

# *Vista Academy*

## *Student/Parent Handbook*

**2016-2017**



4800 Telluride St., Building 6  
Denver, CO 80249  
**Main office:** 720-423-7650  
**Fax:** 720-423-7667  
**Website:** [vistaacademy.dpsk12.org](http://vistaacademy.dpsk12.org)

### **Vista Academy Vision**

Our vision is to ensure that all students demonstrate mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and have a competitive edge grounded in a philosophy of academic excellence, leadership, global thinking and exploration, service learning, advanced technological skills, as well as culture and language acquisition.

### **Vista Academy Core Values**

- 1) Build unparalleled mentoring relationships focused on meeting the needs of all students.
- 2) Ensure that we nurture, cultivate, and assist students with maintaining their SWAGGER.
- 3) To create an academic learning environment where we teach from our hearts.

### **Belief Statement**

Vista Academy believes that all students can learn and move on to post-secondary options and careers of their choice. It is our position that we are relentless and passionate about teaching and helping students excel academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Our teaching and staff core are a part of a team that has mastered competency and standards based instruction, think out the box, and build unparalleled mentoring relationships with students. Our teaching and staff core are lifelong learners and exemplify high levels of professional growth. Our Vista community believes in the vision that we must “teach from the heart to be heard.” This means that we have high expectations and give students the tools to meet those expectations as well as give them the time to learn and practice what we expect from them. The Vista Academy teaching and staff core are a critical part of our student’s academic puzzle. Many of our students are trying to put together their lives, and to get back on track after they have given up.

Our teachers and staff will meet them with an unwavering positive attitude; with passion that we bring to our craft on a daily basis and stop the viscous cycles that many of our students are experiencing because for some this may be their final opportunity. We have the arduous task of re-engaging students within the educational process for the purpose of producing scholars, world class citizens, global thinkers, who are relentless in their pursuit of an education.

## SWAGGER

### What is Vista SWAGGER?

Vista SWAGGER embodies the best of our students and expresses who our students are holistically. Our students have their own unique sense of style but are also academically astute, artistic, physically conditioned, diverse, caring individuals who together create a culture that is SWAGGER. Our students are:

*Scholars*

*World Class*

*Actively Engaged in our Community*

*Go-Getters*

*Global Thinkers*

*Enterprising*

*Relentless in our Pursuit of an Education*

Our teacher and staff core have to believe that all students have SWAGGER because it is our responsibility to ensure that students have the tools so that they are able epitomize Vista SWAGGER. Part of this responsibility is to make sure that all students understand and make a connection to what each word in SWAGGER means and associate why it is relevant for them. Our teacher and staff core, our scholars and community will begin our SWAGGER Journey by understanding what this means. Our scholar's journey begins once they are accepted to Vista Academy.

**Scholar:** A person who attends a school or study under a teacher; a learned person; a person who has done advanced study in a special field.

**World Class:** We rank among the foremost/highest caliber in the world; of an international standard.

**Actively Engaged In Our Community:** We are vigorously involved in service learning projects that uplift our community.

**Go Getter:** We are ambitious, enterprising people who take action and get things done; we are driven to accomplish goals and whose careers progress rapidly.

**Global Thinkers:** We think beyond our own existence and prosperity and examine how we are connected through technology with the world; we understand that what we do have global implications and we have the capacity to improve lives throughout the world.

**Enterprising:** We show initiative and willingness to undertake new projects.

**Relentless in Our Pursuit of An Education:** We are intense in our pace to obtain a quality education and career preparation and will achieve this end goal no matter what obstacles are put before us.

Our scholars will be provided engaging and relevant supports and opportunities to build their SWAGGER until they graduate or obtain a GED.

### **Purpose of SWAGGER**

The purpose of SWAGGER being at the core of what we do at Vista Academy is to address the disconnect that students experience in today's society with regards to having to choose between being cool and stylish or intelligent. At Vista Academy our scholars will be comfortable showing that they are intelligent, articulate, informed, and caring individuals without feeling that they can't have a sense of style or be cool because the cool thing at Vista Academy is to be RELENTLESS in our pursuit of an education. At Vista Academy our scholars, teachers and staff core embrace the SWAGGER philosophy and this is shown daily by our actions.

### **SWAGGER Outcomes**

The SWAGGER outcomes are that our scholars are comfortable showing their academic knowledge and help build a culture of academic excellence and diversity. Our SWAGGER will produce informed scholars who seek to understand how the things that affect them impact people around the world. Eventually, Vista Academy will create educational opportunities that will give our scholars the opportunity to travel internationally. This will lead to higher reading, writing, public speaking, and advocacy skills. Scholars will also have strong planning, communication, and other key 21st Century Skills by participating in service learning projects to meet the authentic needs of the far northeast community. Vista Academy will seek to develop and maintain learning landscapes in various businesses in the far northeast to extend our scholars learning beyond the classroom.

