked at all times. Late arrivals must use the front entrance so we can maintain building security. All visitors to the school must come first to the main office and sign in at all times, including arrival time. This procedure is in place for the safety of our students and staff.

Walking to School/Crossing Guards

- If your child crosses Rohlwing Road as a walker or to be picked up, your child must cross at the walk where the crossing guard is posted (just north of the school). The Palatine Police Department determines the location of the crossing guard. The intersections at Rohlwing and Carpenter and Mill Valley and Cunningham are all-way stops with designated cross-walks; however, there are no crossing guards at these intersections, and we cannot recommend that children cross Rohlwing Road there.
- Walkers are reminded to avoid taking short cuts through yards or over dangerous obstacles such as fences or creeks.
- Any changes in your child's transportation schedule must be brought to the assistant principal's attention in writing or by calling the school.

Home for Lunch Policy

Parents may take their child out for lunch. Parents must come into the main office and sign their child out. Approval for a student to go to lunch with a friend must be made in writing to the school principal.

Leaving during School Day

Students are not permitted to leave school grounds on their own at any time during the school day. When a student needs to be excused during the school day for an appointment, parents should state in writing the reason for early dismissal, date and time the student is to be picked up, and by whom (parent or other designated person). The note should be brought to the office at the beginning of the school day. Students must

report to the office prior to leaving, and the parent or designee must come in to the school office to sign the child out. Students will only be released to parents or the designee, and either may be asked for identification when picking up their child. Students returning to school must report to the office, sign in, and get a pass to return to class.

All children who are assigned a bus route are expected to ride the bus home. Bus riders are not permitted to take a bus other than their own at the end of the school day. If a child is permitted to walk or ride a bike home on occasion, a parent note must be on file in the office. If a child is to go home with another student, both children involved must bring a parent note to the office.

Bicycles, Skateboards, Skates, Scooters

Students in grades 3-6 may ride their bikes to school. All bikes must be walked on school property. Bikes must be locked in the bike rack using one lock per bike. Bicycle helmets are strongly recommended.

Skateboards, scooters, roller skates, and in-line skates are prohibited on school property during school hours.

Should storage of wheeled devices other than bicycles become a problem, the school reserves the right to suspend this privilege at a future date.

Bringing Items to School

Children should never bring valuable or treasured items to school. This includes all electronic devices as well as prized possessions such as jewelry, souvenirs, coin collections, card collections, or others. The school is unable to secure children's personal possessions and cannot be responsible for lost or damaged personal property.

Parents are urged to label clothing, lunch boxes, boots, coats, backpacks, and other items with name tags or indelible ink. The school maintains a lost and found box which students and parents may check for lost items.

Students should not buy, sell, or trade any items including any type of trading cards among themselves. This avoids any questions about ownership, and helps protect student property.

Children are not to use any electronic devices during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, compact disc players, iPODS, hand-held games, etc. Items used during the school day may be confiscated and held until a parent/guardian can pick them up.

Lost & Found

Virginia Lake has a lost and found box located outside the school office. If your child is missing some items please check the school lost and found. This box is emptied twice a year (end of November and the end of April), at which time items unclaimed will be donated to charity.

School Supply List

The school supply list for our school is posted on the District 15 Web site at www.ccsd15.net. Go to the tab marked District 15 schools and click on the school's name. The school supply list is in the Quick Links on the right side of the page.

INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Our school offers a variety of educational opportunities and support programs for all students. The basic curriculum is aligned to Illinois Learning Standards and the District 15 Student Performance Targets. Learner Statements, which provide details regarding grade-level expectations for students, are available on the District 15 Web site (www.ccsd15.net) under Curriculum, Learner Statements.

The instructional program includes the following subject areas:

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- Language arts (reading, writing, listening, and speaking)
- Mathematics and Out of Level Math (students must qualify for placement)
- Science
- Social studies
- Music—Students in grades 1-6 receive two 30-minute music classes each week. Kindergarten students have music instruction for one 30-minute period per week.
- Health
- Physical education—Two 30-minute physical education classes per week are scheduled for students in grades 1-6. All students are expected to participate unless a doctor's note is submitted. Children need gym shoes that can be tied or Velcro closed with non-marking soles. Slip-ons and platform-style shoes are unsafe for running and gym activities. Parent volunteers, under the guidance of a physical education teacher, present a weekly kindergym program for kindergarten students.
- Art—Students in grades 1-6 participate in one 60-minute art class every week. The elements of art and principles of design are taught using a variety of media.

