

# ROBERT L. VALE MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS HANDBOOK

## ROBERT L. VALE MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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### Section A Campus Handbook 2023-2024

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# **WELCOME**

As a student at Robert Vale Middle School, you have the opportunity of continuing the traditions and standards of excellence that started with our first classes in 2008-2009. Our state of the art facility will offer you many opportunities, most important of which is setting the traditions and the standards by which future students will be evaluated. Students are expected to do their best and to demonstrate respect and courtesy at all times. This Student-Parent Handbook has been prepared for your information and guidance.

Keep in mind at all times that you, the student, are the most important aspect of school life at Robert Vale Middle School. Be proud of your school. This is your home away from home. Respect it and take care of those within your school. As a Stingray, you are expected to conduct yourself with dignity. You will be challenged in the classroom to excel and will be given opportunities to grow as a young adult and to enjoy a variety of experiences associated with middle school e.g. dances, games, clubs and concerts.

Robert Vale Middle School is dedicated to the purpose of teaching students to use their minds well and build skills that will be useful and required, now and in the future. Therefore, it is necessary to have certain rules to insure each individual the opportunity to benefit from their educational opportunity. This handbook outlines some of the basic policies around which your school functions. Frequent reference will keep you informed of guidelines and allow you to take full advantage of all school offerings. As Robert Vale Middle School opens and establishes its traditions, academic teachers will be planning lessons for students. Students will have a teacher-advisor who will monitor progress and work closely to help students problem solve and learn to assume personal responsibility.

Please feel free to contact teachers and administrators when you deem it necessary. The cooperation of school patrons, based upon the knowledge of the school, will result in a more efficient and successful school program. Conferences may be scheduled by calling the school at the following number, 397-5700.

## **ROBERT “BOB” L. VALE**

One of the famous “Killer Bees”, Robert “Bob” Vale was a tireless advocate for better opportunities and facilities for school children, higher wages and benefits for teachers, and higher standards for public education. Senator Vale was born Dec. 4, 1931, the third of nine children, in Roma-Los Saenz, Texas. Vale graduated as salutatorian from Manuel Guerra High School in 1950 and was valedictorian of his class at St. Mary’s University, where he also attended law school.

Vale served in the U.S. Army in Korea from 1954 to 1956 and received an honorable discharge as a first lieutenant. Upon his return from Korea, Vale started his own law firm in San Antonio. Vale was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1964 and represented Bexar County District 57-I for 14 years. Representative Vale was the first Bexar County legislator to serve on the House Appropriations committee and was ranked eighth in seniority when he was elected to the Texas Senate in 1978. Vale served two terms in the Senate for a total of 20 years as a Texas legislator. During his two decades in the Legislature, Vale fought for money for the University of Texas Health Science Center and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

In May of 1979, Senator Vale was one of 12 Senators who hid for four days at the end of the 66th session to block a presidential primary bill. This move became known as the “flight of the killer bees.” Senator Vale left the Senate in 1984 and lived in San Antonio until he passed away in 1992 at the age of 60. All four of Vale’s children attended Northside ISD schools. Both Senator Vale and his wife, Theresa, were very involved in PTA while their children were in school.

## **SCHOOL COLORS**

PURPLE and BLACK

## **SCHOOL MASCOT**

STINGRAYS

## **Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs**

**Mission** - Empower students academically, socially and emotionally.

**Vision** - Every day, every student will rise to the challenge of recognizing and developing their potential.

**Core Beliefs** - We are committed to:

- Each student deserves a quality education that honors their voice and prepares them to engage, contribute, and succeed.

- Students' health, safety, engagement, challenge, and support are directly linked to their academic achievement and future success.
- Meaningful relationships among students, families, educators and the community are vital to student success.
- Public schools are essential to foster community and develop engaged citizens.
- Staff members will model the expected behaviors in order for students to become better learners and citizens.
- Staff members will encourage students to think, problem-solve and develop grit through perseverance and mental toughness.