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# Vista Academy Staff

## 2016 - 2017

### **Administrative Team**

Koenig, Barbara – Assistant Principal  
Smith, Anthony - Principal  
Wolford, Lisa – Assistant Principal

### **Teacher Leader Team**

Caldwell, Jaime – CTE Team Lead  
Tipton-Perry, Loretta – Teacher Ambassador  
Trainer, James (Jim) – Dean of Instruction

### **Counseling Department**

Hernandez, Jose (David) - Counselor  
**New - Postsecondary Coach**

### **Student Services**

Higgins, Hannah – Social Worker Intern  
Jimerson, Renate - School Nurse  
Najar, Ximena – Social Worker  
Laffin, Sarah – Psychologist Intern

### **Support Staff**

Bates, Pamela – School Technology Resource  
Clayton, Tiye – Bookkeeper  
**New–School Safety Officer**  
Montanez, Ana – Secretary I  
Urenda, Mayra – Secretary II

### **CTE Department**

Caldwell, Jaime – Sports Medicine Instructor  
Carter, Richard – Multi Media Instructor  
Hurd, Emily – Culinary Arts Assistant  
Mays, Joel – Culinary Arts Instructor  
Tipton-Perry, Loretta – CNA Instructor  
Matthews, Dwane – CTE Coordinator

### **Language Arts Department**

Henderson Dr., Yvonne - MS  
Willett, Joey  
Yong, Lindsey

### **Math Department**

Matl, Dottia  
Mousel, David - MS  
Palsic, Joseph

### **Math Fellows**

Goodloe, Tiffani  
Poutre, Fred  
Stuchly, Shaun - Coordinator

### **Science Department**

Howard, Nicole - MS  
Searing, Mary  
Wolf, Mark

### **Social Studies Department**

Harris, Joan  
Paris, Jathan  
Tobin, Manuel - MS

### **Specials Department**

Hernandez, Cruz – Physical Education  
Kruschke, Joel - JROTC  
Pedigo, Maria – Foreign Language  
Richard, Erica - Art

### **Student Services Department**

Hunt, Jennet  
Wachter, Erin

## Bell Schedule



|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Period 1     | 7:37 - 8:42          |
| Period 2     | 8:46 - 9:51          |
| Period 3     | 9:55 - 11:00         |
| <b>Lunch</b> | <b>11:00 - 11:45</b> |
| Period 4     | 11:47 - 12:27        |
| Period 5     | 12:31 - 1:36         |
| Period 6     | 1:40 - 2:45          |
| Period 7     | 2:49 - 3:54          |

## Middle School



## Bell Schedule



|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Period 1     | 7:37 - 8:27          |
| Period 2     | 8:30 - 9:18          |
| Period 3     | 9:21 - 10:09         |
| Period 4     | 10:12 - 11:00        |
| <b>Lunch</b> | <b>11:00 - 11:45</b> |
| AVID         | 11:47 - 12:27        |
| Period 5     | 12:31 - 1:36         |
| Period 6     | 1:40 - 2:45          |
| Period 7     | 2:49 - 3:54          |

## Athletics

**Middle school students** can participate in Vista Academy sports programs in the DPS Prep League (flag football, volleyball, softball, basketball, soccer). Please contact Physical Education instructor Cruz Hernandez for more information at 720-423-7650.

**High school students** may participate in the Far Northeast Warriors sports programs (Cheerleading, Cross Country, Football, Gymnastics, Poms, Field Hockey, Golf, Softball, Basketball, Soccer, Swimming, Volleyball, Baseball, Tennis, Track & Field).

Students are able to register online through FAMILYID  
<https://www.familyid.com/programs/fne-2016-fall-athletic-registration>

Participation in competitive athletics and games is a privilege, not a right. Athletic eligibility shall be determined by the school and is governed by the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA).

You must meet specific requirements to participate. Students failing more than one course are ineligible to participate in athletics. Activities may include, but are not limited to: performances, contests, demonstrations, displays and club activities. Weekly progress reports will determine eligibility for the following week. Student who have been suspended or are truant from school are ineligible to participate in athletics the following week. Eligibility will be pulled every Friday at noon.

Families will be able to check the schedule and calendar at [www.dpscalendars.org](http://www.dpscalendars.org). A parents' guide is available in the Athletics office. If you have questions you can contact the athletics office at 720-423-5849.

Extracurricular activities shall be available to students with special interests and abilities who meet eligibility requirements for the activity. Your involvement in such activities is encouraged, and you must maintain your academic progress.

All student athletes must have a physical on file with the athletic office to start the season. Physicals are free to all students who attend school in the far Northeast. Vista students can get their physical at the Denver Health Clinic on the Evie Dennis Campus. You must schedule an appointment to complete your physical. Schedule your physical as early as possible.

