



VALHALLA SCHOOL FOUNDATION

VALHALLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

CHARTER



**VALHALLA SCHOOL FOUNDATION
VALHALLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

CHARTER DOCUMENT

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**VALHALLA SCHOOL FOUNDATION
VALHALLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

CHARTER

Background

From the original charter (2008):

The Valhalla School Foundation, a body incorporated in Alberta under the Societies Act on Oct.10, 2001, will operate the Valhalla Community School out of the building currently known as the Valhalla Elementary School in Valhalla Centre, Alberta. As of September 2008, it will deliver programs for rural children from kindergarten to grade six, with the consideration that junior high grades seven to nine may be added in the future. The Valhalla Community School will be governed under the School Act, the Societies Act, the Valhalla Community School Charter, and the Bylaws of the Society. The term of the charter will be set by the Minister of Education.

Valhalla Community School was started by a group of parents and local residents when adjustments were made to the local school boundaries in early 2008, and the school was slated to close at the end of June 2008. Parents and supporters formed a steering committee to explore and develop initiatives. This committee began a series of meetings with the stakeholders in the local education system, and the opportunity to start a charter school emerged. In the space of a few months, and with the help of Alberta Education, the charter process was completed and Valhalla Community School commenced classes on September 2nd, 2008.

The Valhalla Community School is operated by the Valhalla School Foundation, and was initially approved for a five year term (2008 to 2013) on September 16, 2008, followed by approval of a second five year term (2013 to 2018) on February 11, 2013.

VCS is currently a K to 9 school that serves the population in an area of 3600 km² around the hamlet of Valhalla Centre. The student population varies between 90 and 110 students, and there are 99 students registered for the current (2017-2018) school year. Students are introduced to the VCS direct instruction model of teaching and learning through a phonics based reading and writing program immediately in kindergarten. The highly structured and sequenced approach to education meets with very high levels of parent satisfaction, increasing levels of academic success on the part of students, and increasing registration numbers in early elementary school.

Vision

Students will become well-educated and engaged citizens, with strong ethical, civic and democratic standards, who are committed to their families, school, community, province and country.

Mission

To instill a readiness for leadership by equipping rural students with both knowledge and skills necessary for success in a rapidly changing economy in the communities they serve.

Values and Beliefs

The Valhalla School Foundation (VSF) views rural¹ education as possessing unique and beneficial characteristics with the potential to maximize student learning.

- The VSF recognizes the central role of parent and guardian in the life of a child and therefore sees itself as a partner commissioned to foster academic success as part of the overall process of child development.
- Because rural life is rooted in an entrepreneurial culture, bolstered by sharing and supportive relationships, rural students develop unique, personal ties to members of their family and community. As such, the connectedness of a community has a significant impact on the “parent-orientation”² of a child and, by extension, contributes to their success in school.
- The VSF holds strongly to the belief that rural schools must provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for success in both urban and rural settings.
- The VSF believes the unique aspects of rural education that distinguish it from its urban cousin, call for a diligent focus on structured teaching practices that maximize opportunities for all students in the rural classroom.
- The VSF believes that the long-term goal of rural education is to develop the skills, knowledge and values that will enable students to become strong and contributing leaders of tomorrow.
- The VSF views self-confidence as a product of competence. With this in mind, it commits to student success in academics and leadership in an atmosphere of supportive encouragement.
- The VSF believes that mastery of outcomes through effective grouping of students leads to success for all.

¹ Population living in towns and municipalities outside the commuting zone of centres with population of 10,000 or more. (Statistics Canada)

² Gordon Neufeld (Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers, Vintage Canada, 2005)

Guiding Principles of Teaching and Learning

Direct Instruction.

Direct instruction emphasizes the importance of successive learning increments and clearly prescribed teaching tasks so as to minimize student misinterpretation and increase the pace of learning. It is a teacher-directed approach, requiring educators to adopt a style of lesson plan where knowledge precedes enquiry.

(See Appendix III, VCS Direct Instruction Teaching and Learning Framework and references)

Sequential Mastery Learning

The success of direct instruction requires a philosophical embrace of sequential mastery learning, where students have a foundational mastery of basic skills and knowledge before moving on to the next, more advanced, level. Critical to this aspect of teaching is timely diagnosis and diligent correction of student error and misunderstanding.

Explicit Phonics

As part of the focus of incremental and clearly prescribed teaching tasks, explicit phonics is used as the primary basis for teaching decoding skills for reading in the early primary grades.

Automaticity and Recall

The VSF holds in high regard for its students the skills of memorization of prose as well as arithmetic mental calculation and recognizes the role of diligent drill and practice in fostering regular, automatic presentation of said mastered skills.

Core Knowledge

With the intent of training students to be able to competently embrace leadership opportunities as they arise, the VSF values its students acquiring a body of knowledge to enable them to function comfortably in a wide variety of situations in both urban and rural settings. Therefore, the VSF sees it as essential that students are able to converse on a broad scope of subject areas and develop a measurable proficiency in another language.

Rural Leadership

Part of what makes Alberta a competitive province on the global stage is the creativity and enthusiasm of its citizens as they involve themselves in projects that enhance community or municipal development or business opportunities. Small rural communities depend on the willingness of their residents to involve themselves in community life. Such participation functions as a lifeline for a community's existence. As a result, the VSF places a high level of priority on including a basic student understanding of civic and community group processes into its knowledge enrichment component, a keen grasp of the processes of organized group work in committees and civic arenas, and the development of skills and attitudes necessary to make effective contributions as adult members of the community.

Public Speaking and Presentation

The exercise of rural leadership requires that students be comfortable speaking in public as well as being able to present themselves with a level of decorum suitable to the various

degrees of situational formality in which they may find themselves. It is also a priority to enable students to present dignified visual written work in the form of excellent penmanship.

Critical Thinking

The VSF strongly upholds the skill of critical thinking as an important part of child development. It is a crucial tool for developing logic and educational research indicates that it is through the mastery of skills and the acquiring of knowledge that one formulates a basis for such critical analysis. As students advance, the focus on skills and knowledge can naturally lead to more opportunities for abstract reasoning, logic, and self-reliant thought processes.

Charter Goals

With the intent of developing leadership skills in its rural students, the goals of the VCS are:

1. To produce students who are excellent communicators.
 1. Students will communicate with intelligence, using grammatically correct language in both spoken and written word, by mastering the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic.
 2. Students will communicate with confidence on a broad range of subjects by developing a firm understanding of history, science and fine arts.
 3. Students will express themselves in an articulate manner while public speaking.
 4. Students will develop a measurable proficiency in a second language.

2. To prepare students for community involvement and leadership.
 1. Students will recognize the importance of community involvement by directly experiencing the efforts of community and municipal groups.
 2. Students in grades three and higher will participate in community and student groups by attending meetings and participating in relevant discussions at an age-appropriate level. (For example, all students attend at least one School Council or Board meeting with their parents every year.)

