

Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School

**V.A.L.T.S.  
2024-2025**

Harms Advanced Technology Center  
2620 College Park  
Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361  
Phone (308) 635-0206  
Fax (308) 630-6500

The V.A.L.T.S. program is a result of an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the:

**Banner County, Bayard, Bridgeport, Creek Valley, Gering, Kimball, Minatare, Mitchell,  
Morrill, and Sidney School Districts**

**V.A.L.T.S. is administered by:**  
Educational Service Unit #13

**Under the direction of:**  
Dr. Laura Barrett, Administrator  
Tom Peacock, Director

**Instructors:**  
Lesley Billingsley  
John Einfalt  
Cassandra Behnke  
Karen Reason

**Sidney Facilitator:**  
Leticia Herrera

**Administrative Assistant**  
Jasmin Ramirez

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**V.A.L.T.S. School Board**

Brad Helgerson	President
BJ Peters	Vice President
Jasmin Ramirez	Secretary (Appointed)
Jodi Walker	Treasurer (Appointed)
Kathy Nienhueser	Member
Paul Pieper	Member
Brenda Smith	Member
John Maser	Member
Tracy Wiese	Member

**Superintendents**

Banner County – Dr. Evelyn Browne  
Bayard – Rodney Olson  
Bridgeport – George Schlothauer  
Creek Valley- Loren Engel  
Gering – Dr. Nicole Regan  
Minatare - Rocky Robbins  
Kimball – Trevor Anderson  
Mitchell – Dr. Kathy Urbanek  
Morrill – Todd Chessmore  
Sidney- Andrew Farber

**High School Principals**

Banner County – Troy Holmberg  
Bayard – Dr. Kelley Rice  
Bridgeport – Jason Blanco  
Creek Valley- Amy Hostetler  
Gering – Mario Chavez  
Kimball –Danielle Reader  
Minatare – Rocky Schneider  
Mitchell - Heath Peters  
Morrill – Todd Chessmore  
Sidney- Ryan Plummer

## **Section I – Mission, Philosophy, Description, and Goals**

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

ESU #13 does not discriminate on the basis of any protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to designated youth groups. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to employees with disabilities and to those who are pregnant, have given birth, or have a related medical condition, as required by law. Complaints or concerns involving discrimination should be addressed to:

ESU#13 Compliance Coordinator/Human Resources  
4215 Avenue I  
Scottsbluff, NE 69361  
(308) 635-3696

For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact the OCR at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 268-0550 (voice), Fax (816) 268-0599, (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or [ocr.kansascity@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ed.gov).

ESU #13 is committed to offering employment and educational opportunities to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination of any kind by ESU #13 employees, including co-workers, non-employees (such as volunteers), third parties, and others is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. All ESU #13 employees are expected to take prompt and appropriate actions to report and prevent discrimination. Employees who witness or become aware of possible discrimination must immediately report the conduct to his or her supervisor or the designated Compliance Coordinator

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School is to empower students to meet the challenges of our changing world. Our setting will create engaging and empowering learning opportunities.

## **Philosophy**

The philosophy is based upon the belief that students have a right to a free, appropriate education; and students, when offered the appropriate environment, can experience educational success. The traditional educational model, effective as it may be for the majority of students, does not provide the right environment for some students. The Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School will be student, rather than department centered. Its curriculum will be built upon state and district mandated standards.

## **Program Description**

Our alternative school is one that offers the same basic curriculum as the “traditional” school but uses alternative delivery methods. Just as some of us learn best visually, and others acoustically or kinesthetically, students’ unique characteristics cause them to learn best in situations that support their individual needs. While the structure of the alternative program may vary from site to site, the following common effective characteristics have been identified:

- Small class sizes
- Sense of community among staff and students
- Individual educational planning
- Choices for delivery of instruction
- Autonomy and democratic structure
- Broad participation of family and community
- Well defined standards and expectations
- Focus on personal, social, emotional and academic development
- Accountability and constant evaluation
- Support of school districts
- School environment which is safe, disciplined, and drug free
- Opportunities for community involvement

Effective alternative schools serve a segment of the population whose needs differ from others. We are not exclusively a remediation or behavior center.

## **Program Goals**

The program goals are as follows:

- A. To provide alternative ways for students to achieve high school graduation resulting in an increased graduation rate.
- B. To develop innovative student performance assessments which measure student progress.
- C. To provide a caring, diversified learning environment where students will develop positive self-concepts, increase their self-esteem, and recognize and appreciate the correlation between education and success in the workplace.
- D. To be accountable to the community and the home school district through quality student achievement.
- E. To provide opportunities for community involvement.
- F. To provide a safe and orderly school environment.
- G. To provide an alternative diversified environment where students can achieve success.

## **Section II - Curriculum, Expected Outcomes, and Target Population**

### **Curriculum**

The academic program offers basic standards- based programs and career-oriented programs in Science, Social Studies, Math, English and communication skills. Socialization skills, job skills training, and problem solving are also emphasized.

Because the staff is small, we work together to help each student achieve the necessary requirements for grade level advancement and graduation. Each student's program is individualized to meet graduation requirements.

