

MISSION: WHAT WE WANT TO PROVIDE

The mission of Van Nuys Middle School is to create a positive, **student-centered** environment in which we recognize and strive to meet our diverse cultural needs. We expect **parent participation** in student education and school governance. Open, timely communication among all stakeholder groups, active dialogue, and a willingness to listen to all views is essential.

We will provide all children with a **quality** instructional program, in a **safe, secure, and caring environment**, so that they will demonstrate the **intellectual, physical, social and emotional** outcomes necessary to be happy and successful in a changing, diverse world.

We believe it is vital to provide students with an integrated curricular and extra-curricular experience that addresses **the whole child** and enables them to achieve happiness and success in a multicultural and diverse world.

We believe it is vital to prepare our students **for life**, not just for a particular subject. In a modern world of high technology and constant change, students must become **quality producers and life-long learners** who focus on the future. Our mission is to provide students with the skills and motivation to continue to learn and grow, anticipate and thrive on change, and commit to quality in their service, career, family, and civic roles and responsibilities. **We plan to make our students "fit for life"**, ready for a changing, complex and challenging world.

VISION: WHAT WE WANT TO SEE HAPPEN

The vision of Van Nuys Middle School is to become **a learning community** where we realize that obstacles can be overcome. We will be a warm, accepting environment where everyone can, and is, entitled to learn. All learners in our community see **value** in, and **take responsibly** for, their own learning. Students meet State, District, and departmental **standards** in preparation for a successful life.

With this vision, the responsibility of mathematics, science, social studies, English, P.E. and electives cannot be **content specific**, or aimed at **matriculation to the next level**. The duty of each department, teacher, and employee will be to prepare the students for life by the **quality application** of skills, abilities, and attitudes learned in school and in all classes.

In order to be happy and successful in this changing, complex, diverse, and challenging world, the Van Nuys Middle School student **must be prepared intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically** to become:

**A Quality Producer
A Life-long Learner
A Critical Thinker
An Effective Communicator
A Technology Manipulator
A Community Contributor
A Compassionate Caregiver
A Good Health and Wellness Maintainer
A Relationship Builder
A Conflict Resolver**

SCHOOLWIDE STUDENT OUTCOMES:

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO

INTELLECTUAL OUTCOMES:

When students leave Van Nuys Middle School they will be able to...

1. apply concepts to real life situations (i.e. critical thinking skills).
2. communicate at a higher level orally and in writing.
3. demonstrate appropriate social and community responsibility.

SOCIAL OUTCOMES:

When students leave Van Nuys Middle School they will be able to...

1. demonstrate good manners, (thank you, please, excuse me, proper greetings, etc.),
as modeled by teachers and staff.
2. demonstrate respect for personal and public property.
3. resolve conflicts in a non-physical manner.

PHYSICAL OUTCOMES:

When students leave Van Nuys Middle School they will be able to...

1. demonstrate appropriate physical contact.
2. understand the value of nutrition and its effects on their physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being.
3. recognize and accept gender and motor skill differences.

EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES:

When students leave Van Nuys Middle School they will be able to...

1. show greater tolerance of others' similarities and differences.
2. deal more positively with emotions in order to raise their self esteem.
3. demonstrate a greater awareness of the feelings of others.

Outcomes are the essential knowledge, behavior and skills students are able to demonstrate at key times during their school career. Outcomes are **high quality, culminating demonstrations of significant learning** in context. **"Holistic" Outcomes are not content-specific**, meaning they are applicable to all subject areas.

ATTENDANCE

OPENING DAY PROCEDURES

OPENING Homeroom

1. Take attendance on the computer generated Homeroom roster in the plastic cover. This is the official Homeroom roster. Enter a capital letter "E" for each pupil in attendance on the first date of school. If a child is not in class on this first day, enter a slash (/) mark. If a child is present but not listed on the computer Homeroom roster, send him/her at once to the Attendance Office. [NOTE: At the end of Homeroom there should be an entry next to the name of each student whose name appears on your roster.]
2. **DO NOT enter a new student's name on the official Homeroom roster (in plastic). Add the student's name on your copy of the roster only.**
3. Distribute the **large part** of the buff program card **with the teacher's name**. Instruct the students to have each teacher sign or initial the card. The small set is for you to keep as a Homeroom teacher.
 - A. If there is not a program for the student, or if there appears to be a **MAJOR** error, send him/her to the Counseling Office with the **Program Pass**
 1. Please note that **7th grade students who did not complete their immunizations** will not have a schedule. You will find a yellow card with their name on it, and should be sent to the Auditorium
 - B. Do not allow students to use programs from the New Student Orientation. These cards are lined with a marker and should be discarded.
 - C. Remind students that they will return to Homeroom at the end of the day to turn in their signed program card.
 - D. If a student loses his/her program during the day, send the student to the Counseling Office for a copy.
 - E. Program change requests will not be accepted until the second week.
4. Return the Homeroom roster to the Attendance Office at the end of Homeroom, along with any unclaimed programs.