## **PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP YOU**

### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible to the Superintendent of schools for proper administration of Robert L. Vale Middle School. It is her duty to organize, supervise, and administer all of the affairs of the school as they affect students, teachers, and patrons. She will be glad to help you with any of your concerns. Conferences can be scheduled by calling 397-5700.

### **The Associate Principal/Assistant Principal**

The Associate Principal and Assistant Principal work directly with the principal in the management and organization of the school. They handle the day-by-day operations of the school and assume the responsibility of the Principal in her absence.

Due to morning duties and responsibilities on campus, administrators are not available for conferences prior to 8:40 a.m. We strongly suggest that if you wish to speak to an administrator, or have a conference with them, that you call 397-5700 to schedule an appointment. If you are unable to reach an administrator directly by phone, please leave a message and a campus administrator will return your call within 24 hours.

### **The Academic Dean**

The Academic Dean works directly with the Principal in the instructional processes of the school to improve student performance at Robert L. Vale Middle School. She is in charge of all campus testing, both at the district and state level. She handles the day to day operations of the school that address academics and may assume the responsibility of the Principal in her absence. Conferences may be scheduled by calling 397-5700.

### **The Counselors**

All students are assigned a guidance counselor. The counselors are here to assist students both academically and emotionally with issues that may arise at any time. **The function of the counselors is advisory, not disciplinary, and all information is confidential.** Parents can refer their child by contacting the counseling office. Students can refer themselves through the online referral system which is posted in every classroom, hallway, and restroom. If your counselor cannot see you that same day, he/she will make an appointment to meet with you for the next day. Conferences with students receive first consideration of the counselor's time. If you need to make an appointment with your counselor, this can be arranged with the counselor's secretary in the guidance office before and after school.

### **The Nurse**

The school nurse is available to help you at school with medical emergencies and will work closely with your parents and physician in administering prescribed medication. The clinic is located in the main office. Please notify the school nurse of any medical conditions that may be of concern. The school nurse is unable to administer over-the-counter medication to your child and can only administer prescriptions in their original container.

### **The Police Officer**

The Police Officer assists students when needed and helps maintain a safe environment. He/she helps supervise after school events and helps monitor traffic. The SAFE hotline number is 397-7233 or text [safe@nisd.net](mailto:safe@nisd.net).

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **After School Activities**

All school and U.I.L. rules apply to conduct and dress code for students who attend after-school activities. Written permission and/or an admission fee may be required for many events. Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents for these activities; parents are expected to pick up their child immediately at the conclusion of each activity. Children should not have to wait longer than 15 minutes for parents to pick them up after a school event. If a parent or guardian does not pick up their child in a timely manner, the protocol and procedure set forth by NISD in the Crisis Handbook could be followed by the administrator or staff member if they deem it necessary. Students who are not picked up in a timely manner after a school event or school function could be denied the right to attend future after school functions for the remainder of the year. Students who exhibit

inappropriate behaviors will be removed from the activity. Formal attire and/or limousine transportation are not appropriate for these events. Any clothing deemed inappropriate or suggestive is not permitted.

**Circumstances that restrict students from attending after-school events are the following:**

- out of school suspension/in school suspension assigned for the day of the event
- other disciplinary actions that may warrant non-attendance of the event
- absence from school the day of the event
- repeated misconduct at after-school events
- assignment to an alternative educational campus
- withdrawal from Neff Middle School (athletic events may be permitted)

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Parents are charged with the responsibility of ensuring their child comes to school and attends all classes. Students are expected to attend school and be on time to their classes. State law and school policy requires attendance every day that school is in session. Illness, doctor/clinic visits, death in the family, court appearances, religious holidays, and school-sponsored activities are the only excusable reasons for Non-attendance. Absences for reasons other than those stated above will be determined excused or unexcused by the Principal or her designee.

The first rule of success for a student is to “show up” on time. Attendance is one of the Principal's top priorities in managing the school's population. Students who are absent whether excused or unexcused are at risk for falling academically behind.

1. Notes must be turned in to the Attendance Office immediately upon student's return to school. The note must include the following: a) date of note, b) name, id#, grade level of child, c) date(s) of absence(s), d) specific reason for absence(s), e) parent signature, and f) telephone number(s) where parent can be reached. \*Third party notes are accepted (i.e., doctor, dental, funeral, family court) and need to meet the same criteria as listed above.

