

**SECTION V - INSTRUCTION**  
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**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION  
ARTICLE I**

**POLICY 5-1.1            EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

The chief responsibility of the School Board of the City of Richmond (the School Board) is to provide high quality education for its pupils such that they develop attitudes and acquire skills necessary for lifelong learning, responsible citizenship and participation in a democratic society. Sound educational goals also must provide opportunities for children of all races to associate on equal terms in the public schools, as do children of various religious and national origins.

The purpose of schooling must be to transmit knowledge and to transmit that knowledge into desirable action. This concept emphasizes the fact that the development of rational powers is essential to important educational outcomes, which include vocational competence, strong moral character, deep spiritual values, love of home and country, respect for duly constituted authority, general concern and thoughtful consideration for the welfare and rights of others, willingness to act in the interest of the general welfare, a disciplined approach to the varied responsibilities of life, and a desire to improve in those competencies essential to effective personal and community life.

Therefore, the School Board has adopted a Pupil Progress Policy that addresses, but is not limited to, the following core areas: (1) curricular offerings; (2) early needs assessment; (3) special needs population; (4) accelerated instructional programs; (5) summer school; (6) adult education; (7) standards for promotion; (8) intensive educational assessment; (9) grading policies; (10) learning environment; (11) pupil learning; (12) graduation criteria; (13) attendance policy; (14) homework policy; (15) evaluation of instruction; and (16) increased school involvement.

This policy incorporates standards for accrediting public schools in Virginia, which apply to common division and state expectations for pupil's achievement and progress.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-130-10, et. seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-1.2            INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Generally**

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) is committed to excellence in education, equality of educational opportunity, and the recognition of each pupil's individuality. Because pupils differ in their rate of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth and vary in their needs and abilities, learning opportunities shall be provided that are consistent with personal development and potential.

**Standards of Quality and Objectives**

*Generally*

The School Board shall develop and implement a program of instruction for grades kindergarten through twelve (12) that is aligned with the Standards of Learning and meets or exceeds the requirements

of the Virginia General Assembly and the Virginia Board of Education. The program of instruction shall emphasize:

1. reading;
2. writing;
3. speaking;
4. mathematical concepts and computations;
5. proficiency in the use of computers and related technology;
6. scientific concepts and processes;
7. essential skills and concepts of citizenship, including knowledge of
  - a. Virginia history and World and United States history;
  - b. economics, government,
  - c. foreign language,
  - d. international cultures,
  - e. health and physical education,
  - f. environmental issues and geography necessary for responsible participation in American society and in the international community;
8. fine arts, which may include, but need not be limited to, music, art, and practical arts;
9. knowledge and skills needed to qualify for further education, gainful employment, and/or training in a career or technical field; and
10. development of the ability to apply such skills and knowledge in preparation for eventual employment, lifelong learning, and to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

#### ***Pupils who are Educationally At-Risk***

The division superintendent shall develop and implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for pupils who are educationally at risk including, but not limited to, those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three (3) through eight (8) or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research-based.

#### **Reporting**

The School Board, through the school principals and the division superintendent, will make such annual reports to the Virginia Board of Education as are required for accreditation.

#### **Accreditation**

The School Board will review the accreditation status of each school in the school division annually in a public session of a School Board meeting.

#### **Annual Notices**

At the beginning of each school year, RPS will provide to its pupils' parents or guardians:

1. the learning objectives developed in accordance with the Standards of Accreditation to be achieved at their child's grade level, or, in high school, a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses;
2. the Standards of Learning applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date and potential impact of the child's next SOL testing;

3. an annual notice to pupils in all grade levels of all requirements for Standard, Advanced Studies, Modified Standard, and Technical Diplomas; and
4. the School Board's policies on promotion, retention, and remediation.

Richmond Public Schools will provide to the parents and community the School Performance Report Card containing information, as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education, for the most recent three (3) year period.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-253.12:1(C), 22.1-253.13:3; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-280, 8 VAC 20-131-290.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-1.3 ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN**

The basic organizational plan for RPS shall be a K-5, 6-8, 9-12 plan. Exceptions to this plan are permitted when extenuating circumstances exist which make the above grouping impractical.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Constitution of Virginia, Article VIII, §7; Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-79.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-1.4 SCHOOL YEAR**

#### **School Year**

##### ***Days or Hours of Required Operation***

In accordance with the Code of Virginia, RPS will operate with pupils in attendance at least 180 teaching days or 990 hours (540 hours for kindergarten) per school year. Days on which schools are closed due to severe weather or other emergencies will be made up if necessary to meet these requirements in the manner prescribed by law.