(See Appendix I for program details to meet these goals.)

Appendices

- I. The Charter and the Ministerial Order*
- II. Charter Resources and Research Foundation*
- III. Teaching and Learning Framework*
- IV. Action Research*
- V. Roles and Responsibilities*
- VI. Communication Plan*
- VII. Charter Amendments and Dissolution*
- VIII. Charter Bylaws*

Appendix I

The Charter and the Ministerial Order

VCS strives to meet the requirements of its charter and the expectations of its parents and community, as well as the expectations of the Alberta Education Ministerial Order and Program of Studies. It is our firm conviction that the VCS charter, in its origins as well as in its progression, effectively develops the competencies for **engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit**. The following addresses the competencies and outlines three major foci of the VCS program and considers how they, in turn, support the development of these competencies.

Engaged Thinkers

The VCS charter is founded on the belief that the development of essential literacy and numeracy skills, as well as the acquisition of a solid foundation of background knowledge, are both necessary for the development of critical and creative thinking. Both the literacy and numeracy programs foster the development of basic skills while giving students the opportunity to solve problems and to write analytically and creatively as they progress through the grades. Students are also all involved in a French second language program, which develops their capacity to live and work in both a national and global environment, while the development of cursive writing seeks to, among other outcomes, increase the capacity for note-taking leading to better analytical and meta-cognitive skills.

Ethical Citizens

The VCS charter vision for its students is that they become “engaged citizens, with strong ethical, civic and democratic standards.” Preparation for a life of involvement in their community, and in particular playing a leadership role in the rural context, requires an attitude of service, and the rural leadership program at VCS seeks to prepare students for this way of being and living. The strong emphasis on community, the mixed grade levels, the multi-age house league program and the opportunities for older students to work with and support younger students all contribute to the development of ethical citizenship in our students.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

From its inception, the Valhalla School Foundation charter has recognized that rural life is inherently entrepreneurial. Preparation for both service and leadership in rural culture requires the development of an understanding of the role of community groups as well as the requisite attitudes and skills necessary to participation. The rural leadership program brings students into contact with a variety of community organizations, offers opportunities for leadership inside the school and in the community, and has a public speaking program which develops the critical skills and the confidence necessary for active participation in community life.

VCS LITERACY & NUMERACY PROGRAM

The VCS literacy program currently uses two primary direct instruction resources. “The Writing Road to Reading” program develops phoneme and grapheme understanding of the functioning of the written English language, and students grasp this foundational understanding at an early age. “Reading Mastery” is a program which uses scripted teaching of phonics and reading strategies, homogenous reading fluency groups and whole-group responses. Using frequent monitoring and school-wide reporting of reading fluency, comprehension and writing skills, the teacher brings each student to mastery as they ascend through the reading levels.

The VCS numeracy program also uses two primary direct instruction resources. “JUMP Math” and “Saxon Math” both utilize an appropriately sequenced and scaffolded approach to teaching and learning, and our program has maintained a strong focus on basic arithmetic and mathematical skill development through the use of these resources. This approach is supplemented by opportunities for problem-solving and the use of manipulatives for students to develop a multi-faceted understanding of math at the same time as they master the essential skills and logarithms.

The literacy and numeracy program contributes to students becoming *engaged thinkers* as well as *ethical citizens* as they solve problems and articulate, in written form as well as oral presentations, a point of view on curriculum subjects as well as subjects of their own choosing.

VCS RURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

In working out the aims of VCS to “develop the skills, knowledge and values that will enable students to become strong and contributing leaders of tomorrow”, a rural leadership component has developed at the school which exposes students to community groups and activities and offers opportunities to exercise both service and leadership, truly being *engaged, ethical and entrepreneurial*. Older students often work in pairs with younger students, reading, doing crafts, and participating in competitions together in the recently created “House League”. Students work in the community through various opportunities: participating in the Terry Fox Run, packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, shoveling snow for local businesses, roadside clean-up programs, collecting donations for food banks and fundraising for charitable organizations. Parents are increasingly involved in the life of the school in volunteer opportunities as well as participating on the Valhalla School Foundation board and the School Council. In recent years, an initiative to give all junior high students the opportunity to serve on the Student Council through a rotating option program has allowed students to learn meeting rules of order and to organize social and service opportunities for the student body. For the last two years, students and their parents come together from grade three on to attend either a School Council meeting or a VSF board meeting once a year to understand and contribute to the important volunteer work of community organizations that directly affect their school.

VCS PUBLIC SPEAKING AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

The VCS public speaking and performing arts programs have a strong connection to the rural leadership program and the development of leadership skills. While it is not necessary to be strongly expressive or extroverted to exercise leadership, it often does require the ability to research a subject, to synthesize one’s thoughts, and to have the courage and the experience to speak up in a public forum, as an *engaged thinker* and *ethical citizen*. From grade one on, students participate in public speaking as well as drama presentations in front of students, parents and other members of the community. Beginning with reciting poetry in the lower grades, students gradually move to researching and presenting, developing skills in research, analysis and synthesis, as well as the finer points of public speaking, on subjects of their own choosing.

Appendix II

Charter Resources and Research Foundation

Consistent with the Charter focus on direct instruction, clear objectives, and structured learning, VCS utilizes a number of resources to foster both literacy and numeracy that have a strong theoretical base and are backed by research.

Reading Mastery

“Reading Mastery” is a program which uses scripted teaching of phonics and reading strategies, homogenous reading fluency groups and whole-group responses. Using frequent monitoring and school-wide reporting of reading fluency, comprehension and writing skills, the teacher brings each student to mastery as they ascend through the reading levels. Research indicates that “Reading Mastery” results in positive reading and language outcomes for general education students, general education remedial readers, and students in special education. Relative to other reading curricula, instruction with “Reading Mastery” appears to be more effective in improving student reading performance. 1,2,3

Writing Road to Reading

The understanding that spoken words and syllables consist of sequences of elementary speech sounds is a powerful predictor of success in learning to read (Adams 1990). Research findings demonstrate that phonemic awareness is more highly related to learning to read than are tests of general intelligence, reading readiness, and listening comprehension – and that phonemic awareness instruction is strongest when the sounds are presented with the symbols. The “Writing Road to Reading” is a thorough, intensive phonics program which instructs the teacher how to present phonics, writing, and spelling in great detail as a unified, multisensory language arts program. It builds on the research mentioned above and uses its own system for marking the phonograms to identify sounds, which helps children with both reading and spelling. It has been used successfully throughout the United States and, in particular, at Foundations for the Future Charter Academy in Calgary. It is currently being implemented at VCS and is being assessed as an Action Research project. 4,5

