



# Shellsburg Elementary Student Handbook

Shellsburg Elementary School reflects a student population of approximately 275 unique preschool through fifth grade learners. We are confident that you will find Shellsburg Elementary to be a child and family centered school with high expectations for student learning and achievement. We believe you will be pleased with the educational program and the supportive, caring atmosphere that Shellsburg Elementary offers.

Shellsburg Elementary places student learning and helping each child reach his or her full potential as our primary focus. Our school also offers additional support services in the areas of Title 1 reading/math intervention, special education, and extended learning. With our strong emphasis on meeting the needs of all learners through differentiated, research-based instructional practices, our students are able to continually make strong achievement gains.

We believe that through teaching, modeling, and practicing, Shellsburg Elementary Students will show good character by demonstrating safe, caring, respectful, and responsible behaviors. We believe that by acknowledging and recognizing students when they demonstrate those core values, we will promote continued positive behavior.

Effective communication between school and home is an important aspect of your child's education. Feel free to stop by or call at any time throughout the school year with questions, concerns, or suggestions. By communicating effectively, we will make this a rewarding school year for all.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved and to volunteer at Shellsburg Elementary. We encourage you to speak with your child's teacher or visit the school webpage for more information.

*Ryan Davis, Principal*  
*(319)436-5903*  
*ryan.davis@vscsd.org*

**Shellsburg Elementary School**  
**203 Tomahawk Trail, Shellsburg, Iowa 42332**  
**(319)436-5900**

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## District /Building Information

### Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District Phone Numbers

Shellsburg Elementary	(319) 436-5900
Tilford Elementary	(319) 436-5824
Vinton-Shellsburg Middle School	(319) 436-5601
Vinton-Shellsburg High School	(319) 436-5702
Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District Administrative Office	(319) 436-4728
→ Business services	(319) 436-4728
→ Transportation	(319) 436-5687
→ Food Service	(319) 436-5771

### Student Learning Goals

1. All students will communicate effectively.
2. All students will be independent life-long learners.
3. All students will be technologically literate.
4. All students will use leadership skills to develop positive relationships and work collaboratively.
5. All students will be effective problem solvers.

## **District Mission Statement and Goals**

Mission Statement: To Be Positive Difference Makers

Goals: Our goal is for each student to have access to an effective teacher and access to the same content, knowledge and skills in each section or class (guaranteed and viable curriculum), including a strong system of supports that gives students what they need when they need it (MTSS/RtI).

## **VSCSD Equity Statement**

The Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District provides equal educational and employment opportunities and will not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District shall take affirmative action in recruitment, appointment, assignment and advancement of women and men, minorities and disabled. Inquiries regarding compliance with equal educational or employment opportunities and/or affirmative action shall be directed to Tony Islas Equity Coordinator, Vinton-Shellsburg CSD, 1502 C Avenue, Vinton, Iowa 52349 or [tony.islas@vscsd.org](mailto:tony.islas@vscsd.org). Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII Office of the United States Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, or the Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Education in Chicago, IL.

## **Daily Schedule**

### **Building Office Hours**

The school offices are open from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. The buildings are locked at 4:00 PM. Before 7:30 AM and after 4:00 PM, a voicemail system will take your messages. Elementary offices are not open on vacation and/or holiday dates. The District Administration Office is open throughout the summer.

### **Student Schedule for Arrival and Dismissal**

Students should arrive after 7:30 A.M. (there is no student supervision or access to the building before this time)

7:40 A.M. -- Students have the option of breakfast or recess

8:05 A.M. – Bell Rings for students to go inside to their lockers

8:10 A.M. – Classes Start

8:15 A.M. -- TARDY BELL

3:05 P.M. – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Vinton students dismissed

3:20 P.M. – Shellsburg Town students dismissed

3:40 P.M. – Shellsburg Bus students dismissed

### **Student Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures**

Morning Drop Off is Actually Quite Easy and Fast:

- Students being dropped off can be let out of vehicles either on Cottage Street or in the parking lot.
- Supervision will be on the playground starting at 7:30. Students should not be dropped off before that. Students will not be allowed in the building before 7:30, regardless of the weather, due to lack of supervision. Please plan accordingly.
- If you are going to leave your car to bring your child in, please park in the parking lot.
- **Vinton Fifth Graders** will leave Tilford Elementary at **7:45**. They will wait for the bus in the cafeteria or auditorium.

#### Picking Students Up Can Get A Little Congested:

- We are requiring that cars keep moving and parents stay in their cars when picking up their children. If you want to walk up and pick up your child, please park in the parking lot. Parents are asked to wait at the fence line and not enter the playground when picking up their children.
- Students should be picked up by 3:40. There is not playground supervision after all route buses have picked up students and left.
- Students walking home should leave the school grounds immediately when they are dismissed, unless they are waiting for a ride. If they are wishing to come back to play on the playground, they must wait until 4:00. The reason for this is that the playground supervisors are making sure all kids get where they are supposed to go (bus, Creative Kids), so they need to visually see that the playground is clear.

