



Middle School

Important Dates for the 2025-2026 School Year

This information is **Subject to Change**. This is the initial calendar for the 25/26 school year. For a complete calendar and to see additional events added throughout the year, please visit the school's online calendar at <http://www.valleycatholic.org>.

As a reminder, students have early dismissal days several times during the year. Those days are noted below.

Please see the excerpts about missing school (excessive absences) and missing final exams on p. 5

August	11-22	VCEMS office	Open 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (M-F)
	25-29	The VCEMS office is closed to in-person visits	(Staff are attending start-of-year training)
	TBD	VCS Foundation Staff hosts a New Parent Information Night - 6-7:30 PM <i>Details will come from the Foundation staff, not VCMS staff</i>	
September	1	Labor Day	
	2	Orientation and Back to School for 6th grade families: (students should wear Free Dress) Students and at least one parent should attend	12:00 – 4:00 p.m.
	3-5	Week One: Starting School (Orientation Week) Half Day Dismissal: (All Grades)	Half Day: 7:50 - 12:15 p.m. Dismissal No after-school study or activities
	3	Picture day – Free Dress Half Day Dismissal	Half Day: 7:50 - 12:15 p.m. Dismissal No after-school study or activities
	4	Half Day Dismissal: Wear Uniform	Half Day: 7:50 - 12:15 p.m. Dismissal No after-school study or activities
		Evening Event: IN PERSON Back to School for Grades 7 & 8	6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
	5	Half Day Dismissal: (All Grades) Spirit Dress or Uniform All Campus - Welcome Back Mass	Half Day: 7:50 - 12:15 p.m. Dismissal 9:25 a.m.
	8-12	Week Two: Starting coursework	Class time: 7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
	8	Scholastic Testing Academic classes begin – all grades	No after-school study or activities
	9	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m. Dismissal
	9	Scholastic Testing	No after-school study or activities
	11	All Grades - Camp Howard Field Trip	7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
	12	Spirit dress or uniform	
	15-19	Week Three: Getting Involved After-school study hall begins (3:20 reg. dismissal days - not Tuesdays)	Class time: 7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m. After-school study hall begins
	16	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	19	Half Day Dismissal Spirit Dress or Uniform	Half Day: 12:15 p.m. Dismissal No after-school study or activities
	22	“Good-Bye Summer” Special Dress Day	
	23	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	25	No School: In-service (OFIS)	
	26	No School: In-service (APDX)	
	30	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.

October	3	All Campus - Blue Mass	9:25 a.m.
	7-9	No School: Parent–Teacher Conferences In Person	9:00 a.m. -- 8:00 p.m.
	10	No School: Conferences via Google Meet	Time TBD (approx. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m)
	10	No School: Statewide In-service	
	14	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	21	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	
	26	VCHS Staff hosts the Valley Catholic High School Open House - Details will come from the VCHS staff, not VCMS staff	
	27	Extended Day Field Trip: Camp Howard 8th grade 6th and 7th grade asynchronous	7:30am - 7:30pm
	28	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	
	31	Halloween Colors: Special Dress Day	
November	3	Special Dress: Lazy Dress	
	4	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m
	6	6th Grade Field Trip to BizTown	
	7	Photo Retake Day	
	8	VCS Gala - Details will come from the Foundation staff, not VCMS staff	
	10	No School: End of 1st Quarter	
	11	No School – Veterans Day	
	18	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday) Food Drive Kick-Off	1:45 p.m
	25	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m
	25	VCMS & VCHS Thanksgiving Mass	9:25 a.m.
	26	No School: In-service	
	27-28	No School: Thanksgiving Break	
December	Please note: As part of the food drive, there will be special “red” and “green” dress days every Tuesday and Thursday, and specific food drive items will be contributed. Details will be announced in mid-November.		
	2	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m
		Giving Tuesday - Details will come from the Foundation staff, not VCMS staff	
	3 or 4	HSPT testing - required attendance for all 8th-grade students	Regular school day (7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.)
	8	All Campus - Immaculate Conception Mass	9:25 a.m
	9	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	10	VCHS Staff hosts a Very Valiant Christmas and Tree Lighting event Details will come from the VCHS staff (Evening event - Time TBD)	
	16	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
		Foundation Young Alumni Day - Details will come from the Foundation staff, not VCMS staff	
	17	VCMS Christmas Concert and Art Fair	6:00 - 8:30 p.m. <i>VCHS Auditorium</i>
	19	All Campus - Christmas Mass Special Early Release – Food Drive	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. Dismissal
	20 - 1/4	Christmas Break	
January	5	Classes Resume	
	6	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday) All Campus - Epiphany Mass	1:45 p.m. 9:25 a.m.
	13	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	15	Applicant Q&A - In person	8:15 a.m. or 7:00 p.m.
	19	No School: Martin Luther King, Jr.	