CLASS PROCEDURES

1. Enter an "E" on the roster for any student who is present. If the student is not in attendance, place a "/" next to his/her name.
2. Sign or stamp the program card with your name.
3. DO NOT change any student's program.
4. If you see a major error, please send the student with a **Program Pass** to the Counseling Office. (i.e., two history classes)

SECOND HOMEROOM PROCEDURES

1. Have students record their schedule in their notebook.
2. Collect all program cards. Check for completeness and teacher signatures, Incomplete cards will be returned to the student the second day, during Homeroom, to complete the process.

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETE SIGNED SET THE SECOND WEEK OF SCHOOL TO THE COUNSELING OFFICE. THE SPECIFIC DATE WILL BE PRINTED IN THE BULLETIN.

SECOND DAY PROCEDURES

1. FIRST Homeroom

A. Attendance

1. Take attendance on the computer generated Homeroom attendance list in the plastic cover. Return the roster to the Attendance Office at the close of Homeroom.
 - 1.. Enter a capital letter "E" in the second box for the semester for each new student who is in attendance for the first time.
 2. If a child is not in class today and was not in class yesterday, mark a slash (/). A child is not considered absent until he/she has been "E'd" in.
 3. If a child is present, but not listed on the computer Homeroom roster, send him/her, at once, to the Counseling Office. Do not let him/her convince you that he/she should be there.
 4. If a child was present yesterday, but absent today, enter a (--) dash.
 5. **DO NOT enter a new student's name on the official Homeroom roster. DO add the name on your copy.**

B. Re-issue program cards that have not been signed completely.

C. Issue program cards to students entering for the first time today if they are without one. Remind students that they are to return signed programs cards during the closing Homeroom today.

D. Collect completed Emergency Cards. Note the return of this document on your roll sheet.

E. Send all returned forms to the Attendance Office at the end of Homeroom.

F. Return all unclaimed programs to the Attendance Office in your Attendance roster at the end of Homeroom.

2. PERIODS 1 - 6

- A. Enter an "E" in the second day column, if the student is in attendance for the first time. If the student is not in attendance, place a "/" next to his/her name.
- B. If a child was present yesterday but absent today, enter a (--).
- C. Initial or stamp any new program cards.

3. SECOND Homeroom

- A. Collect all computer printed program cards

DAILY ATTENDANCE ROUTINE-Homeroom

Each teacher is to maintain two separate attendance documents: a Roll Book which is retained by the teacher, and a Homeroom Roster which travels daily between the teachers and the attendance office. The roll book may reflect different attendance than

the Homeroom roster. A student may arrive at school after Homeroom, in which case the Homeroom teacher will record an absence, but the attendance office will change the Homeroom roster to indicate the student's presence.

1. Mark attendance in the roll book and computer class roster using the standard District marking symbols which are on the back of the Homeroom roster. Class rosters are the source of documentation and are to be kept with the permanent records. All markings are in either black or blue ink only.
2. For students returning from absence, mark the roll book with the accepted District symbols used for marking roll books.
3. If a student arrives late (after you have marked the absence) change the absence to a "T" in the correct column on the roster for the current date.
4. Upon receipt of a "Change of Program" form, "Clearance Card" or another official notice of withdrawal, mark an "L" in the withdrawal date on the roster and indicate next to it where the student went.
5. Send the attendance folder to the Attendance Office at the close of Homeroom. If there are no absences, **send the folder to the Attendance Office at the end of Homeroom anyway.**
6. Procedures for newly enrolled students:
 - A. If the student's name appears on the roster when the student arrives, mark an "E" in the appropriate date on the roster. On subsequent days, attendance is marked in the usual manner.
 - B. If the student's name is not on the roster and the student has been instructed to report to the Homeroom class, write the student's name, birthdate, grade level and an "E" in the entry date on the first available line on the roster. Add that student to your roll book, too.
 - C. If a student is on your roll but has never come to your class, place a diagonal slash (/) in the box for that day.
 - D. Students who come to your class who are not on your roll should be sent to the attendance office immediately with a note.
7. Students **ARE NOT** to take roll in the classroom.

ATTENDANCE FOLDERS WILL BE FOUND IN THE TEACHER'S MAILBOX EACH MORNING. DO NOT REMOVE THE ATTENDANCE FOLDER FROM YOUR BOX THE NIGHT BEFORE.

STUDENT CHECK-OUT FROM Homeroom

1. Homeroom teacher will be notified by the Attendance Office that a student is checking out. This may be done by:
 - A. Clearance Card being circulated directly by the Attendance Office.
 - B. Teacher will be requested to come to the Attendance Office to sign the Clearance Card.
2. When Clearance Card is given to the Homeroom teacher, it should be signed, grades recorded and entered in the official roll book.
3. Date of leaving must be entered in the appropriate column and the destination of the student must be entered after a "L" is placed on the date of leaving in the roll book.