Saxon Math

The Saxon approach differs from most programs in that it distributes instruction, practice, and assessment of skills and concepts throughout the lessons and school year instead of massing these elements within a single chapter or unit. In the Saxon Math program, as students encounter new increments of instruction, they also continually review previously introduced math concepts. Foundational research has shown that distributed instruction results in greater student achievement than does massed instruction, and distributed instruction with incremental practice and review has been found effective at all grade levels in a variety of subjects, including mathematics, science, and reading comprehension. Research studies have also shown that students who are taught with a mathematics curriculum that uses continual practice and review demonstrate greater math achievement and skill acquisition than do students who are taught with a mass approach. 6,7

JUMP Math

In “The Myth of Ability: Nurturing Mathematical Ability in Every Child”, John Mighton, the author and founder of the JUMP Math program, argues that “it can take an hour to convince a child he or she is intelligent: with an adult, it can take forever.” Founded on the notion that incremental small steps, combined with attention to inclusion and participation of all students, praise and encouragement, and

paying attention to what students already know, the JUMP math program reduces concepts into the most basic elements of perception and understanding, and extends mathematical ideas in a way that is engaging while taking into account the student's readiness to move forward. JUMP math has a solid and growing research foundation, primarily in Ontario and England, indicating very strong gains in mathematical understanding for children using the program. A recent study in Ontario (<https://jumpmath.org/jump/en/research>) involving 272 students randomly selected from 29 classrooms, in 18 schools, in a rural Canadian school board, found that the math knowledge of children using JUMP Math grew twice as much as that of children using the incumbent program, one of Canada's two best-selling math programs. 8,9

CHAMPS Class Management Strategies

CHAMPS is not a program, but rather a compilation of how-to strategies that support teachers in the very skills that have been associated with student success. CHAMPS is a systematic, prevention-oriented approach that guides teachers in providing universal classroom supports that are likely to promote appropriate behavior and reduce disruptive behavior in the classroom. Once the teacher has implemented the core supports, there is guidance for how to structure supports that target smaller groups or individual students who need additional supports. Educational research has shown that when these levels of support are in place and incorporate meaningful involvement of relevant parties (e.g., teachers, parents, peers), positive student out- comes can be achieved. 10,11

Cursive Writing

VCS uses a programmed approach to Cursive Writing from grades one to five. Considerable research exists to show that both handwriting and spelling support the written expression of ideas. Results of assessment, instructional, brain and genetics research explain the links between the development of grapho-motor skills, visual sensory feedback, the written expression of ideas, and the benefits of teaching for transfer across levels of language close in time to facilitate efficient, temporal coordination of working memory components. Research also indicates that there is a distinct system in the human brain that is recruited during reading that is also recruited during writing, that the reading network develops as function of handwriting experience, and that handwriting, not keyboarding, leads to adult-like neural processing in the visuals system of the pre-school child. 12, 13, 14

1. <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/9-components-effective-research-supported-reading-instruction>
2. <https://www.nifdi.org/programs/reading/reading-mastery>
3. <http://rosedale.sd33.bc.ca/sites/default/files/Reading%20Mastery.pdf>
4. <http://cathyduffyreviews.com/homeschool-reviews-core-curricula/phonics-reading/phonics-reading-programs/writing-road-to-reading>
5. <http://www.spalding.org>
6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saxon_math
7. <https://www.reference.com/education/features-saxon-math-textbooks-7a3ec27058c55ea0?aq=what+is+saxon+math&qo=cdpArticles>
8. <https://jumpmath.org>
9. <https://cms.math.ca/notes/v44/n6/Notesv44n6.pdf>
10. <http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/champs-classroom-management.html>
11. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/research/references/champs.php>
12. <http://www.cursiveologic.com/why-cursive/>
13. <https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/2014/09/brain-benefits-write-in-cursive/>
14. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4274624/>

Appendix III

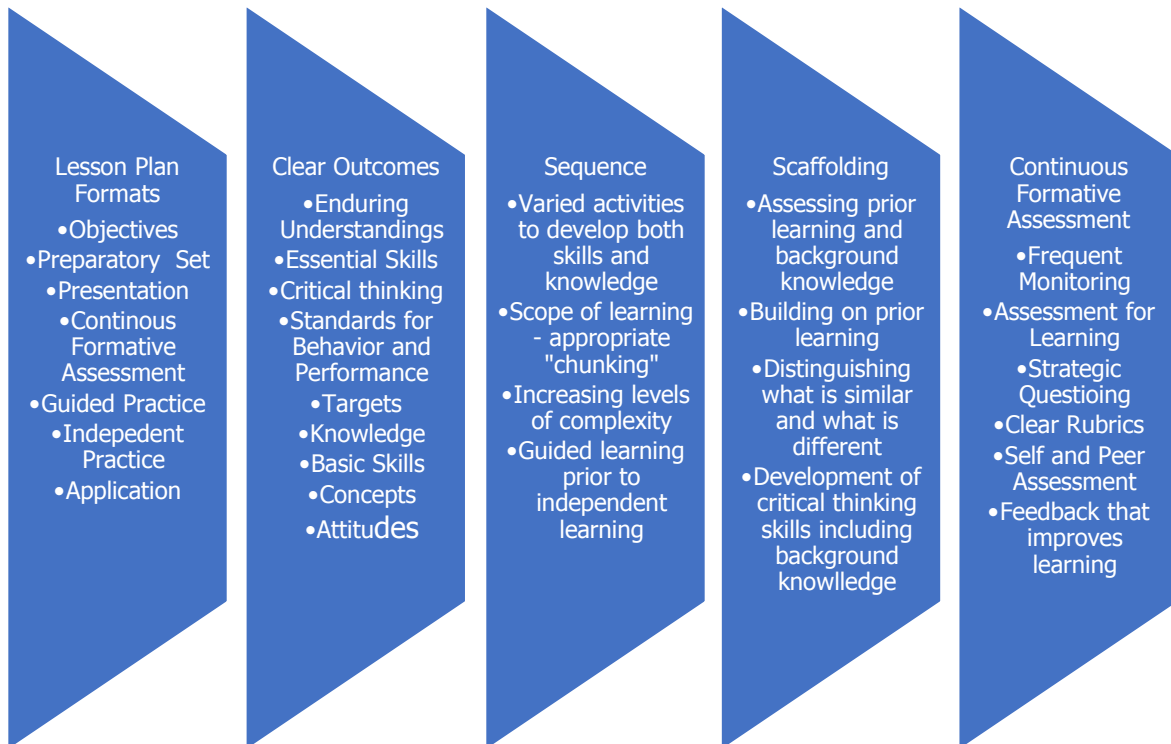
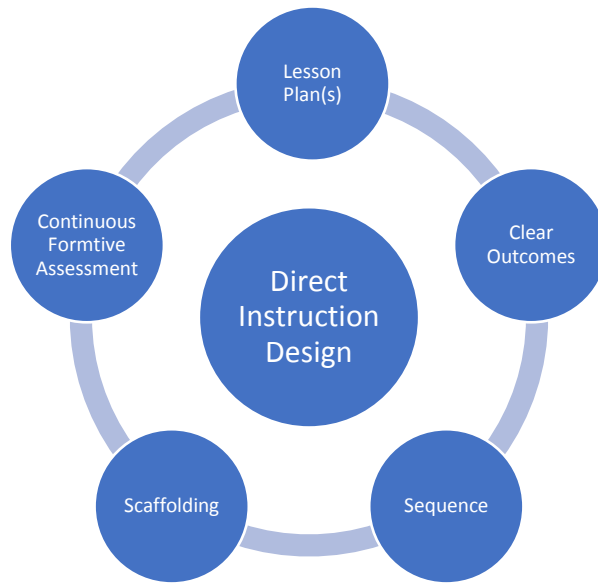
VCS Direct Instruction Teaching and Learning Framework