## Attendance and Tardies

**Arriving to School:** First hour class begins at 7:35 am. Breakfast supervision begins at 7:15am in the culinary area. The building will be open starting at 6:45 for the arrival of the first bus.



**Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential for students to obtain the greatest benefit from their education. Denver Public Schools students are required to attend classes in accordance with the Colorado Compulsory Attendance Law (22-33-104) and Article IX, Section 2, of the Colorado constitution. We all have our responsibility for attendance. Absences, whether excused or unexcused, impact the learning process because work made up outside of class is not as effective as the actual classroom experience. The experiences of class discussions and student-teacher interaction cannot be replicated outside the classroom or at a later time. We know that regular attendance develops habits that are essential for success in the working world.

**Tardies:** All passing periods are 4 minutes. If a student is late for any class, they are subject to meeting with their assigned administrator and could be given Detention. It is extremely important to be in all periods on time. We are aware that a medical emergency, doctor or dental appointment (with documentation) or major family emergency are the only reasons to be excused. All students that have an excessive number of unexcused tardies will have a meeting set-up with their parent/guardian and the appropriate administrator, member(s) of the attendance team and a decision will be made as to next steps.

Any student who is more than 10 minutes late to any class needs to stop by the main office to get a pass.

**Hall Sweeps:** Hall sweeps are random checks for students who are found in the hall after the tardy bell. Students found in the hall after the tardy bell, without the proper signed documentation by a staff member will meet with their administrator. Excessive hall concerns will result in a meeting with student, parent and administration.

**Guidelines and Procedures for Notifying the School of Absences:** Parents are expected to notify the attendance line at (720) 423-7651 when their student will be absent from school. It is requested that parents report all absences to the school(s) within 24 hours of the absence. When reporting an absence to the Front Office, the following information is necessary for school records:

- Student's name
- Student's grade
- Time Estimate
- Date(s) of the absence or tardy
- Reason for the absence or tardy

When a student misses school, their absence will be categorized by the office into one of the types listed below:

**Excused Absences:** An excused absence will be an absence with permission of the parent/guardian and school principal. Such absences should comply with state law and include those that are the result of the following:

- Ill or injured (doctor's appointments fall into this category)

- Attending to a death in the family
- Legal matters
- Observing a religious holiday

Students will be provided make-up work for any excused absence and receive full credit for the work. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements to complete missing assignments. Students who accumulate excessive excused absences will be required to provide the school with documentation to verify the absence.

**Unexcused Absence:** An unexcused absence will be an absence without permission of the parent/guardian or school principal. Unexcused absences are all other absences that include, but are not limited to the following:

- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Staying home to study
- Staying home to care for family members
- Traffic problems

Students may be provided make-up work for any unexcused absence. However, the student may not receive full credit for the make-up work. It is the responsibility of the student to pick up any make-up assignments and return them to the teacher within a predetermined time. Students with ten consecutive unexcused absences may be withdrawn from school and Social Services may be contacted. The student and parent will be required to meet with a school administrator and other school staff (i.e. school social worker or counselor) to develop a school attendance contract. The school attendance contract may require the student's participation in before or after school activities designed to reintegrate the student into the learning community. Anytime a student is absent, a parent should call the school attendance line 720-423-7651 as soon as possible, to report the absence and the reason for it. When parents are unable to call, we do expect that the child will bring a written excuse to bring to the office when they return.

**Truancy:** If a student purposely misses class, the student will be considered truant for that class and will be subject to further disciplinary actions.

**Anticipated Absences:** Only a parent or adult listed on the enrollment information is allowed to pick up a student from school at a time other than the regular dismissal time. The adult must come inside and sign the student out. The student may sign themselves back in upon returning. Long term absences: A long term absence form needs to be requested at the main office for any anticipated absences of 3 or more consecutive days. A long term absence form must be requested 2 business days in advanced of the last day of attendance. Long term absence form is subject to approval by an administrator and may be denied.

## Chromebook Policies and Procedures

**Purpose:** The vision of Vista Academy is to ensure that every student demonstrates *mastery of 21st century skills*, which will provide them a competitive edge grounded in a philosophy of academic excellence, leadership, global thinking, exploration, service learning, advanced technological skills, as well as culture and language acquisition. Students at Vista Academy will be issued a Chromebook to serve as one of their primary tools of learning

The policies, procedures and information contained in this document apply to all Chromebooks, laptops and other devices as stated by Administration used at Vista Academy. Administrators and teachers may set additional requirements for computer use in the classroom.

**Device Purpose:** Vista Academy is supplying students with a Chromebook device. This device is property of Vista Academy and Denver Public Schools. The supplied device will provide each student access to educational materials needed for academic success. The supplied device is an educational tool not intended for gaming, social networking or high end computing.