### **Expected Outcomes**

The expected outcome of the program are as follows:

- *Increased proficiency in basic skills*
- *Increased career/vocational exploration*
- *Increased skills in conflict resolution*
- *Increased appropriate career choices*
- *Increased student self confidence*
- *Increased student productive behavior*
- *Increased student attendance*
- *Increased student recognition of relevancy between education and employment*



### **Target Population**

Below are characteristics of at-risk students whose needs can be met through our alternative program:

- Students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting cohort graduation date.
- Students who have exhausted the educational opportunities in their resident school.
- Students with a demonstrated need for consistency in instructional staff, curriculum, and/or scheduling.
- Students whose individual instructional pacing needs do not fit the traditional means of instructional delivery.
- Students whose educational success is, in part, dependent on non-academic support, e.g., flex scheduling, intensive counseling, child care, and health counseling.
- Students whose talents significantly exceed their performance.
- Students with deficiencies in basic skills.
- Students wanting to have a better chance to complete their education.

### **Section III – Application and Admission**

#### **Application Procedures**

Students wishing to apply for enrollment in the Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School facility must submit a request to their home high school. The request must include the reason(s) the V.A.L.T.S. facility is being requested to meet the educational needs of the student.

All applications will be reviewed by the home high school administrative team (counselors and principals) to determine placement.

While all applications will be reviewed on an individual basis, placement priority will be given to junior/senior level students with a minimum number of credits needed to complete graduation requirements.

Placement on a waiting list will be necessary should the V.A.L.T.S. facility experience full enrollment. Priority for the waiting list positions will follow the same guidelines as placement in the facility.

### **Criteria for Admission**

- Referred by the student's home district.
- Expressed desire to be part of the program (self-referral).
- Expressed desire to achieve graduation.
- Referred by the home high school's counseling team and principal.
- If students have qualified for special education services, an IEP must be held to determine the least restrictive environment and change of placement.
- Reasonable student expectation to complete the program within 6 quarters of graduation class. At a minimum, students should have completed enough of their home district's graduation requirements to be successful prior to entering the V.A.L.T.S. program.
- Agrees to abide by conditions and rules established for the program.
- Completion of a successful intake interview.

### **Academic Requirements**

Requirements for graduation from the Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School will remain the same as for all other students in their home district.

When the student is admitted to the V.A.L.T.S. facility, the application will include the student's transcript, attendance records, State Assessment Scores and a listing of all courses required for graduation.

The V.A.L.T.S. curriculum is designed to help those students lacking the required credits to graduate with his/her class. It is not designed to be an accelerated option for traditional students to advance.

Students who are not on track to graduate with their cohort class are required to attend summer school. Summer school dates and times will be determined on an annual basis.

**V.A.L.T.S. GRADE SCALE**

<b><u>LETTER</u></b>	<b><u>POINT RANGE</u></b>	<b><u>PERCENT RANGE</u></b>	<b><u>SCORE</u></b>
<b><u>A+</u></b>	<b><u>4.00</u></b>	<b><u>99-100</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>3.8-3.94</u></b>	<b><u>95-98</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>A-</u></b>	<b><u>3.5-3.79</u></b>	<b><u>90-94</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b><u>B+</u></b>	<b><u>3.38-3.49</u></b>	<b><u>87-89</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b><u>B</u></b>	<b><u>2.7-3.37</u></b>	<b><u>84-86</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b><u>B-</u></b>	<b><u>2.5-2.69</u></b>	<b><u>80-83</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b><u>C+</u></b>	<b><u>2.38-2.49</u></b>	<b><u>77-79</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>1.6-2.37</u></b>	<b><u>73-76</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>C-</u></b>	<b><u>1.5-1.59</u></b>	<b><u>70-72</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>F</u></b>	<b><u>1.38-1.49</u></b>	<b><u>67-69</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>F</u></b>	<b><u>1.0-1.37</u></b>	<b><u>63-66</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>F</u></b>	<b><u>.67-.99</u></b>	<b><u>60-62</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b><u>F</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<b><u>Below 60</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>

## **Section IV – Use of School Building and Grounds**

### **Building and Grounds Rules**

- I will respect all property.
- I will not loiter around school facilities.
- I will only have food or drink in designated areas.
- I will help maintain a clean parking lot and grounds area.
- I will leave all school grounds and work areas clean and litter-free.
- I will only be in my vehicle when it is allowed by V.A.L.T.S. staff.
- I will not leave the building during school hours unless permission is granted by V.A.L.T.S. staff.
- I will leave the building at a safe, slow speed.
- I will only use approved vehicles for field trips.

Violations of V.A.L.T.S. rules and regulations could result in the student receiving in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion from the program.

### **Asbestos**

Educational Service Unit #13 has completed and has on file at the Administration Office, each building's Asbestos Management Plan. This plan contains the results of all building inspections and response action necessary to either abate or encapsulate any asbestos-containing material. Each building plan is available for public inspection in the Administrator's office at the Scottsbluff Office (4215 Avenue I, Scottsbluff, Nebraska) and at the Sidney location (361 College Drive, Sidney, Nebraska).

### **Internet/E-mail Acceptable Use – Student**

The following are guidelines for acceptable use of the internet/e-mail:

1. The intent of the legislature is to provide educators and students with access on the internet/e-mail for professional growth opportunities, research and other educationally related experiences. ESU #13 recognizes some personal use of the internet/e-mail is appropriate, being mindful of excessive personal use limits access availability for others.
2. Transmission or reception of any material which is in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following copyrighted material; threatening, harassing, pornographic, or obscene material; or materials protected by trade secrets.
3. Commercial activities, product advertising, and political lobbying are prohibited. Excessive personal use during the school day will be considered misuse.

