

JOLLEY ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK

“TO EMPOWER ALL STUDENTS TO MAXIMIZE THEIR SUCCESS IN OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY”

Welcome to the Vermillion School District and a new school year! The purpose of this Student Handbook is to provide parents and guardians with a quick reference guide regarding our elementary school. It contains essential information about our school and supports our district Board of Education policies. For additional information and updates you are encouraged to visit our school website at: www.vermillion.k12.sd.us. Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a “contract.” The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations. In Vermillion we are team and value parents as vital link in your child’s education. Please take every opportunity to volunteer and actively participate in our schools. We are excited about the new school year and anticipate many fun-filled and challenging educational opportunities for the children.

Vermillion School District #13-1 NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Vermillion School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or age in its education programs or activities and employment opportunities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies and Title VI compliance:

Damon R. Alvey, Superintendent

Vermillion School District

17 Prospect Street

Vermillion, SD 57069

605-677-7000

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding Title IX compliance:

Jason Huska, Dean of Students/Activities Director

Vermillion High School

1001 East Main Street

Vermillion, SD 57069

605-677-7035

The following respective principal of each school building serves as Section 504 coordinator/director for each building program:

Kim Johnson
Austin Elementary School
300 High Street
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-7010

Sam Jacobs
Jolley Elementary School
224 South University Street
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-7015

Tom O'Boyle
Vermillion Middle School
422 Princeton Street
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-7025

Jon Frey
Vermillion High School
1001 East Main Street
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-7035

South Dakota Regional U.S. Office for Civil Rights:

U.S. Department of Education
One Petticoat Lane

1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Ste 320

Kansas City, MO 64106
Phone: 816-268-0550
Fax: 816-268-0599
TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

This notice will appear in: School Handbook & School Website

POLICY ON DIRECTORY AND WEBSITE INFORMATION:

The Vermillion School District 13-1 proposes to designate the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record as "directory information", and will disclose that information without prior written notice.

1. The student's name.
2. The names of the student's parents or guardians.
3. The student's date of birth.
4. The student's class designation (i.e., 1st grade, 10th grade, etc.).
5. The student's extracurricular participation.
6. The student's achievement awards or honor.
7. The student's weight and height if a member of an athletic team.
8. The student's photograph.
9. The school or school district the student attended before he or she enrolled in the Vermillion School District.
10. Every student and employee will abide by the rules and procedures established by the

Computer Network and the Internet Usage Policy. It is the intent of this policy to ensure the positive, ethical use of school computers and network systems. Infractions of the Internet Usage Policy will be handled by the Administration.

Within the first three weeks of each school year, the Vermillion School District will publish in the Plain Talk the above list, or a revised list, of the items of directory information it proposed to designate as directory information. For students enrolling after the directory information is published, the list will be given to the student's parent or guardian or the eligible student at the time and place of enrollment.

After the parents or guardians of eligible students have been notified, they will have two weeks to advise the school district in writing (a letter to the superintendent's office) of any or all of the items they refuse to permit the district to designate as directory information about that student. At the end of the two-week period, student records will be appropriately marked by the records custodians to indicate the items the district will not designate as directory information about individual students. This designation will remain in effect until it is modified by the written direction of the student's parent or guardian or the eligible student.

From time to time, website information may be published by various schools in the district. Vermillion School District 13-1 proposes to designate the following identifiable information contained in student's education records as "Website Information," and will disclose that information without prior written consent:

K-6 Website Information

1. Photographs may be used on a website as long as there are at least two (2) students in the pictures and no names are mentioned in the photographs;
2. First names only will be used;
3. No other personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational record will be permitted on the website.

7-12 Website Information

1. First and last names may be used;
2. No photographs will be associated with the names in any context;
3. No other personally identifiable information contained in student's educational record will be permitted on a website.

COMPUTER, NETWORK, AND INTERNET USE POLICY:

Every student and employee will abide by the rules and procedures established by the Computer, Network, and Internet Procedures. This is intended to ensure the positive, ethical use of school computers and network systems.