January	20	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams	12:15 p.m.
	21	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams	12:15 p.m.
	22	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams	12:15 p.m.
	23	No School: End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester	
	26 -29	Catholic Schools / Spirit Week (Special dress all week)	
	26	Retreat (All Grades)	
	26	All Campus Mass	9:25 a.m.
	27	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	30	No School: Inservice	
February	3	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	10	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	12	Spirit Dress	
	13	Special Dress: Valentine's Colors	
	16	No School: President's Day	
	17	No School: Inservice	
	18	All Campus - Ash Wednesday Mass	9:25 a.m.
	24	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
March	3	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	10	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	13	6th-grade extended day field trip to Camp Howard 7th and 8th grade asynchronous	7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
	17	Special Dress: St. Patrick's colors	
	17	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	20	SSMO Heritage Day Prayer Service	9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
	23-27	Spring Break	
	31	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
April	1	All Campus - Holy Wednesday Mass	9:25 a.m.
	3	Special Half Day - Good Friday Service	Dismiss at 11:45 a.m.
	6	No School: Easter Monday	
	7	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	10	No School: End of 3rd quarter	
	14	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	17	7th grade extended day field trip to Camp Howard 6th and 8th grade asynchronous	7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
	20-24	Culture and Rejuvenation Week - Special dress	
	21	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	24	Administrative Assistant's Day	.
		Give 24 (<i>Details will come from the Foundation staff</i>)	All Day
	28	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
May	1	VCMS & VCHS - Mass May Crowning	9:25 a.m.
	4-8	Teacher Appreciation Week	
	5	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	12	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	19	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.

May	21	All Campus - End of Year Mass	9:25 a.m.
	22	No School: Inservice	
	25	No School: Memorial Day	
	26	Early Dismissal (every Tuesday)	1:45 p.m.
	28	Spring Performance and Art Fair- VCHS Auditorium Band/Orchestra - Dance/Choir - Art Fair	6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
June	1-3	8th grade Capstone presentations	12:15 p.m. Dismissal for 6th & 7th (3:20 p.m. 8 th grade only)
	4	8th Grade Graduation Get-Away Trip No School 6 th and 7 th grade 8th Grade Sending Ceremony Final Prayer Service Parents welcome!	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
		Last day for 8th grade	
	5	Half Day for 6 th and 7 th 6 th and 7 th Grade Social Studies Fair Please note: There will be a presentation time at the end of the day that will be open for parents/visitors. Details are announced in mid-May.	12:15 p.m.
	8	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams	12:15 p.m.
	9	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams	12:15 p.m.
	10	Half Day Dismissal – Final Exams-	12:15 p.m.
		Last day for 6th & 7th Gr.	



Missing School for Reasons Other than Illness

Students cannot miss 10 days of school in a semester and still be in compliance with school policy as well as the State of Oregon's attendance (#339.065) requirement (as outlined in our Handbook Section 2.11).

Once a student misses the 10th day, for any reason - the student will not receive credit for coursework without the student receiving a Medical Learning Plan due to a medically verified reason (surgery, chemo, COVID, etc). The student's transcript will show that the student did not fulfill the minimum number of seat hours and thus no credit, nor grade, will be provided.

Missing Final Exams and Standardized Testing Days

Final exams are a key part of our program, and we do not make accommodations unless there are extenuating circumstances (as defined in our handbook). Extenuating circumstances would include bereavement, surgery for the child, medical treatments (chemotherapy), concussion, in-treatment program (such as eating disorders or mental health, for example), etc.