DAILY ATTENDANCE ROUTINE-Regular Classes

1. Roll is to be taken by the teacher immediately at the beginning of each period. Refer to roll book explanation sheet for accepted markings.
2. The teacher should sign the permit to re-enter form for pupils who return from previous days' absences. Students who do not have a form should be sent to the Attendance Office to clear their absence.
3. If the PRC lists "illness" or "non-illness" as the reason for absence the student should be given the opportunity to make up the work missed. If a "truancy" or "suspension" is listed, the student may be allowed to make up the work.
4. You will receive a Teacher's Absence Report for your classes daily. Please check this list daily and, as necessary, make corrections in red.
 - a. After attendance has been recorded for the last class of the day, sign the report and return it to the Attendance Office.
 - Students are listed on this report because they were reported absent in Homeroom.
 - If any student is reported absent in Homeroom, but attended other classes, it is the responsibility of the teacher(s) of that or those classes to indicate on the report that the student was not absent from a particular class.
5. When a student is suspended from school, the following procedures will be followed:
 - A. Notification of suspension will be on the Teacher's Absence Report.
 - B. Students will return from suspension
 - C. Teacher may allow students to make up missed work.
6. For newly enrolled students, follow the same procedures as in Homeroom.

Responsibility

1. All teachers shall be held accountable for accurately recording student attendance and for being knowledgeable about school-site procedures.
2. Your roll book is a legal document and must show an accurate and up-to-date attendance record at all times.

TARDINESS

1. Tardy policy and procedures
 - A. A pupil is tardy if he/she is not in his/her assigned seat or station when the bell rings and should be marked so in the roll book.
 - B. When a pupil is tardy to school more than 20 minutes, he/she should be sent to the Attendance Office for a permit to re-enter class.
 - C. Teachers must avoid detaining pupils after the passing bell rings. If this does become necessary, the pupil must be given a signed tardy excuse. Pupils must not be penalized when a teacher detains them. Receiving teacher should accept co-teacher's signed tardy excuse.
 - D. A teacher may not keep a student out of another teacher's class to make up a test or class work missed. It is the student's responsibility to make up the work during lunch, nutrition or after school unless the work can be made up during the regular class period.
 - E. Each teacher should be at his/her door between passing periods in order to encourage orderly and prompt passing to classes.
 - F. Each teacher must be in his/her classroom when the tardy bell rings. If we

BINDER REMINDER

The "Binder Reminder" is an agenda book that is intended to assist students with keeping track of their homework assignments, activities, and personal schedules. It is also a means of communication between the school and home.

Students are expected to purchase a Binder Reminder from the Student Store and carry it with them at all times. Periodic checks will help to encourage students to make use of this valuable resource.

The first sixteen (16) pages of the Binder Reminder is our Van Nuys Middle School Student Handbook. During Homeroom the first few weeks of school is the time to review all the rules, policies, and procedures with your students. During the school year, teachers should remind students to record important assignments and due dates.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

To request permission to attend a conference/convention on school time and/or to request reimbursement for fees, the following procedures have been established:

1. Complete the "So You Want To Go To A Conference" form, available in the Main Office, and submit it to the Principal for approval. If approved:
2. Complete Form 10.12, also available from the Main Office.
3. If notified by the person coordinating the event that the request has been approved by the District, advise the Office Manager if class coverage will be required.

COURSE OUTLINES

It is very important that students and parents know what is expected from the beginning of each class. All teachers will be asked to prepare a course outline/syllabus for each course taught, obtain approval from the principal, then send home a copy with each student as soon as possible at the beginning of each school year. The course outline should include a course description, representative standards, grading scale, and homework policy.

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

DUTY STATEMENT OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

1. Provide instructional leadership within their department, team, and grade-level.
2. Coordinate department activities.
3. Make classroom visitations to provide assistance to teachers - instruction, courses of study, materials, etc.

4. Maintain an accounting of department's equipment and supplies.
5. Administer department's budget for instructional materials.
6. Requisition necessary textbooks, equipment and supplies.
7. Participate in developing or revising courses of study.
8. Assist in coordinating testing activities within department.
9. Conduct department meetings.
10. Attend Team Leader/Dept. Chair and District meetings.
11. Recommend to the principal the assignment of teachers to classes within the department.
12. Monitor department members' emergency lesson plan files in the Main Office. Lesson Plan should be current for the school year.
13. Assist new teachers with classroom management strategies; lesson planning, school procedures; selecting textbooks; and other matters of concern to new teachers.

ELECTION OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

There are two methods of selecting a department chairperson:

1. The department chairperson is elected by the members of the staff who teach subjects in that department. The department will meet and select the chairperson by consensus.
2. The department chairperson is elected by the members of the staff who teach subjects in that department. Each person in that department will have the number of votes equal to the number of classes he/she teaches in that department; this will equal from one to six. The person receiving the highest number of votes will become the department chairperson.