USER RESPONSIBILITY:

1. To transmit or knowingly receive any materials in violation of United States, state, or local laws, or in violation of school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Copyrighted material and material protected by trade secret,
 - Pornographic or obscene materials,
 - Materials that threaten, harass, discriminate, or are abusive to others.
2. Use for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Commercial activities include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Solicited junk mail, unsolicited junk mail, and chain letters are prohibited.
 - Extensive use for personal and/or private business is prohibited.
3. The right to privacy and the work of others shall be respected. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Never reveal your name, address, or phone number; or the name, address, or phone number of others.
 - Never reveal your password, or another's password, to anyone. *Never trespass in another person's file.
4. The user is responsible for all activities traced to his/her account. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Ordering of items through business ventures via the internet,
 - Any expenses due to contacts made on the internet.
5. Curricular use takes precedence over personal use. Time limits may be established.
6. Vandalism is prohibited. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the following: *Creating or spreading computer viruses or Trojan horses, *Attempting to harm or destroy data, software, or hardware.
7. Compromising network security is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Attempting to log in as the system administrator or using administrative commands,
 - Identifying a security problem and failing to notify a system administrator, or demonstrating the problems to others.
 - Using the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by others.
8. Use of language, which is appropriate for a school setting, is mandatory. Any use of profane, obscene, or vulgar language is prohibited.

Jolley Internet Usage Consequences Plan

Any student enrolled in Jolley Elementary School, who violates the Vermillion School District's internet usage policy, will be subject to the following consequences;

1. First Offense – The student will be sent to the office and his/her parents will be notified.
2. Second Offense – The student's parents will come to the office to discuss the student's inappropriate use of the computer/internet. A contract will be written to address the inappropriate behavior.
3. Third Offense – The student will receive a one-day in-school suspension (ISS).
4. Fourth Offense – The student will receive a two-day in-school suspension (ISS) or a one-day out-of-school suspension (OSS).

The student could be placed on any step in the above consequences list depending on the severity of the infraction. Should any student violate the law while using the district's computer, referral may be made to civil authorities for criminal prosecution. Should any student's computer usage result in other legal actions: such as; action to recover civil damages and penalties, etc., the school district may pursue legal action.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

It is critical for the safety of your child to keep us posted to any changes with your current phone number or mailing address including those on your emergency contact list/white card. Please ensure the school has your important contact information including phone numbers, places of employment of parents, the person the school may call if parents cannot be reached by phone. If any of your contact information changes during the school year, please inform the school of the change.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

This policy includes all students, kindergarten through grade twelve, who attend school in the Vermillion School District. South Dakota law requires regular school attendance of all students until the age of 18. Regular attendance is important. Students who are absent miss daily classroom instruction and interaction with the class group, both of which are important to learning. Students who are absent an unreasonable number of days may not earn passing grades or complete the grade work required for promotion. Whenever possible, after school hours, Saturdays, and days when school is not in session should be used for appointments with dentists, doctors, family trips, etc.

Vermillion School District will adhere to all state laws pertaining to attendance. 13-27-6.1 reads as follows:

An elementary and secondary student is eligible to be counted for school attendance up to five days in a school term if an excuse from actual school attendance is requested by a parent or guardian for the purpose of attending events of state or nationally recognized youth programs of educational value or for the purpose of working as a precinct election official if the student is at least eighteen years old.

For the purposes of this policy, principals are granted the authority to make the determination regarding the granting of the excuse.

Vermillion School District also views tardiness as unacceptable. Tardiness of students interrupts classroom work. Not only does the pupil who is tardy lose educational opportunities, but also all students in the classroom lose valuable educational time due to the disruption. If a student is not in their assigned location at the start of the period, they will be counted as tardy. Periods

and tardiness are defined in the individual school student handbooks.

Parents or guardians who request to remove their child from school prior to scheduled dismissal times shall report to the office and the administrative assistant will notify the student's teacher. Students will remain in classrooms until called to the office.

Parents shall notify the school by phone or in writing as to why their child was absent from school. Failure to comply will result in any or all of the following:

- Phone call for information whenever possible
- Written request for information
- Visitation to the home to find out why child was not in attendance.

The state requires the school district to report a student as present or absent except for state law 13-27-6.1 as identified above and a SDHSAA (South Dakota High School Activities Association) sponsored activity. Any student absent from school for any reason other than for these two reasons will be identified as "absent" on the school attendance register. All work for these planned absences must be made up in advance of the absence, or arrangements made with the teacher, in order to participate in the activity.

Each principal is granted the authority to establish rules in their student handbook to address make up work for unplanned absences.

If a child appears to be ill, every reasonable precaution will be made to keep the child from needless exposure to other students and staff. A parent or other designated adult will be asked to remove the child from the school setting.

A student must be present for at least the second half of the school day in order to participate in an extracurricular activity or practice; he/she will not be able to participate in the extracurricular activity or practice that day if not in attendance. The administration is granted the authority to waive this on a case-by-case basis.