### Receiving Your Chromebook:

Once students receive their Chromebook at the beginning of the school year, they will receive the following:

- One (1) Samsung Chromebook (Student Label and DPS tag must remain on Chromebook and visible at all times)
- One (1) AC Adapter (with power cord)
- One clear (1) Vista Academy cover – two (2) pieces, top cover and bottom cover (must remain on Chromebook at all times)

### Returning Your Chromebook:

Student Chromebooks and accessories (AC Adapter and Vista Academy cover) will be collected at the end of each school year for maintenance over summer vacation.

- Students leaving Vista Academy must return Chromebook and accessories to office or tech person at school.
- Failure to turn in the Chromebook and accessories will result in the student/parent/guardian being charged the full replacement cost. Any Chromebook not returned will be considered stolen property and law enforcement agencies will be notified.

### Taking Care of Your Chromebook:

Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook which they have issued by school. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the Tech Office located in Room 215 (inside Rm 214).

### **General Care Guidelines:**

- Do not carry your Chromebook by the screen
- No food or drink allowed next to Chromebook
- Chromebooks must remain free of writing, drawing stickers or labels on Chromebook or case.
- Chromebooks should **NEVER be shoved into a locker or wedged into a book bag, as this may break the screen.**

### **Screen Care:**

- Do not lean on Chromebook
- Do not put pressure or stack books on Chromebooks
- Do not place anything between keyboard and screen when the Chromebook is closed
- Do NOT use Windex or other harsh cleaners on screen; clean with soft, dry cloth
- Use caution when placing your Chromebook in your backpack, so items do not put pressure on screen.

### **Chromebooks at School:**

- Chromebooks have been issued to students to enhance and support each student's academic work. Students will utilize the Chromebook during class only when instructed by their teacher.
- Students will bring their Chromebook **fully charged** to school each day.
- If a student forgets their Chromebook, they must immediately phone parent/guardian to bring it to school. Repeated violations of this policy may result in loss of take-home privileges or other disciplinary action.
- Chromebook sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instruction purposes.
- Chromebooks must be kept secured at all times. Do not leave in classroom, on floor, SWAGGER Café or other area. If you do not need your Chromebook for class, place in your locker. Remember YOU are ultimately responsible for your Chromebook, keep it secure.
- Do NOT take Chromebooks to gym, unless specifically requested/needed for class assignment.
- Chromebooks left unsecured will be confiscated and disciplinary action may be taken for repeat violations.

### **Student Activities Strictly Prohibited on Chromebooks:**

- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials.
- Changing of computer settings - wiping the operating system and using default guest account.
- Removal of DPSS student network on Chromebook when on campus.
- Removal of dpsk12.net account login to Chromebook.
- Accessing other student's accounts, files and/or email.

- Password sharing.
- Vandalism. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware (taking keyboard keys out, scratching device screen, etc.), software or data, including, but not limited to changing or using hardware to run other operating systems such as Linux will not be allowed.
- Transmission or accessing materials which are obscene, offensive, or threatening.
- “Cyberbullying” of any kind.

**Consequences for Chromebook Misuse:**

Students using Chromebooks inappropriately and not completing their schoolwork, disrupting others will receive Detention (see Vista Academy Detention Policy). Repeated issues with Chromebooks will be referred to administration for disciplinary action.

**Repair/Replacing Your Chromebook:**

The items checked out to you must be returned in the same condition at the end of the school year or student account will be charged. If your Chromebook is damaged or not working you must immediately notify Mrs. Bates and fill out a Chromebook incident report. Failure to take care of and/or turn in your Chromebook may result in fees being charged to your student account.

- Replacement Cost of Chromebook   \$300.00
- Screen   \$ 75.00
- Power cord                                   \$ 35.00
- Vista Cover                                   \$ 25.00
- Other damages and repairs charged dependent upon cost to school

**Closed Campus**

**Middle School Students** will remain on campus during lunch and the entire day, unless they are on an approved outing with staff. Middle school students violating this rule may face disciplinary action.

**High School Students with Off Campus Rights:**

Only high school students who are in good academic standing are allowed to go off campus during the designated lunch break. In order to maintain this privilege, students must return to school and be in class on time, and conduct themselves in a safe and appropriate manner both off and on campus. The privilege to go off campus for lunch may be taken away from the entire class or school if students are not conducting themselves as responsible young adults.

***\* Remember, you are always a Vista Academy student and must represent our school in a positive manner. \****

## Current Contact Information

Vista Academy is committed to working closely with students and families in order for students to achieve and maintain their SWAGGER. Any time you move or change your phone number, please contact the school immediately to let us know.

