



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

What’s Special about View Ridge—The Highlights

We focus on developing the whole child through core instruction, arts, music, enrichment activities, and student leadership programs. Every student has the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through student leadership teams, safety patrol, green team, kindergarten escorts, and class jobs. Our Advanced Learning program serves students determined academically gifted according to district standards, offering a rigorous curriculum at an accelerated pace. We serve many students with special needs at View Ridge, including special medical needs. With a nurse, counselor, school psychologist, occupational, physical and speech therapists, resource room, and Learning Assistance Program, View Ridge has many resources available for students and families. View Ridge is an inclusive community composed of many kinds of learners. Our inclusive FOCUS Special Needs Program serves children from kindergarten through fifth grade, providing intensive services to meet each student’s needs.

Our classrooms often include a wide range of student abilities, and our teachers have received numerous trainings on the concept of “differentiated instruction” which is a teaching theory based on the premise that teaching approaches should vary and should be geared toward diverse students and learning styles. Teachers use a blend of whole-class, group and individual instruction in View Ridge classrooms.

FAQs:

How do I enroll my child in Seattle Public Schools?

- Kindergarten students are assigned to their neighborhood Attendance Area school under the Student Assignment Plan. Visit the SPS website and click on School Finder under the Enroll tab on the district home page (about a third way down the page at www.seattleschools.org) to access the Address Look-Up tool to determine your child’s attendance area school.
- Open enrollment for Fall 2021 is January 4th to 16th online and at enrollment centers; results are mailed in mid-late April.
- Keep redirecting people to Admissions since the rules can be complicated and are not our area of expertise.
- More info on the Enroll page at www.seattleschools.org.

What is ‘Pay for K?’

- State has historically funded a half day program. We run a full day K program paid in full by the state.
- There is now WaKIDS program that allows SPS to have full-day K throughout the district. One aspect of the program provides K teachers time to conference with families sometime during the first 3 days of school so K students don’t start attending school until the 4th day after school has started for 1st – 5th grades (this is typically the first Monday after school has started for all other students).
- Families should arrange for childcare during the first 3 days of school (typically the first Wednesday through Friday after Labor Day).



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

What's special about Kindergarten at View Ridge? (K teachers- Theresa Lourde, Christine Caruso, Jackie Flaherty; Ben Fitch instructs students with special needs)

- Each Kindergartner has an older buddy from upper grades to meet with for special projects. Kindergartners have their own playground to assist in adjusting to school, sit together at lunch with other Kindergartners, take field trips together, etc.
- **(FOR IN PERSON TOUR)** Our community has chosen not to break instruction; this means you will get to see how the teacher interacts with the class, and students will be minimally disrupted because the teacher will continue to focus on them.
- **(FOR IN PERSON TOUR)** Please observe respectfully and then talk in the hall.

Where do children go for recess? 3 Playgrounds, recess is monitored

- Two recesses (morning and afternoon) are 15 minutes each. Lunch recess is 20 minutes.
- K exclusive playground adjacent to their classrooms (3 supervised recesses/daily)
- Middle playground = 1st, 2nd, 3rd grades
- 4th and 5th grade playground
- Rainy day recess rotates covered playgrounds outside/indoor activities

When do Kindergartners eat lunch? Use the restroom?

- K has lunch at 10:20am; parent volunteers help open juice boxes/open containers etc.
- Our vice principal and principal supervise lunch most days, building a rapport with children and getting to know them.
- K and all students may use restroom at any time on request; teachers take whole class before lunch and often at recess time. There is a designated restroom in the K hallway for kinders to use, also at the end K hall, in the lunchroom, and by the intermediate grades.

What kinds of Special Education Services/Programs currently exist at View Ridge?

- We currently have 2 FOCUS classes accommodating students with special needs ranging from K to grade 5
- Resource room support
- Occupational (handwriting) /physical/speech therapists
- School psychologist
- School counselor
- We have an ELL *teacher* who works with children for whom English is not their first or primary language.
- We have a reading interventionist. It is their job to help students become confident and competent readers and writers while making it fun! They utilize the multisensory Wired For Reading program in her work. They also serve as a resource for parents and teachers on questions related to dyslexia.
- School-based SLPs work with children who have communication challenges that affect their success in classroom activities, social interactions, literacy, and/or learning. Many



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

of our students receive services of one kind or another, ranging from self-contained to OT/PT to nurse support. We assist students with IEP's for pragmatic disorders/social language, receptive and expressive language, fluency/stuttering, articulation/phonological disorders, and voice disorders.