#### **Students Leaving Early or Changing Routines for the Day**

- To be excused during school hours, a child must bring a personal note, or we must have a call from a parent stating the reason for the absence. The child must be signed out in the office. Parents having total custody rights who do not wish to have the non-custodial parent take the child from school must leave a copy of the court order with the school district.
- Parents must contact the school by sending a note or phone call for students not following their usual dismissal routine, informing the school of where the child should go and how he/she will get there. Without a phone call or note stating otherwise, students will be sent home following their usual routine. To alleviate student worry and confusion, regular routines should be followed as much as possible.
- If a student is going home with a friend on a bus that they do not regularly ride, they must bring a note from their parent with details about what day, and who the friend is that they are riding with. The note should be brought to the office to be

signed by the principal or secretary and should then be given to the bus driver by the student when they board the bus.

## **2 Hour Early Dismissal Schedule**

Early dismissals for teacher professional development and parent-teacher conferences are noted on our school calendar. Plan now to use those free hours to take care of some of your child's out-of-school needs (medical and dental appointments). These "shortened" days for our District will be "early dismissals", meaning school will be dismissed 2 hours early. Teachers utilize professional development time to strengthen their instructional practices and to collaborate with others for providing the best possible differentiating learning opportunities for our students.

1:05 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Vinton students dismissed  
1:20 Students getting picked up and walkers dismissed  
1:40 Shellsburg bus students dismissed

## **Shellsburg Elementary Policies and Procedures**

### **Academic Curriculum Review (in conjunction with [Board Policy 605.03](#))**

Parents or caregivers may contact the district office to review curriculum materials prior to their use. Those wishing to excuse their children from parts of our program need to identify the specific objectives and the unit from which they wish to have their child excused. A district form can be obtained from the central office and is posted on our district website.

Our teachers strive to give students access to the same content, knowledge and skills as others in their grade level, regardless of which class they are in. Our teachers follow the Iowa Core Curriculum to teach appropriate grade level standards at the appropriate rigor. Students are made aware each day of the specific Learning Intentions and Success Criteria for the content they will be working on.

### **Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy (in conjunction with [Board Policy 104 and 104.R1](#))**

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the Board. The Board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the Board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by other students, by school employees, and by volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The Board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization; of students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon the employee's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age or disability is also prohibited.

This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of the Board; while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school or school district.

After an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures that may include suspension or expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures that may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures which may include exclusion from school grounds. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

When looking at the totality of the circumstances, harassment and bullying mean any electronic/digital, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Electronic/digital" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic/digital" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, cell phones, electronic text messaging or similar technologies.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc.;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or

- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors:

- Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities; and/or
- Requiring submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for decisions affecting the student.

Any person who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceeding relating to the report. Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. Individuals who knowingly file false harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy should be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy should be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

The school or school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The Superintendent or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment. The superintendent or appropriate building principal will be responsible for handling all complaints by employees alleging harassment.

It also is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the investigator and principals, to develop procedures regarding this policy. The superintendent also is responsible for organizing training programs for students, school officials, faculty, staff, and volunteers who have direct contact with students. The training will include how to recognize harassment and what to do in case a student is harassed. It will also include proven effective harassment prevention strategies. The superintendent will also develop a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy in reducing bullying and harassment in the school district.

### **Appearance/Appropriate Dress (in conjunction with [Board Policy 502.01](#))**

The Board believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district.



Students should wear comfortable clothes and shoes for active participation in gym class and recess. During cold weather, students need to wear warm coats, snow pants, gloves or mittens and something warm to cover their head. Boots may be required depending upon the condition of the playground area. Please take a moment in the morning to check your child's attire and make sure it is marked with his/her name.

Clothing that is offensive creates a distraction and is not conducive to our learning environment. Although the responsibility of dress begins with parent supervision, the school administration has the right to determine what is proper or improper for the school setting. Students are expected to dress appropriately for the weather and adhere to school policy on clothing or other apparel

The following items are considered inappropriate dress for elementary students and are prohibited:

- Clothing and apparel promoting profanity, inappropriate pictures or slogans, negative religious references, gang-related clothing, or items which are illegal for use by minors (alcohol, tobacco, drugs)
- Hats worn inside the school building (unless for a special reward)
- Revealing tops or see-through clothing
- Tops that expose the midriff
- Low riding pants which expose areas when seated
- Short shorts
- Flip flops, high heels (students must wear comfortable clothes and shoes for active participation in gym class and recess)

Iowa Code 279.58 allows schools to regulate dress code and eliminate anything gang-related, distracting, and or an expression of violence, bigotry, hate and abuse. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the building principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/279.58.pdf>

We expect students to come to school clean and well groomed. If hygiene issues are affecting the academic setting, the school nurse will work with families to come up with a plan to improve the situation.

### **Attendance Policy (in conjunction with [Board Policy 501.10](#))**

The Vinton-Shellsburg School District is committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed academically and personally. Regular attendance is crucial for academic achievement, and as such, the district has established clear attendance guidelines to support student success. This below outlines the procedures for reporting absences, defines attendance codes, and details interventions for addressing absenteeism. By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to foster a supportive and accountable educational environment for all students.

Reporting Absences: Parents or guardians must notify the school by 8:45 AM if a student will be absent. An automated Remind message will be sent for any absence to the family.

Attendance Codes:

- EX: Excused Absence (bereavement, vacation, family, court/legal, military, weather)
- UE: Unexcused Absence
- DR: Medical (doctor, dental, chiro, therapy, hospitalization, etc.)