## Detention

**Purpose:** The purpose of a detention is to provide students the opportunity to fulfill expectations.

**Staff procedure** – Staff is responsible for filling out the Vista Academy Teacher Mandatory Detention Notice. Students will serve detention with teachers at a time assigned by the teacher (i.e., before school, at lunch, or during 7<sup>th</sup> period).

1<sup>st</sup> – Attempt students get Pink Copy

2<sup>nd</sup> – Attempt student gets Yellow Copy

3<sup>rd</sup> – White copy is to be turned into the main office (no show box)

**Administrative Procedure** – For students for do not attend detention with their teacher, the administrative team will hold a mandatory detention during 7<sup>th</sup> period. Parents will be contacted by the administrator, and teacher will be notified via Google Drive when students complete the detention. During detention, students will complete a Restorative Approaches Reflection Form. Students assigned who do not attend will meet with their parents and a school administrator.

## Dress Code for Students:

Vista Academy is serious about students representing themselves, and the school, well at all times. If students come to school in violation of the dress code, the administration will contact the student's parents/guardians, and students will be sent home if guardian cannot bring the appropriate clothing to school. Dress code checks will be made several times a day. Please maintain your SWAGGER!

***For grades 6-8: students may wear the colors black, gold, and white.***

- Students have a choice of wearing polos, collared shirts, sweaters, vests, blazer jackets, ties, appropriate v-necks, crew neck shirts (no tank tops) in the following colors: White, Black, Gold, or combinations thereof.
- Students have a choice of wearing dress pants, black or white denim, capris, shorts or skirts (in appropriate length, which is tips of fingers with relaxed shoulders). Shorts/skirts too short are a violation of dress code. All colors must again be in school colors of black, white, or gold.
- Shoes should be school-appropriate and neutral in color -the following colors are preferred: White, Black, or/and Gold. Sandals should have a strap

around the back side. Heels should be school-appropriate and safe. Please do not wear shoes with wheels, flip flops, house shoes, etc.

***For grades 9-12, students should dress in business casual attire that follows Denver Public Schools dress code. No specific colors are required.***

**Please note:**

- Skirts and shorts must be at an appropriate length which is an inch below the finger tips.
- Pants must be worn at the waist with a belt.
- Hats are not to be worn inside any building on the school campus, unless approved by an administrator under special circumstances, in which case the student will be granted permission to wear a Vista Academy hat.

**The following are not permitted at any time:**

- Any clothing, grooming, jewelry, accessories, shapes in haircuts or body adornments that contain advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that are sexually suggestive; that are drug, tobacco, or alcohol-related, or that are obscene, profane, vulgar, obscene, or offensive.
- Wave caps, bandanas, do-rags, picks, or any other grooming items.
- Red, blue, or combination of red and blue shoes/laces/bandanas/accessories/etc.
- Hoodies with the hood up, sunglasses, underwear as outerwear.
- Slashes through eyebrows.
- Inappropriately sheer, tight, or short clothing.
- Clothing that reveals the stomach, chest, back, or buttocks.

**Piercings and Tattoos**

- Students who have existing tattoos that are gang related, offensive, or obscene will be required to cover them up. Students who are interested in having tattoos removed can be connected with services that can assist with this.

## **Extended Learning Opportunities**

**Purpose:** The purpose of Extended Learning Opportunities is to provide additional academic and organizational support for students.

**Types of Extended Learning Opportunities:**

- All teachers are available until 4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, to work with students. Students may choose to stay and work with teachers, or teachers may assign

students to stay for extra tutoring or to make up learning lost due to absences or for other reasons.

- Students may be assigned to Mandatory Intervention from 8-11 a.m. on designated Fridays when classes are not held. Dates include: Sept. 2, Sept. 23, Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 9, Dec. 21, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, March 10, March 24, April 7, April 28, and May 19

**Assigned Mandatory Intervention** – Students with a D or an F or three or more missing assignments will receive additional assistance. Students will receive notification the Wednesday before the Mandatory Intervention, and teachers will contact parents. In a structured environment, students will have the opportunity to complete missing assignments or retake tests under the supervision of a Vista staff member, who will provide tutorial services. Any work completed during this time will be accepted for credit. Students assigned who do not attend will meet with their parents and a school administrator.

**Voluntary Academic Assistance** – At any of our Extended Learning Opportunities, students may choose to attend to obtain additional supports in a subject area. We encourage students to attend if additional supports are needed, or if assistance is needed in preparing for an assessment.

## Grading Guidelines

Vista Academy’s grading policy in every class incorporates a separation between demonstrations of the understanding of the standards, referred to as **Product** grades (such as tests, projects, and presentations), and work completed in the pursuit of mastery of learning, called **Process/Progress** grades, (such as homework, quizzes, formative checks, or exit slips).