In addition, the following programs and services are provided:

- Gifted and Talented—A specialized instruction program is provided for students from third through sixth grades who have been identified as intellectually gifted.
- Speech and language services—Speech/language services are provided as needed for preschoolers through junior high students. The goal of the program is to enhance the child's ability to communicate in the educational setting. Parents who have concerns about their child's speech/language skills should talk with their child's teacher or the school principal. Parents of preschool children may request a screening by calling the Student Services Department, 847-963-3000.
- Special education—Special education includes the areas of learning disabilities, behavioral/emotional disorders, early childhood education, physical impairments, visual impairment, and hearing impairments. Eligibility for special education is determined by completion of a case study evaluation. Special education services are delivered in the setting which best meet the needs of individual students and may be in the regular classroom setting, as a small group pull-out, with an inclusion program, or in a self-contained classroom. Parents who have concerns about their child's educational progress should discuss the situation with the child's teacher or the school principal/assistant principal.
- English Language Learners—As required by the State of Illinois, District 15 provides programs to meet the needs of students whose native language is other than English. The purpose is to accelerate English language literacy while valuing each child's social and cultural knowledge. The programs are:
 - *Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)*
TBE serves groups of 20 or more children from the same language group. Students who are not yet proficient in English receive native language support and instruction while they acquire English skills. Students exit the program when they meet the state and district exit criteria.
 - *Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI)*
TPI serves students who are in a school attended by 19 or fewer students of the same language group. English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and tutors staff this program. Native language support is given, where possible, through the use of native language tutors.
- Reading Interventions—Students who are at-risk readers, as identified through test results and teacher recommendation, get extra help through research-based reading intervention programs. The school's reading consultant specialist or a trained program assistant may work with children individually or in

small groups, and struggling readers may be assigned to one of the district's reading intervention programs, including:

- *Kindergarten Intervention Program (KIP) in English or Spanish*
At-risk students work one-on-one with a trained tutor for 15 minutes daily in addition to regular classroom reading instruction.
- *First-grade Literacy Intervention Program (FLIP) in English or Spanish*
Students in FLIP receive 30 minutes of daily one-on-one instruction from a trained tutor in addition to regular classroom reading instruction.
- *Second-grade Acceleration in Literacy (SAIL)*
Small groups of 2-4 students receive 40 minutes of instruction twice each week. Each student also receives one-on-one instruction two or three times a week in addition to regular classroom reading instruction.
- *Soar to Success*
Students in grades three through six who are one year or more below grade level in reading comprehension benefit from Soar to Success, which uses quality literature, proven strategies, and powerful graphic organizers to accelerate reading growth.
- *InStep*
InStep, for third to sixth graders, focuses on key competencies of reading, language, and developmental phonics.
- *Read 180*
This program combines computer-based individual instruction, whole group and small group instruction, and individual reading using high-interest, age-appropriate print materials.

For more information about these programs, contact your child's teacher or the school's reading consultant specialist.

The following resources are available in support of or in addition to the instructional programs listed above:

- Learning Resource Center (library)
- Computer education
- Video studio
- Band/orchestra—Fifth and sixth graders may join band or orchestra. Lessons are provided weekly. Practices are held before school.
- Chorus—Chorus is a school-sponsored club that may be available for students in Grades 5-6. Chorus meets twice each week. All students are welcome to participate.
- Intramurals—Fifth- and sixth-grade students are eligible to participate in intramurals. Parents must sign a Medical Authorization Form.

Students are supported, as appropriate, by:

- Staff development team
- Special services team
- School social worker
- School psychologist
- Registered school nurse

Homework Guidelines

Homework extends and reinforces classroom learning, provides skills practice, and helps students prepare and review for lessons and tests. It is also a way to help parents stay informed about what their child is learning, and it helps children develop good discipline and responsibility.

We encourage families to consider the importance of setting aside a specific time and place for children to do their homework. Parents should check their child's understanding of assignments and review direction together if necessary. If there is a special problem, contact the child's teacher.

The following guidelines for suggested amounts of time to be spent on homework may be helpful:

| Grade Level | Minutes per Day |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Kindergarten | 10 |
| First and Second | 20 |
| Third | 30 |
| Fourth | 30-40 |
| Fifth and Sixth | 45-60 |

Reading for pleasure at home is important. Children should set aside daily time for recreational reading in addition to homework time. You may wish to establish a family reading time.

At times long-term projects are assigned which may span over several days. Students in intermediate grades may need to study for tests as part of their homework assignment.