A letter of attendance will be sent to parents after 5 days of unplanned absences per year. Should the failure to comply with mandatory attendance laws continue it could result in notification of the courts that there is a lack of attendance and charges may be brought by the school administration.

Planned and unplanned absences for illness will be considered excused if accompanied with a doctor's note explaining the reason for the absence. Students may be considered excused for funerals based upon principal approval.

If a student and his/her parents believe there were unusual circumstances causing these absences, a written appeal may be given to the principal. If further consideration is sought, a written appeal may be given to the superintendent within 5 school days following the written response from the principal. The superintendent will render a written decision within 5 school days of the appeal. If further consideration is sought, following the superintendent's decision, a final appeal may be made to the school board and a hearing will be held at the next scheduled school board meeting.

SCHOOL DAY:

Jolley students begin the day at 8:20 a.m. and are dismissed at 3:12 p.m. **Since playground supervision does not start until 8:05, students should not arrive before 8:05 each morning. Students are to leave the school grounds promptly at 3:12 each day.**

SCHOOL CLOSING:

On days when weather causes cancellations or early dismissal, we urge you to listen to KVTK (1570 AM), KVHT (106.3 FM), WNAX (570 AM), and the regional television stations (KELO, KDLT, KSFY).

Please discuss an alternative plan with your child should school start late or dismiss early due to weather related or emergency issues.

You may also e-mail Steven Kruse, steven.kruse@k12.sd.us, to have your name put on the automated "**SCHOOL REACH**" program. This service will call or e-mail you when a weather-related change is made in the daily schedule or to announce special school related messages.

TELEPHONE CALLS:

Except in cases of emergency, pupils or teachers are not called to the telephone during the time of classroom instruction. To reduce the number of pupils using the telephone during the day, pupils must make arrangements for after school rides or visits to another student's home prior to coming to school.

VISITATIONS:

We maintain an "open door" policy for adult visitation. It is wise to call before you visit to ensure your child is involved with an activity that you wish to observe.

HOMEWORK:

Some homework preparation may be necessary in elementary grades. This will vary according to grade levels and the individual child's needs. Parents may wish to contact teachers concerning schoolwork when individual help is necessary. If a student does not finish his/her work in class, they may be asked to stay after school to complete it. Parents will be notified so they may make necessary arrangements for transportation.

GRADING AND REPORTING

Report cards will be sent home with students at the end of a grading period and parents are encouraged to utilize the DDN Infinite Campus Parent Portal online at www.vermillion.k12.sd.us. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled with your child's grade level teachers and are conducted in the fall and spring. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher anytime about performance concerns via telephone or email. Teachers and the Administration reserve the right to determine grades based upon a student's academic performance. **The DDN Infinite Campus Parent Portal password can be obtained by calling at the Vermillion School District Technology Office at 677-7041.**

STUDENTS LEAVING JOLLEY SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

Any person picking up a student from any elementary classroom must report to the office, where the secretary will call the child to the office. The student then is signed out for the remaining of the day.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION:

The playgrounds are supervised by staff members at 8:05 A.M., noon hour, and at recess periods. During stormy weather, pupils will be expected to remain quietly in the gym. Any activity that the supervising teacher/aide decides is dangerous to the students, will not be allowed on the playground.

State and Federal Law do not permit children to bring guns or knives to school. Any student violating this policy will be suspended or expelled from school. Because we are concerned about the safety of your child and wish to know the whereabouts of each child at all times, no student is to leave the school grounds during school hours unless previous contact has been made with the parent/guardian.

Since supervision is not provided on the playground before 8:05, students SHOULD NOT arrive at school before 8:05 and SHOULD leave promptly at 3:12.

BICYCLE, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS AND ROLLERBLADE SAFETY:

Parents should remember that they are responsible for their children when they give them permission to ride their bicycles to school. We recommend that no student below the second grade ride his/her bike to school. Upon arrival at school, students are to walk their bikes on school property and lock them up in the designated bike rack area. Skateboards, scooters, Heely shoes, and rollerblades are not permitted at school due to safety concerns.

STUDENT DRESS:

All students are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing daily and when the weather is inclement. Tennis shoes are suggested for physical education classes. These shoes are recommended for safety reasons. Items such as chains, baggy pants, bandanas, etc. are not allowed at Jolley School. Lost and found items are taken monthly to the Civic Council.