The two types of grading have different point values, or weighting, applied to them. Product makes up 80% of a student’s overall grade, and the Process/Progress consists of 20% of a student’s overall grade.

This type of grading system is an effort to make sure that students demonstrate what they know and are able to do concerning the standards. Standards-based education is teaching with the end in mind and ensuring that the district standards are the focal point of learning in every classroom, every day.

### 1. Curricular Standards:

- Standards-based education identifies what students should know and be able to do in each content area at every grade level. Denver Public Schools district standards are based on those developed by the state of Colorado, Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). For our Certified Nursing Assistant, Sports Medicine, Culinary Arts, and Digital Media



programs, the Colorado Community College Career and Technical Education Standards are used.

## **2. End in Mind:**

- Using identified district standards, teachers design units and lessons with the “End in Mind.” This means that teachers develop standards-based summative assessments before instruction begins. A summative assessment is an example of a grade that would fall in the Product category and is referred to as an assessment of the students learning. A final exam is an example of a summative test.
- After the summative assessment is developed and prior to instruction, students are informed about what they will learn through classroom objectives defined on the syllabus and on a daily basis posted within the classroom. Standards-based education ensures that students, parents, and teachers know what the student must demonstrate to attain proficiency. Summative assessments are in many forms such as tests, projects, papers, and speeches. In some circumstances, a rubric is developed in tandem with the assessment and used to grade assignments.
- A rubric is a scoring guide that measures levels of student progress against the standard as demonstrated by the thoroughness of the answer from the student or performance of the standard. In traditional educational settings, student performance is often compared to each other, such as the bell curve model. In a standards-based model, the focus is on what each student can do in relation to the standard individually.
- Teachers will then plan daily instruction, which includes daily formative assessments, to track student progress on the standards. Formative assessments ensure that all students are progressing toward the summative assessment. The formative assessments fall into the Process/Progress category and are often referred to as assessments for learning – practice along the way to the summative assessment.
- Other Process/Progress category items are homework, exit slips, group work, participation, in class work, and quizzes.

## **3. Standards-Based Grading:**

- Grading in a standards-based system is different from a traditional model. Standards-based instruction is focused on whether or not a student can attain proficiency in a given standard. A student’s performance is measured through summative assessments (Product); therefore, assessments in a standards-based model tend to impact a student’s grade to a greater degree than the traditional classroom. In our model at Vista Academy, the summative tests make up 80% of the grade.

- Often times a letter grade can include a variety of both academic and non-academic factors; standards-based education provides a level of consistency for grading within a school.
- At Vista Academy, the use of the 80/20 model for grading purposes places focus on academic factors and standards-mastery: 80% of a student's grade will be derived from summative assessments, Product, and 20% will be derived from formative assessments, Process/Progress.

#### 4. Guiding Principles

- Grades are intended to convey a student's level of achievement.
- Effort, participation, attitude, and other behaviors will not be included in grades.
- All grading practices must be related to achievement of district and state standards.
- At Vista Academy, 80% of a student's grade is derived from summative assessments.
- 20% of a student's grade is derived from formative assessments.
- Extra credit will NOT be given. If a student struggles with an assignment or does not grasp the concept, the student and teacher will work together to determine if more time is needed. Different instructional methods may appropriate in order for the student to gain a better understanding of standards from their formative work. The student should consider attending study sessions to obtain additional instruction in these areas.

#### Formative Assessments:

- Formative assessments are assessments **for learning**; they are intended to measure student achievement and provide evidence of student understanding during instruction. Formative assessments are used to inform students, teachers, and parents about the progress a student is making.
- Formative assessments should be focused and reflective of the summative assessment, and must clearly indicate the student's progress toward the determined proficiency level.
- Evidence of student understanding is gathered through a variety of formal and informal assessments during a unit or course of study.
- Not all formative assessments need to be included in a student's grade. **Teachers should record at least one process grade a week in order to monitor students' learning progress.**
- Collected evidence may include observations, discussions, quizzes, performance tasks and projects, Socratic seminars, exit slips and even student self-assessment.
- Formative assessments are gathered over a period of time and are not the end of teaching tests or culminating performance tasks.

- Formative assessments will vary in structure depending on the content covered, but must be aligned to the standards being taught. Formative assessments are practices that prepare students for the summative assessment.
- Parents may access the IC Parent Portal to view all student grades within a teacher's grade book.

### **Summative Assessments:**

- Summative assessments are assessments **of learning** and are intended to measure student achievement at the end of a unit or period of instruction.
- Teachers will give a summative assessment or product every three weeks, for a minimum of four product grades per trimester.