4. Users of internet/e-mail are expected to abide by established rules of network etiquette including, but not limited to the following:
  - a. Politeness is a must at all times. Abusive messages, hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited.
  - b. Profanity, vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language is prohibited.
  - c. Personal phone numbers and home addresses are not to be divulged.
  - d. Network storage areas will be regarded as school property. Files and communications may be reviewed by ESU #13 personnel. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.
  - e. "Chain letters" are considered to be a misuse of the system.
  - f. Talk, write, and chat commands may be intrusive and should only be used after receiving permission from the other party. Personal information should not be given.
  - g. Classroom use will take precedence over individual use.
5. Users must respect the integrity of the system at all times. Students and staff should not intentionally develop or activate programs that harass other users, infiltrate a computer system, or alter the software components of a computer or computer system. These include, but not are limited to: viruses, forgoing e-mail, hacking, and attempting to use administrative commands,
6. Do not vandalize or destroy the data or hardware on any other system.
7. Security of any computer system is essential. Access to internet/e-mail is intended for exclusive use by authorized individuals. Any problems which arise from the use of an account are the responsibility of the account holder. Misuse may result in the suspension of the account privileges. This may include, but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Trespassing in another's work file.
  - b. Giving out your password or the password of others.
  - c. Attempting to log in to another individual's account.
  - d. Failure to notify the supervising staff members of a security problem.
8. Technology- Related Limitations: Technology resources shall not be used in any manner which impairs its effective operations or the rights of other technology users.
  - a. Users shall not use another person's name, log-on, password, or files for any reason, or allow another to use their password (except for authorized staff members).
  - b. Users shall not erase, remake, or make unusable another person's computer, information, files, programs or disks.
  - c. Users shall not access resources not specifically granted to the user or engage in electronic trespassing.
  - d. Users shall not engage in "hacking" to gain unauthorized access to the operating system software or unauthorized access to the system of other users.

- e. Users shall not copy, change, or transfer any software without permission from the network administrators.
- f. Users shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of any computer's memory, file system, or software. Such software is called a bug, virus, worm, Trojan horse, or similar name.
- g. Users shall not engage in any form of vandalism of the technology resources.
- h. Users shall follow the generally accepted rules of the network etiquette. The ESU #13 Administrator or designee may further define such rules.

### **Personal Belongings**

Students are responsible for the safekeeping of all their personal belongings. Valuable items should not be brought to school or on school field trips.

### **Removal of Students and Interviews of Students**

It shall be the policy of ESU #13 to follow the policy of the school in which each individual student is enrolled with respect to the removal of students and interviews of ESU #13. In the absence of such a school policy, or when the school policy has not been provided to ESU #13, the following procedures shall be used.

#### 1. **Removal of Students by Law Enforcement Officials**

In dealing with law enforcement officials, ESU #13 employees are not to obstruct government operations or unreasonably refuse or fail to aid a peace officer, but are also to attempt to prevent undue interference with ESU #13 operations or educational programming.

A peace officer may in the line of duty require a student to accompany him for questioning or detention, either with or without an arrest warrant. A peace officer has the lawful authority to take immediate temporary custody of children under the age of 18 without a warrant or order of the court (1) when, in the presence of the officer, the juvenile has violated a state law or a municipal ordinance; (2) when a felony has been committed and the officer has reasonable grounds to believe the juvenile committed it; (3) when such juvenile is seriously endangered in his or her surroundings and immediate removal appears to be necessary for the juvenile's protection; or (4) when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the juvenile has run away from his or her parent, guardian, or custodian. A probation officer assigned to a student by a court also has the statutory authority to arrest a student in certain circumstances and that power is similar to the power granted to a peace officer by law.

If a peace officer or probation officer requests custody of a student who is at that time under the control and jurisdiction of ESU #13:

- a. The student should be released after appropriate measures are taken and documented to ensure that the officer has the authority to take the student.
- b. Upon releasing the student, the school in which the student is enrolled has a statutory responsibility to inform the student's parent or guardian of the removal. To assist the school in meeting this responsibility, the ESU #13 employee who has released the student shall contact an appropriate administrator or director of the school in which the student is enrolled. The Program Administrator or Program Director shall be informed of any circumstances that warrant a delay in immediately contacting the parent or guardian, such as information which suggests that immediate notification could interfere with the peace officer's performance of duties or create a dangerous situation for the student or peace officer.

In some cases there may be orders for custody of a student served by the FBI, a federal marshal, a postal inspector, another federal officer, state official or officers from the jurisdiction of ESU #13. While these officers may have authority to arrest and remove students, local law enforcement should be contacted and requested to participate in or monitor the removal.

A student should not be released to a private or "special police officer" who is not an officer of a Nebraska political subdivision or an officer of some agency of the federal government without consent of the student's parent, guardian or custodian.

## 2. Interviews of Students by Law Enforcement Officials

Unless a student is placed under arrest, a peace officer or probation officer will not be permitted to remove a student from the control and jurisdiction of ESU #13 for questioning unless permission of the student's parent, guardian, or custodian is obtained. Law enforcement officers should be urged to contact students outside the instructional day and off ESU #13 premises whenever possible. Questioning or interview of students in ESU #13 premises should only take place pursuant to the following guidelines:

- a. If an interview of a student is requested during school hours concerning an ongoing investigation of a crime not related to ESU #13, questioning should not take place until the student's parent, guardian, or custodian has been contacted, by either ESU #13 or by an appropriate administrator or director of the school in which the student is enrolled, and permission is given for such interviews. The consent should be documented. The presence of an ESU #13 employee during the interview is not necessary.