If a student misses final exams without an extenuating circumstance, the student will be marked as absent and will receive a grade of "0" on the final exam for any course that is giving a final exam during final exam week. Some classes, though, have culminating projects instead of or in addition to finals.

If a student misses class during these projects or if she/he is involved with a group project that requires the student's presence in order for the group to complete their task, the student will not be granted a "make-up" assignment as we do not offer individual accommodations without an Individual Learning Plan.

(Re)New for 2025-2026 Valley Catholic Middle School Outdoor Education Program

Parent Introduction and 2025–2026 Program Preview

We are excited to share the renewal and expansion of Valley Catholic Middle School's **Outdoor Education Program**—an initiative designed to help students become confident, curious, and connected individuals. Grounded in our Catholic identity and school values, Outdoor Education at VCMS promotes personal growth, emotional wellness, and a deeper relationship with both nature and one another.

Mission Statement

Through Outdoor Education, students will become better communicators, more aware of their emotions and how to channel them constructively, and more deeply connected to both their community and the natural world.

Rooted in Our Catholic and Valiant Identity

The Outdoor Education Program reflects and reinforces the Pillars of Valley Catholic:

- Celebrating God, life, and creation
- Striving for excellence through balance and flow
- Honoring the unique gifts of each person
- Living valiantly by taking risks and embracing new experiences

Why Outdoor Education?

For the vast majority of human history, people have lived in close relationship with the natural world. In more recent centuries, that connection has diminished—often to the detriment of our emotional and physical well-being. Scholars like E.O. Wilson and Richard Louv have identified this disconnection as a contributing factor to Nature Deficit Disorder, with implications for human health and happiness.

At Valley Catholic, we believe that time spent in nature is not only healthy—it is holy. By offering meaningful, structured outdoor learning experiences, we invite our students to develop confidence, empathy, and stewardship for God's creation.

Key Goals of the Program

- Community Development: Strengthening belonging at VCMS
- Emotional Balance: Supporting emotional and spiritual growth
- Connection to Nature: Fostering awe, respect, and care for the environment
- Self-Reflection: Encouraging identity development and introspection
- Physical Activity: Promoting movement, exploration, and joy in outdoor spaces

More information about curricular connections and interdisciplinary activities will be shared later in the 2025–2026 school year.

Extended Day Field Trips – Save the Dates

A cornerstone of the Outdoor Education Program is our **Extended Day Field Trips**, one of which each grade level will experience during the 2025–2026 school year.

What Is an Extended Day Field Trip?

Each trip includes:

- Departure from VCMS at 7:30 a.m.
- Return to VCMS by approximately 7:30 p.m.

These full-day off-campus experiences provide students with a wide range of outdoor learning activities, shared meals, and time to gather around a campfire under the stars. Students build lasting memories and deeper connections with their classmates and teachers alike.

Asynchronous Days

To allow staff to accompany and support students on these trips:

- Students in the other two grades will have asynchronous learning days at home on the same date.
- Each student will have one Extended Day Field Trip and two asynchronous days over the course of the year.
- Asynchronous assignments will be posted to Google Classroom and are expected to be completed independently.

This structure ensures full participation while also creating intentional space for staff and students to connect in meaningful ways during their time at camp.

Cost

There is no additional cost for the Extended Day Field Trip. All expenses are covered by the activities fee collected during registration.

Looking Ahead

Additional information—including specific dates, locations, what to bring, and family logistics—will be shared at **Back to School Night in September 2026**.

Tentative Dates include:

- September 11: All grades Introduction to Outdoor Education (7:50 a.m. - 3:20 p.m. - Regular School day)
- October 8: Eighth Grade Outdoor Education (7:50 a.m. - 7:50 p.m.); Sixth and seventh grade asynchronous work at home.
- April 17: Seventh Grade Outdoor Education (7:50 a.m. - 7:50 p.m.); Sixth and eighth grade asynchronous work at home.
- April 24: Sixth Grade Outdoor Education (7:50 a.m. - 7:50 p.m.); Seventh and eighth grade asynchronous work at home.

We are thrilled to bring this renewed Outdoor Education Program to life for our students and look forward to a year filled with exploration, growth, and grace.

Warmly,

Dr. Jennifer Gfroerer

Principal, Valley Catholic Middle School