- T: Tardy
- O: Other (extenuating circumstances)
- SRE: School-Related Event
- Off: Office (principal or nurse's office)
- ILL: Illness
- OSS: Out-of-School Suspension
- ISS: In-School Suspension

Tardy Policy:

- Elementary: Arrival after 8:45 AM is marked as tardy.
- Secondary: Late for any class period is marked as tardy.

Attendance Recording:

- High School (HS): Missing more than 3 blocks counts as a full day absence. Missing 2 blocks counts as a half-day absence.
- Middle School (MS): Missing more than 3 periods counts as a full day absence. Missing 4 periods counts as a half-day absence.
- Elementary: Attendance is recorded in AM and PM blocks.

Tier 1 Interventions:

- All absences and tardies will trigger a Remind message to parents/guardians.
- Communication about attendance policies and codes will be consistently provided to all families.
- If a student has 10% absences in a quarter (5 days), a generic letter or postcard will be sent home.
- Attendance status will be discussed at parent-teacher conferences.

Tier 2 Interventions:

- If a student has 10% absences in a semester (9 days), communication will be sent, and a mandatory meeting will be scheduled (can be at school, home, or a neutral site).
- Meetings will involve the principal or designee (counselors, facilitators, assistant principal).
- Strategies include Social or Academic Intervention Groups (SAIG groups), attendance lessons, lessons with school counselors and student interviews to identify barriers and offer support.

Tier 3 Interventions:

- If a student has 10% absences for the school year (18 days), a mediation meeting will occur. A documented improvement plan will be created, involving a designee from the county attorney's office.
- Failure to adhere to the mediation plan may result in further action by the county attorney.
- Compulsory Attendance Policy (501.03): As outlined by the state of Iowa code; parents must ensure children aged six to sixteen attend school unless exempt. The minimum attendance is a minimum of 1080 hours per school year. Students attending private instruction must meet similar requirements.

Exceptions include:

- Graduation or high school equivalency diploma holders
- Attendance at religious services or private preparatory schools
- Accredited non-public school attendance

→ Independent or competent private instruction

Truancy Procedures: The principal will investigate truanancies. If unresolved, the principal will consult with the superintendent. Persistent truancy will be referred to the county attorney.

### **Audio/Video Surveillance**

Video and audio surveillance is in use in various locations throughout Shellsburg Elementary and throughout the district

### **Birthday / Celebration Treats**

All treats coming to school for student consumption are to be pre-packaged or sealed in individual packages. Please do not bring homemade treats, as we cannot give those to students. Please ask about allergies within your child's classroom prior to sending packaged snacks to school.

### **Bus Procedures**

All students who normally ride a bus are expected to do so unless an email or call is received from parents or caregivers giving other instructions. The safety of every child on our school buses is of great concern to all of us. Your cooperation is necessary in emphasizing the need for your child or children to adhere to the following rules that have been established for the safety of students and the orderly operation of the bus fleet.

Chapter 43 of School Rules of Iowa states that pupils whose residence is within two miles of the school are ineligible for transportation at public expense. In other words, if you live within two miles of your child's attendance center or town shuttle you are not eligible for transportation. A misunderstanding seems to occur when a parent of a young child makes babysitting arrangements at a home that is more than two miles from school. According to state law, we must determine transportation eligibility on the basis of a child's home address not the babysitter's address. If you live within two miles of school and your babysitter lives four miles from school, your child is not eligible for bus transportation even if the bus directly passes the babysitter's home.

1. Students should be at their pick-up stations a few minutes before the established time. School buses will not wait for students to appear. If the bus waits for students, the bus will be late all along the remainder of the route.
2. All students shall be received and discharged from the right front entrance of every school bus and if students must cross the highway, they shall be required to pass in front of the bus, look in both directions, and proceed to cross the highway only on signal from the bus driver.
3. According to State statutes, students may be picked up or discharged along established regular bus routes only at designated stations (where bus students reside). Students who wish to be discharged from the regular route at some place other than that which has been previously designated, may do so only if the stop is a designated pick-up on the route. The student must also submit a note to the building principal/office secretary from the caregivers requesting such, before the privilege is granted.
4. Students who wish to ride a bus that is not their regular means of transportation to and from school must bring a note from their parent/guardian. This note will need to be signed by office personnel.

5. A ruling by the Attorney General prevents a school bus from loading or unloading students when there is less than 300 feet visibility because of fog or a snowstorm. Buses will not be sent out unless there is 300 feet of visibility, we will plan to delay school opening for up to 2 hours depending on conditions. Such delays will be announced on the same stations or communications listed under School Cancellation. If the buses are out and fog suddenly develops, the drivers will not stop unless there is at least 300 feet of visibility. If this should be during morning pick-up, the driver will continue on to school and caregivers will be notified by phone that the bus was unable to stop. During the evening route the bus will stop in a safe farm yard off the road and wait for conditions to clear before continuing the route.

### BUS BADGE AND ID SCANNING

All students are going to be given a school ID badge and a retractable lanyard. The badge must be attached to the student's bag/backpack with the retractable lanyard. Students are required to scan when entering the bus and when exiting the bus. This will include all field trips and athletic events. If a student forgets his/her card more than three times in a month, a bus conduct report can be issued. If cards are lost, students are to notify the bus driver and a replacement will be issued to the student and the cost of the card may be billed to the parent/guardian.