Does View Ridge have a school counselor?

School Counselor: Joyce Cho

About Your Counselor

My name is Joyce Cho and I am very excited to be here at View Ridge as the school counselor. This will be my second year working at this amazing school and community. I have a big heart and passion for serving the youth and am willing to go to bat for our students. Although we have been unable to meet physically, I am still available virtually to meet and tend to the students and families of View Ridge. I cannot wait until we can all meet again soon.

Below are the services that I would have offered in person. However, due to COVID-19, if you would like additional support virtually please do not hesitate to reach out at jecho@seattleschools.org. I am available for virtual sessions as well as groups. Thank you!

Counseling Services for Students and Families

- **Small groups**– These groups tend to have 4-6 students and last from 6 weeks to the whole year, depending on need. These groups are mostly educational in focus and include role plays, games, and other learning activities. Here are some topics that are covered:
 - Friendship skills- making, keeping, and resolving challenges with friends
 - Emotional regulation- recognizing feelings, understanding where they come from, labeling feelings, expressing appropriately, and regulating. Groups can focus on challenging feelings like anger, sadness, and anxiety, and can also address attention impulse control challenges
 - Grief/loss/trauma- Because confidentiality cannot be guaranteed amongst the students, group conversations tend to be more general, with students being given the opportunity to process through writing exercises.
- **Guidance lessons**– Classroom lessons focus on various topics, including emotional regulation, bullying, and friendships
- **1:1 support**– Because of the large number of students, school counselors are unable to provide regular, intensive therapy to individual students. I can meet with individual students for sessions, provide referrals as needed, and work with our staff to collaborate with outside providers.
- **Family support**– Nurse Pamela Altman and I work with families to help them find needed support, including medical/mental health providers, food, and clothing. We can help provide referrals for other needed services.
- **Responsive services**– My first responsibility is to provide immediate support for students and families during times of crisis.



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

How Students Are Referred

- Students may be referred for counseling services by teachers, parents, or administrators. They may also self-refer. It is View Ridge’s policy that regular participation in counseling services (not including guidance lessons) requires parent permission.

I look forward to working with View Ridge families!

What is Advanced Learning at View Ridge?

- Students participate in a district assessment to determine their eligibility as: Academically Highly Gifted (eligible to enroll in Highly Capable, formerly the Accelerated Progress Program); or Academically Gifted (eligible to enroll in Advanced Learning/Spectrum). Students are nominated by parents or teachers in early fall; assessments are administered in late fall/winter.
- Grades 1-5 advanced curriculum is offered in class with all learners; currently Walk to Math groups students of like abilities for math instruction. Teachers are trained to meet/challenge each student at their level, regardless of classroom configuration.
- We use a literacy curriculum that allows every student to read at their own level. This way you are not restricted to reading only at your grade level but rather you read at your level, even if it’s well-above grade level.

How is Science taught at View Ridge?

- Classroom teachers address the Washington State Science Standards through inquiry-and materials-based instruction. Our curricula include:
- The district adopted curriculum, consisting of life, earth/space, and physical science units at each grade level (three per grade level)
- New “launch” units (one or two per grade level) offered by the district to address scientific practices on explaining natural phenomena and developing models

What about Computers and Technology at View Ridge?

VRE currently does not have a designated technology teacher however students have access to:

- Multiple desktop computers in each classroom
- Laptop carts available for class projects
- ipad cart available for class projects
- Instructional resources include:
- Typing Agent (grades 1-5)
- Office 365 online account access (grades 3-5)
- Microsoft Office programs available (grades K-5), including Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Sway
- Schoology (grade 5)

What about literacy and View Ridge’s Library program?