### **All summative assessments must be tied directly to the standards covered.**

- Summative assessments may take the form of and/or be a combination of the following: short answer, fill in the blank, multiple choice, essays, gridded response, constructed response, chapter tests, performance assessments, debates, oral presentations, projects created at school, or labs.
- Summative assessments must be constructed to adequately measure each standard covered.
- An appropriate number of questions must measure each standard (generally from 4-8 questions minimum per standard).
- Constructed response questions or performance tasks, well-constructed rubrics that are consistent with the questions may be used reliably in scoring and should be created to assess student responses.
- Some examples of constructed response questions and performance tasks include interpretation of maps, charts, essays, debates, presentations, or projects.
- All students will be given the opportunity to **re-take** a summative assessment provided they have completed and turned in all formative assignments prior to each initial summative. The student will have 72 hours to make-up the exam or make arrangements with the instructor if additional time is needed.
- Students must participate in an extended learning opportunity (ELO), such as a Friday intervention session or tutoring session to be eligible for a reassessment.
- After the reassessment, the student will receive the most recent assessment grade, NOT the higher grade of the two test scores.
- ELOs will be assigned by each teacher. ELOs can occur during class time, lunch time, before and after school, Friday intervention day, or through other means determined by the teacher.
- The reported grade represents a picture of where the student is currently performing based on weighted format.

## Grading Summary-

- **Formative assessments**= 20% of the grade
- **Summative assessments** = 80% of the grade
- **Advanced 90-100% A**  
Student work represents an advanced level of sophistication and understanding of the standards covered at this point in time.
- **Proficient 80-89% B**  
Student work represents a proficient level of understanding of the standards covered at this point in time.
- **Partially Proficient 70-79% C**  
Student work represents progress towards proficiency of the standards covered at this point in time.
- **Low 60-69 D**  
Student work represents minimal understanding of the standards covered at this point in time.
- **Incomplete/Unsatisfactory 50-59% I or F**  
Student work is incomplete and represents lack of mastery of course proficiencies of standards. Students would benefit from extended learning opportunities such as after-school, tutoring, summer school, etc.  
The lowest grade a student can get is a 50% as long as an attempt is made demonstrating the student's level of understanding of the assignment. If no attempt is made, a grade of a zero will be entered and the student has 72 hours to make arrangements with the instructor to make up the assignment.

## Health Services

If you need to see the nurse, you should first obtain a pass from your teacher and then proceed to the main office, where the secretary will give you a pass to the clinic. You should not go to the clinic between classes. When the nurse is not available please report to the front desk.

The campus nurse needs to know about students with special needs or problems, especially students who:

- have chronic illness, such as asthma or diabetes
- have been injured or hospitalized
- have excessive absences
- may be pregnant
- are taking medication, especially those using inhalers
- have a serious illness, such as mononucleosis

### ***Immunization Policy***

Students who have incomplete immunization records are not allowed to attend school unless they complete an exemption form, which can be found on the Colorado Department of Health and Environment web site. If you receive a notice requiring immunization, you must bring evidence of having received the immunization to the school nurse.

### ***Vista Academy Medication Policy***

You may be allowed to take medication at school provided certain requirements are met:

- Medication must be in the original container, properly labeled with the student's name, doctor's name, medication, and instructions of administration.
- A medication form must be obtained from the nurse's office, signed by both parent/guardian and physician, and returned to the school nurse.
- You must sign in with the nurse daily when taking your medication.
- Parents are to keep the nurse informed of any changes in medication dosage or schedule.

### ***Accidents***

If you are injured or have an accident while at school, you should report to the front desk. Once there you will be sent to the clinic, receive assistance and be asked to complete an accident form, and if the situation is serious, your parents will be notified.

### ***Emergency Medical Treatment***

If you have a medical emergency at school or an injury at a school-related activity when your parent cannot be reached, the school will call 911 and the student may be transported to the hospital. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information. The district or school is not responsible for medical expenses associated with a student's injury.

### ***School-Based Health Center***

The School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) of Denver Health are continuing on their mission to ensure that Denver's children have access to the medical care when they need it. Our network of 17 health centers located in Denver Public Schools across Denver provides a convenient option for parents and students.

Each medical office is staffed by physician assistants and/or nurse practitioners and health care partners who treat a number of medical conditions. Each location functions just like a primary care center located inside of a school. Here are just a few examples of the services that SBHCs can offer:

- Physical exams/ Well Child Care (Well Child Checks also meet the requirement for sports physicals)

- Immunizations
- Prescriptions
- Acute Injury and illness care
- Care for common chronic concerns such as asthma, diabetes, and depression

This unique service provides medical and mental health care to DPS students at NO COST or LOW COST and also helps families enroll in health insurance programs if needed. All DPS students are eligible to receive services.

All children need is their DPS identification number and a signed parental consent to start receiving vital primary care services such as vaccinations, physicals, and care for illnesses. Appointments are strongly encouraged and can usually be made for the same day or next day. For locations and more information visit our website at [DenverHealth.org/SBHC](http://DenverHealth.org/SBHC) or call 303.602.8958.