Homework Policy

Homework is expected to be completed when it is assigned and quality work is expected at all times. Students that do not complete homework assignments may be required to complete the assignment during a non-instructional period. Student grades may also be affected due to missing homework assignments.

Testing

Standardized testing helps teachers and schools assess student progress. Different types of testing take place throughout the year.

Two types of tests mandated by the State of Illinois are administered to third- through eighth-grade students in District 15:

- The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) measures individual student achievement relative to the Illinois Learning Standards.
- ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State) is given to all students in a second language program. It measures English language learners' social and academic proficiency in English.

In addition to these state-required tests, District 15 uses the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing system. Second- through eighth-grade students are tested two times a year (fall and spring) in all schools; some schools may also choose to administer MAP tests during the winter. The computer-based MAP tests measure individual student achievement in three academic areas: reading, language, and math. They accurately reflect each student's knowledge and understanding and measure growth over time. Tests dynamically adjust to a student's performance level, making test scores more accurate. Results are available to schools staff within 24 hours. Test results are shared with parents at the close of each testing window. The information provided through MAP testing better enables the district to make appropriate, data-driven decisions at the classroom, school, and district levels. It also allows teachers to make rapid adjustments in instruction to respond to identified student needs.

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District 15 also administers the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) to students in grades two, four, and six. CogAT measures verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative aptitude areas.

Individual tests may be administered if additional information is needed to provide an appropriate educational program. Individual evaluations may include a psychological examination as part of a case study evaluation. Parent permission is required for this type of evaluation.

Please be certain your child has adequate sleep prior to testing and encourage your child to do his or her best when taking the tests. The opportunity for making up tests is limited, so it is important that you schedule doctor appointments or important family commitments when students are not involved in standardized testing.

No single test can provide a complete picture of a child's achievement. Classroom performance, teacher observation, and other tests help provide additional information about your child. Questions about your child's test results should be directed to his/her teacher or the school principal.

For more information on testing, see the District 15 Web site at www.ccsd15.net, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Achievement.

Learning Resource Center (LRC)

The LRC houses a wide variety of educational materials including books, videos, software, tapes, and other media. The LRC teacher assists students and teachers in all areas of the curriculum. The LRC is open to all children in the school as well as to entire classrooms, small groups, or individuals working on special projects.

Computers

Computers are available in every classroom for student use. Wireless laptop computers are available by teacher request as well as a computer lab for whole-class use. Classroom teachers assist children in becoming literate in computer use. Software is used to enhance the curriculum at each grade level. All computers at the school are networked and operate in the Windows format. Students can access their files from any computer in the school.

Students who have a signed Authorization for Electronic Network Access form on file may use the Internet under the supervision of a staff member. A copy of guidelines for Internet usage and the form are available in the school office.

Video Studio

A video production studio in the school is used by students to produce, edit, and televise live broadcasts of school news each morning. All classrooms have television monitors connected to the video production studio.

Field Trips

Classroom teachers occasionally plan educational trips to extend and enhance curriculum studies. Children must have a signed parental permission form to participate in these trips. The field trip form also provides space for parent permission for children who need medication while on the field trip.

Field trips are an important part of the educational program, and all students should participate in them if possible. Students who do not turn in signed permission forms and fees by the deadline may be unable to participate and may be assigned to another classroom for the day.

Student behavior expectations are the same for field trips as for the classroom. If there is a significant concern about a student's ability or willingness to behave appropriately on a trip, there is the possibility that participation could be contingent on the parent accompanying the child. Parents of children who have severe allergies or other medical conditions may also be asked to accompany their children on field trips to ensure the child's safety.

Parent volunteers are always needed for these trips. Please let your child's teacher know if you can help.

Recess

Students generally go outside for recess every day, so they should be dressed appropriately. Exceptions are made only when a child brings a doctor's note excusing him/her from outdoor recess.

Staff members provide playground supervision at all times. Children who misbehave may be placed in "time out" or sent to the office to talk with an administrator.

Indoor recess is determined based on the following guidelines:

- If the temperature outside, together with the wind chill, is below 0°, all students will remain inside for the entire lunch hour.
- If the temperature outside, together with the wind chill, is between 0° -10°, the preferred procedure is a rotation of 20 minutes for lunch, a 20-minute outdoor recess, and a 20-minute indoor recess. However, at the principal's discretion, the students may be kept inside for the entire lunch hour.
- If the temperature outside, together with the wind chill, is above 10°, students will have regular outdoor recess.