Librarian: Amy Young

View Ridge teachers, staff, and families find many ways to encourage literacy. Our librarian, Amy Young, promotes the Global Reading Challenge program, brings in guest authors and



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

illustrators for readings, and offers students weekly interactive library visits. Ms. Young engages beginning and experienced readers alike by reviewing and highlighting new books as well as well-loved classics, working with students to find books that appeal to each child's individual taste, teaching students fresh research and information skills, and daily providing an open library during recess to grades 1-5. With middle school teaching as well as elementary experience, Ms. Young encourages connections between grade levels. Highlights:
"I want kids to LOVE books and enjoy listening to them"

- K learns different sections of the library (fiction, non-fiction, biographies, reference, periodicals)
- All grades learn about authors and illustrators, different parts of books, book awards, study of various cultures through literature (social studies)
- Author visits, open to school community (younger siblings, parents)
- Learn information literacy skills-how to find and use information

How is Music taught at View Ridge?

Music Teacher: Brian Goetz

Each View Ridge student in grades 1-5 attends general music class weekly. Kindergarten students get to enjoy 2 days of music class each week. Fourth and fifth grade students who choose to play a musical instrument receive weekly group lessons as a class that is designated by specific instrument (students rent their own instruments, and financial assistance is available if needed). The vast majority of our fourth and fifth graders play an instrument. View Ridge is fortunate to offer both Orchestra and Band. Our Winter and Spring concerts are major school events.

General Music classes-grades K-5 - singing, music notation, songwriting, music technology
Instrumental instruction (band and strings) for 4th and 5th grade

What about Art at View Ridge?

Art Teacher: Liz Haven

Ms. Haven brings the challenge of creativity into every project. She strives to develop a variety of skills, techniques and material understanding at each grade level. Cultural, historical and integrated classroom subjects are a favorite. Pinwheels for Peace started out this View Ridge year with a school wide discussion of how peace could be represented in an Art Installation. Visual art is in Ms. Haven's art classroom but also flows in and out of the classrooms and hallways of View Ridge School.

Students have art at least once a week for 35 minutes in the art room.

Objectives:

- Experience Visual Art through a project-based class.
- Learn different art techniques through drawing, painting, printmaking, collage and three-dimensional mediums such as clay.
- Develop creative thinking skills, problem solving skills and self-esteem.



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

- Develop collaboration skills
- Gain appreciation for artists and cultures throughout history.
- Recognize and describe the Elements of Art; Line Shape, Form, Space, Color, Value, and Texture.
- Develop understanding of the Principles of Design; Pattern, Balance, Harmony, Unity, Contrast, Emphasis, Variety, Diversity, and Movement
- Develop new insights into Core Classroom subjects through integrated projects. (NW Coast Native American Art, Asian Art, Rainforest illustrations, Math terms and Geometric art, Snowflake art/science/math, social awareness Pinwheels for Peace)
- In April View Ridge will have a Art Walk which will highlight all of the student artwork throughout the year.
- Visual Arts at View Ridge are supported and are an integral part of student's lives.

What about P.E. at View Ridge?

P.E. Teacher: Jennifer Shaw

- Currently grades K-2 have PE once a week, grades 3-5 twice a week.
- Some PE activities are Rock Climbing, Bicycling, Tennis, Jumping Rope, Health & Fitness Activities, Circus Sports, Heart Adventure Challenge Course, Unicycles, Razor Scooters.
- Opportunities for extracurricular involvement: Walk & Bike to School, Seattle Kids Marathon, & After School Activity Classes.
- Annual Field Day for all students K-5.
- A Success-Oriented Physical Education program with an emphasis on cooperation, lifetime fitness, and motor skill development through movement experiences. Developmentally appropriate, student-centered, inclusive and focuses on presenting a variety of movement options.

(IN BUILDING TOUR) Can we see classrooms in grades other than Kindergarten?

- Take tours to any class; depending on the day, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades may be at PCP starting at 8:40 so rooms may be empty
- Remind them to silence their phones, and that there is no picture-taking allowed.
- Highlight art, research, and other projects in classrooms and in hallways

What are VR policies on visitors and volunteering?

- Visitor's policy: doors are locked 10 min. after school starts; enter by office and sign-in
- All classroom visits pre-arranged, parent volunteers WELCOME.
- If you enroll at VR, please park so that neighbors are not disturbed or inconvenienced. Due to congestion, we recommend walking / carpooling.

What are the options for before/after school childcare?

- Wallingford Boys and Girls Club chapter in adjacent church basement
- YMCA satellite location at Magnuson (bottom of the hill)-bus transportation provided from VRE.