FIELD TRIPS

Requests for field trips need to be made to the APSSS at least 4 weeks prior to the date of the field trip. There are forms that need to be filled out. Parent approval must be obtained as evidenced by a signature on the Trip Slip. (Trip Slips are available in the Attendance Office.) All excursions off the school grounds require compliance with the field trip requirements:

- In accordance with Board Rule 2379c and District practices, trips:
 - must have a connection with courses of instruction or with school-related social, educational, or cultural activities.
 - Must be for students enrolled at Van Nuys Middle School.
 - Must be paid from currently budgeted, appropriate funds.
 - Must not deny participation of any student based on race, color, national origin, gender, or handicap.
 - Must be free of cost to students if ADA credit is to be granted, except for trips conducted by Youth Services Section and some conducted under policies governing student body activities.

- Must be educationally worthwhile and must lead directly to the educational growth of the students.
- Must provide adequate supervision by certificated personnel.

Requests for buses are to be made to the Title I Coordinator 3 weeks in advance of the trip. The main purpose of field trips is to supplement the instructional program.

Types

1. Regular school journeys listed on approved District list."
2. Special curricular trips requiring Principal's approval.

How to go on an Educational Trip

1. Plan well ahead of anticipated date of trip
2. Determine the availability of trip forms
3. Reserve tentative trip date on the Master Calendar as early as possible.
4. Obtain memo on procedures for educational trips from the Attendance Office.
 - A. Obtain and complete the "Student Trip/Excursion Approval" form from the APSSS.
 - B. Obtain an "Application for Curricular Trip" form from the coordinator funding your trip. Complete the form and submit it for approval.
 - C. When the trip has been approved, have the students take "Parent Consent" forms home and get their parent's signature on the form. After the parent has signed the permission slip, the students are to get the signatures of all their teachers whose classes they will be missing for the trip. These signatures can be placed on a special form that you may obtain from the Attendance Office. This procedure must be completed two days prior to the field trip. **Make sure that the students understand they must make up any assignments missed.**
 - D. Two days before the trip, a complete list of all the students who will be attending the field trip must be duplicated and distributed to all offices and teachers. Give the administrator in charge of field trips a copy of the "Application for Curricular Trip."
 - E. Obtain a form from the Cafeteria Manager. On this form make a list of those students who will need lunches. On the day of the trip pick up the lunches for the students that are on the list. Make a copy of the list for yourself. **(Do this as soon as your trip has been approved so the Cafeteria has time to prepare the lunches.)**

- F. The day of the trip, an accurate list of the students attending the field trip must be left in the Attendance Office before boarding the bus. You must also leave the TOP half of the parent permission slips in the Attendance Office.
- G. Make sure that every student who gets on the bus has given you a "Consent" form AND THAT ALL OF THE NECESSARY TEACHERS HAVE SIGNED THE AUTHORIZATION FORM. **NO VERBAL OR TELEPHONE AUTHORIZATIONS.**

NOTE: TEACHERS MAY NOT TRANSPORT STUDENTS WITHOUT PRIOR PARENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL.

GRADING

MARKING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(Bulletin No. M-23 Rev., August 23, 1999)

- A. The Board of Education has the authority to adopt rules and regulations governing a marking system. The Principal has the responsibility for implementing Board policy.
- B. Because marks reflect students' individual achievement toward the standards and objectives of the course, at the beginning of each school year, all classroom teachers are to provide students and parents copies of the course description and objectives contained in the revised *Secondary Guidelines for Instruction*, and the *ESL Course Outlines*, which specify the standards to be met for each course and/or each grade level, and a copy of the "Criteria for Marks".
- C. The classroom teacher shall determine the mark given to each student in the class based upon the "Criteria for Marks"; and in absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, that mark shall be final.
- D. The determination as to whether mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency exists in relation to an achievement mark should be made by the school principal or designated administrator.
- E. Subject achievement marks should reflect a variety of class assignments that measure performance on District Learning Standards. Along with classroom

assignments, students must complete one required District developed *standards-based performance assignment* in Grades 6 and 8 for each subject area of language arts and math beginning in the spring of 2000. A *performance assignment* is a uniform task provided by the District that measures a student's performance of the state/district standards. The assignment is based upon what students should be able to produce as a result of a unit of study and is to be scored using the District criteria/rubric. *Performance assignments* will be implemented for history/social science and science courses beginning in the

spring of 2001. Student grades on *performance assignments* will be incorporated into their semester/year-end mark. Marking techniques may include daily/weekly entries for oral, written, and other class activities. These marks, as others, must be uniformly administered and recorded.