- b. If an investigator represents that an interview is necessary to collect information concerning an allegation of child abuse or neglect or an offense involving a family relation and it is clear that obtaining prenatal consent for the interview would be impossible or counter-productive, the interview may be conducted on ESU #13 premises without such consent. In these situations, an employee of ESU #13 or the school in which the student is enrolled should be present during the interview to ensure that the interview relates only to those matters specified by the law enforcement official.
- c. If the investigation relates to an incident which took place on ESU #13 school premises or during instructional time, it is not necessary to obtain parental consent for an interview. In these situations, an employee of ESU #13 or the school in which the student is enrolled should be present during the interview to ensure that the interview relates only to the incident which took place on ESU #13 or school premises or during instructional time or something which is directly related thereto.
- d. A probation officer assigned to a student by a court may be allowed the opportunity, on request, to interview a student on ESU #13 premises free from the observation of other children or individuals. In such situations, it is neither necessary nor desirable that an ESU #13 employee be present during the interview. It also is not necessary to obtain the consent of the parent, guardian or custodian for the interview.

### 3. Disclosure of Student Records

ESU #13 employees shall not, in the course of dealing with a peace officer or probation officer, disclose any confidential student records or information from such student records other than in response to a court order or subpoena or as otherwise authorized by state law and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### 4. Interviews of Students by Persons other than Law Enforcement Officials

Any person other than an employee or agent of ESU #13 or of the school in which the student is enrolled who comes to ESU #13 premises to interview a student or remove a student prior to the end of the student's instructional day must obtain permission of the Program Administrator or Program Director.

Permission to remove is not to be granted unless authorized by the student's parent, guardian or custodian or a person authorized by the student's parent, guardian or custodian.



Permission to interview is not to be granted unless that person has a clearly valid and proper reason and such is not disruptive to ESU #13 operations or the student's educational program. Ordinarily such contacts shall be restricted to the student's parent, guardian or custodian or a friend of the family when an emergency or other similar circumstance exists.

### **Searches, Seizures and Arrests**

ESU #13 property is held in public trust by the Board. ESU #13 authorities may, without a search warrant, search students, protected student areas, or vehicles driven by students parked on ESU #13 property based on a reasonable and definable suspicion that an ESU #13 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 the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the ESU #13 facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by ESU #13 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.

ESU #13 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, vapes, weapons, explosives, poisons and stolen property. Such items are not to be possessed by students while they are on ESU #13 property or on property within the jurisdiction of ESU #13; while on ESU #13 owned and/or operated transportation; while attending or engaged in ESU #13 activities; and while away from ESU #13 grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of ESU #13.

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 illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials may cause substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors on the ESU #13 premises or property within the jurisdiction of ESU #13.

The Program Administrator or Program Directors may release a minor student into the custody of a law enforcement officer upon presentation of a court order or warrant for the student's arrest, or to remove a student from the ESU #13 premises if the officer or Program Administrator or Program Director has reason to believe that the student has violated the law.

The Program Administrator, Program Director, or designee will immediately attempt to notify the parent/guardian or responsible relative of the student's removal from the ESU #13 premises and the place to which the student is reportedly taken, except in cases of child abuse.

The appropriate Program Administrator or Program Director of the school in which the student is enrolled is to be notified when items are discovered that would warrant discipline of the student under the school's student code of conduct.

### **Visitors to ESU #13**

The ESU #13 Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit ESU #13 programs and classrooms at any time to observe the work of students, teachers and other employees. All visitors, which includes persons other than employees or students, must notify the Program Administrator or Program Director of their presence in the facility upon arrival and request authorization to visit elsewhere in the building.

Persons who wish to visit a classroom while ESU #13 is in session are asked to notify the Program Administrator or Program Director and obtain approval prior to the visit so appropriate arrangements can be made and so class disruption can be minimized. Teachers and other employees shall not take time from their duties to discuss matters with visitors.

Visitors shall conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of others while attending ESU #13 events. Visitors failing to conduct themselves accordingly may be asked to leave the premises. The Board, Administration and Directors will not tolerate any person or persons whose presence disturbs classes or ESU #13 activities or hinders the instructional process. Children who wish to visit ESU #13 must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

It shall be the responsibility of employees to report inappropriate conduct. It shall be the responsibility of the Program Administrator and Program Directors to take the action necessary to cease the inappropriate conduct. If the Program Administrator or Program Director is not available, an ESU #13 employee shall act to cease the inappropriate conduct.

The Board discourages using ESU #13 as a site for parents without custody to visit their children. The onsite supervisor may deny the parent without custody the opportunity to deliver packages, gifts, messages, etc., to the child and/or to see the child during the program day without the approval of the custodial parent or legal guardian. In this paragraph, "without custody" means the parent lacks joint legal custody under Nebraska law.

ESU #13 may restrict the use of its buildings and grounds or restrict access to ESU #13 property by issuing no trespassing commands and/or stay away/ no trespassing letters when deemed necessary by the Program Administrator or Program Director when any individual or group:

1. Is determined to present a risk to the safety of others
2. Presents a disruption to the learning environment
3. Fails to follow proper check-in and identification procedures
4. Does not have a legitimate purpose to be present on ESU #13 grounds or activities

In the event a person prohibited by this or other board policies is on ESU #13 property or is attending an ESU #13 sponsored event, the Program Administrator or Program Director will tell the person he or she must leave and will notify the person they are not permitted back on ESU #13 property, except if their presence is required by the ESU #13. The Program Administrator or Program Director may contact the proper legal authorities if necessary to enforce this policy and may file a report or sign a complaint on behalf of ESU #13.

