

VISTA HIGH SCHOOL
2625 Barnard St., Room VH1
Richmond, CA 94806
Phone (510) 231-1431 FAX (510) 222-8357

The Application Process

Vista High School (VHS) is an alternative education school and the only independent study school in the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD). Being an independent study school, VHS is bound by specific regulations and guidelines from the California Department of Education that are unique to independent study. Students may not automatically transfer to Vista High, but must go through an application process to determine if independent study is indeed an appropriate academic placement. The process begins at the student's school of residence.

First Steps: The Referral

The student and parent/guardian should meet with a counselor from the student's current school of residence and request an Alternative Education Referral (AER) to Vista. The form should be signed by an administrator, the counselor, the student, and the parent/guardian who is requesting the referral. In addition, the parent/guardian should get a copy of the student's current transcript. Those two documents, along with copies of the student's birth certificate, immunization (shot) records, a valid photo ID from the parent/guardian, and proof of residence--a utility bill, rental agreement, or car registration--should be taken to the Vista High School office, room VH1, where the family will be scheduled for an Assessments and Informational Meeting (AIM) date. We do not accept faxed or emailed referral forms.

Next Steps: AIM, Homework, and Application Documents

Both student and parent/guardian must attend the 2.5 hour AIM; the parent/guardian must be there the first hour, the student for the entire 2.5 hours. During the first hour additional documents are completed, a PowerPoint overview of the school is presented, and the AIM homework is reviewed. After the parents/guardians are dismissed, the students remain to take reading and math assessments. The completed and returned homework and all application documents are due the following week for review. Based upon all information (the assessments, homework, transcript, and PowerSchool records), a determination is made as to whether independent study is an appropriate academic placement for the student. Families are contacted by phone in about a week after everything has been turned in. The student who is applying to attend Vista High School should not be dropped from the current school of residence. The student may be dropped after the school has been notified by VHS of acceptance.

English Language Learners

Please note that we can accommodate only ELPAC Levels 3 and 4 accompanied with either Level 3 or 4 ELD.

Special Education Students

The referral process for RSP students is different from the process detailed above. The student's case manager holds an IEP meeting with the program specialist in attendance. If it is determined that independent study would be a good academic option for the student, the program specialist will place the student at Vista if a space is available. The IEP will be updated to reflect the change in placement.