##### ***Additional Days***

Ten (10) days or the equivalent may be included for such activities as teaching, planning for the opening of school, evaluations, completing records and reports incident to the closing of each semester or school year, committee assignments, and conferences as are defined by the School Board. The provision of additional days may be reviewed by the School Board in light of budgetary constraints and adjusted as necessary.

##### ***Make Up Days***

If severe weather conditions or other emergency situations result in the closing of a school or schools in the school division for:

1. five (5) or fewer days, all missed days will be made up by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the school day; or

2. six (6) days or more, the first five (5) days plus one (1) day for each two (2) days missed in excess of the first five (5) days will be made up by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the school day.

If severe weather conditions or other emergency situations result in the closing of any school in the school division and such school has been unable to meet the 180 day teaching requirement, the school division may make up the missed teaching days by providing its pupils with instructional hours equivalent to such missed teaching days to meet the minimum 990 teaching hour requirement.

The Virginia Board of Education may waive the requirement that the school division provide additional teaching days or teaching hours to compensate for school closings resulting from a declared state of emergency or severe weather conditions or other emergency situations under certain circumstances. If the School Board desires a waiver, it will submit a request for a waiver to the Virginia Board of Education. The request will include evidence of the school division's efforts to reschedule as many days as possible and certification by the division superintendent and School Board chairman that every reasonable effort to make up lost teaching days was exhausted before the School Board requested the waiver. If the waiver is denied, the school division will make up the lost instructional time.

## **School Calendar**

### ***First Day of School***

The first day of school shall be after Labor Day unless this requirement has been waived by the Virginia Board of Education pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 22:1-79.1.

### ***Drafting and Adoption***

A proposed school calendar shall be drafted by the administration after appropriate consultation. Extra or emergency days shall be incorporated which, if not necessary, may be deleted or adjusted upon the recommendation of the division superintendent and upon approval of the School Board.

The annual school calendar shall be presented to the School Board for adoption by April of each year. The School Board shall establish the school calendar and related teaching contracts in accordance with applicable regulations of the Virginia Board of Education to include contingencies for making up teaching days and teaching hours missed for emergency situations. Historical data shall be used to determine the needs of the school division including scheduling holidays, breaks and work-days.

### ***Amendments***

The school calendar may be amended upon recommendation of the division superintendent and approval of the School Board.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-79, 22.1-79.1, 22.1-98; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-150, 8 VAC 20-521-20, 8 VAC 20-521-30, 8 VAC 20-521-40.

Adopted September 7, 2010  
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## **POLICY 5-1.5            SCHOOL DAY**

### **School Day – Generally**

#### *Standard School Day*

The standard school day for pupils in grades on (1) through 12 (12) will average at least 5 ½ hours, excluding breaks for meals. The standard school day for kindergarten will be a minimum of three (3) hours, excluding breaks for meals.

#### *Secondary Class Clock Hours*

The secondary school class schedule shall contain a minimum of 140 clock hours for each unit of credit. When credit is awarded in less than whole units, the increment awarded must be no greater than the fractional part of the 140 hours of instruction provided. College credits will be applied according to the applicable university or community college guidelines.

### **Instructional Day**

The School Board recognizes the need for establishing the length of the instructional day for all pupils in the school division to provide consistency throughout the school system. The School Board also recognizes the need for daily school schedules to allow for differences in community and transportation needs within attendance zones. The School Board shall accept the standard provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia as minimal in nature and may extend pupil hours beyond state guidelines.

The division superintendent shall be authorized to establish daily time schedules for all schools within the system that shall be subject to School Board Review at least on an annual basis. All pupils in similar grade classifications shall meet the established School Board directive on instructional day length at all schools in the division.

Richmond Public Schools recognizes the following exceptions to a full school day schedule that may be granted:

1. pupils enrolled in cooperative work-study programs granting credit may be allowed a modified schedule;
2. pupil with disabilities deemed appropriate by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) committee may be granted a modified schedule; and
3. any additional exceptions may be granted by the principal in cases of financial need, health, or other extenuating circumstances with division superintendent approval.

The instructional time shall be protected from interruptions and intrusions.