## **Section V – Attendance**

### **VALTS Attendance Policy**

#### **Absences**

- Students are expected to attend school every day school is in session. Students are required to follow the state mandated attendance policy:
- The last 30 min. of the day (each session) has been set aside for “make-up time”.
  - All work due to absences must be made up.
  - Grade checks are handed out each Monday including missing assignments.
  - If a student has a prearranged absence, missed work should be completed before the student is gone.
  - If students leave the facility without permission, they must make up work for the class they missed the following day.
  - Students have the week of grade checks to turn in missing work.
  - Students must stay during “WIN” time on Friday for missing work.
  - Students refusing to stay the 30min on Fridays will result in the missing work being marked as “0”.
- Parents will be notified of all absences.

#### **Tardies**

- Students are expected to be in class every day and to arrive on time. These simple habits are the top two skills required by employers. Punctuality is important in all careers.
  - Tardy = Not in seat when class starts.
  - Students need to manage their time wisely.
  - Parents will be notified of continued tardiness.

## Section VI - Scholastic Achievement

### Academic Integrity

#### A. Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism violate the standards of academic integrity. Sanctions could be imposed against students who engage in such conduct.

- "Cheating" means intentionally to misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. Cheating includes, but is not limited to the following: tests, advanced information, use of unauthorized materials, use of another student's answers, use of another student to take a test, misrepresenting the need to delay a test, and failure to contribute to group projects.
- "Plagiarism" means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works.

#### B. Sanctions

- Academic Sanction: The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place, and require the student to complete another assignment, test or project in place of the work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement assignment, test or project at a level meeting minimum performance standards, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work.
- Report to Parents and Administration: The instructor will notify the Principal of the offense, and the instructor or Principal will notify the student's parent or guardian.
- Student Discipline Sanctions: Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration if a student has engaged in a serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and if the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic violations.

## Section VII - Support Services

### Dispensing Prescription and Non- Prescription Medications

The administration of prescription and non-prescription medication to students is to be limited to medications that must be taken while students are participating in ESU #13 programs or otherwise under the control and jurisdiction of the ESU #13. All medications administered by ESU #13 personnel should be administered in accordance with the Medication Aide Act.

If at all possible, all prescription and non-prescription medications should be given at home outside of school hours by the parent or by other responsible parties identified by the parent. However, ESU #13 recognizes that some medication regimens necessitate the administering of medication during school hours: therefore, a safe and effective means of administering the medication is required.

1. **Authorizations for Prescription Medications:** Prescription medications may be administered when the Medication Administration Form is on file with ESU #13 and meet the following:
  - a. **Physician's Authorization:** A physician's signed, dated authorization including name of the medication, dosage, administration route, time to be given and reason the student is receiving the medication.
  - b. **Caretaker's Authorization:** A caretaker's signed and dated authorization or permission to administer the medication during school. (Note: All references to "caretaker" in this policy shall mean a parent, foster parent, family member, or legal guardian who provides care for the student for whom medication is to be administered. The laws include a "friend" as a caretaker, but the school will not ordinarily recognize such an individual as a "caretaker" for the purposes of medication administration.)
  - c. **Original Packaging:** The medication is in its original packaging and is labeled as dispensed by the prescriber or pharmacist. The label must name the student and identify the medication, strength, time interval and route to be administered. If needed, the physician may be contacted for clarification and a corrected label must be obtained if orders differ from those listed on the packaging.
2. **Authorization for Non- Prescription Medications:** Non- prescription medications may be administered provided that a caretaker's authorization is provided in the form established by the Administrator or Administrators designee and the medication is in its original packaging.

3. Renewal of Authorizations: Medication authorizations must be renewed annually and updated immediately as changes occur (*ie. Change in dose or medication*).
4. Documentation: Accurate medication administration records are to be kept and maintained. Documentation of each dose of medication administered shall be made reflecting the student's name, the name of medication, date, time, dosage, route, the signature and title of the person administering the medication and any unusual observations, and any refusal by the recipient to take or receive the medication. Medication documentation shall be kept confidential in accordance with the policies and practices concerning student records, provided that medication administration records shall be available to the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure for inspection and copying according to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements. Such medication administration records shall be maintained for not less than two years.
5. Storage: Medication shall be stored in a locked or otherwise secure area in accordance with the manufacturer's or dispensing pharmacist's instructions or temperature, light, humidity, or other storage instructions. Only authorized personnel who are designated by the administration shall have access to the medications. The ESU #13 school nurse shall establish procedures for monitoring the storage and handling of medication, the medications expirations date, and the disposal of medication.
6. Receipt and Disposal of Medications: Medication shall be delivered to ESU #13 personnel and picked up by the caretaker. When medication is received, the amount received should be documented. Medication which is either past the expiration date or not claimed by the parent in a reasonable time following the student's departure from the ESU #13 program shall be destroyed. Procedures for destroying medication shall include a witness and documentation.

### **Emergency Response to Life- Threatening Asthma or Systemic Allergic Reactions**

It is the policy of the ESU #13 to follow the Emergency Response to Life-Threatening asthma or Systemic Allergic Reactions ( Emergency Protocol) and related policies of the school in which ESU #13 provides services in the ESU #13 facilities.