Direct instruction, as practiced at VCS, is the intentional and purposeful design and implementation of a comprehensive set of pedagogical strategies. As explained by Siegfried Engelmann, direct instruction emphasizes the importance of small learning increments and clearly prescribed teaching tasks so as to minimize student misinterpretation and increase the pace of learning. It is a teacher-directed approach, requiring educators to adopt a style of lesson plan where knowledge precedes enquiry. Strategies should include:

- **Clear student learning outcomes**, including the enduring understandings to be retained and the specific targets of learning in terms of knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes – outcomes, along with procedural expectations, are communicated clearly to students.
- **Sequenced learning activities**, proceeding from the presentation of information and activities for skill development and the acquisition of knowledge - to the opportunity for students to develop their skills and aptitudes as independent learners and thinkers
- **Scaffolding learning** - fundamental to direct instruction is the belief that for learning to be meaningful, it must be connected to prior learning and established understanding. This attains best when the learning is “chunked” into increments of a scope appropriate to the learning context. Appropriately scoped increments are “scaffolded”, or build on one another, with every attempt being made to ensure that mastery is attained with each step.
- **Continuous formative assessment** which permits both teachers and students to understand their progress and to use the evidence of learning to make decisions about the next steps in the learning process – checking for understanding, guided practice, strategic questioning and peer and self-assessment are among the approaches that are used. Direct instruction is both diagnostic and prescriptive.
- **Choosing among a variety of teaching and learning methods or approaches**, including, but not restricted to:
 - Presentation and demonstration followed by guided practice and independent practice;
 - Discussion and decision-making related to criteria and objectives (critical and creative thinking);
 - Problem-solving – making learning problematic such that students construct their learning in response to questions and problems posed to them;
 - Experiential learning through field trips;
 - Inquiry and research;
 - Group work and cooperative learning.
- **A lesson plan or lesson design**, with consideration of the following:
 - Identification of objective / learning goal
 - Preparing the learning / activating prior learning
 - Assessing readiness or prior knowledge
 - Presenting the new learning
 - Checking for understanding
 - Practicing and continuous assessment
 - Application and independent practice
 - Assessment of learning

<https://www.nifdi.org/what-is-di/basic-philosophy>
<https://www.education.com/reference/article/what-direct-instruction/>
<http://edglossary.org/direct-instruction/>

VCS Direct Instruction Teaching and Learning Framework



<http://www.worksheetlibrary.com/teachingtips/directinstruction.html>
<http://www.jefflindsay.com/EducData.shtm>

Appendix IV

Action Research Projects

Valhalla Community School has two action research literacy initiatives, which have been shared with members of the Education Faculty at Grande Prairie Regional College, and which will be presented to education students at GPRC in the near future. The two projects are:

- 1. Implementation of the “Writing Road to Reading” phonogram program, measuring the impact on student mastery of phonograms, spelling, vocabulary, and the volume and quality of written responses.*
- 2. Implementation of a Cursive Writing program, measuring impact on cursive writing skills, note-taking and written responses to both written and oral prompts.*

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “WRITING ROAD TO READING” PHONOGRAM PROGRAM

Background

The development of literacy in kindergarten and early elementary students is subject to a wide variety of influences, including the attitude of parents towards learning, the quality of verbal communication in the home, mother tongue considerations and exposure of children to the written word, in addition to personal contextual variables, ranging from the age and health of the child to his or her personal interests and capacity for concentration.

Valhalla Community School recognizes communication as an integral component of leadership, placing special emphasis in Language Arts on mastery of the mechanics of language as well as the skills and confidence to use language in conveying meaningful messages. Valhalla Community School will emphasize the importance of attending to graphophonic, syntactic and semantic elements of language through the use of carefully sequenced, direct teaching.

(From the Valhalla Community School Charter Document “Language Arts Supplement- Mechanics of Language and Public Speaking, Valhalla Community School”)

Valhalla Community School has been using the “Reading Mastery” program with considerable success, but a sense had developed that more intentional work connected to phonics would be beneficial. In our ongoing partnership with Foundations for the Future Charter Academy in Calgary, two of our teachers were exposed through collegial visits to the “Writing Road to Reading” program which has been in use in that school for over 15 years.

This project will look at the impact the implementation of the “Writing Road to Reading” program on language arts proficiency in writing for, initially, children in Kindergarten and Grades One and Two.

Purpose

Our overall purpose is to facilitate increased language arts proficiency in writing. Our specific learner goals are

Kindergarten

- To increase the number of phonograms and words students are able to read and write from dictation.
- To increase the volume and clarity of written responses and personal stories.

Grade One/Two

- To increase the number of phonograms and words students are able to read, write from dictation and produce orally for spelling bees.

- To increase the volume and clarity of writing in personal stories, subject reports and written responses to questions about text

Research Question

How has the implementation of the WRTR program impacted:

- i) the number of phonograms and words Kindergarten students are able to read and write from dictation.
- ii) the volume and clarity of written responses and personal stories in Kindergarten students.
- iii) the number of phonograms and words students in grades one and two are able to read, write from dictation and produce orally for spelling bees.
- iv) the volume and clarity of writing in personal stories, subject reports and written responses to questions about text in students in grades one and two

Literature Review

The method used in this project is based on 120 years of collective years of research and experience, and truly began with Dr. Samuel T. Orton, the earliest neuroscientist to research the functioning of the human brain in learning language skills (1923-1948). Dr. Orton collaborated with successful classroom teachers to combine his non-discriminatory multi-sensory techniques with classical direct and Socratic instructional approaches to teaching. His first successful applications went to re-establish language-skills memory in brain-damaged World War 1 veterans. Other physiological organic or trauma-induced brain-damaged individuals (stroke patients) were treated similarly until his death in 1948.

Romalda Spalding, who authored "The Writing Road to Reading", was one of Orton's last teacher-collaborators, and was using Orton's methods to teach normal primary students. She believed that her method represented Dr. Orton's final conclusions that this method should be used for primary children, both to prevent and correct learning disorders, and most importantly to establish high literacy in virtually all primary children.