Other considerations include the condition of the playground and the presence of precipitation. For indoor recess, students are supervised in their classrooms. Students are permitted to socialize and play appropriate games (cards or board games) during indoor recess.

School Bus Information

Bus service is provided at no cost for all students who live more than 1-1/2 miles from the school or who live in an area declared to be hazardous as determined by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Bus transportation may be provided to other areas on a paid basis; for additional information on this option, see "Bus Information" on the district Web site at www.ccsd15.net.

All bus assignments, as well as routes and stops, are determined by the Transportation Department. Parents whose children ride school buses are asked to be sure the information on the bus assignment is accurate. If the information is not correct, please call the school office.

Students who ride the bus must observe the following rules:

- Students are to board and depart the bus at their assigned stop only. They should be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the bus. While waiting for the bus, students are not to stand or play on the road or street.
- Students are not permitted to ride another student's bus.
- Riders are to remain seated throughout the entire bus route.
- Windows are not to be lowered beyond the safety mark. Hands, arms, feet, heads, and all objects must be kept inside the bus.
- Loud conversation, profane language, throwing objects, or other actions discourteous to other passengers or the bus driver will not be tolerated.
- Students are responsible for any damage to the bus.
- Glass containers, live animals, and large objects may not be carried on the bus.

To enhance bus safety, video cameras are installed on buses. Students who display inappropriate behavior will be subject to consequences, including discipline which may include, but are not limited to: loss of bus riding privileges, detention, or suspension.

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Written parent permission is required for children assigned to a bus to walk home; however this practice is not encouraged. All requests must be made in writing prior to 9:00 a.m., and must be approved by the principal. Any deviation in your child's transportation schedule must be brought to the assistant principal's attention in writing or by calling the school.

School Nutrition Services

The district's School Nutrition Services Department offers daily breakfast and lunch programs. Meals are prepared, packaged, and delivered to school from the district's central kitchen. Students have up to 20 minutes to eat and 40 minutes for outdoor recess when weather permits.

Lunch

Hot lunches may be purchased for \$2.00 per day, including milk. Menus are provided every month and are also available on the District 15 Web site at www.ccsd15.net. Students who bring their lunches may purchase milk for 45 cents per carton, and ice cream novelties are available for purchase at an additional cost.

Students use a PIN number to debit their accounts. Parents can make cash deposits into the child's account to pay for meals; checks should be made out to "CCSD 15 School Nutrition Services" and submitted in an envelope with the child's name and class written on the outside. Payments also may be made online by going to www.mymealtime.com. Notices are sent home for both low balances and negative account balances, and students are also reminded as they go through the line.

Applications for free and/or reduced-price meals are sent directly to parents by the School Nutrition Services Department. If you believe you may be eligible, please contact your school office or call the School Nutrition Services Department at 847-963-3929. Children who are eligible for free lunches receive breakfast at no charge at schools where breakfast is served.

Please remind your child not to share his/her lunch with others due to food allergy concerns.

Gifts & Parties

District 15 strongly discourages the collection of money by either students or parents for gifts to staff members. Gifts to staff members are also discouraged.

At the teacher's discretion, classroom parties may be held at Halloween and Valentine's Day. Room representatives and PTA volunteers may be asked to help on these days. Parties will be planned with nutrition in mind in accordance with the room parent party treats parameters. A note about Halloween costumes: children are not allowed to bring weapons, toy weapons, or weapon-like objects to school, even if it is part of a costume. We also request that children not wear bloody, gruesome, or especially scary costumes.

Treats provided in celebration of a child's birthday must be non-edible. Parents will be provided with a suggested list of alternative, non-edible treats at the beginning of the school year. The classroom teacher will determine the best time to distribute them. It is against federal regulations to serve lunch to students in lieu of the regular lunch program. This includes pizza and other fast food. If you are planning a party for your child, please do not distribute invitations at school.

Letters will be sent home before our Halloween parade. This letter will specifically outline the parameters for appropriate costumes, and the parade route. Please keep in mind that young children can be frightened of halloween costumes. To keep our celebration on a fun, creative level, please have your child wear a costume that is consistent with that spirit. This means we would like our children to not wear masks, clothing, or make-up that are gruesome or especially scary. Violence is not entertaining! While it may be a reality of today's society, it does not have a positive role in our school. Please avoid costume choices that portray violence, blood, or gore! Students are also not allowed to have any hair coloring.

Please check with your child's teacher in regard to bringing treats for school sponsored parties, or birthday treats.