Each employee who is or will be providing services to student in an accredited school, an approved school, or to children in an approved early childhood program, is to be provided with the following:

1. Information about the existence of the Emergency Response to Life- Threatening Asthma or Systemic Allergic Reactions (Emergency Protocol) established by the Nebraska Department of Education and adopted by ESU #13;

2. Access to a copy of the Emergency Protocol form and either a copy of the school's signed Emergency Protocol or directions to obtain such from the school administrator;
3. Information about the availability of a school nurse and, if one is not available, who at the school site where services are being provided is a designated trained non-medical staff member for the purposes of implementing the Emergency Protocol;
4. Information about the whereabouts within the school building where the employee is providing services of the equipment and medication necessary to implement the Emergency Protocol in the case of any student or school staff emergency, including the location of an IM EpiPen- Jr. or an adult EpiPen, or the school official who is to be contacted to obtain such information;
5. Appropriate direction and instruction so that employee who may be involved in an Emergency Protocol Response provides appropriate and accurate information to the appropriate school official, in order that the school may maintain records of administration of medication by school staff as required;
6. Inform and provide the employee of any written request from a parent or guardian of a minor student served by the employee, directing that such minor student not receive emergency treatment under the protocol.

#### **Student Self - Management of Asthma, Anaphylaxis, and Diabetes**

Students with asthma, anaphylaxis or diabetes will be permitted to self-manage such medical conditions while participating in programs operated by ESU #13 when the student has a self-management plan established with the school in which they are enrolled that is prepared and signed in accordance with legal requirements.



## **Section VIII - Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco**

### **Drugs**

WNCC policy prohibits the consumption, possession or sale of controlled substances and/or the presence of controlled substances on College property, whether leased or owned, and on the specific premises of College sponsored or supervised off-campus functions. Conduct covered by this offense includes but is not limited to:

- a. Manufacture, distribution, sale, offer for sale, possession, or use of any illegal drug or narcotic, including but not limited to barbiturates, hallucinogens, amphetamines, cocaine, opium, heroin, or marijuana;
- b. Misuse or abuse of legal drugs or narcotics;
- c. Possession of a device (drug paraphernalia) that has been used to ingest illegal drug or narcotic

### **Alcohol**

WNCC policy prohibits the use, possession, or sale of alcoholic beverages on College property, whether leased or owned, and on the specific premises of College sponsored or unsupervised off-campus functions.

### **Tobacco**

The use of tobacco products is prohibited in all buildings and all vehicles owned by ESU #13. Smoking is also prohibited in any outdoor areas where others may be affected by smoke, including areas near the entry of buildings.

For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (including electronic nicotine delivery systems), alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. This does not preclude adults from wearing non-visible nicotine patches, or using nicotine gum without displaying the product container, as part of a smoking cessation program.

## **Section IX - Student Conduct, Rules and Regulations**

### **Anti- Bullying**

#### **One of the missions of ESU #13 is to provide a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for students and staff.**

The administration and staff are to implement strategies and practices to reinforce and encourage positive behaviors by students. Positive behaviors include non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding, and acceptance of others.

The Program Administrator, Program Director and staff are to implement strategies and practices to identify and prevent inappropriate behaviors by all students, including anti-bullying education for all students. Inappropriate behaviors include bullying, intimidation, and harassment. Bullying means any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse in areas within the control or jurisdiction of ESU #13.

### **Classroom Expectations**

- Students will contribute creatively and productively to any independent or group activity.
- Students will complete all assignments to passing quality and turn in all assignments by their due dates.
- Students understand the expectation for successful grades.
- Backpacks and purses are not allowed in classrooms. If students bring a backpack or purse, they will be required to leave it in their locker or office.
- Students who are behind their cohort graduation class are required to attend summer school.
- Students who are granted the option of receiving elective credit for work study, community service and volunteer hours must complete 180 hours per quarter for five elective credits. Hours cannot be counted if work is done “under the table” or hours are traded for a service. Babysitting/childcare hours for family and/or friends will not be accepted.
- Jobsite Evaluations: Pre-Approval by Administration on all work/volunteer hours will be required.

## Electronic Devices

If for any reason a student needs to use his/her cell phone during class hours, that student will need to obtain permission from V.A.L.T.S. staff.

### V.A.L.T.S. Cell Phone Policy

There is to be TEACHER APPROVED cell phone usage in the classroom.

1. Cell phones are in “SILENT” mode and placed in pocket, face down on table, or in assigned locker.
2. **Teachers** will provide/approve cell phones use times during the period.
  - a. Cell phones may be used during transition times approved by teachers **ONLY IF** there is **100%** engagement of students during teaching time.
3. Students may use their phones during the passing times between classes and before and after school.
4. Earbuds/Headphones are NOT to be worn during instruction. During WORK times one can be worn, but never both in class.
  - a. Scanning your music on your phone during class will fall under cell phone policy.

#### Consequences:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Time: The student will be given a warning to put the cell phone away.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Time: **ALL** students in class will lose their cell phone breaks for the **REST** of the period and during the same period the **NEXT DAY**.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Time: The student will give their phone to the teacher who will turn into the school Director. The cell phone can be picked up from the school Director at the end of session. **ALSO** following consequence 2.

Any further incidence of cell phone use will result in parent involvement.

Students may also be required to turn their phone into the office when they arrive at school and may pick it up at the end of the session.