Protocol or Process

Valhalla Community School has been using the "Signature Reading Mastery Series" by Seigfried Engelman since our Charter was written. We have been very satisfied with the results in reading. The language/grammar portion of the program is primarily oral in the beginning years, which has been very beneficial for the high number of English as a Second Language learners in our population. However, we have found that it is lacking in written production. For example, by the end of grade one the students are writing two related sentences from a pattern given orally about a picture prompt. We feel the creative component is lacking as well as the volume of responses which are required. During observation of kindergarten, grade two and grade 4 classes in an FFCA (Foundations for the Future Charter Academy) school in Calgary, we were impressed with the high level of achievement in writing that was evidenced. As a result, we are implementing a program called the Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking (WRTR) by the Riggs Institute on a trial basis in order to test the results for our student population.

The Riggs method incorporates the phonics-based spelling with a rules system dating from the Webster-Oxford standardization of English spelling, but also provides realistic phonemic/graphemic correspondences from contemporary dictionaries. It uses roots, prefixes, suffixes, homophones and homographs, antonyms, synonyms and graphic organizers to provide for a high-expectation, skills-based, complete language arts method.

Research Methodology

A writing baseline sample and a spelling baseline was taken at the end of June 2016. The following assessment materials were used. These samples will be taken at the end of the year in the same grade levels this year and forward.

Instrument

"A Primary Writing Assessment" from *35 Rubrics & Checklists to Assess Reading and Writing*, **Scholastic Professional Books, 1998**

"A Primary Spelling Assessment" from *35 Rubrics & Checklists to Assess Reading and Writing*, **Scholastic Professional Books, 1998, pp. 15-18.**

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURSIVE WRITING PROGRAM

Background

Valhalla Community School recognizes communication as an integral component of leadership, placing special emphasis in Language Arts on mastery of the mechanics of language as well as the skills and confidence to use language in conveying meaningful messages. Valhalla Community School will emphasize the importance of attending to graphophonic, syntactic and semantic elements of language through the use of carefully sequenced, direct teaching.

(From the Valhalla Community School Charter Document "Language Arts Supplement- Mechanics of Language and Public Speaking, Valhalla Community School")

Valhalla Community School has a focus on the development of basic skills in literacy and the belief that appropriate skill development along with the development of strong background knowledge are essential to the subsequent development of critical thinking skills in analysis, synthesis, understanding and communication.

This project will look at the eventual impact of the implementation of Cursive Writing in grades 1 through 5 on the note-taking skills, analytical skills, and written presentation of understanding in Social Studies and Science in grades six to nine

Purpose

Our overall purpose is to facilitate increased reading and writing skills in students beginning in Kindergarten, with the ultimate purpose of improving student capacity to effectively express ideas, opinions and conclusions in their writing. Our specific purpose is to facilitate student skills in taking notes and in written analysis, and communicating their ideas, their conceptual understanding and their questions in hand-writing.

Research Question

How has the implementation of the Cursive Writing program impacted:

- student cursive writing ability in grades one through five.
- writing ability in response to dictation.
- note-taking ability during presentations and discussions.
- written responses to both written and oral prompts.

Literature Review

In an era emphasizing evidence-based instructional practices, it is puzzling why neither handwriting nor spelling is included in most standards. Considerable research exists to show that both handwriting and spelling support the written expression of ideas. Results of assessment, instructional, brain and genetics research explain the links between the development of grapho-motor skills, visual sensory feedback, the written expression of ideas, and the benefits of teaching for transfer across levels of language close in time to facilitate efficient, temporal coordination of working memory components.

(Evidence-Based, Developmentally Appropriate Writing Skills K to 5: Teaching the Orthographic Loop of Working Memory to Write Letters, Spell Words, and Express Ideas: Berninger, John Hopkins University)

Research also indicated that there is a distinct system in the human brain that is recruited during reading that is also recruited during writing, that the reading network develops as function of handwriting experience, and that handwriting, not keyboarding, leads to adult-like neural processing in the visual system of the pre-school child.

(The Neural Correlates of Handwriting and Its Affect on Reading Acquisition: James, Indiana University)

Protocol or Process

The Cursive Writing program is being implemented at grades one through five. As students begin to move through grades six through nine, follow-up and reinforcement activities will be developed to maintain and improve

cursive writing skills. Essential to the reinforcement of cursive writing skills will be an emphasis on note-taking and written assignments and responses. A series of assessment means are being developed to measure the development and application of cursive writing as in the section on “Instruments” below.

Research Methodology

Tracking improvement in cursive writing skills in grades one to five and tracking of the application of cursive writing skills to note-taking, analysis and response skills in grades six through nine.

Instrument

- Assessment of cursive writing ability in grades one through five.
- Assessment of pure writing ability in response to dictation over a given and limited period of time.
- Assessment of note-taking via a rubric to assess the quality of notes taken during presentations and discussions.
- Assessment of a variety of written responses, based on content accuracy as well as analytical skills, to both written and oral prompts in a limited time period.

<http://www.cursivelogic.com/why-cursive/>

<https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/2014/09/brain-benefits-write-in-cursive/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4274624/>

Appendix V

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of the Charter Board

The charter board is responsible for the governance of the Valhalla Community School in support of the goals and obligations of the Foundation. The board is responsible for establishing, maintaining and monitoring policies concerning educational programs offered by the Valhalla Community School. The authority of the board is derived from the province, and the board is accountable to Alberta Education, the Minister of Education, and the public.

Roles and Responsibilities of Administration

The Superintendent is the Chief Education Officer of the school and the Chief Executive Officer of the Board, and carries out the duties outlined in the School Act and in Board Policies. The Superintendent shall supervise the operation and management of the school and the provision of the educational program. The Secretary Treasurer is the Chief Financial Officer of the school and is responsible for the day-to-day financial operations of the school and carries out duties outlined in the School Act and in Board Policies. The Transportation Director is responsible for the bussing fleet and all aspects connected to transporting students safely to and from the school. The Principal is responsible for the management and operation of Valhalla Community School. The duties of the Principal shall be as provided by the School Act or as required by the Charter Board. The Secretary Treasurer, the Transportation Director and the Principal report directly to the Superintendent.

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers

Teachers are responsible for instructing the students in accordance with the School Act as well as the Charter, including working in close concert with parents as the primary educators of their children. Outlined as one of the VSF's basic philosophies, is the recognition of the importance of providing support to its educators. By providing the training and tools necessary to teach well and in a manner aligned to the school's primary goals, the Foundation intends to transfer a direct and positive impact on its students. As a result, the Valhalla School Foundation sets the availability of training opportunities for both teaching methods and resources as a priority when selecting resources and developing programs. Being located in Northern Alberta means there are added travel and financial considerations, yet the VSF commits to working creatively with its teaching staff to ensure excellent training and resources are provided whenever it is deemed necessary. When recruiting staff we will make every effort to attract the most qualified people for the available positions including provincial posting of teaching positions.

Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

The Valhalla Community School recognizes parent involvement as of prime importance to student success. Parents or legal guardians will make up the majority of the members of the Society, and will be active as Directors of the Charter Board according to the Bylaws, as well as members of School Council. The School Council is a key vehicle for parent involvement and operates in an advisory role to the Board and the Administration in accordance with the School Councils Regulation 113/2007. Parents will be expected to support the goals, philosophy and staff of the VCS, including the timely payment of school fees as required, providing support with homework, and volunteering. Parents will promptly raise concerns with the appropriate staff and work constructively towards solutions to those concerns. Parents and guardians are responsible for making decisions regarding their children's education and fostering a positive attitude toward learning. By being actively involved in their school, parents support their children in achieving their full educational potential

Appendix VI

Communication Plan

It is the responsibility of the charter board to ensure that the school's effective practices and innovative approaches are communicated to stakeholders in order that Alberta's entire education system can benefit from its experience. Stakeholders include the Minister of Education, parents, staff, other educators, sponsors, and the general public. Communication strategies include publishing relevant documents on the school's website and the use of the school's newsletters, advertisements and feature stories in local newspapers. Access to the Three-year

Education plan and the Annual Education Results Report will be available in print and on the school's website. School Council will be informed specifically by disseminating information during their meetings. Details of the Communication Plan will be adjusted and provided annually in the Annual Education Plan provided to Alberta Education.

Appendix VII

Amendment and Dissolution of the Charter

Amending the Charter

Issues that could affect the ability of the school to provide effective education or that could enhance program delivery to its students may result in the amendment of the Charter. Any amendment to the Charter shall be done in accordance with the School Act and the Valhalla Community School Bylaws, and is subject to the approval of the Minister of Education.

Charter Dissolution Process

Should the Board or the Minister of Education decide to dissolve the charter, then the Charter Board will call a special meeting (the "dissolution meeting") of the Charter Board to determine the effective date of dissolution and to begin planning the dissolution process.

1. Within two (2) weeks of its decision, the Charter Board shall, in accordance with relevant legislation, give written notice to all stakeholders of the decision to dissolve the Charter. Stakeholders include the Minister of Education, the Society members, the Principal, teachers and other employees of the Charter Board, and the parents and students. Notice of dissolution shall provide the reasons for, the effective date of, and the proposed plan for dissolution. The dissolution process shall begin immediately following the dissolution meeting and shall be carried out by the Charter Board. The Charter Board shall use its best efforts to meet financial and other obligations of the school throughout the dissolution process.
2. After providing notice to stakeholders as provided above, the Charter Board shall proceed to:
 - i. provide notice pursuant to any rental agreements for buildings, land, property or facilities;
 - ii. determine a value for any owned buildings, land, property, facilities or other assets;
 - iii. liquidate any owned assets either by public auction or private sale;
 - iv. discharge the liabilities of the school;
 - v. provide the Society and the Minister of Education with a full accounting of the finances of the school;
 - vi. return any surplus attributable to provincial funding to the Provincial Treasurer; and
 - vii. turn over to the Society any residual funds.
3. The Charter Board shall provide each registered student with a transfer of records form to be completed with information regarding the school to which records are to be transferred. Within seven (7) days of receipt of the completed transfer form, the Charter Board shall ensure that the student's records are forwarded according to instructions on the form. The Charter Board shall remain responsible for the transfer of a student's records for a period of three (3) months from the date it provided the transfer form, thereafter, any remaining student records shall be forwarded to the Minister of Education. School records will be forwarded to the Minister of Education.

Appendix VIII

Valhalla School Foundation Bylaws

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Article 1: Name and Location

Section 1: Name

The name of the Society shall be the Valhalla School Foundation, and will be referred to in these bylaws by the acronym VSF.

The name of the School shall be the Valhalla Community School, and will be referred to in these bylaws by the acronym VCS.

Section 2: Location

The VSF and the VCS shall be located in the Hamlet of Valhalla Centre, Alberta.

Article 2: Membership

Section 1: General Conditions

Subject to these bylaws, membership is open to persons eighteen years of age or older who want to advance the objects for which the society was formed.

Section 2: No persons shall be members of the Society unless they are:

- a) parents or guardians of a child registered in the school, herein called a Parent Member, or
- b) community members who have signed a Declaration of Understanding, herein called a Community Member

Section 3: Commencement of Membership

Membership in the Society commences automatically effective as of:

- a) For Parent Members, the date of registration of their child in the School;
- b) For Community Members, the date of receipt of the signed Declaration of Understanding by the Secretary.

Section 4: Termination of Membership

Membership in the Society ceases automatically when:

- a) a Parent Member no longer has a child registered in the School;
- b) a Community Member has resigned their membership by written notice to the Secretary.

Section 5: Termination of Membership for Cause:

Any member, who demonstrates behavior that detrimentally impacts the objectives of the Society (as expressed in the Charter), may be required to resign by a simple majority vote of the Directors at a Board meeting.

Section 6: Duties of Society Members

Each Member of the Society shall promote the objectives of the Society and shall conform to all rules and regulations of the Society whether expressed in these bylaws, the *School Act*, the Charter or which otherwise may have been, or may be, from time to time adopted by the Society.

Section 7: Rights and Privileges of Members

Any Member in good standing is entitled to:

- a) attend any general or special meeting; and
- b) be eligible to vote at meetings of the general membership.

Section 8: Annual General Meetings

- a) The annual general meeting shall be held on or before the 31st of March of each year, at such time and place as may be determined by the Board
- b) At every annual meeting, in addition to any other business that may be transacted, the report of the Board, financial statement, and the report of the auditors shall be presented.
- c) Notice of the annual meeting shall be made in writing or via electronic mail at least 21 days before the date of the annual meeting, and posted on the VCS website.
- d) The members present at an annual general meeting will have one vote per member.

Article 3: Board of Directors

Section 1: Number

The Board of Directors shall consist of seven persons, and may consist of both parent/guardian members and community members. The VSF shall strive to include a majority of parent and/or guardian members.

Section 2: Qualifications

- a) Charter Board Directors (hereafter referred to as "Directors") must be
 - i) 18 years of age or older
 - ii) Parents or Guardians of children attending VCS, or
 - iii) Community Members (in accordance with Article 2, Section 2b)
- b) Staff currently employed by VCS may not be a Director

Section 3: Term

Directors shall be elected for three year terms. Terms shall be staggered so that no more than one third (1/3) of the Board shall be up for election in any year, unless a vacancy(ies) needs to be filled.

Section 4: Term Limits

Directors shall be limited to 3 consecutive 3 year terms. Previous Directors who have not served 3 consecutive 3 years terms shall be eligible to become Directors again at any time. Previous Directors who have served 3 consecutive 3 year terms shall be re-eligible for membership after a lapse of 1 (one) year.