2. Students without a note will be issued an unexcused absence. The student must bring a note within three school days to the attendance secretary for the record to be amended.

3. Students with 3 or more unexcused full or partial day absences, in accordance with state law, may be issued an attendance contract and/or an attendance warning notice (AWN). Students with additional absences after issuance of AWN may be routed to truancy court.

**NOTE:** Please refer to the District policy on Attendance in Section D of this handbook.

**Tardies** - Students should be in their classrooms when the tardy (second) bell rings at 8:40 am. Campus expectation is for students to attend every class on time before the tardy bell rings. If your student(s) are counted tardy for any class period during the school day, you will receive a callout stating that your student has received a tardy(s) for the day. Students and parents are able to view the specific class period(s) that are marked tardy on [HAC](#). Tardies will reset each week and your student will have a fresh start. We look forward to working with you to maximize your student's success. Excessive unexcused tardy accumulations each week will result in the student receiving disciplinary action.

Parents/Guardians who wish to check out their student early will be required to provide an ID and must be listed as the parent/guardian in our student information system (HAC). If a person other than the listed parent/guardian is picking up your student, our front office staff will contact the listed parent/guardian for approval prior to releasing the student.

## **BACKPACKS/BOOK BAGS**

Any appropriate backpack is acceptable.

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROCEDURES**

All students will enter the cafeteria in an orderly manner. There are specific rules on how students sit in the cafeteria and the majority of the time students will be allowed to sit with their friends, as long as cafeteria rules are followed. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seat. Duty teachers will dismiss students and students may not leave the cafeteria before permission is granted. Students are required to keep their area clean. While in the cafeteria line, students are to only touch the food items they intend to buy.

Our campus has implemented the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs for the

2023-2024 School Year. This means all enrolled students at Vale Middle School are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch each day at no charge to your household for the 2023-24 School Year.

Beginning this year, food deliveries from parents/guardians or delivery services will NOT be accepted at the campus for students. This procedure helps the school to maintain a safe and academic environment and eliminates unnecessary visitors on campus. Parents/guardians may eat lunch with their student so long as they check in at the front office, provide proper identification and sit in the campus designated area. No celebrations are permitted in the cafeteria (e.g. birthdays). To ensure that other students do not feel uncomfortable or left out, parents who bring outside food and drinks should eat lunch with their children in a designated area in the cafeteria.

Breakfast/Lunch Money - Go to <https://www.nisd.net/parents> to access your student's cafeteria account and add money as needed for optional snacks.. We encourage parents to monitor their student's lunch account online to prevent any problems that deal with your child's purchases.

## **BUS ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Students are required to ride the designated bus assigned to them by transportation. Riding a bus is a privilege, not a right. Please refer to our district student handbook for bus rules and expectations. Students may be assigned a specific seat on their bus. Only a family emergency would warrant assignment to a different bus. (Staying overnight with a friend is not an emergency.) In order to ride a different bus home, and receive an official bus change form, a note must be sent by a parent/guardian the day prior to or the morning of and be brought to the Associate Principal's office for administrative approval. This approval must be obtained prior to the end of the school day (these will not be approved after school in the bus loop) for a student to ride a different bus. Students will be given a note from the Associate Principal's office that needs to be given to the bus driver. The number of students assigned to buses and the systemized route system are disrupted when ineligible students ride on alternate routes. All bus routes and assignments of students are done through the district's transportation offices.

## **CAMPUS OPERATING HOURS**

- Classes begin for Robert L. Vale Middle School students at **8:40 a.m.** and end each afternoon at **3:55 p.m.** each day, Monday through Friday.
- The doors will be opened to all students at 7:30 a.m. Students who arrive at school before 8:30 a.m. are allowed to eat breakfast (if they choose) and to report to the grade level designated areas.
- Front Office Hours are from 7:45 - 4:30 PM.
- Students will not be allowed to be checked out after 3:45 PM due to dismissal procedures.