- F. For every course, a minimum of one achievement mark for each five-class hours of instruction is to be recorded in the Roll Book for each student. *Performance assignment* marks must be recorded once each year in designated grade levels.
- G. Classroom, homework, and other written assignments, i.e. *performance assignments* that count toward a subject mark should be graded, recorded, and returned to students within a reasonable time. (The criteria for determining "reasonable time" might include students receiving evaluation of their work prior to final assessment and/or final mark.)
- H. Meaningful homework relates to classwork and the objectives of the course, emphasizes quality rather than quantity, and should be reflected in the subject mark.
- I. Marking practices which place major emphasis only upon specific test results may minimize the value of daily classroom instruction, at least insofar as that instruction is reflected in a mark. However, any such test must be aligned with the standards of the course.
- J. A disproportionate number of Fails or D's for any reporting period or for a single assignment should be an immediate signal to assess and consider revising the instructional program. Revisions may include reteaching of specific concepts and skills, individualization of instruction, and varying strategies and techniques to meet the needs of students with different learning modalities.
- K. A systematic process will be established that will be used by all schools in the District to identify students experiencing difficulty achieving grade-level standards for promotion. Parents and students will be informed of concerns regarding student progress as early as possible but no later than the intervals corresponding to progress-reporting periods.
- L. Teachers should send parents positive notes regarding exceptional student performance and student improvement in addition to the regularly scheduled required reports. The District form, *Complimentary Report to Parents*, may be used.

Relationship Of Attendance To Marking

- A. Attendance, work habits, and cooperation may not be used as a part of any rigid formula for assigning subject marks, e.g., a set number of tardies or absences may not result in the automatic lowering of a subject mark or loss of class credit. However, daily classroom activities are customarily the most vital and significant aspect of the instructional program; therefore, significant absences as well as

habitual and prolonged tardies may result in an *absence of learning* and a corresponding reduction in the mark assigned.

Work that can reasonably be made up should be made up within reasonable time constraints. Frequently, classroom activities, laboratory investigations, and oral examinations will be work that, when marked, cannot reasonably be made up. Daily marks that cannot reasonably be made up, e.g. classroom activities, laboratory investigations, and oral examinations, can readily lower a student's overall mark.

- B. A reduction of semester credits because of absences is not permitted.
- C. Students with excused absences shall be afforded the opportunity to complete missed classwork and tests or other appropriate or equivalent assignments which can reasonably be provided.
- D. Students absent for justifiable personal reasons, upon written request of the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or designated representatives, shall be allowed to complete assignments and tests missed during the absence which can be reasonably provided and completed.

The principal or his administrative designee will consult with the teacher before the final determination is made on whether or not the personal reason is justifiable. The teacher shall determine what assignments the student shall make up and in what period of time the student shall complete such assignments. The tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments which the student missed during the absence.

- E. Students who have been suspended from a class may be required to complete assignments and tests missed during the suspension which can reasonably be provided and completed. The teacher shall determine what assignments are to be made up and in what period of time the student must complete such assignments.
- F. Students who are truant or absent without verified justifiable personal reasons or students who have returned to school without a note need not be afforded the opportunity to complete classroom work and tests missed. However, in the interest of helping these students, such opportunities should be provided by the teacher.

Marking Symbols

Three separate marks are issued for all courses: subject achievement, work habits, and cooperation.

- A. **Subject Achievement Mark:**
A - Produces markedly superior work
B - Produces superior work
C - Demonstrates satisfactory work
D - Needs to improve progress in work; barely passing
F - Demonstrates little or no progress in work
- B. **Work Habits and Cooperation**
E - Excellent
S - Satisfactory
U - Unsatisfactory

Requirements For Notification Of Possible Failure

- A. CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE, Section 49067, requires each pupil's achievement to be evaluated for each marking period and requires a conference with, or written report to, the parent or guardian whenever it becomes evident that the pupil is in danger of failing a course. The refusal of the parent or guardian to attend the conference or respond to the written report shall not preclude failing the pupil at the end of the marking period.
- B. Teachers have the responsibility to communicate with parents whenever student achievement is not commensurate with content standards identified for each course. Whenever a student is not meeting the standards of the course and/or there exists the possibility of failure, the parent or guardian must be notified when students are at risk of not meeting grade-level standards for promotion in or more of the following ways:
1. Marking a "Fail" in the subject area on the twelve week progress report is considered sufficient notification for issuing a "Fail" on the final report card. A mark of "D" on the twelve week marking report is not adequate warning of failure to the parent or guardian. However, a "D" on the report with the written comment "In danger of failing," can be considered adequate notification to the parent or guardian.
 2. A "Special Report to Parents-Unsatisfactory" issued prior to the marking period as identified above is considered sufficient notification to the parent or guardian. This special report should be issued with *sufficient time for the student to demonstrate progress and improvement*.
- C. Work habits and cooperation marks are closely tied to the achievement marks; therefore, teachers should notify the parent of a decline in these marks or the possibility of an unsatisfactory mark. The same procedures described above for notification of possible failure should be followed for a decline in work habits and/or cooperation marks.

- D. Without assistance from the parent or guardian, it is often impossible to prevent failure. In addition to the above requirements of notification of possible failure, the teacher is encouraged to hold a conference with the parent or guardian as soon as it becomes apparent that the student would profit from additional help at home or intervention at the school site.

Participants In Gifted And Special Education Programs

A. Evaluating progress of secondary students in Gifted Programs.

In general, an "A" or "B" mark is considered to be the usual mark for students identified gifted who are highly able learners. These students generally perform two years or more above grade level and receive such marks when they are performing beyond their age-grade peers and beyond the District standards for a designated grade. Please note that students are identified gifted in various categories; therefore, individual performance assessments are necessary.

