VECHS incoming Freshmen build team skills with sticky spaghetti at orientation

"Friendship is important in the VECHS program because when friends work together ideas flow and we are more creative and willing to work. Friendship cannot be taught, it is something we make ourselves.

Picture of a "Friendship" poster created by freshmen at orientation. 
Right: Freshmen build collaboration skills with sticky spaghetti structures.

Twenty-seven ninth graders attended this year’s three-day Freshman Orientation at Solano Community College’s Vacaville Center on August 6, 7 and 8.

Students were introduced to their teachers, made new friends, and learned a variety of team building skills, including building “sticky spaghetti” -- an activity in which participants attempt to build the highest structure out of raw spaghetti noodles and marshmallows. Participation in the “sticky spaghetti” activity allowed students to acquire collaborative skills and recognize the benefits of working together -- a concept stressed in the VECHS program.

The orientation also provided incoming freshmen with advice on how to be a successful VECHS student. Maintaining an organized binder, taking notes, study buddies, and being prepared for class were some of the strategies presented throughout the three days.

Five of this year’s VECHS sophomores joined the freshmen on Friday answering questions that ranged from “How much homework will we have?” to “What is the best way to earn good grades in college?” Sophomore Konnor Lemay offered his sagely wisdom, telling freshmen that working with other students and getting to know them is one way to succeed in VECHS. Lemay also commented on how VECHS is, in many ways, a “family,” and that working together is the key to success.

Welcome to the 2014-2015 VECHS School Year

A message from our Chief Academic Officer, Mark Frazier

Greetings and welcome to the 2014-15 school year in the Vacaville Early College High School Program (VECHS).

Our faculty is excited about this upcoming year and would like to welcome each of you, whether you are a returning or new student. Your enrollment in this program signifies your commitment to excellence in academic endeavors and a willingness to persevere as you experience a rigorous, college preparatory program. We commend you and will support you as you participate in both high school and college courses.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Solano Community College and improving our program. You are all on the ground floor of this experience, and we are confident that VECHS will be a springboard for further success in the years to come.

Again, welcome to the VECHS family.

New and familiar faces for 2014-2015 VECHS staff

The VECHS program is growing, and so is our staff! Returning this year is our Chief Academic Officer, Mr. Mark Frazier. WCW Principal, Mr. Cliff De Graw is also back with us this year.

Mrs. Elizabeth Urabe returns this year as our ninth grade English teacher and our Counselor. In the history department is Mrs. Kathleen McDermott, also returning for her second year.

Mrs. Adriane Boykin returns this year as our valuable Administrative Assistant. New to the staff this year are two English teachers, Ms. Desiree Nothstine and Ms. Launda Thompson.

Ms. Nothstine teaches our Academic Success classes, and Ms. Thompson teaches our tenth grade English classes.
Student safety is a foremost concern for the administration and staff of VECHS, especially on the college site. During the day, our high school classes are held in the college annex, across from the main campus. The bus drops off students at the annex, and as students walk to the building, they should be aware of traffic in the parking lot. Students taking the City Coach bus after class in the annex need to execute extreme care when crossing the parkway. The preferred procedure is for students to use the crosswalk at the corner, and remain on sidewalks at all times. Whether driving, taking the bus, or walking through the parking lot, VECHS students are encouraged to be cognizant of all vehicles and to demonstrate traffic safety.

VECHS students crossing the parkway after classes at SCC Annex.

**College classes: withdrawals or dropped courses?**

The last day to drop a Solano College class was August 24. Any classes dropped by August 24 will NOT appear on student transcripts. However, students can still drop a class with a “W” (Withdrawal) by October 26. The difference between dropping a class by August 24 and a withdrawal drop by October 26 is that classes dropped by August 24 will not appear on transcripts, while classes dropped after August 24 but before October 26 are permanently recorded on student transcripts as a “W” (withdrawal).

Any class dropped after October 26 are recorded on transcripts as an “F.” Students are encouraged to pay attention to all deadline dates.

**VECHS Regular Day Bell Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7:50-8:45</td>
<td>7:50-8:45</td>
<td>7:50-8:44</td>
<td>7:50-8:45</td>
<td>7:50-8:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8:50-9:45</td>
<td>8:50-9:45</td>
<td>8:49-9:43</td>
<td>8:50-9:45</td>
<td>8:50-9:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Success</td>
<td>11:50-12:15</td>
<td>11:50-12:15</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>11:50-12:15</td>
<td>11:50-12:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Bus to SCC at 12:55</td>
<td>Bus to SCC at 12:12</td>
<td>Bus to SCC at 12:55</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
<td>1:15-3:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bell schedules for Minimum Days, Rally Days, and Final Block Days can be found on the Vacaville Unified School District website.

**Classroom expectations: Solano College procedures apply to VECHS students**

VECHS students are expected to adhere to the same classroom procedures as other Solano Community College students.

Students should arrive in class by the scheduled start time, be seated, have all necessary supplies ready, and be prepared to work when the instructor begins.

Food and beverages should not be consumed in the classroom. Students should make arrangements to finish eating before or after class. Gum is discouraged and, in most classes, prohibited. Electronic devices should only be used at the direction of the instructor. Texting during class is unprofessional and demonstrates a lack of respect. Students should make arrangements to communicate via text at times other than during class hours. Academic language should be used at all times during class.

Students should refrain from side conversations with friends during all classes. Side conversations are disruptive and demonstrate a lack of respect for one’s colleagues, the instructor, and for oneself.

During breaks, students should demonstrate mature and professional behavior by not talking in the hallways. Students should never loiter in the hallways and talk with friends. When talking with friends in the lobby, students should always use quiet voices.

By following a few simple procedures, VECHS students will have a positive experience at Solano College.

**Need to leave class early? What to do for early dismissal**

Students are encouraged to attend all classes at all times. However, it is sometimes necessary to leave class early for illness, medical and/or dental appointments.

Any time students are in a VECHS class on the Solano Community College campus and need to be excused early, a parent/guardian must physically come in to the student’s classroom and sign a form releasing the student.

Parents/guardians cannot just call the student and meet them outside – they must come in to the class, talk with the teacher, and sign the release form. Educational minutes are valuable, and your cooperation in keeping absences to a minimum is appreciated.