### EMERGENCY BUS ROUTES

During times when the country roads are too muddy and soft or too icy for the school buses to travel, emergency routes will be used. These routes will be on hard surface roads only. When emergency routes are followed in the morning, they will also be followed in the afternoon.

### Ways to have a safe bus ride:

1. Follow driver's directions
2. Stay in seat, face forward, feet on floor, aisle clear
3. Level 1 or 2 voices, no cursing or profanity allowed
4. Keep hands, feet and objects to oneself
5. Electronic devices are permitted but must be used in a manner that is not distracting to the driver. For example- the use of headphones. No vulgar or inappropriate usage
6. Seats and surroundings stay clean without vandalism
7. No food or drink on the bus

### CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT FOLLOWING SAFE RIDING RULES:

Please keep in mind that getting your children to and from school safely is the primary objective of a bus driver. For safety reasons, it is necessary for students to respect the privilege of riding a bus and behaving appropriately. It is important that you stress to your child/children the importance of following the bus expectations and procedures. It may be necessary to immediately impose bus-riding restrictions if a student exhibits severe behavior problems.

- First Offense -- The driver verbally warns a student that the unwanted behavior must stop. A bus conduct report will be issued and parent signature will be required.
- Second Offense -- The driver notifies the Transportation Director and they will talk to the student about the unexpected behavior. A bus conduct report form will be completed, sent home, and signed by a parent/guardian in order for bus

service to continue for the student. The building principal will be notified by phone, in person, or by receiving a copy of the bus report.

- Third Offense -- The driver will notify the Transportation Director. A bus conduct report is completed, sent home, and signed by a parent/guardian. Parent, student, driver, transportation director, and principal may hold a joint conference to discuss behavior
    - ◆ Suspension of student's bus riding privileges may occur.
  - ◆ Fourth Offense -- The driver notifies the Transportation Director. Caregivers and building principals are contacted. The student may be excluded from bus service for an extended period of time.
- Any physical interactions with another student or the driver will be grounds for an immediate bus suspension for a minimum of 3 school days.
  - Any use of tobacco, vape products, or alcohol will be an automatic 5 day bus suspension.

### **Care of School Property / Vandalism (in conjunction with [Board Policy 502.02](#))**

Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school district property may be required to reimburse the school district for the damage. They may be subject to discipline under Board policy and the school district rules and regulations. These instances may also be turned over to local law enforcement authorities.

School equipment, furniture, books, etc. are provided for your child's temporary use. It is the responsibility of each child and family to care for books and equipment borrowed. Should a child fail to care for books issued to him/her or misuse school property in any way, they will be required to pay for the damage. Books lost or significantly damaged will be replaced at full replacement cost. Students shall treat school district property with care and respect. This is an excellent opportunity to teach respect for public property.

### **Child Custody**

Parents, caregivers, and others, (with permission from parents), will be allowed to pick up students from school. The District will try to respect the rights of parents, both custodial and non-custodial, to participate in the education of their child. Absent a court order, decree, or other documentation, the school will assume both parents have equal custodial rights and shall allow both parents to visit or pick up the child from school.

If the custodial parent indicates that the non-custodial parent should not visit the school, or the non-custodial parent does not have authority to take the child from the school, it shall be the custodial parent's responsibility to immediately provide the District with documentation regarding any restrictions applicable to the noncustodial parent, such as a court order or decree. This must be on file in the office in order for us to implement the court orders.

### **Communication Devices / Phone calls (cell phone, tablet, smart watch/device)**

Students are allowed to call home with the teacher or principal's permission from our school office. Students can be contacted throughout the day through our school office. Communication devices such as cell phones, smart watches, tablets, or any other communication device may be brought to school, but it must stay in the locker and be

powered off during school hours. These communication devices can be a strong distraction at school and during recess. Students must keep communication devices closed securely in their backpacks during the school day. If a student is found with a communication device during school hours, it will be taken to the principal's office, and can be picked up at the end of the day. If there is a second offense, the device will be kept in the office until a parent picks it up.

### **Conferences With A Teacher**

All students will be provided with a scheduled, personal parent-teacher conference during the fall and spring during parent/teacher conference night. Our elementary schools strive for 100% attendance by families at these conferences. Due to being limited to the number of conference slots available, divorced or separated parents may not necessarily be provided with separate conference time. In the event that the family is unable to attend, a rescheduled date and time may be provided. You may contact any teacher in the district by calling their building or emailing them. Teachers are often unavailable to come directly to the phone during school hours. Please leave a voicemail message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

### **Digital Backpack / Solicitations From Outside**

Employees and students should be free from solicitations at their place of employment. No organization or individuals, including building employees, may solicit or distribute flyers or other materials within school district facilities or on school district grounds without the approval of the Superintendent.

Please check out our digital backpack for more information about local events.

<https://digitalbackpack.vscsd.org>

### **Discipline / Behavior Expectations**

Shellsburg Elementary School utilizes PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports). The goal of PBIS is to promote safe and responsible decision making, respect for self and others, and respect for property and pride in appropriate behavior. One of our primary responsibilities as a school is to promote a safe, productive learning environment, and it is our belief that communication and teamwork between the home and the school are important in promoting good citizenship and a secure school. Teachers will present school-wide rules and expectations for the classroom, playground, and all school settings.