Students not maintaining an "A" or "B" should receive teacher assistance, i.e. practice in understanding the rubrics for assignments and assessment and instruction in content area and skill gaps. Intervention measures should be planned with the student and/or parents as necessary. Special counseling and notification of parent and/or guardian is recommended.

The final grade:

1. Must fairly reflect the composite strength of the student using the work of an average student or grade level standard as a benchmark. Punitive grading practices should be avoided.
2. Must contain fair mark value for enhanced, modified learning beyond the regular program.
3. Must yield a satisfactory ranking of the gifted student among his age-grade peers who do not participate in more advanced, fast paced, modified curriculum.

B. Evaluating Progress of Secondary Students with Disabilities

Teachers must consider the individual needs of students with disabilities as described in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) when evaluating student performance. All teachers of students with disabilities, including teachers in general education shall implement the accommodations or modification for instruction, assessment, and/or evaluation written in the IEP. Before grading students with disabilities, teachers should consider whether the accommodations and/or modification in the IEPs have been provided throughout the period of instruction in the subject area/course.

It is expected that most students with disabilities be held to the same grade-level standards as their nondisabled peers, with accommodations. The IEP team will make this determination based upon assessments of the students' skills and abilities. If students with disabilities are held to differentiated standards, then a grade of Fail in a subject course must not be directly due to the impact of their disabilities. Schools should refer to District IEP guidelines for further clarification for IEP teams.

In order to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 which requires parents of students with disabilities to be regularly informed as often as parents of nondisabled peers of their child's progress toward (IEP) goals.

GUEST SPEAKERS

While it is always interesting to have outside speakers, School District policy requires that approval for such a speaker be obtained prior to the appearance. It is also District policy that when discussing a "controversial" issue, both sides be given equal time. Please notify the Main Office of any guests you are expecting and where they should be sent. If other than your classroom, an "Activity Clearance" form must be completed.

HOMEWORK

All students should use their "Binder Reminder" to record homework assignments daily.

1. It is inappropriate to assign homework as a punishment.
2. Homework assignments should be directly related to classroom work.
3. Endless copying of materials should be discouraged.
4. Homework must be assigned only in those areas which have been taught and learned sufficiently so that the student does the work correctly rather than reinforce errors or incorrect work. New concepts should not be introduced as homework. Homework must be clearly understood by the students before they leave the classroom.
5. Assignments should be thoroughly explained and clearly understood, and students should recognize when they are due.
6. Homework should be for the purpose of reinforcing, extending, enriching, and/or strengthening skills.
7. The assignments should be reasonable.
8. Assignments should not be additional burden to the teachers but of assistance in making an assessment of the student's overall performance.
9. Homework is an important resource in helping students to learn. quality. Quantity should not be stressed.

10. Special-interest projects may be an outgrowth of classroom instruction or may extend and enrich specific interests.
11. Books and other materials required for assignments should be provided.
12. It is advisable for the teacher to perform the assignment occasionally to verify the actual amount of time necessary for the students to complete the homework.
13. Assignments should be representative of the school and of the quality of the instructional program.

Return of Homework Assignments

When students return homework, the teacher should consider the following:

1. Homework assignments, once completed, deserve recognition as an indication of the student's progress through application to classroom activities.
2. Some teachers place an "OK" or their initials at the top of returned work to indicate they have read the material.
3. Periodically returned work might be added to the student's homework folder or portfolio for parent review.
4. Certain homework assignments may require only acknowledgment while other assignments may require correcting.
5. Simple correcting techniques involving a minimum amount of teaching time is recommended. These techniques may include self-checking by pupils, group checking, or teacher checking.
6. Homework may be checked during a special time or during appropriate instruction.
7. The teacher should review all assignments periodically and inform parents when class members repeatedly fail to return or complete assignments.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parent/guardian should be informed of homework schedules, including date given and time allowance. They should also understand the level of independent work expected of the student and the parental help and involvement required. They should be aware of materials and conditions which should be provided for the student at home, if possible; and, occasionally, acknowledge the extent of student success in homework.

Marking Practices

When homework is assigned to help students maintain and improve their learning, the results are reflected in student achievement. In general, however, subject marks recorded on report cards are based on accomplishment in the classroom rather than on quantity and quality of returned homework. Failure to return assignments is reflected in

marks for Work Habits recorded on the report card, rather than as part of the student's academic letter grade.

Suggested Schedule

School staff, parents, and other community members vary in their points of view as to what is considered an appropriate length of time for homework assignments. The following guidelines are suggested for use by schools in developing a schedule for homework:

Grade 6 1/2 to 1 hour per day, 4 days per week

Grade 7 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours per day, 4 days per week

Grade 8 1 1/2 to 2 hours per day, 4 days per week

Teams should get together to plan homework activities and tests so that students are not overly burdened on any given night.