## **CAMPUS VISITORS**

All Parents and Visitors are required to enter the building through the main doors and register in the front office with the Principal's secretary regardless of how long they plan to stay on campus, and must indicate the reason for visiting the campus. They are also required to sign-out prior to leaving the campus. Upon sign-in, all Parents and Visitors should receive a Visitor's Pass, and must wear this pass where it can be visible to staff. These precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff. All volunteers and mentors are also required to do a criminal background check before volunteering on campus or field trips. The background check may be done on-line through the NISD website.

## **Cell phone/Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices such as cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, smart watches etc. may be used before and after school ONLY. If you feel your child must have a cell phone/communication device, it must remain in their backpack, turned off or on silent during the school day (8:40 a.m.-3:55 p.m.), including lunch time. The use of electronic devices will not be allowed in the cafeteria, restrooms, locker rooms, library, or classroom. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in confiscation of the device. If an electronic device is confiscated it will be logged and securely held until the end of the school day, at which point it can be collected by the parent. As stated in section E of the NISD student parent handbook, the district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic devices.

When a student is referred to the Associate Principal's office for a discipline infraction, students will turn in their phone while administrators conduct an investigation. Administration reserves the right to hold the phone until the conclusion of the investigation and/or the end of the school day

## **DELIVERY OF ITEMS**

In an effort to minimize interruptions and maximize instructional time, **we do not deliver items directly to students**. However, we also recognize that students will sometimes forget an item at home. We will deliver glasses, school items (books, assignments, etc), house keys, and lunch money. For all other items, the student is expected to come by the office BETWEEN classes to retrieve their belongings. This procedure helps the school to maintain

an academic environment and is effective in helping students practice personal responsibility. Parents/Guardians dropping off items for their student must be listed in our student information system (HAC) as the Parent/Guardian.. Please contact the school if a non parent/guardian will be delivering an item and ensure they are listed as an emergency contact in our student information system (HAC). Flowers, balloons, birthday presents etc. will not be delivered and will be held in the office until the end of the day when students can pick them up to be taken home.

## **Dress for Success**

The district's dress code is implemented (Section D ); therefore, students will be expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the district. Dress code standards are extended to extra-curricular activities held on the campus. In an effort to promote a safe and positive school environment which is conducive to learning, students should wear appropriate clothing that will not cause disruptions in learning or safety. Inappropriate, indecent, suggestive or distracting clothing will not be allowed. Changes in dress code, deemed appropriate and necessary by the school principal, may be announced, implemented and enforced during the course of the academic school year.

Students out of compliance with dress code may be removed from the regular school setting until the parent is able to provide appropriate attire. Students will be asked to change into school issued clothing if parents cannot be reached. Book covers, folders, book bags, school property, body parts, and/or personal property or clothing displaying obscenities, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, weapons, gang related materials or any design or inscription that administration determines to be unacceptable are not permitted at Robert LVale MS. These items will be confiscated and documented, if necessary, in the student's discipline record.

**Final determination of acceptable dress code and grooming rests with the Principal or his/her designees.**

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES / TECHNOLOGY**

School districts throughout the country, including Northside ISD, have moved into the "Information Age" by providing network and Internet access for students. Technology will be used abundantly at Vale Middle School. Everything from testing reading levels of students to accessing the Library's card catalog database requires the use of networked computers. With this privilege comes responsibility. Students must use the Northside network and the Internet in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the Northside ISD Acceptable Use Policy. At the beginning of each school year there are two forms that must be signed and returned to the school before your child will be able to use a networked computer at Vale Middle School or have their work published on the Vale's website.

TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, STUDENTS MUST ASSUME PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO BEHAVE ETHICALLY, EVEN WHEN TECHNOLOGY PROVIDES THEM THE FREEDOM TO DO OTHER- WISE. THE USE OF NORTHSIDE NETWORK AND THE INTERNET IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT, WHICH MAY BE REVOKED AT ANY TIME FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR. USERS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND GUIDELINES AS A CONDITION OF USING THE NORTHSIDE NETWORK AND THE INTERNET. USE OF NORTHSIDE NETWORK OR THE INTERNET THAT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THIS POLICY MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF ACCESS AS WELL AS OTHER DISCIPLINARY OR LEGAL ACTION.