Section 5: Powers and Accountabilities of Directors

- a) The Board of Directors shall have all powers and authority, as designated in the Charter, for the management of the business, property, and affairs of the VCS, to do such lawful acts as it deems proper and appropriate to promote the objectives and purposes of the VCS.

- b) The Board of Directors may, by general resolution, assign to committees, the task of obtaining information pertinent to a specific topic for the board to review.
- c) Directors shall be guided by the Vision, Mission, Values and Beliefs of the Charter.
- d) Directors are expected to attend all Board meetings. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Board to communicate with any Director after such Director's three unexcused, consecutive absences to ascertain the Director's interest in retaining Board membership.
- e) The Board is accountable to the Minister of Education to ensure that VCS operates in accordance with the applicable provisions of the School Act.
- f) The Board is accountable to ensure students are learning in accordance with the School Act and Charter goals and objectives.

Section 6: Director Conflict of Interest

- a) Any Director or committee member having an interest in a contract, other transaction or program presented to or discussed by the Board or Board Committee for authorization, approval, or ratification shall make a prompt, full and frank disclosure of his or her interest to the Board or committee prior to its acting on such contract or transaction. Such disclosure shall include all relevant and material facts known to such person about the contract or transaction which might reasonably be construed to be adverse to the society's interest. The body to which such disclosure is made shall thereupon determine, by majority vote, whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is deemed to exist, such person shall not vote on, nor use his or her personal influence on, nor be present during the discussion or deliberations with respect to, such contract or transaction (other than to present factual information or to respond to questions prior to the discussion). The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon and, where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation.
- b) The Board may adopt conflict of interest policies requiring:
 1. Regular annual statements from Directors to disclose existing and potential conflict in interest; and,
 2. Corrective and disciplinary actions with respect to transgressions of such policies.
- c) For the purpose of this section, a person shall be deemed to have an "interest" in a contract or other transaction if he or she is the party (or one of the parties) contracting or dealing with the society, or is a director, trustee or officer of, or has a significant financial or influential interest in the entity contracting or dealing with the society.

Section 7: Election

Directors shall be elected by the eligible members of the school community at an election held each year at the annual meeting. The positions of those Directors whose terms have expired shall be open to be filled by those eligible to vote. Elections shall be conducted using secret ballots. Members shall be required to sign a Roster confirming their eligibility to vote. The members present at an annual meeting will have one vote per member per available position. Proxy voting is prohibited. Votes shall be tallied and announced at the meeting where the vote takes place. A group of volunteers, no less than three nor more than five people, made up of eligible members, but not those up for election, shall tally the votes. In the event of a tie vote for a position, a second ballot will be cast for the position only, with only the tied candidates participating on the ballot. Should a second tie vote occur, a result shall be obtained by flipping a coin with the person whose surname is earliest in the alphabet calling a coin side first. Newly elected Directors shall assume office at the first Board of Directors meeting following their election.

Section 8: Resignation, Disqualification and Termination of a Charter Board Director

- a) A Director may resign from the Charter Board by giving one (1) month's notice in writing to the Chairperson (or to the Vice-Chairperson in the case of resignation of the Chairperson). Such resignation shall take effect at the end of the month's notice, or on the date the Charter Board accepts the resignation, whichever is the earlier.
- b) A Director may be disqualified and removed for cause outlined below, at a meeting of Directors by an affirmative vote of two thirds of the remaining Board of Directors. Directors being considered for disqualification shall receive at least two weeks' notice of such proposed action and shall be given the opportunity to address the Board regarding such action prior to any vote on such removal. A Director may be removed if that person:
 - i. Dies;
 - ii. Tenders his or her resignation in writing;
 - iii. Is an auditor or employee of the Board;
 - iv. Uses information gained through a person's position as a Director to gain a pecuniary benefit in respect of any matter in which the person has a pecuniary interest;
 - v. Absents his or herself, without being authorized by a resolution of the Board to do so, from three consecutive meetings of the Board unless the person's absence is due to illness;
 - vi. Is convicted of an indictable offence for which a pardon has not been granted.
- c) In addition to the provisions contained in the School Act, a Charter Board Director may be terminated as Director from the Charter Board, for cause outlined below, by a 75% majority vote at a special meeting of the Charter Board called for such a purpose. Directors being considered for termination shall receive at least two weeks' notice of such proposed action and shall be given the opportunity to address the Board regarding such action prior to any vote on such removal. A Director may be removed under this clause if that person:
 - i. Has failed to carry out the duties of their position as outlined in the *School Act*, the *Societies Act*, or the Charter or these bylaws;
 - ii. Has interfered with the function of the other Charter Board members or an employee of the School in the performance of their duties;
 - iii. Has willfully acted to contravene the Charter, the objectives of the Society or these bylaws.

Section 9: Quorum

A majority of the full number of Directors, in person, shall constitute a quorum of the Board for the transaction of business at a regularly scheduled meeting. When a quorum is present, a majority of the Directors present may take any action on behalf of the Board. Every act of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present shall be regarded as the act of the Board of Directors

Section 10: Vacancies

A vacancy on the Board of Directors, may be temporarily filled by a majority vote of the remaining Directors to elect a person(s) to fill the vacancy(ies) until the next annual meeting of the Board, at which time Directors so elected must be re-elected as specified in the Bylaws.

Section 11: Compensation

Directors receive no payment for their services. With board approval, Directors may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred on approved board business. Directors must present receipts for all such expenses, which shall be for the Director only, and shall be itemized and documented. Such expenses must be approved by a motion of the Board at the meeting immediately following the expenditure(s).

Article 4: Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings:

- a) The Board may hold as many meetings as it considers necessary to deal adequately with its business.
- b) The resolution of the Board establishing the regular meetings of the Board shall state the date, time and place of the regular meetings. This resolution will be made at the first Board meeting of the new school

- year.
- c) The Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer must attend all Board meetings unless they are unavailable and have made provisions for such. The Principal and other administrative staff may be in attendance at the Board meetings.
 - d) No act or proceeding of the Board is binding unless it is adopted at a meeting at which a quorum of the Board is present.
 - e) All Directors present at a meeting of the Board shall have a single vote on each motion presented before them. In the event of a tie the motion shall be deemed lost.
 - f) At all regular Board meetings, every question will be determined by an Ordinary Resolution by show of hands, unless the Directors present resolve that a particular vote will be by secret ballot.
 - g) An agenda for the regular meetings shall be available twenty-four hours before the meeting, and will be emailed to the Directors.
 - h) The minutes of all meetings shall be adopted at the beginning of the following meeting and signed by the Secretary and Chair of the meeting.
 - i) All regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be Open Public Meetings, but not public forums. Adequate notice of all meetings shall be visibly posted and provided to the school newsletter not less than forty-eight (48) hours before any such meeting.