We believe that together, we will promote an academically, physically, socially and emotionally safe environment in which every individual accepts personal responsibility for making a positive contribution to the harmony and welfare of the school as a whole. We strongly encourage students to take pride in their learning and their choices. Please reinforce and encourage appropriate behaviors using these expectations while speaking with your child about their school day. A collaborative effort with common language and support from home will help our students be successful throughout their day.

Our combined behavior chart guideline for both Tilford and Shellsburg can be found [here](https://tinyurl.com/VSCSDelemBehavior) (<https://tinyurl.com/VSCSDelemBehavior>). This outlines both minor and major behavior referrals and the variety of interventions to respond to the behavior. Much of this has been updated in accordance with the recent Iowa HF 604 legislation.

<b>Students Can Show Positive Behavior and Viking Spirit by showing...</b>
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<p><b><u>Responsibility</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Following directions right away</li> <li>→ Completing work</li> <li>→ Being prepared</li> <li>→ Taking care of yourself and property</li> <li>→ Making good choices</li> <li>→ Doing your best</li> <li>→ Helping others</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Respect</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Treating others as you would like to be treated</li> <li>→ Listening to others</li> <li>→ Following directions</li> <li>→ Accepting differences</li> <li>→ Using manners and kind words</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Safety</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Using line and body basics</li> <li>→ Asking for help</li> <li>→ Reporting concerns to a trusted adult</li> <li>→ Following the group plan and showing Viking Spirit</li> <li>→ Keeping hands and feet from hurting others</li> </ul>
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## **Drills**

Fire, severe weather, and ALICE (A - Alert L - Lockdown, I - Inform, C - Counter, E - Evacuate) lockdown / evacuation drills are conducted throughout the year to assure the students and staff understand the procedures associated with these drills. Fire and severe weather drills are conducted twice in the fall and twice in the spring. ALICE drills are conducted once per year in the fall, as appropriate to the age level of the students.

## **Family/School Communication and Cohesion**

A unified team of parent and teacher provides the most effective educational experience. Use caution when sharing frustrations regarding school with your children so that a temporary problem does not permanently alter the student's perception of teamwork between school and home.

- Don't be a stranger. Make time to talk with school personnel regularly. Know who your children's teachers and bus drivers are and how they may be contacted.
- Communicate concerns early, quickly and openly. The problem you or your child faces may be the result of an oversight or misunderstanding that can be easily rectified once it is brought to the attention of the appropriate school personnel.
- Give everyone a chance to understand your concern.
- If you call for a meeting to see the person involved, let them know in advance the general nature of your concern. This gives them a chance to reflect on it before the meeting and ask other staff members for information that might relate to your problem or concern. If a personal visit isn't possible, call once to state the problem, and during that conversation, offer to call back at a time when you can both discuss the situation in more detail.
- Be careful sharing frustrations in front of your children.

## **Health & Safety Procedures (in conjunction with [Board Policy 607.02](#))**

### **ACCIDENTS**

- ◆ The school will administer first aid to all minor injuries. In case of a major injury, parents will be contacted and emergency care will be given.
- ◆ If parents cannot be located and the school feels that the child needs immediate medical attention, the doctor listed on the child's emergency card will be called. Every effort will be made to contact the parents or emergency number. Please update your student's online Power School information or notify the office of any changes, such as new employment, emergency, and caregiver phone numbers.
- ◆ Responsibility for reporting the accident will rest upon the injured person to

report to an adult, the teacher who is on playground duty at the time of the accident, and upon anyone who may have witnessed or received a report of it.

### BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

- ◆ To provide for the safety and protection of our students and staff, we have initiated several precautionary measures. The staff is prepared for emergency situations involving blood by having appropriate bloodborne pathogen training annually.

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

- ◆ Students exhibiting symptoms of possible communicable diseases are reported to the school nurse. Each case is treated according to school guidelines with length of exclusion from school varies with the specific disease. Please contact the school if your child is treated for a communicable disease. This will alert us of other cases in the school and enable us to take preventative action to stop the spread of the disease.

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

- ◆ There may be instances throughout the school year when children will be injured and it would be wise to seek the help of a doctor immediately. It is possible that this could happen to your child and you are not available by telephone to secure permission for treatment. Therefore, we would like to have your written consent on file so there will be no delay in receiving treatment. This form is for your convenience and your child's benefit.

### GRANT WOOD AEA HEARING SCREENING

- ◆ Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA) will be providing a hearing test for your child during the upcoming year. Routine screening is performed in grades K, 1, 2, and 5. Students in other grades may be tested if there is a known history of hearing problems or if the student is new to the school.
- ◆ The school newsletter will indicate when testing is to be done. **Parents who do not want their child tested will need to indicate in writing to the school.** The school will then notify the Grant Wood AEA audiologist of your request.

### MEDICATION POLICY

- ◆ If your physician has prescribed medication for your child that must be taken during school hours, the school nurse or trained office personnel will see that your child receives the medication. In order to give prescription medication, the medication must be in the original container, stating the child's name, medication name and dosage. Also A PERMISSION SLIP MUST BE SIGNED BY THE DOCTOR AND THE PARENT/GUARDIAN. Medication permission slips are available in the nurse's office. No medication will be given without written permission. This included Ibuprofen, Tylenol, antacids and cough drops.
- ◆ No medications will be sent home with a student for any reason. These must be picked up by a parent or guardian in the nurse's office.
- ◆ For prescription medication, most pharmacists will provide you with an extra labeled container for any medication that needs to be taken during school hours. The policy for grades PK-4 is that an adult should bring the medication directly to the nurse's office. If the directions allow for parents to administer the medication at home, it would be extremely helpful to the school if you would do so.