## **GRADE REPORTING THROUGH HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC)**

Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor their student's progress throughout the year by utilizing NISD's on-line Parent Portal. Students will receive a progress report in the middle of each nine weeks grading period. The progress reports are designed to inform parents and students of current classroom performance and grades. The teacher may require the students to have you sign and return each progress report sent home to verify that you received your child's report. If the teacher deems necessary, you may be contacted by phone to make sure you received the report. This is especially true if the progress of your child is not acceptable or if the grades or conduct are below average.

Report cards will be issued at the end of each grading period. They provide the student's academic grades, citizenship grades, plus other pertinent information. We implore you to make sure that you receive a report card every six weeks. If a parent did not receive their child's report card, please contact the counselor's office for assistance. If a parent/guardian has any questions or concerns regarding your child's education, please start by contacting the teacher, then if the question or concern is not answered/solved, then contact the counselors' office and administration.

## **LOCKERS**

To promote productive hallway transitions, hallway lockers will not be issued to students. Students are encouraged to bring only the necessary school materials, i.e., notebook, pens and pencils. Expensive items should be left at home. Textbooks are in the classrooms for students to use while at school. If your child needs a textbook for home use, contact the school and one can be issued. Students will be issued a P.E. locker for the purpose of storing P.E. uniforms and clothes while in P.E. Students may only access P.E. lockers during their scheduled P.E. time.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

IF YOU FIND ANY ARTICLE OF VALUE, PLEASE TURN IT IN TO THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

As the school assumes no responsibility for lost articles, students are encouraged to take every precaution to protect their possessions. Students should not bring expensive or valuable items to school. Students should carefully label each article, such as clothing, books, and supplies for easy identification. If you are in possession of an item that does not belong to you, you will be subject to disciplinary measures. Lost and found items collected and not claimed by the end of each grading period will be donated to charity.

## **NUISANCE ITEMS**

Items that cause a distraction from the school's academic atmosphere are not permitted. The school cannot be held responsible for any of these lost or stolen items. Confiscated items will be returned to the parent only. Students who bring these items to school are subject to disciplinary action.

## **P.E./ATHLETIC LOCKERS**

PE/Athletic lockers should be kept locked; a student should not divulge the combination to another student. Direct all locker problems to the office. Sharing lockers is not permitted. Students found sharing lockers will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students should observe the following practices:

1. Valuable items should be left at home, not kept in a locker.
2. Do not share lockers - Sharing lockers can lead to the loss of expensive textbooks and personal items.
3. Do not give your locker combination to anyone.
4. Be sure to properly secure all items in your locker.
5. Locker problems should be reported to the associate principal's secretary.

## **REGISTRATION/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

Registrations - To register your student, please go to <https://www.nisd.net/schools/registration> and complete the pre-registration. A counselor will contact you and schedule an appointment to complete the registration process.

Withdrawal of Student - When it becomes necessary for students to withdraw from school, the student and parent should report to the school attendance secretary in the Attendance office to complete the required paperwork. All textbooks, library books, and any school/district property must be returned prior to finalization of withdrawal. Parent/guardian must present an ID in order to withdraw the student. Updated contact information must be provided at the time of withdrawal, including an email address, and information regarding the school or program the student will be enrolling at. School records will not be released until all obligations (textbooks, fines, release forms, etc.) have been fulfilled. A parent signature will be required for final clearance to be given.

## **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Please refer to Section B of Northside's Student and Parent Agreement for the Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Communication System policy.

## **VALE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS / PBIS**

Vale implements a system called PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) that encourages and rewards positive student behavior and clearly defines student expectations. Every area of the campus has a posted matrix with the RAYS acronym and student expectations.

- Respectful
- Accountable
- Young Adults

- **Seeking Success**

**\*\*Note: As policies and procedures change, administration reserves the right to update the campus handbook.**