### **Exceptions to School Day Time Requirements**

The time for opening and closing schools will be established by the School Board upon recommendation of the division superintendent, provided that the daily program for pupils in grades one (1) through twelve (12) will average at least 5 ½ hours, excluding breaks for meals. If the required program length is maintained, the School Board may approve occasional shortened days for staff development, conferences, planning, and other activities designed to improve the instructional program, provided that no more than (1) day in each five (5) day week may be shortened to no less than four (4) hours as provided by the school calendar and as determined by the division superintendent. When

exceptions in the length of the daily program are necessary for special education, alternative education, double shifts, and scheduling or other unusual situations, the School Board will request approval for the exceptions by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction no later than August 1 proceeding the school year for which they are requested.

The length of the work-day for employees will be determined by the School Board. It will be of sufficient length to allow for the daily program for pupils and additional time as may be necessary for such activities a planning, preparation, meetings, workshops, conferences, meal intermissions, or other contractual obligations.

No classes shall be dismissed before the scheduled dismissal hour except with the approval of the division superintendent.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-19, 22.1-253.13:3; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-110, 8 VAC 20-121-140, 8 VAC 20-490-30.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-1.6                      CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

### **Flags**

#### ***Provision and Maintenance of Flags***

Each Richmond Public School shall be provided with a flag of the United States of America and of the Commonwealth of Virginia to be flown in accordance with protocol. The poles, flags, and necessary equipment shall be provided for, maintained, and replaced from funds appropriated for this purpose by the governing body of the city.

#### ***Flying of the Flags***

The principal of each school shall see that the flags are flown each school day from the hour of opening until the hour of closing the school, except on days when the flags might be damaged due to inclement weather conditions. The flags shall be flown at half-staff in accordance with official orders.

#### ***Salute to the Flag***

The form of salute to the flag of the United States of America which shall be taught in the public schools shall be that approved by the Congress of the United States.

### **Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States**

In accordance with the Code of Virginia and the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States of America, the statement, "In God We Trust," the national motto, enacted by Congress in 1956," shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each Richmond Public School for all pupils to read.



## **Opening Exercises**

The Pledge of Allegiance shall be recited daily in each classroom of RPS as part of opening exercises. During the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, pupils shall stand while facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts or in an appropriate salute if in uniform.

No pupil shall be compelled to recite the Pledge of Allegiance if the pupil, the pupil's parent(s), or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to the pupil's participation in this exercise. Pupils who are exempt from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance shall stand quietly or sit at their desks while others recite the pledge and make no display that disrupts or distracts those who are reciting the pledge.

Appropriate accommodations shall be made for pupils who are unable to comply with the procedures described herein due to disability.

## **Minute of Silence**

The School Board hereby establishes the daily observance of one (1) minute of silence in each classroom of the school division. During this minute of silence, the teacher responsible for each classroom shall take care that all pupils remain seated and silent and make no distracting display.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-133, 22.1-202, 22.1-203; Law 2002 Acts of Assembly cc.891, 895.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-1.7            COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

Richmond Public Schools supports and encourages the active participation of parents and members of the community in providing and extending educational opportunities for children. The involvement of parents, volunteers, and others in the community who can serve as a resource to schools is a fundamentally important component of successful school programs. The administration of each school will direct the activities of parents, volunteers and other community resources at the building level.

Volunteers serve at the sole discretion of the principal, division superintendent and/or the School Board. They are obligated to adhere to all policies and regulations of the School Board and administration, but are not School Board employees and do not enjoy the benefits of employment. All volunteers are expected to undergo any applicable registration process implemented at each school prior to engaging in any activity. Volunteers may also be expected to present a form of photo identification to school administration upon entry into school buildings for the purpose of engaging in any activity or function.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-253, 13:6.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-1.8            TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

The School Board accepts training for effective citizenship as one of the major purposes of education. This can be done by recognizing that many important areas of curricular study involve issues on which individuals or groups hold differing positions.

Pupils engaged in the teacher-assigned curricular study of controversial issues shall:

1. have free access to all relevant information and materials in the school;
2. conduct research in an atmosphere of freedom from bias and prejudice; and
3. form and express opinions on assigned issues.