**\*Parents can call the office (635-0206) to contact your child while they are in class during the school day or during their passing time between classes. The consequences for your child answering their cell phone during class will be enforced.\***

### **Student Behavior**

- I will attend school every day, unless there is a medical or family emergency.
- I will make all possible attempts to schedule appointments out of scheduled school time.
- I will adhere to the attendance policy at all times. If I am going to be absent or tardy for any reason, my parents or guardian will personally call V.A.L.T.S. prior to my absence.
- I will make up any assignments I miss as a result of my absence the day(s) I return to school. I will stay after my classes the day of my return or come in early before class.
- I will behave in an appropriate manner at all times. I will remember that aggressiveness and inappropriate gesturing are unacceptable.
- I will treat staff members, fellow students, and visitors with respect.
- I will respect others' privacy.
- I will respect my own and others' personal property and personal space.
- I will not interrupt others while they are speaking.
- I will dress appropriately. Shirts displaying drug and alcohol messages are not permitted and undergarments should not be seen. (See Dress Code Policy)
- I will not use or have in my possession: tobacco, vape pens, alcohol, any illegal substances, mind altering substances, look-alike drugs, or weapons while on the premises of V.A.L.T.S. or WNCC campus. WNCC is a tobacco free campus.
- Any student suspected of possessing or being under the influence of any illegal substances will be referred to the office. The office will contact law enforcement and the student will be assessed by the officer that responds to the call.
- I will refrain from bringing inappropriate materials and paraphernalia.
- I will not loiter in the building after my classes.
- I will observe all expectations and guidelines in adherence to my home school.

### **Student Conduct Rules**

Students are to be held responsible for compliance with the student conduct rules of the school district in which they are enrolled. ESU #13 employees shall report conduct violations to the responsible Program Administrator or Program Director of such school as appropriate for disciplinary action, subject to the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

The Administrator, Director or designee is authorized to establish additional conduct rules for students while participating in ESU #13 programs and such conduct rules, when approved by the Board, shall have the effect of Board-approved policy.

### **Student Fees**

ESU #13 will not assess any fee to students in a manner inconsistent with the adopted Student Fee Policy of the school district in which the student is enrolled (“School District”). Further, ESU #13 will not assess any fee to students in the absence of specific authority within a contract for services between ESU #13 and the School District.

ESU #13 requires certain goods or services to be provided by ESU #13 when no counterpart service is available within the School District; any fees to be charged for any such good or services by ESU #13 shall be specifically identified by the School and ESU #13. Any fees assessed by ESU #13 to the direction of, or by contract with, the School shall be deemed a fee collected by the School District.

### **Student Dress Attire and Appearance (Dress Code)**

The educational climate of the school is affected by student appearance. As a result, administrative prerogative is reserved for judgment in cases of student dress that could be considered immoral, immodest, or in any way distracting or offensive to students, teachers, or staff. Students at Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School (V.A.L.T.S.) are expected to come to school being neat and clean. An individual's dress, personal appearance, and cleanliness, like his/her behavior, should reflect sensitivity to and a respect for others. The dress and grooming of a student do have a relationship to attitude and work habits, as well as interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and classmates. Hence, appropriate dress and grooming can have a positive effect on school.

Student dress and grooming should be in good taste and appropriate for the occasion. It should reflect consideration for safety, health precautions, cleanliness, neatness, and academic endeavor.

**The following are examples of clothing and/or jewelry that will NOT be allowed:**

1. Clothing that is immodest or unnecessarily distracting to the learning environment
  - A. BOYS: shirts with no sleeves, tank tops, muscle shirts, mesh shirts, etc.)
  - B. GIRLS: shirt with bare backs, spaghetti strap tops, low-cut tops, tube tops, halter tops, see through tops.
  - C. All clothing should be sufficient to conceal undergarments (including sports bras and boxer shorts) at all times. **What is meant to be covered needs to be covered.**
2. Clothing that is suggestive or has suggestive phrases, racist in nature, promotes immoral, or illegal practices, or advertises tobacco, alcohol, drugs, etc.
3. Clothing that is in any other way disruptive to the educational process. (Torn or soiled clothing, gang related apparel, jeans with excessive tears, apparel described above, etc.)
4. Shorts may be worn as long as they are in good taste and not excessively short or tight.
5. Proper footwear should be worn at all times. Health laws require that shoes be worn at all times while in school. Slippers should not be worn to school.
6. Outdoor clothing such as backpack, book bags, sunglasses, hats, jackets, or coats must be stored in the assigned lockers during school hours.
7. Hats, bandannas, or head covers of any type (hoods, etc.) are not to be worn in any fashion in the classroom during regular school hours. This rule applies to both girls and boys. Hats are to go in the student's locker when they enter the school and stay there until the student leaves the school.
8. Any articles that could cause injury to others such as spikes, chains, etc.

**\*Clothing must be Appropriate, Modest, and Clean\***

The Director/Principal has the final discretion in making the decision of what is a disruption. The Director/Principal and Staff will determine if a student is wearing inappropriate clothing. The student will be asked to change clothes and/or cover the inappropriate clothing or have parents bring appropriate clothing for changing.

## Title IX

Employees or students, who believe they have been subject to, or believe they have witnessed sexual harassment should follow these procedures:

1. Directly inform the person engaging in the discrimination or harassment that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
2. For employee reporters, contact your supervisor or the supervisor of the offending person, the Title IX Coordinator or the Human Resources Manager if you do not wish to communicate directly with the person whose conduct was offensive or if direct communication with the offending person has been ineffective.
3. Report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator or the Human Resources Manager, if the offending conduct continues or has not been resolved to your satisfaction after you have reported the matter to the supervisor.
4. For student reporters, contact any teacher.
5. Report to the Title IX Coordinator if you are the adult to whom the student has made a report so that the matter can be properly resolved. The Title IX Coordinator may file a formal complaint and begin the following complaint procedure.

Allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination shall be investigated and if substantiated, corrective or disciplinary action taken, up to and including dismissal from employment if the offender is an employee, or suspension and/or expulsion if the offender is a student. Retaliatory action will not be taken against an employee for reporting discrimination or harassment.