It is suggested that no homework be assigned on weekends or holidays.

LIBRARY USE

The library is available for class use, or for individual students during Nutrition and/or Lunch, or after school. Visit the library often with your class. Arrangements should be made with the Librarian for the use of the library. When a whole class visits the library, the teacher must accompany the class, remain with the class, and be responsible for student discipline, and be responsible for the proper use of library facilities. This will prevent damage to library books and equipment and insure profitable use of the library time. The school's collection of films, filmstrips, cassettes, records, video tapes, etc., are centrally located in the library along with the school's professional library. Ask the Librarian for assistance.

PARENT CONFERENCES

1. Greet the parent as you would a guest in your home and continue as a courteous host during the conference. Try to start the conference on time and keep on schedule. Keeping parents waiting in effect is saying their time is not as valuable as yours.
2. Realize that most parents are more afraid of you than you are of them and reassure them by starting off with a good thing you have to say about their child.
3. Do not overwhelm a parent by trying to discuss all of the problems some children have. Select the one or two things which concern you the most and about which parent cooperation might affect a change. Leave the rest for future conferences.
4. Expect to make appointments for follow-up conferences with some of the parents and be prepared to suggest a time and date.

5. Have examples of the child's work to show the parent, starting off with examples of good work and concluding with work which needs improvement. Solicit ideas from the parents on ways in which you can both help the child.
6. Listen to the parent - not only what he or she is saying, but to the feelings about the child, or the school, as well.
7. Do not contradict parents if you disagree with something they say. Try to think of a question which helps the parent consider the facts upon which your disagreement is based; for example:
 - Aren't there some situations in which...?
 - Are you sure that...?
8. Try not to give advice. Above all, never say, "IF I WERE YOU I WOULD..." Try to put your suggestions in question form; for example:
 - Do you think it might help if...?
 - Have you ever tried...?
 - How would you (Jose, or his father) feel about...
9. Information gained during a conference is confidential and we must be professional in our use of it. We should not even discuss it with other teachers or administrators unless it serves the best interest of the child. GOSSIPING is NOT PROFESSIONAL.
10. If the parent introduces other children into the discussion, try to explain that in your school you recognize that children are different, and are more concerned with adjusting to each child's unique needs than with treating all children alike. NEVER TALK ABOUT ANOTHER STUDENT BY NAME.
11. If a favorable remark is made about a previous teacher, try to make some comment that will reinforce it. If the teacher is criticized, listen carefully. Try to think of a question that may help the parent consider all factors, such as:
 - Did you ever discuss the situation with...?
 - Are you basing this on the child's report or have you...?
 - How do you think she should have handled the situation...?
12. You make a judgment about the child on the report card. Use the conference to help you and the parent share ideas about helping the child. If the parent asks pointed questions about the child's ability or achievement, try, before answering, to find out what impression the parent has by saying, for example, "I'll bet you have a better answer to that than I have, for you know Jose much better than I do." If the parent's impression is fairly accurate, reinforce it; if the parent's opinion differs widely from your "Impression", rather than "facts" which always need interpretations, try to reach consensus.
13. Rather than bluntly saying, "Jose is failing in math," ask the parent how Jose feels about his math, and follow with a discussion of what you can both do to help him.
14. If a parent is worrying about a child's success or behavior, allow the parent to verbalize such

fears without interruptions. Follow by trying to get the parent to suggest possible reasons for the fears or worries. You may want to suggest additional causes with a phrase such "Could it be that...?"

15. Remember that parents take any criticism of the child as a criticism of themselves. Parents, like teachers, do the best they can at the moment. Suggestions for improvement, in question form, focus on improvement rather than failure. "Would it help if we...?"
16. It is recommended that you keep notes of your conferences.
17. Close the conference by standing up, expressing appreciation to the parent for coming and specifically for ideas which help you better understand and help the child - while moving toward the door and ushering the parent out with a genuine invitation to return any time you can be of assistance.
18. After the conference is over, jot down things you want to remember about the child, parent or situation.
19. A brief note, after any improvement, indicating that improvement and expressing appreciation for the parent's help can do much in improving the child's emotional climate at home.
20. Remember the process of parent conferences involves seeking information, giving information and gaining friends.

ROLL BOOKS

The roll book is a legal document used by teachers for recording attendance data, grades, and other information required for the proper operation of the District's secondary schools. Therefore, it is essential that each certificated employee who has the responsibility for attendance recording and reporting should understand the importance of keeping legible, accurate, and complete records that conform to state laws and District policies.

The roll book is not complete until all required attendance entries have been made in **blue or black ink**, (unless computer-generated). Since corrections must not obliterate previous entries, erasures or whiteouts are not to be used.

The number of absences and tardies recorded in the roll book for each period includes **ALL** absences and **ALL** tardies, regardless of the reasons. (Exception: if the reason for

the absence was an "A", school activity, then that absence should not be counted for the report card.

Teachers are required to sign a certification sheet to certify that, to the best of their knowledge, roll books have been kept in a manner that conforms to state law and District policies.