The role of the teacher in the presentation of assigned issues is vitally important. All sides of the issue shall be given to pupils in a dispassionate manner. In the discussion of controversial questions, extreme care is exercised to present facts in an accurate and unbiased manner. The goal is for the pupils to be taught to think clearly on all matters of importance and to make decisions in light of all the material that has been presented or can be researched on the issues. Indoctrination is not the intent or purpose of the school division. Although the instructional program of the school division includes many facets of the political party system in the United States, the School Board does not approve as a part of the school program the involvement of pupils in activities that imply school endorsement of an individual political party or candidate. Principals shall prevent the distribution of partisan or sectarian literature within the school building and on the school grounds.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-78.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-1.9 RELIGION IN SCHOOLS**

In accordance with the mandate of the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the establishment of religion, it is the policy of the School Board that RPS shall be neutral in matters of religion. This means that RPS:

1. will assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any pupil; and
2. will in no way become involved in the religious belief, disbelief or doubt of any pupil.

This requirement of neutrality need not preclude nor hinder RPS in fulfilling their responsibility to educate pupils to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. The School Board recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization. Therefore, the division's instructional staff shall approach religions from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all pupils and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. In that spirit of respect, pupils and staff members may be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of compelling public interest that would preclude such nonparticipation.

The School Board may offer, as an elective in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) with appropriate credits toward graduation, a comparative religion class that focuses on the basic tenets, history, and religious observations and rites of world religions.



**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION**  
**ARTICLE II**

**POLICY 5-2.1            BASIC INSTRUCTION PROGRAM**

Because education is a lifelong process, the educational program of RPS shall provide both formal studies to meet the general academic needs of all pupils and opportunities for individual pupils to develop specific talents and interests in career, technical, and other specialized fields and grow towards independent learning.

The various instructional programs shall be developed with the view towards maintaining balanced, integrated, and sequentially articulated curricula which shall serve the educational needs of all school-age children in the school division.

The School Board subscribes to the philosophy that well-developed reading and other basic skills, including the ability to spell, speak, and write intelligently are essential in society. It shall adopt specific requirements to ensure that high school graduates are sufficiently competent in these essential skills.

At all levels, provisions shall be made for a wide range of individual differences in pupil abilities and learning rates through uses of a variety of materials, adjustments in programs, and courses adapted to special needs of pupils.

The curriculum shall meet or exceed those requirements established by the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Board of Education. The curriculum will be aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning.

To advance these goals, the division superintendent and staff shall provide an effective program of instructional supervision and assistance to principals and teachers that are consistent with the Virginia Standards of Learning, the Virginia Standards of Quality, the Virginia Standards of Accrediting Public Schools, and the objectives of the school division.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-199 through 22.1-253:13.6; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-10, et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-2.2            CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION**

**Curriculum Development**

*Philosophy*

The curriculum is defined as the total of all social and educational experiences that occur as a part of the school program. Educational experiences are designed by grade level and/or by course. Other factors that influence the ongoing development of curriculum include technological advances, social relationships, community values and resources, and changing needs in the workplace.

Curriculum development, which shall be based on standards set by the Commonwealth of Virginia, at a minimum, is a collaborative process with broad representation from all schools in the division. At the elementary and middle school levels, curriculum development includes the identification

of essential learning goals, with particular attention to beginning and ending expectations for pupil grade levels is an integral part of the curriculum development process.

### ***New Course Proposals***

New course proposals for secondary schools are submitted in writing to the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Academic Officer is responsible for convening the RPS Curriculum Task Force, which is composed of teacher representatives, representatives from specialty teaching areas, as necessary, school administration, and instructional supervisory staff. The Curriculum Task Force reviews new course proposals submitted to them and forwards all proposals to the School Board with a recommendation to approve or decline each proposed course. New courses must be approved by the School Board prior to being offered to pupils for enrollment. Once a course is approved, it may be offered at appropriate Richmond Public Schools contingent upon staffing, pupil enrollment, and the availability of other required resources.

The curriculum shall meet the requirement of the Code of Virginia and regulations of the Virginia Board of Education.

### **Evaluation of Instructional Programs**

Richmond Public Schools is committed to the ongoing evaluation of the instructional program within the school division. The instructional program will be evaluated on its efficiency and effectiveness at a minimum. This evaluation is essential to the continuing provision of high-quality educational services, and the School Board shall be regularly informed of such assessment results via a report on at least an annual basis for the particular program in that evaluation cycle. The administration is charged with involving the school staff and the community in a continuous evaluation process of instructional programs.