- ◆ If there are any changes to the original prescription, we must have a written or verbal order from the prescribing physician providing us with the proper information. We feel that extra caution is warranted when it comes to administering medication to your child, and we thank you for your cooperation and understanding.
- ◆ **In the event of a late start**, medications routinely prior to 10:00 AM, will not be given, unless permission to do so has been received from the parents. This can be done through a phone call or email giving permission to give the medication at a later time. This will alleviate confusion & accidental possible over-medicating of the student.

#### NURSE'S OFFICE

- ◆ The school maintains a nurse's office in the building. The school nurse is available to help provide temporary care for sick or injured children. **The purpose of these guidelines is to prevent the spread of disease.**
  - Children who are obviously ill **should not be sent to school.** A child's temperature should remain normal for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers before returning to school.
  - A child who is taking medication to reduce a fever, **should not be sent to school.**
  - A child who has a temperature of 100°F or higher will be sent home.
  - A child who has vomited or has had diarrhea within the last 24 hours **should not be sent to school.**
  - If your child has been hospitalized and will be returning to school, it is policy to have a doctor's note/release upon their return

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- ◆ If a student is unable to participate in physical education class due to an illness or injury they should not participate in recess. It seems reasonable that if a student is too ill or injured to participate in physical education class, the student should not risk additional illness by participating in physical activity during recess.
  - All medical excuses written by parents will be referred to the school nurse. The nurse will make the judgment as to the level of participation, if any, for that day.
  - The nurse will use their judgment and call parents as they feel it necessary to verify the situation.
  - A doctor's note for extended illness or injury will be required.

#### **Parties Outside of School**

No invitations will be exchanged at school. Contacts and invitations to personal parties are to be handled privately outside of school unless all children in the class are receiving an invitation.

#### **Problem Resolving Strategy: We Have a Problem**

A Parent's Guide for Solving Problems at School (Vinton-Shellsburg Community Schools) Unfairness, misunderstanding, hurt feelings, and conflict are experiences common to all of us. We recognize the special pain that parents feel when their children experience these problems in school and the difficulties that children, parents, and school staff face as they try to overcome these problems.

- STEP ONE - Take your concern to the person closest to the problem.
  - ◆ No matter where the problem is, take your concerns there first. Whether in the classroom, on the bus, or on the practice field, the quickest and easiest solution can usually be found with the staff member most directly involved. Sometimes this approach just isn't possible or leads to an unsatisfactory conclusion; then what?
- STEP TWO - Present your concern to the next level.
  - ◆ Building principals and the director of transportation are examples of the next level of school personnel to contact. Their interest in your problem will be increased if you share with them the steps you've already taken with the person closest to the situation, or if you will take the time to openly share with them the reasons why you feel uncomfortable dealing directly with the person who's closest to the problem.
- STEP THREE - Talk with the superintendent of schools.
  - ◆ Sometimes all the best intentions can't solve a problem. When you believe you've worked hard with those closest to the problem, and you've taken the problem to the next level but still haven't achieved a satisfactory outcome, the superintendent of schools is the next place to go. Keep in mind that the superintendent's day starts early and often ends late in the evening. Part of the superintendent's job requires attendance at area-wide meetings outside the district. As a consequence, a meeting with the superintendent will probably require some advance planning.
- STEP FOUR - Contact your School Board members.
  - ◆ School Board members are elected to represent the interest of all parents and district residents, and you should always feel free to tell them your point of view. School Board members do not, however, have authority in day-to-day school operations. So when should a Board member be contacted and what can they do?
- Contact a Board member...
  - ◆ after other means to solve a problem have been tried.
  - ◆ when a policy is being enforced but you believe it results in bad consequences.
  - ◆ when you believe a policy isn't being enforced.
  - ◆ when policies or procedures are not enforced fairly for all.
- The Board member may take one or all of the following actions:
  - ◆ informally discuss the issue with the superintendent or other administrators.
  - ◆ request that the Board review the specific policies that relate to the situation.
  - ◆ propose new policies for the Board's consideration.

*The laws of the State of Iowa do not grant individual Board members any authority over the school. All authority is the result of official actions by a majority of the Board at meetings open to the public.*

### **Report Cards / Progress Monitoring**

There are two grading periods each consisting of approximately 20 weeks during the school year. Report cards will be sent home with the students at the end of each semester. Report card folders are to be signed and returned back to the teacher in a timely manner. At-risk and

persistently at-risk letters will be sent home three times per year which coincides with Iowa's state-wide testing windows.

### **Safety and Security**

Shellsburg Elementary has a buzzer system at the main entrance and all other doors are locked during the school day. All visitors during school hours will enter through the main office and have to be buzzed in at the main entrance located on the north side of the building.

### **School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP)**

Students will be served the menu for the day with the exception of those with special dietary needs due to a medical condition. These needs should be in writing and given to the school nurse or Food Service Director who will relay the information to the building head cook. Milk will be served with all hot lunches unless we are otherwise notified in writing from a doctor.