The **Evie Dennis Clinic** is located in Building 1, and their phone number is **720-423-7610**.

### **Parent Engagement Opportunities**

There are a variety of ways for parents to be involved at Vista. We are excited to partner with parents to support student achievement and welcome your ideas for additional ways you'd like to be involved! If interested, please complete a volunteer interest form and DPS volunteer application.

### **Parking/Parking Lots**

Thank you for parking in the designated parking area for students and visitors. Please remember that when you are in a school zone you should respect the speed limit and be cautious of pedestrians. Students should not be in their cars or the parking lot at unauthorized times. The same rules that are followed on campus are the same at the parking lot. You must be a licensed and insured driver to operate vehicles on district property. Any violations of driving, for example racing, speeding, spinning of wheels (burnouts), laws will result in the loss of driving privileges on school grounds. Valid drivers will be granted a parking permit.

### **Passes**

In order to exit your class, **you must** have a pass. If you do not have a pass, you will be asked to return to your class in order to get a pass to your destination.

### **Restorative Approaches to Behavior Intervention**

Restorative Approaches at Vista Academy afford students and adults an opportunity to give their side of the story and participate in a mediation to repair harm and be restored to daily school activities. Administration or a designee may ask a staff member, parent,

or other students to participate in a restorative justice conversation. RJ can also be requested by faculty/staff.

What is Restorative Justice: **Restorative Justice** is an approach to *justice* that focuses on the needs of victims and offenders, instead of satisfying abstract legal principles or punishing the offender. Victims take an active role in the process, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, “to repair the harm they’ve done— by apologizing, returning stolen money, or community service.” It is based on a theory of justice that considers crime and wrongdoing to be an offense against an individual or community rather than the state. Restorative justice that fosters dialogue between victim and offender shows the highest rates of victim satisfaction and offender accountability.

### **School Closings Due to Winter Weather**

The decision to keep schools open or to close them during winter weather conditions is not a simple one, but it is made with one overriding factor in mind: the well-being of our students, their families and staff. It is a good idea to decide in advance how to best keep up with the changes, what childcare arrangements are needed, and how to adjust if schools closed due to inclement weather. Detailed DPS winter weather and snow day information, including information on how families can find out if school is closed, can be found on the transportation website or on the DPS website.

### **Searches**

A student's person and/or personal effects, such as a purse, book bag, back pack, locker, etc., may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Parents/Guardians will be contacted.

### **Student Behavior Expectations**

#### **Respect Ourselves and Others:**

Vista Academy is a safe place where all students are welcomed and belong. We expect all students to treat themselves and other students, teachers, staff and administration with respect. Students are expected to use kind words when interacting with others, keep their hands and objects to themselves, and to conduct themselves appropriately.

#### **Contribute toward a Positive School Culture:**

Scholars, please remember that our words and actions affect others and ourselves. Please think before you speak or act. Always keeping in mind that we are here to learn and develop our SWAGGER.

Be inclusive by inviting others to sit with you and take time to get to know your classmates.

If you see something negative, say something. If you or someone else is being bullied or disrespected please tell the nearest adult immediately. Mediation can help solve the issue so we can focus on learning and feeling safe at school.

### **Transportation**

Students will use the Success Express DPS Shuttle to get to school on time every day. Students are expected to maintain their SWAGGER both on the Success Express Shuttle and on campus. Students should follow the guidelines of the Shuttle in order to maintain eligibility to continue to benefit from the privilege of riding the Shuttle.

### **Use of Electronics**

Vista Academy does not allow cell phones or any other use of electronics in the classroom, unless it is used for academic purposes. Listening to music is not permitted in the classrooms or hallways. During lunch-time you may use your electronic devices, but at all other times they should be secured and turned off. Vista Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen items and recommends that students leave all cell phones and electronic devices at home.

### **Use or Possession of Weapons, Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco**

The use or possession of any type of weapon, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or any other unauthorized items is strictly prohibited. Serious measures will be taken if any student is in possession of any unauthorized item. Coming to school under the influence of any type of drug or alcohol is strictly prohibited.



## ***Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement***

\_\_\_\_\_ We have received a copy of the Vista Academy Student Handbook for the 2016-2017 school year.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ We have accessed an electronic copy of the Vista Academy Student Handbook for the 2016-2017 school year via the school website.

We agree to read the contents of the handbook. I understand that my child and I are expected to abide by the rules and regulations of Vista Academy and the Denver Public School District. I understand that not reading the Student Handbook will not exempt me or my student from the expectations expressed in the Student Handbook.

**Parent Name** \_\_\_\_\_ *(printed)*

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ *(printed)*

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_