GIFT EXCHANGE:

An individual gift exchange at school between pupils or between pupils and teachers may result in unhappy situations for other children in the classroom. Therefore, any gift exchange is discouraged. Gifts delivered to school will remain in the office during the school day. At times, collections may be sanctioned under specific circumstances, such as a tribute of appreciation, serious health, or death of a staff member, student, etc.

PARTIES:

Parties are a part of the regular school program and these activities will be held during the school day. A list of safe snack treats will be provided to students and parents. **As per the allergen policy, all treats must be in the original wrapper indicating that there are no nuts or nut oil in the product.** Please feel free to contact the teacher before sending food to the classroom. To avoid disappointment and hurt feelings, invitations to private children's parties should not be issued at school unless you are going to invite all of the girls in the class, all of the boys in the class, or the entire class.

LUNCH PROGRAM:

The hot lunch program is available for all children, grades kindergarten through twelve, who wish to participate. Quiet, orderly conduct is a necessity in the lunchroom. Please emphasize to your child that proper table manners should prevail in the lunchroom. Cost of lunches will be announced in the local newspaper at the beginning of each school year. Breakfast is served from 7:50 to 8:10. Your child's account balance may be previewed online at www.mymealtime.com or by calling the Lunchtime Solutions office at 677-7032. School policy does not allow any commercially prepared food to be consumed in the lunchroom. This includes parents coming to school to eat with a student – no outside fast food meals are allowed in the lunchroom. **The Vermillion School District has implemented a no peanut/tree nut policy for Jolley School. If you child eats a home lunch, please provide your child(ren) meals that do NOT include any peanut/tree nut products. To view the complete allergen policy, go the VPS website and look under the Quick Link portion for the "Allergen Policy" quick link.**

HEALTH:

The school, through the efforts of the nurse, is constantly working toward prevention of disease and improvement of health for all students. The school nurse is on duty in the district throughout the school day. If you have problems that should be brought to the nurse's attention, feel free to call her. When a child returns to school following a contagious disease he/she should present a slip from the doctor or have the approval of the school nurse.

DISPENSING OF MEDICINE IN THE SCHOOLS:

All medication is given at school only by an order of a physician. The giving of aspirin or any nonprescription drug at school is not allowed, as this is the responsibility of the parent. Pupils who must depend upon medication in order to stay in school must have a written prescription giving specific directions for taking the medication. The label must be clearly marked on the container together with the pupil's name and the name of the physician. Medication will be stored in a safe place at school. Parents can assist by reminding their child when to take their medicine. Any medication, which is ordered by the physician to be administered at school, may be given according to the following procedures:

1. Prescribed medicine must be in a container provided by the pharmacy with a label that includes date, student's name, dosage, and the doctor's name. A School Medication Permission form must be completed by the parent. This form must accompany the medication.
2. The permission form will be kept with the medicine until treatment is completed. Upon the completion of treatment, this form will be kept on file at the school.
3. The principal will assign the person who will be present at the time the medicine is taken by the student.
4. Records will be kept when the medication is given, noting the date, time, and initials of the person who administered it. If medication is for emergency use only, such as a bee sting kit, parents must demonstrate proper procedure to the person or persons responsible and leave complete instructions provided by the physician for administration.

REQUESTS TO STAY INSIDE AT RECESS:

It is our thinking that if a child is well enough to come to school, he/she is well enough to participate in the daily program. Exceptions are made in certain cases where the family physician requests that a child be excused from outdoor activity. Fresh air and a chance to "run off" excess energy is a must for elementary children. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately for recess. All students will participate in outdoor recess unless the temperature falls below 0 degrees wind chill. If for some medical reason your child cannot participate in outdoor activity, please send a doctor's note to our child's teacher so stating, so the nurse can keep it as part of the health record.

DISASTER DRILLS:

Austin and Jolley schools are interested in providing a safe environment for your child's education. Disaster drills approved by the local Department of Civil Defense are held at regular intervals. Two disaster drills are conducted annually.

FIRE DRILLS:

The State Department of Public Safety requires that each school holds a fire drill in according to the state regulations. Two fire drills are conducted each semester.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES:

As a further safety precaution, each attendance center has a plan in place to "lockdown" the building should an emergency arise at the school or in the community. This lockdown procedure is reviewed and/or practiced on a yearly basis.