Parents or caregivers can make payments for a student's lunch account on the schools' web site or in any school office. Please make sure your child's name is listed with your payment. Please note that if your child has a negative lunch balance of more than \$5.00, the student may receive an alternate meal until their account returns to a positive balance.

If you would like to eat lunch with your child, please notify the school the day before or early the same day you plan to eat.

### **School Delays Or Cancellations**

"Remind" is an automated phone messaging system that will send text messages, emails, and phone calls to alert you of any school closings, late starts, and "hard surface roads bus routes only". It is important that all cell phone numbers and contact information are kept up to date. If you need assistance setting up your Remind account, please contact the office.

### **School Resource Officer (SRO)**

The SRO is a Vinton Police Officer who is assigned to work in our schools. This program provides an opportunity for students to build positive relationships with the community police department. The SRO visits classrooms making presentations on a wide range of topics of student interest, is visible in the hallways and school grounds throughout the school day, assists at various events, and works with the administration as needed. The SRO is available to answer student or parent questions and assist them with a variety of issues.

### **School Supplies**

A list of school supplies will be available online and at registration. All clothing, school bags, and shoes need to be marked with the student's name. A link to school supply lists can be found here: [www.vscsd.org/school-supply-list](http://www.vscsd.org/school-supply-list).

### **Search And Seizure (in conjunction with [Board Policy 502.08](#))**

School district property is held in public trust by the Board. School district authorities may, without a search warrant, search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated. The search shall be in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote a positive educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of

students, employees, and visitors to the school district facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, shall not create a protected student area and shall not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility.

School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. Items of contraband may include, but are not limited to, non-prescription controlled substances, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, apparatus used for controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco or tobacco products, weapons, explosives, poisons, and stolen property. Such items are not to be possessed by a student while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district: while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered buses; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Possession of such items will be grounds for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to local law enforcement officials. The Board believes that such illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or may present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent, in conjunction with the building principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

### **Student Classroom Placement**

A lot of time and effort is put into developing class lists each spring. Class lists are actually developed during the months of March and April for the following school year. Information is gathered from each child's classroom and specials teachers regarding his/her academic development and social behavior. The first priority is to balance each room academically and behaviorally. We also work to ensure that students entitled to our district supports such as special education, will be in a classroom where schedule and support align with that student's needs and where these students also have a variety of classmates with which to learn from and interact. We then separate students who may not demonstrate their best behavior when paired with another student.

Please remember, students will have access to many teachers during their educational experiences. If a student is responsible with homework and is respectful to all, they will have a successful learning experience in any of our classrooms. All of our teachers are willing to work in partnership with parents to provide the best possible learning experience for their children.

At the preschool through 4th grade level, we do not accept non-requests due to having only 1-2 teachers. If you feel it necessary, you may non-request a classroom at the 5th grade level. With the non-request option, we do not honor specific teacher requests for students to be placed INTO a specific room. We are always open to meeting with parents who have a serious educational or social concern about their child at any time.

### **Student Contact Information / Student Records**

Parents or caregivers are responsible for keeping their contact information current using our PowerSchool online program available through our school website at [vscsd.org](http://vscsd.org). It is critical to have current phone numbers and contacts, as emergencies can arise with your

student at any time. Parents or caregivers may view the contents of their child's cumulative folder in the presence of the building principal. Contact the building office to set up an appointment to view the student record files.

### **Student Lockers (in conjunction with [Board Policy 502.05](#))**

Student lockers are the property of the school district. Students shall use the lockers assigned to them by the school district for storing school materials and personal belongings necessary for attendance at school. It shall be the responsibility of students to keep their assigned lockers clean and undamaged. To ensure students are properly maintaining their assigned locker, the principal of the building may periodically inspect the lockers. Student lockers may be searched in compliance with Board policy regulating search and seizure.

### **Student Support Services (Student Academic Need)**

Additional support services are available to assist teachers when concerns arise with students. These services include our building staff, (classroom teachers, special education teachers, school counselors, school nurse, health clerk, etc.) and Grant Wood Area Education Agency support staff, (psychologist, social worker, academic consultant, speech-language pathologist, occupational and physical therapist, and others). Grant Wood AEA support staff members are an important part of our team. They often assist with students who are struggling academically or behaviorally. They assist with developing supplemental and intensive assistance plans. They also may visit classrooms to observe and work with students. Of course, no educational placement decisions are made without parent input. Teachers and families may use input on an informal basis or request formal assistance in identifying strategies to address a concern, in carrying out these strategies, or in monitoring individual student progress. These services are available for all students through teacher or parent request. Working together, we can provide the best education possible for all of our children.

### **Student Support Services (Student or Family Need)**

If your student or family has additional needs please do not hesitate to communicate them with our office. We have a team of individuals who work very hard to ensure that our students have everything they need to be their best learners.

Some examples include...

- Assistance with obtaining school supplies
- The VSCSD Backpack Program supplies food for students over the weekend
- Access to our district's homeless liaison

### **Toys/Electronics at School**

Toys from home can be a distracting influence during the school day. Unless the toy or electronic is a part of the special event, they are not allowed at school. Trading cards are not allowed at school or on the bus. Electronics may only be used in the classrooms for special events or learning opportunities established by the classroom teacher. The school is not responsible for the loss or damage of toys, trading cards, or electronics. For the safety of students, hard balls and baseball bats are not allowed at school. If your child must bring a bat or hard ball due to a practice after school, they may store it in the school office but will not be allowed to store it in the students' locker.