STULL EVALUATION

Regular classroom visitation is a key component of maintaining a high quality instructional program. It not only reinforces good teaching practices and allows the teacher and administrator to communicate, but it also allows the administrator to recognize good teaching practices and encourage the sharing of these with other teachers.

The Administrative Guide, Board Rule 4310(a) (4) indicates that the established evaluation and assessment procedures are specifically designed for:

...Employees to be evaluated at least once during each of the first two school years of service in the class and every other school year thereafter. If the evaluatee receives a below standard performance, the District shall annually evaluate the employee until the employee achieves a "Meets or Exceeds" standard performance evaluation. Regardless of years in their class, employees shall be evaluated every school year if deemed necessary by the principal, regardless of whether an overall evaluation of "Meets or Exceeds" has been given for the previous year's service.

There are three parts to the evaluation procedures:

1. Initial Planning Sheet

The Initial Planning Sheet will be provided by the principal, completed by the evaluatee, and the original copy returned to the evaluator by the end of the sixth week of the evaluatee's regular assignment basis. The curriculum guide for your subject area, and the State Framework, are useful in preparing initial planning sheets.

2. Initial Planning Conference

An Initial Planning Conference should be held by the evaluator with each evaluatee by the end of the eighth week. The purpose of the conference is to review and approve the objectives and the strategies to meet those objectives as described in the Initial Planning Sheet.

3. Observation and Documentation of Performance

Observations will be made throughout the school year in several areas of performance. Generally, the evaluator will meet with the teacher to discuss the observation.

4. Final Evaluation Sheet

Teachers receive their final evaluation in May of each year. They may be evaluated: a) Meets or exceeds standard performance, or b) Below standard performance. There are spaces for commendations, recommendation and recommended assistance. A copy is filed with the Personnel Division. A teacher may respond, in writing, to his/her evaluation within seven (7) days from the date of the final evaluation.

Van Nuys Middle School's teachers are expected to have a daily lesson plan that may be checked by school administrators and other district personnel. Students should know what they are expected to learn each day. This can be done by writing a daily agenda on the board.

SUBSTITUTE FOLDER

In accordance with Article XIX 10.0 (Substitute Employees), of the contract between LAUSD and UTLA, "Substitutes shall be provided with the information needed to perform their duties of the position including, but not limited to, student attendance information, lesson plans, class roster, appropriate keys, seating charts, and security and emergency plans."

You will be asked to submit the following materials to be placed in your substitute folder. If certain materials are stored in the classroom, please note the specific location of these materials in your plans.

- ___ Emergency lesson plans
- ___ Seating charts
- ___ Attendance roll sheets
- ___ Course outline
- ___ Modifications for individual students

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are checked out through Mrs. Ana Castillo, the Textbook Clerk, who is in the Main Office. Our computer system generates a barcode for each set of books before they are issued to teachers. The following guidelines are to be followed when issuing textbooks:

- Every student is to be issued a textbook for each core subject.
- When you are ready to issue textbooks, request the appropriate set of books from the Textbook Clerk, with approval from the Department Chairperson.
- Make a photocopy of each class roster, and, after issuing a book to each student, indicate on your roster the barcoded number of the book next to each student's name. Return the roster to the Textbook Clerk so that the numbers can be entered into the computer for tracking and accountability.
- Have students complete a blue and white books card for each book received. Have students indicate on the back of each card any damage, (e.g. torn pages, graffiti, writing, etc.) This will clear them of responsibility of damage they were not responsible for. Send the set of white cards to the Textbook Clerk, and retain the blue cards.

- Stamp each book with your name so that if a book is found it can be easily returned to you.
- Conduct periodic book checks to make sure students have not lost, or damaged, their textbooks.
- If a student checks out of your class, **send the book with the student** and make note of it on the Program Change form. Receiving teachers, add the book info when you add the student to your roster. The Program Change form will be our method of tracking the change. If the student is changing books, send the unneeded book with a note to Mrs. Castillo.

VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDINGS

The use of video films is an integral part of the curriculum. Teachers must keep in mind the copyright laws, and the ratings, when they show commercial films in their classrooms. **ALL FILMS** must be approved by an administrators before showing to students .

Students should be given pre-viewing activities, the film should be stopped periodically for the teacher to clarify and lead discussion, and it should be followed by instructional activities to check for understanding. The video should directly relate to the standards for your curriculum, and appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students in your class. Excessive use of videos should be avoided.

The following is the District Policy regarding videotapes and films [Bulletin No. 91, 1997]:

1. **NC-17 Rated** videotapes and films shall not be shown in any school.
2. **R-Rated** videotapes and films may only be used in grades 7 or 8 with prior, written approval from parent and consent of principal.
3. **PG-13 Rated** videotapes and films may only be used in grades 7 or 8 with prior, written approval from parent and consent of principal.
4. **PG Rated** videotapes and films may be used with prior, written approval from Parent and consent of principal.
5. **G Rated** videotapes and films do not require written parent approval.