STUDENT RETENTION:

Before a student is retained, several procedures must be followed. The teacher may ask that the special education personnel to evaluate the student to determine what learning difficulties may exist. Parents should be informed that we are considering retention and they must be given the reasons for considering retention. Each student must be looked at individually when retention is involved. Many factors are considered which make it impossible to have a set standard for all students when considering retention. It is imperative to use all available resources in making this decision.

PETS:

We are aware of the importance of pets in your child's life. Due to student allergies, pets are not encouraged to visit school. Dogs frequently cause considerable trouble on the playground before school. When a dog is on the playground before school or at a recess time, the Animal Control officer is called immediately so the dog can be removed from the school grounds.

STUDENTS MOVING OUT OF THE DISTRICT:

The school should be notified by the parent in advance of withdrawal stating where the parents are moving and the address of the new school, if possible. Your child's records and report card will be sent to the new school upon request from that Principal's office. A withdrawal form indicating a general statement about the child's classroom performance will be sent with the records. Please return all books and school materials prior to moving.

JOLLEY PBIS PROGRAM:

Jolley has instituted a behavior program called Positive Behavior Intervention Supports. PBIS is a method much like RTI in that there are behavior expectations in place for all students. These established behavior expectations would be our “core curriculum for behavior”. Students are praised and rewarded for practicing the expectations. Austin and Jolley programs are very similar in many ways, but are also different because of the age of the students in each school.

Student expectations have been posted around the buildings and will be stressed by the classroom teacher so all students are aware of appropriate behavior. As seen in the RTI model, students who are having difficulty with the expectations are given extra staff support to help them change their behavior so it meets the expectations.

We are excited about the PBIS program and what it can offer to our students. The behavior expectations are what you would want and expect from any student. Overall, we want all students and staff to be **RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, and SAFE**. To establish this school climate, each area of the school has specific expectations of how students should behave. These include playground rules and expectations for each piece of equipment, the way we walk in the hallway with our voices off and our hands to ourselves, the way we line up in the lunchroom and the way we behave at the table, and the way we conduct ourselves in the bathrooms. The expectations are how we would want students to behave in all aspects of development in social and physical interactions with fellow students and staff.

Part of Positive Behavior Intervention Programs is that there are rewards for following the expectations of the program and consequences for not following the expectations of the program. Students who follow the expectations are rewarded with certificates, verbal praise, and treats at the end of each quarter. Students who do not follow the expectations set for Jolley Elementary have consequences given to them also. These consequences range from the teacher talking to the student with a reminder of the expectations, written up with an office referral, call or note home to parent, and after school detention, an in-school suspension, or an out-of-school suspension.

Please visit with your child about the expectations at school and help us by reinforcing what your child can do to meet the expectations.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Students are expected to discipline themselves and comply with the instructions of the bus operator. The driver will be in full charge of the bus and the passengers. There must be no disturbance of any kind that might distract the driver and imperil the safety of the passengers. Misconduct on buses will not be tolerated and will result in forfeiture of the privileges of riding.

Rules of Conduct

Students will observe the following rules of conduct while riding the school buses.

1. Students should always be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to be there. Students should remain well back from the roadway while awaiting the arrival of the bus and not move to board the bus until it is stopped and the door opens.
2. Students will be picked up or dropped off at designated stops unless prior arrangements have been made with parents.
3. No extra riders without written authorization or prior approval.
4. Students will enter the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to a seat. Students must stay in their seats and in a sitting position when the bus is in motion.
5. Students will keep their hands, arms and heads inside the bus. Bus driver approval is

- required for operation of windows.
6. Shouting, screaming, running, fighting, vulgar talk, pushing, and throwing objects (in or out of the bus) are not permitted.
 7. Students shall not possess or distribute pornographic material.
 8. All riders should help to keep the bus clean and sanitary on the inside.
 9. Any damage to the bus will be paid for by the rider inflicting the damage.
 10. Bus riders are expected to be courteous and obedient to bus drivers at all times.
 11. Any form of harassment, hazing, or bullying (either verbal, physical, or electronic) will not be tolerated.
 12. Students shall not use, possess, or distribute tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any form of mind altering substance.
 13. Any form of weapon is strictly prohibited on the bus.
 14. **Any additional rules may be set by the bus driver upon approval of the transportation supervisor or school administrator.**

Supervisory and Disciplinary Process

When a child is boarding, riding, or leaving the bus, the bus driver has supervisory control over the student and may exercise reasonable and necessary physical restraint to maintain that control.

Students will conduct themselves in the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.