Section 2: Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Directors for any purpose or purposes may be called at any time by the Chair or by a petition signed by a majority of the full Board of Directors. Such meetings may be held on short notice if notification to all Directors is given personally or by telephone, or with 4 days notice if given by electronic mail, or phone messages. Such notices shall specify time and place of the meeting.

Section 3: In Camera Meetings

- a) In camera meetings may only be called by resolution of the Board.
- b) In camera meetings shall be called to discuss:
 - i) complaints about a child;
 - ii) complaints about a teacher or staff member;
 - iii) other personnel issues;
 - iv) matters regarding security of the Board's property;
 - v) financial issues and contract information.
- c) During an in camera meeting the Board shall only discuss the matter which qualifies as an in-camera matter.
- d) Board members and other persons attending the In camera meeting are not to disclose the details of the discussion. It is the responsibility of the Chair or Vice Chair to update those Directors who are absent.
- e) No resolutions may be passed at an in-camera meeting. Any decisions made during in camera meetings must be ratified during a regular board meeting.

Article 5: Establishment of Committees

Section 1:

The Board of Directors may appoint such standing committees and or ad hoc committees as it thinks necessary for the effective governing of the school.

Section 2: Standing Committees:

Each standing committee shall have a charge specific to its permitted activities and such charges shall be incorporated into the charter school policy manual. The function of any committee so established shall be fact-finding, deliberative, and advisory to the Board of Directors. Committees shall not have authority to take legislative or administrative actions, nor to adopt policies for the school. Standing committees shall be made up of no more than two less than a quorum of the Board of Trustees. The chair may be an ex officio member of each committee.

The Superintendent of the Charter school may be an ex officio member of each committee, except where his or her evaluation, tenure, or salary is to be deliberated. Standing committees shall be created, combined or eliminated by majority board decision.

3: Ad Hoc Committees:

Each ad hoc committee shall have a charge specific to its permitted activities and that charge shall include the date on which the committee is to present its final report to the Board of Directors and be dissolved. Members of ad hoc committees shall be drawn from those parents and staff of the school community who indicate interest in serving on the ad hoc committee and from such others as may be deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.

Article 6: Officers of the Board

Section 1: Officers of the Board

- a) Officers shall be elected by the Board from among the elected Directors at the first meeting following the annual meeting. Officer positions shall include the Chair and Vice-Chair, or alternatively Co-Chairs, as the Board may determine, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- b) Each Officer will be and remain during his or her term a Director in good standing and will take office at the first meeting of the Board after the annual meeting, or in the case of an appointment, at the meeting at which they were appointed
- c) The term of office of each Officer will commence immediately after the election or appointment and will continue until the earlier of the following
 - i) the Officer's resignation;
 - ii) the Officer's disqualification to hold office, or
 - iii) the first meeting of the Board after the annual meeting wherein it appoints new Officers

Section 2: Chair

The Chair shall:

- a) be responsible for calling and, when present, preside at all meetings of the Board.
- b) prepare the meeting agendas in consultation with the Superintendent;
- c) inform and work with the Superintendent and Principal of the School in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the Directors, these Bylaws and the School Act.

Section 3: Vice Chair

The Vice-Chair shall:

- a) in absence of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair and shall perform such other duties as may be required by the Board.
- b) If the Board elects to have Co-Chairs, there shall be no Vice-Chair position.

Section 4: Co-Chairs

If the Board elects to have Co-Chairs, the duties and responsibilities of the Chair will be taken by either or both of the Co-Chairs.

Section 5: Secretary

The Secretary will:

- a) ensure that minutes are taken at all regular, special, and annual meetings and keep these minutes;
- b) assist the Chair in such other matters as the Chair may require; and
- c) perform any and all other duties as otherwise set out in the VCS policies

Section 6: Treasurer

The Treasurer will:

- a) be responsible for the maintenance of all required books of account and financial records of the Society;
- b) be responsible for the coordination of the preparation of the annual audit and year-end financial statements;
- c) establish and maintain adequate systems for the control of all expenditures;
- d) establish and maintain adequate systems to ensure that all funds of the VCS are properly received, adequately protected, and properly deposited and accounted for in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures; and
- e) perform any and all other duties as otherwise set out in the VCS policies

Section 7: Directors

The Directors shall attend all regular, special, and annual meetings and perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chair(s) or Vice-Chair. This will include chairing various ad hoc committees occasionally.

Article 7: Execution of Documents

1: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the VCS shall be from September 1st to August 31st.

2: Cheque Signing

- a) Contracts, documents, or any instruments in writing requiring the signature of the Board shall be signed by the Chair or the Vice-Chair or other Director appointed by the Board as having signing authority for such documents
- b) All cheques in excess of \$15,000 shall require two signatures, one of which shall be the Chair or Vice-Chair.

3: Auditor

The Board shall appoint an auditor to audit the accounts. The Auditor will be appointed at the annual meeting. The remuneration of the auditor shall be fixed by the Board. No Society member or Staff member may be allowed to do the audit.

Article 8: Amendments to Bylaws

The Board of Directors shall have the power to make, amend, or repeal the Bylaws of the VCS, either in whole or in part. The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors or any special meeting called for that purpose. Any change shall require the approval by 2/3rds vote of the full Board of Directors, and the approval of the Minister of Education.

Article 9: Dissolution

1: Voluntary Dissolution

Should the VCS choose to dissolve for reasons other than the revocation of its charter or financial insolvency, all assets of the charter school, after satisfaction of all outstanding claims by creditors and governmental grantors, will be distributed to Valhalla community organizations, as determined by a vote of the Board and pending the approval of the Minister of Education.

Section 2: Revocation of Charter

If at any time and for any reason, the VCS charter is revoked or the VCS becomes insolvent, the Charter

Dissolution Process will begin as outlined in the VCS Charter document.

Article 10: Additional Provisions

1: Indemnification of Officers and Directors

The VCS Directors shall not be personally liable to the VCS for damages for breach of any duty owed to the VCS, its beneficiaries, or its Board of Directors except that nothing contained herein shall relieve a director or officer from liability for breach of a duty based on an act of omission:

- a) in breach of such person's duty of loyalty to the VCS;
- b) not in good faith or involving a knowing violation of law; or
- c) resulting in receipt of an improper personal benefit.

Section 2: Insurance

The Board of Directors shall provide for the liability and other forms of insurance in compliance with all requirements in s.60(1) of the *School Act* and considered to be necessary and prudent as protection against possible claims.

Section 3: Audit

At the close of each fiscal year, the accounts of the Society shall be audited by an independent auditor appointed for that purpose at the Annual General Meeting. A complete and proper statement of the standing of the books for the previous year will be submitted by such Auditor at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. The remuneration of the auditor will be fixed by the Board. The auditor may not be one of the Board of Directors or Staff.