### Response to a Formal Complaint

1. Filing Formal Complaint: An employee or student can allege sexual harassment by filing a formal complaint in writing with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail using the following contact information:

TITLE IX COORDINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION  
ESU#13 Compliance Coordinator/Human Resources  
4215 Ave I, Scottsbluff, NE 69361  
308-635-3696

The formal complaint must be signed by the complainant or by the Title IX Coordinator.

### **Fire Drill Procedures**

In compliance with State Fire Marshal regulations, V.A.L.T.S. will hold fire drills. During these drills, students and faculty will exit the building in a quiet, orderly fashion through the door that offers the safest exit. Students should then proceed to the parking lot on the north end of the Harms Advanced Technology Center at a safe distance from the building. Students are to remain in this area until they receive an all-clear signal from an authorized person.

### **Tornado Drill Procedures**

V.A.L.T.S. will conduct tornado drills in accordance with the Harms Advanced Technology Center and host school district's regulations. We will quickly and quietly proceed down the stairs to the lower level of the building where all faculty and students will assume the position required for tornado safety. At the conclusion of the drill, we will quietly return to the V.A.L.T.S. classrooms.

### **Section X - Parent and Student Conferences**

Parents/guardians are expected, as per agreement, to consult with teachers about their student's progress. Regular conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring semesters. Special conferences may be scheduled as needed. Parents are encouraged to contact V.A.L.T.S. staff for an appointment any time they have a question or concern.

### **Section XI - Forms**

Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement  
Parent/Guardian and Student Contract  
Field Trip Form  
Attendance Policy Contract  
Publicity Permission



**Educational Service Unit No. 13**  
**Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy Student's Agreement**

By signing this form, I acknowledge receipt of, understand, and agree to abide by the rules and standards set forth in ESU #13 Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy. I understand that to gain access to the ESU #13 computer network systems, I must return this form signed by me and my parent or legal guardian. I further understand that any violation of the Policy is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, monetary liability may be incurred, school disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. I understand that this agreement will be in effect for one school year and must be re-signed in subsequent years.

Printed Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Service Unit No. 13**  
**Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy Parent's or Legal Guardian's Agreement**

I have read, understand, and agree with the ESU #13 Network Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy. I understand that by signing this form I give permission for ESU #13 to grant access to district electronic communication systems, including the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. I understand that ESU #13 has taken reasonable precautions to eliminate access to inappropriate material and I will not hold the district or staff members responsible if inappropriate material is inadvertently accessed. I understand that this agreement will be in effect for one school year and must be re-signed in subsequent years.

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Guardian and Student Contract**

My child and I are prepared to meet the following criteria in agreement with the **Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School**:

- Attend scheduled Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences.
- Support the attitude that we are a 3-part team (Parent, Student, and Teacher) and all parts of the team must work together for the good of the student.
- See that my child gets to school on time for his/her session and adheres to the attendance policy.
- Support the V.A.L.T.S. program in all the rules and regulations of the V.A.L.T.S., Harms Advanced Technology Center, and my child’s host school district.
- Understand that tolerance and respect for differences are valued at V.A.L.T.S.
- Actions or words that violate this expectation may result in suspension or expulsion.
- Understand that using, possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of look-alikes, drugs, alcohol, or weapons during school hours or daily breaks will result in suspension or expulsion. Students suspected of any these types of behaviors will be referred to local law enforcement officials for investigation/assessment.
- Understand that fighting will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion.
- Understand that V.A.L.T.S. is not a shortcut to graduation. V.A.L.T.S. follows the host school district’s policy for credits to graduate.
- Understand that if we fail to uphold our commitment to this agreement our child’s continued placement in the V.A.L.T.S. program could be in jeopardy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**V.A.L.T.S. FIELD TRIP FORM**

I give permission for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Name)

to take part in all field trips this school year. I understand that there will be times when there will be no advance notice prior to a trip away from the building. One of the features of V.A.L.T.S. is an opportunity to tie into the broader community and I understand that this sometimes happens spontaneously.

I agree that students will ride only in vehicles approved by the V.A.L.T.S. administration.

I release the Valley Alternative Learning Transitioning School and my student's home school district from all responsibility in case of an accident.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent or Emancipated Youth)

## Attendance Policy Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read  
(student's signature)

and understand the Attendance Policy for the current school year. I understand that the purpose of this attendance policy is to instill in me the importance of attendance and punctuality as I continue to develop meaningful life skills. I will adhere to this policy. I understand that should I abuse this policy I could be dismissed from the program.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read  
(parent/guardian signature)

and understand the Attendance Policy for the current school year. I will support my student in adhering to this policy. I understand that should my student abuse this policy he/she could be dismissed from V.A.L.T.S.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**V.A.L.T.S. News Coverage/Web Publications Authorization**

**Return this form ONLY IF you DO NOT want your child to be included in any publicity that a classroom or regular school program might receive.**

Reporters from local newspapers, television stations, and radio stations frequently visit schools to gather information and pictures for stories on a variety of topics (profiles on new school programs, stories about outstanding students and teachers, parent/student issues, news such as new standards and policies).

Occasionally, due to family, legal, or other reasons, parents and legal guardians prefer that their children never receive publicity. We ask that those parents and legal guardians sign and return the form below. Signed forms returned to us will be kept on file at ESU #13 and referred to when members of the media visit the school. Reporters and photographers will be asked to avoid featuring any children for whom this form is on file.

*Please note that this procedure cannot apply to public events or programs for which children must register.*

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\_\_\_\_\_ I do **NOT** want my child to be included in any publicity or web publications that a school classroom or regular school program may receive.

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