In cases when a child does not conduct himself/herself properly on a bus, such instances will be brought to the attention of the transportation supervisor by the bus driver. The transportation supervisor will inform the parents immediately of the misconduct and request their cooperation in modifying the child's behavior. Transportation supervisor will confer with building principal regarding student misconduct.

Children who do not follow the Rules of Conduct or direction of the bus driver or other supervisory personnel on the school bus may have their riding privileges suspended. In such cases, the parents of the children involved become responsible for seeing that their children get to and from school safely.

Consequences for student misconduct including failure to follow policy, rules or direction of the bus driver or supervisory personnel on a school bus.

Step 1 – Conference with transportation supervisor and verbal notification to parent/guardian.

Step 2 – Suspension by transportation supervisor from riding bus up to 3 days

Step 3 – Suspension by transportation supervisor from riding bus up to 10 days.

Step 4 – Long term suspension/expulsion from riding school bus according to procedures for student suspension or expulsion promulgated by the state. Based on the seriousness of the offense, the student can be removed from the bus at any time without following the above steps.

Consequences for misconduct on school buses may also include other disciplinary action by school administration which may include suspension/expulsion from school according to procedure for student suspension or expulsion promulgated by the state. Parents and students will be informed of the Rules of Conduct at the beginning of each school year.

In town busing is provided between schools and at designated stops before and after school.

Please contact the Central Administration Office for applicable fees.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS:

Constructive criticism of the schools will be welcomed by the board when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the schools to do their tasks more effectively.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the board as a whole or to an individual board member, the individual or group involved will be advised to take their concern to the appropriate staff member.

The board believes that complaints and grievances are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the board. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving staff, instruction, discipline, or learning materials will be as follows:

Teacher (coach/director)
Principal
Superintendent
Board

If a complaint, which was presented to the board and referred back through proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the board, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the board by the superintendent.

The board expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

Matters referred to the superintendent and/or board are requested to be in writing and should be specific in terms of action desired.

Concerns about board actions or board operations are welcome anytime.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE:

Step 1: The patron will meet with the proper school personnel as outlined in the channeling of complaints procedure to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved at the lowest possible level, the patron may take the complaint to the next level. Whenever a complaint about staff, instruction, discipline, or learning materials is received from a patron of the Vermillion School District by the school board, a board member, or an employee, shall refer the complainant to the district policy.

Step 2: The principal/director will meet with the patron and employee involved individually or jointly in an attempt to resolve the problem. If resolution involved is agreeable to the patron, the principal will make a written report. If no agreement is reached, the principal will render a decision in writing and a copy will be given to the patron, employee, and superintendent. Within 15 days the patron or employee may go to Step 3 by writing to the superintendent.

Step 3: The complaint with the principal's action will be given to the superintendent. The superintendent will meet with the patron, employee, and principal together or individually. If a resolution is reached, the superintendent will write a report, notifying the patron, employee, and principal. If no agreement is reached, the superintendent will render a decision in writing and deliver it to the patron, employee, and principal. The patron or employee, within 15 days, may go to Step 4 by notifying the superintendent.

Step 4: The school board will consider the complaint while meeting in executive session (if dealing with personnel). The superintendent will provide the board with any written reports which contains the complaints, the employee's response, principal's decision, and superintendent's decision. At this hearing, the patron will explain the complaint, the superintendent will explain the administrator's response, and the employee will explain their response. The school board will render its decision which will be implemented by the superintendent.

DISTRICT COMPLAINT POLICY FOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS:

A parent, student, employee, or district stakeholder who has a complaint regarding the use of federal NCLB funds and is unable to resolve the issue, may address the complaint in writing to the district's superintendent.

Disputes addressing the enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this procedure. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the dispute resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district or district's homeless liaison's office. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. Students should be provided with all services for which they are eligible while disputes are resolved.

- The superintendent will investigate, within one week, the circumstances of the complaint and render a decision within two weeks after receipt of the complaint.
- The superintendent will notify the complainant of the decision in writing.
- The complainant will be allowed one week to react to the decision before it becomes final.
- The complainant will either accept or disagree with the decision and will provide such acknowledgement in writing, addressed to the district superintendent.
- If the issue is not resolved with the superintendent, the complaint will be forwarded to the district's Board of Education for further review. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the district's decision including any rights the parent, guardian, or youth may have to appeal the decision.
- Unresolved complaints may be forwarded by the person grieved to the South Dakota Department of Education for review. (Consult SD Department of Education Complaint Procedure)