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

What types of after school activities exist for students?

*** Conditional upon parent volunteer interest/availability—may not be available every year – as the afterschool enrichment classes are coordinated by the PTA.

- Chess Club
- After-school sports
- Drama
- Yoga
- Arts and craft classes
- Computer coding
- Sewing
- Cooking

Special Events/Programs-

- Classrooms are paired with another class at a different grade, and enjoy special “Buddy” activities together
- Open House / Ice Cream Social, Arts Night, Science Night
- Fall and Spring Picnics, Boo Ridge Carnival, Family Dance
- Pancake Breakfast and Pre-Loved Book Sale
- Enrichment events (assemblies) like Lunar New Year, Veterans Day, Martin Luther King, Jr.



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

Safety and Security at View Ridge

The safety of our students, staff and families is one of our most important jobs here at View Ridge. We are constantly updating and revising our safety procedures. We follow the SPS schedule of practice fire/earthquake/lockdown drills and we are always looking at new ways that we can improve. Because of the strange shape of our building, (it's like a giant letter "F") we have many entrances, and because we have portables, we need to allow access for kids who need to use restrooms. So, our safety protocols are always evolving.

- SPS recently has installed security cameras for us on several entrances and installed locks with a buzz-in system which is operated by staff at the front desk.
- During emergencies, our paramount duty is to keep the students safe. One way of keeping students safe is to practice drills throughout the year. This helps alleviate some of the anxiety around safety drills and helps prepares students and staff.
- View Ridge Elementary conducts the following 5 drills throughout the school year:
- Shelter-in-place– Shelter-in-Place is the process of keeping students and staff safe from dangers *outside* of the school building.
- Lockdown– A Lockdown is the process of protecting students and staff from dangers that are either *outside* or *inside* the building.
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Reverse Evacuation – A Reverse Evacuation is the process of moving students/staff indoors quickly.

Each drill we conduct is documented with the date, time, and type of drill. We keep documentation of each drill on the bulletin board in the office.

We also secure the doors during school hours with two camera-monitored entry points on the north and south sides of our building. This way, families have 2 points of access during school hours and we can monitor who enters our building.

Safety is our paramount duty here at VRE so if you ever have any safety concerns, please contact our principal, Mr. Roos.

COVID Related Health and Safety Changes:

- As this is a constantly changing world, we will not know exactly what our fall will look like in terms of the recommended requirements for social distancing and masks. We will likely have more information as our current Kinder and 1st graders come back to in building learning starting March 1.
- While we are not sure if your child will be required to wear a mask in the fall, it would be wise to have your child practice wearing a mask over the summer in preparation. During the school year the mask mandates may change, so we appreciate your flexibility and patience as we figure this out together.
- VR was audited by facilities district office to ensure proper space between student desks and space from teacher's desks. They also moved furniture around to make sure that hallways provide enough space with students walking down them. A new hand washing



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

station was also added in the hallway outside the lunchroom. There are also decals/stickers on floors to remind students to keep their distance from each other.

- Teachers routinely have their students wash or sanitize their hands upon entry to the classroom and before meals. There is no reason for those routines to change.
- As requirements come in, some parts of the schedule may need to be adjusted (e.g. lunch time in the classroom rather than the lunch room; recess with only your classroom to minimize cross over, etc.). Please be patient as we figure these out together.
- There are many required vaccines for enrollment in Seattle Public Schools. The COVID-19 Vaccine is not currently a requirement for students or staff; these guidelines will likely change. This is also true for parent volunteers.
- We will try to keep both the school and PTA websites up to date with information regarding fall requirements.

View Ridge Process for Student Releases

Regular student release:

Please sign your child out in the office. Office staff will contact the appropriate teacher, and your child will meet you in the office.

Mass release within the school building:

If there is a situation where the whole school will be released early, and the building is safe to remain within, the office will likely be overwhelmed with parents signing out their student/s. In this case, go to your child/s classroom, show photo ID, and sign the teachers school release form.

Mass release outside the school building:

Please refer to the directions on the other side of this page. Consider keeping a copy of this in your vehicle. This information is also available on our website at <https://viewridgees.seattleschools.org/about/safety>



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

What about PTA fundraising—what does that mean?