Health Services

A full-time registered nurse is at the school every day to respond to health concerns and medical issues. The nurse also maintains health records on all students, screens students for vision and hearing, and provides treatment to students and staff in case of illness or accidents. If you have questions about immunization, physicals, medications or special health concerns, please contact the school nurse. Please share any medical issues with the school nurse.

When a student has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, is vomiting, and/or has diarrhea, parents will be contacted to pick up their children. It is important that the school has accurate phone numbers for parents and/or emergency contacts. Please notify the school office immediately with any changes in contact information.

Children who exhibit any of the following should be kept home:

- Fever (child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Contagious diseases such as chicken pox or fifth disease
- Rash of unknown origin

Please call the school nurse to report any contagious disease, serious illness, surgery, or change in medication given to your child at home.

Medication Policy

Medications will be administered in accordance with the Board of Education policy, which requires:

- A consent form signed by a parent
- A doctor's written order specifying time, dosage, and duration of medication (separate from the prescription)
- The medication in a prescription container
- Over-the-counter medication cannot be administered to a child without a doctor's written direction. Over-the counter medication should not be sent to school.

Medication should be brought to school by the parents and turned into the school office, along with the required information. Medication will be kept in a secure location and administered only by the school's registered nurse, a school administrator, or another consenting school staff member such as a secretary or a clerical assistant. Any change in medication policy must come in writing directly from the doctor.

Required Health Examinations and Immunization Recording

For the purpose of safeguarding the health of children, District 15 enforces Illinois health requirements. These requirements consist of health examinations, immunizations, dental examinations, and eye examinations specific to grade and age.

Health exams are required for students entering preschool, kindergarten, and sixth grade and those new to the school. Students who received a health examination prior to entering the fifth grade during the 2007-08 school year will not have to receive another exam before entering the sixth grade in the 2008-09 school year. The Certificate of Child Health Examination form is available in the school office and at www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/DistrictOffices/HealthServices/PDFs/cert_child_health05.pdf. The exam, completed and signed by a doctor, must be dated within one year prior to the first day of school and must include lead screening for children who are six years or younger and diabetes screening. A tuberculosis (TB) skin test is recommended. The parent/guardian completes and signs the Health History section of the form.

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In addition, annual health examinations are required for interscholastic sports participation.

The required school **immunizations** are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DPT)
- Polio (IPV)
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- Haemophilus influenzae (Hib)
- Chicken pox/Varicella (Varivax)
- Hepatitis (HBV)

Students who do not show proof of the health exam and immunizations will not be allowed to start school.

Dental exams are required for students in kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade. The Illinois Department of Public Health Dental Examination form is available in the school office and at www.ccsd15.net/AboutDistrict15/DistrictOffices/HealthServices/PDFs/SS-720_DentalExamForm.pdf.

Eye exams are required for students entering kindergarten and those entering Illinois schools for the first time. The Eye Examination form is available in the school office and must be returned by October 15.

Medical Excuses

A physician's excuse is needed for any students who cannot participate in physical education or outdoor recess. The excuse must state the specific injury or problem, the dates the student cannot participate, and a date when the child can resume activity. Students will not be allowed to resume activities until a physician's release is received.

Behavior Expectations/Discipline Policy

Discipline is used to discourage inappropriate student behavior through consequences that are implemented fairly and consistently. Consistent discipline helps educate children on appropriate behavior and teaches them to make better choices in the future. Students who fail to comply with school/district rules and guidelines will be referred to the principal or assistant principal. The administrator will determine consequences for the student's misbehavior and contact parents, either by phone and/or referral form.

Discipline Summary and School Rules

The Virginia Lake School staff is committed to maintaining high standards of proper behavior and courtesy that are taught in the home. Virginia Lake has three basic behavior guidelines:

- Be Respectful
- Be Safe
- Be Responsible

Classroom, school, bus, lunchroom, and playground rules are based on these three guidelines. Clear expectations and recognition of responsible behavior and logical consequences for misbehavior reinforce the importance of these rules and ensure a safe and productive place to learn. We notify parents of repeated or serious misconduct.

Gum Chewing

Gum chewing is not permitted at our school. Please help do not send gum in your child's lunch, as a treat, or for distribution to other children.

Zero Tolerance

Some behaviors are considered serious enough to warrant immediate response by the school. A parent will be contacted, and a conference will be required with the parent(s). These behaviors are considered “zero tolerance” and are never accepted or appropriate for students:

- Verbal or physical threats
- Overt sexual behavior
- Gang representation
- Having weapon or weapon-like devices in school
- Vandalizing school property
- Deliberate bus violations
- Continued minor / moderate infractions
- Stealing

Consequences could include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and/or other suspended privileges.