### **Visitors**

***All parents, caregivers, or visitors who come to our school are required to check-in at the office to sign-in and receive a visitor identification sticker if you are going past the main office area.*** When entering the school, you must check-in at the office and sign out in the office as you leave so we are able to keep track of visitors in the building. Parents or caregivers visiting/volunteering should make alternative arrangements for non-school age children. Children of school age who may be visiting in your home are welcome to visit the school during non-instructional times, such as lunch and/or recess, and should be accompanied by an adult. Arrangements for these visits need to be made prior to the day of the visit.

### **Visitors - Animals In The Classroom (in conjunction with [Board Policy 606.03](#))**

Live animals will not be allowed in school district facilities except under special approved circumstances. When authorized, the presence of a live animal must be for an educational purpose. Permission from the principal will be required of anyone wishing to bring an animal into school district facilities. Appropriate supervision of animals is required when animals are brought into the school district facilities. The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal brought to school. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student's attendance center on the school bus or in school vehicles.

### **Volunteers**

Whether you find yourself with free time on your hands, a desire to spend time with youth in our community, or welcome the opportunity to help others, our teachers, students and staff greatly appreciate your willingness to share your time through volunteering in our district. There are certain guidelines volunteers must follow. Check out the website to see the guidelines and to fill out the required sign-up form. Find the website here: [www.vscsd.org/volunteering](http://www.vscsd.org/volunteering).

In the Vinton-Shellsburg School District, our students' safety and your protection are very important to us. We strive to provide a safe, healthy, and supportive work environment for our students, staff and volunteers. To help ensure this, we ask that you follow these guidelines.

- ALL volunteers should check-in at the office and wear a name badge. Please sign out when leaving the building.
- The classroom teacher will determine how your volunteer talents can best be utilized. This might include listening to children read, reading to students, tutoring, playing games, helping with class projects, helping with class parties, helping on field trips, etc... Understand that your role is to support the teacher.
- All information regarding students and staff should remain confidential. Volunteers should not ask for student addresses or phone numbers or share yours with the student. A volunteer should not take photos of students without the consent of the teacher.
- The school board expects all adults working with students to remain substance free.
- Volunteers should use adult restrooms only and should not take students individually to the restroom.
- Volunteers should work with children in open areas near other adults or children. There should be another volunteer, district employee or parent in the area where you are working with students at all times. Volunteers should not lead a field trip group without staff present.
- Volunteers should not ask for hugs. If a student requests one, hug from the side, or

bend down so that your shoulders are level with the student. Handshakes, “high fives”, and an arm around the shoulder are safe, warm, and friendly touches.

- Your role as a volunteer does not involve disciplining students. Return to the classroom teacher for support or to report an incident.
- Let your conversations demonstrate respect for others and avoid a tone or language that may be perceived as discriminatory, sexist, or offensive. Remember that you are a role model for students. Treat all students in the same kind and fair manner and be respectful of their differences.
- If a student shares with you anything that causes you concern for their safety or health, TELL THE TEACHER OR PRINCIPAL. Be assured that they will follow up on the information.

### **Weapons (in conjunction with [Board Policy 502.06](#))**

The Board believes weapons and other and look-alikes dangerous objects in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons or dangerous objects and look-alikes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents or caregivers of students found to possess a weapon or dangerous object on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects shall be reported to the law enforcement officials, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students bringing a firearm to school shall be expelled for not less than 12 months. The superintendent shall have the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for a student on a case-by-case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials shall be exempt from this policy. The principal may allow authorized persons to display weapons or other dangerous objects or look-alikes for educational purposes. Such a display shall also be exempt from this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

### **Weather Related Recess Procedures**

Our goal is to allow for outdoor recess as much as possible. We believe that outdoor play is vital to a student's development. Caregivers should see that children are properly dressed for adequate protection from the hot, wet, and cold weather. Children are not permitted to play in the rain. Shellsburg Elementary will follow the *Iowa Department of Public Health Child Care Weather Watch Guidelines* to determine if conditions will allow for outdoor recess. If the wind chill temperature is 10°F or colder OR if conditions do not allow children to play outside safely

(ex: extreme wind, rain, storms, or icy conditions) children will remain inside. If the Heat Index exceeds 100°F, adjustments will be made to outdoor activities. Please send your child to school dressed with the appropriate clothing layers. If your child needs to remain inside for recess because of illness or injury, please send a doctor's excuse. If you need help finding winter gear for your child, please contact the office.

### **Waiver Of Student Fees (in conjunction with [Board Policy 503.03-R\(1\)](#))**

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or who are in foster care are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Students whose families are experiencing a temporary financial difficulty may be eligible for a temporary waiver of student fees. Caregivers or students who believe they may qualify for temporary financial hardship may complete a waiver form. The form can be accessed online [here](#). This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.

### **504 Plan**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District to provide to eligible students a free appropriate education, including individually designed instruction. Section 504 does not require a written special education Individual Education Plan (IEP) but does require an educational plan which outlines accommodations for providing an education for handicapped students comparable to that provided to non-handicapped students.

Questions regarding the district's 504 Plan may be directed to any of the building administrators or to the Superintendent.