Each year, our strong and active PTA helps support many community builders, enrichment, school support and student learning at View Ridge. We have one fundraiser which is our annual appeal called the Otter Fund which happens in the fall.

Parents, grandparents, and teachers contribute to the PTA and Classroom Success Fund that directly supports classrooms at VR. By adding funds to our school's budget, we have helped support *approx. 2.6 additional teacher positions over and above what the District provides*. VR has been able to keep budgetary flexibility and continue to offer an enriching learning environment with benefits like Art, Music, Library, and Computers in the classroom.

Classroom Success Fund

- Every year 100% of our community's Otter Fund profits support additional teaching positions at View Ridge
- Direct support for classrooms through teacher grants, grade level books, new classroom setup, and Writers in the Schools program
- Contributing to school budget allows flexibility and increased staffing . . .
- Enabling VR to offer art, music, library, and computer in the classrooms
- Over 100 4th and 5th graders are involved in instrumental music
- Our full-time Librarian brings in guest authors, promotes the Global Reading Challenge, assists with research projects, and offers students weekly Library visits.
- Our Visual Arts program offers weekly classes covering a huge variety of techniques and developing skills in Visual Arts.
- PTA Fundraising has helped with computer/tech in the classrooms by helping supply VR ipad & laptop cards, computer stations in class for project-based learning. We've been able to install 8 overhead projectors in various classrooms with these PTA funds.
- SPS continue to experience budget challenges, so WHILE WE CANNOT PROMISE EXACTLY WHAT THINGS WILL LOOK LIKE NEXT YEAR, we do know we have a great team of teachers, families, administration, and wider community, and our children will continue to flourish
- We appreciate the many ways our families are involved in school, from re-shelving library books to fund-raising, and rely upon the help of each family to continue our successful learning environment.

Community Builders PTA Organized & Funding Available

- Open House/Ice Cream Social
- BooRidge Carnival
- Family Dance
- Pancake Breakfast and Pre-Loved Book Sale
- Music Night Out



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

Enrichment PTA Organized and Funding Available

- Arts Night, Science Night
- Assemblies like Lunar New Year, Veterans Day, Martin Luther King, Jr.
- After School Enrichment Activities *When offered

School Support PTA Organized & Funding Available

- Family and Student Support (grocery gift cards, school supplies, coat drive, Giving Tree)
- HIP (Hunger Intervention Program)
- Camp Orkila – 4th Grade Camp
- Field Day

Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Committee

We are aware of the recent, December 2020, article that was written about a child at our school being held for long periods of time in a district approved outdoor play area. As a community we are saddened by the events and we are starting with acknowledging that harm took place on school grounds. The next step is to mobilize our community in facing the racism, ableism, and bullying that happens at our school and in our community. This has been a year of growth for our community, and we are working hard TO IDENTIFY values and goals that will guide our continued work. While we are creating these, we are opening the topic up to community members, parents, and staff to help in the creation of our guiding principles for tackling racism, ableism, and bullying.

We have a parent led equity committee, the Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Committee. While we are continuing to build our committee's identity and goals for the school year, we do have active members that are passionate about making change at our school and in our community. The committee collaborates closely with the staff led equity committee as well as the PTA to ensure that policies & procedures, event planning & events, and activities are inclusive to our community. Additionally, they advocate for less represented groups and help to bring an equity lens to all things PTA. The DEI committee has also been a safe place for families to contact to get support when faced with discrimination either at school or by the school district. Part of their role is to help families know the process for making reports and who to report to.

Some activities have included organizing a guest speaker around race and parenting for the parent community; monthly community meetings on specific topics related to equity (named "Equi-TEA"); creating informational posters at library check out on a topic related to equity (e.g. Human Rights, Disability Awareness, Native Rights, etc.); collecting and sharing resources and community events related to equity; providing volunteer activities for MLK Jr. Day of Service; and providing virtual family activities to honor Black History Month.

Future plans include community movie watching and discussion; having a speaker for our parent community to discuss racism and issues of equity; increase PTA membership to include under-represented groups; participate in hiring process to ensure that the hiring committee is using an



View Ridge Elementary 2020-2021 – FAQs

equity lens; have advocacy resources available for families in need (e.g. student GENDER identity changes, ELL, SpEd, how to report discrimination or other issues of equity, etc.).