Bullying

Virginia Lake School fosters respect among students through an emphasis on character development. We encourage students to be sensitive to others, and to be part of an environment where everyone feels safe, accepted, and valued. Bullying will not be tolerated so that we can preserve a school climate based on mutual respect. Bullying can be in the form of but not limited to: name calling, emotional or physical abuse.

School Rules

Virginia Lake School has three specific school rules. These rules are: be respectful, be responsible, be safe. These rules are for the benefit of all of our students. They are expected to be followed by all of our students. Virginia Lake School also expects all of our students to abide by all rules set forth by the district and the board of education. These rules are expected to be followed during school hours and during school-sponsored events.

Dress Code

Appropriate school dress assists in maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning. The principal or assistant principal will determine the appropriateness of a student’s dress. Clothing and accessories that display undesirable and/or unhealthy image (such as, but not limited to: alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, or violence) do not belong in a school setting. Also considered inappropriate are the depiction of vulgar actions/language/behavior, gang signs, or sexually suggestive pictures or statements.

The following guidelines are used in determining appropriate attire:

- No bare midriffs
- No undergarments of any kind showing
- No bare or lace-up backs
- Shoulders must be covered by at least two inches of fabric
- Skirts and shorts must not be shorter than mid-thigh
- Tops may not be lower than an imaginary line drawn from armpit to armpit

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- No hats or bandannas are to be worn inside the building except when entering or preparing to exit the building
- Temporary hair coloring, glitter, or other alterations which may cause distractions in the classroom are not permitted.

For safety reasons, students should follow these guidelines:

- Footwear which is safe for indoor and outdoor physical activity should be worn at all times (platform shoes and thong-style sandals are discouraged and shoes with wheels are not allowed)
- No belts, necklaces, or bracelets with spikes or chains, including chains connecting wallets to a belt
- No pants or skirts which drag on the floor
- Pants must be worn around the hips. Pants that “sag” will not be tolerated.
- Students who wear earrings, necklaces, and other jewelry that cause a distraction may be asked to remove them. Multiple infractions will lead to items being confiscated.

Playground rules

Playground safety is vitally important. If a student chooses not to follow our school rules, these consequences will be enforced according to the following steps.

1. First occurrence: The student will be removed from the playground and will spend recess inside to plan how to change his/her behavior.
2. Second occurrence: An administrator will notify a parent.
3. Third occurrence: A parent must come to school to meet with an administrator before the student is allowed playground privileges.

Harassment/Bullying

Harassment or bullying of any kind (physical, verbal, non-verbal or sexual) will not be tolerated. Because these behaviors show disrespect and are harmful to all involved, they should be reported to the school administration or any staff member. Harassment is a serious offense which may result in suspension from school.

PTA

One of the most important organizations at Virginia Lake School is the PTA, a vital link between home and school.

The PTA Executive Board, consisting of elected officers and volunteer committee chairpersons, meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the school. The PTA coordinates many programs for our students and families throughout the year that support learning and promote parental involvement in the educational process. Parents and teachers are urged to join this volunteer child-advocacy organization, and participate in and support its activities.

The school newsletter, *The Reporter*, is a PTA publication that goes home monthly with your student and provides your family with important school and PTA information.

Virginia Lake's PTA provides many programs for our children and their families during the school year. For example, the PTA funds all the assembly programs our students and teachers enjoy. These programs help to educate our children and some-times just entertain them.

PTA Coat Closet

The PTA Coat Closet was established so that all District 15 children would have the opportunity to be properly clothed in the winter months. The Coat Closet is located at Gray M. Sanborn School, 101 N. Oak St., Palatine. Coats, hats, gloves or mittens, snow pants, scarves, and boots, ranging in size from toddler to adult, are available. Those needing clothing should contact any school office.

Donations of *outerwear only* are accepted. The clothing may be brought to any District 15 school or directly to Gray M. Sanborn during the school day. All garments should be washed and/or in clean condition without rips or broken zippers.

C.A.R.E. Program

District 15 and the Palatine and Rolling Meadows park districts offer an affordable, well-supervised before- and after-school program during the school year. C.A.R.E. provides a safe, recreational, educational, and enrichment program for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. For more information on C.A.R.E., contact the District 15 C.A.R.E. coordinator at 847-963-3127, the Palatine Park District at 847-991-0333, or the Rolling Meadows Park District at 847-818-3202.



2008-09 Board of Education

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