### **Curriculum Guides**

Programs and courses shall be flexible enough to provide for the wide range of needs of individual learners. Curriculum guides shall be provided to enable teaches to achieve this goal.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-199 through 22.1-253:13.6; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-10, et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-2.3 INNOVATIVE OR EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS**

### **Generally**

The curriculum in RPS shall conform to the requirements of the Code of Virginia and the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education. This conformity shall not be interpreted to discourage innovation in curriculum that would be appropriate to the needs of the pupils in the school system. Experimental and innovative programs that are not consistent with accreditation standards or other regulations promulgated by the Virginia Board of Education shall be submitted to the Virginia Board of Education for approval prior to implementation. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall promulgate regulations consistent with this policy.

## **Pilot, Research or Experimental Projects**

### ***Right to Inspect Instructional Materials***

In addition to any other rights they may have with respect to the inspection of instructional materials, the parent or guardian of a child enrolled or engaged in any research or experimental program and/or project that is funded by the United States Department of Education shall be entitled to inspect all instructional materials which will be used in conjunction with such program or project.

### ***Research and Informed Consent***

As used herein, the term “research or experimentation program or project: means any systematic investigation that departs from the application of established and accepted methods which are appropriate to meet the pupil’s needs and may result in physical or psychological injury to the participants. The division superintendent shall make the designation of any program or project as a research or experimentation program or project.

### ***Informed Consent***

No research shall be conducted or authorized unless the pupil’s parents or legally authorized representative or emancipated pupil signs a pupil consent form and has it witnessed. The form shall comply with the Code of Virginia §32.1-162.18.

Any research involving pupils shall be approved and conducted under the review of a human research committee established by RPS. If the subjects cannot be identified and the research falls within the exemptions of the Code of Virginia, the research is exempted from these requirements. Any complaints arising under this policy shall be submitted pursuant to applicable law.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-16, 32.1-162.16, 32.1-162.18; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-565-10, et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-2.4                      ANIMALS IN SCHOOLS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES**

### **Generally**

The School Board recognizes the benefits of the safe and humane use of animals to support the goals and objectives of its instructional program. Animals are permitted on RPS grounds for instructional purposes only and in accordance with this policy.

### **Prior Approval**

The school principal must approve all animals brought onto school grounds for instructional purposes. As part of the school principal’s approval process, verification must be made of proper and current vaccination of the animals to be brought onto school property. Record of such approval and vaccination must be provided to the school principal and documented.

## **Health Safeguards**

### ***For Pupils, Staff and Visitors***

Building administrators and teachers will ensure that the animal(s) does not present a health risk to pupils or other staff members. If a pupil or staff member suffers from documented allergies or an illness that would be triggered by exposure to the animal, the pupil or staff member must not be removed from the classroom on this basis. The animal in this instance shall be prohibited. The teacher must also ensure implementation of relevant accommodations and health information included in Section 504 plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Staff shall not be permitted to bring their household pets onto school grounds, except with prior approval from the school principal and for instructional purposes only. Wild animals, turtles, birds and ducks are not allowed onto school property due to the health risks these animals present. Animals shall not be permitted to roam the school building or grounds freely.

### ***For Animals***

Animals shall be treated in a safe, humane and respectful manner.

## **Exceptions**

### ***Service Animals***

Service animals are not pets, nor are they used to supplement instruction. Animals, as the term is referred to in this policy, do not include service animals.

### ***Mascots***

Animals serving as mascots or otherwise related to extra-curricular activities are allowed onto school property with prior approval of the school principal and verification of vaccination.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-79, 51.5-44.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION  
ARTICLE III**

**POLICY 5-3.1            ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**Generally**

Richmond Public Schools may offer a variety of educational adult and continuing education programs for residents of the City of Richmond who meet the eligibility criteria.

The purpose of the adult education program shall be to provide an opportunity for adults and out-of-school youth 18 years of age and older, to earn their high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, complete a marketable skill training program, and find employment in the workplace. High school equivalency programs shall be offered to those who have been ordered by the court to participate in the program.

**Eligibility**

Generally, students must be at least 18 years of age to participate in adult or continuing education programs. Under circumstances which the division superintendent or his/her designee may consider to be justifiable, the minimum age requirement may be lowered.

The following persons may participate in the program of testing for high school equivalency credentials:

1. persons who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting compulsory attendance requirements;
2. with the approval of the division superintendent, persons 16 years of age or older who have been instructed by their parents in their home and who have completed such home school instruction;
3. persons 16 years of age or older who have been excused by the division superintendent from school attendance;
4. persons for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted;
5. persons 16 through 18 years of age who are housed in adult correctional facilities and who are actively pursuing high school equivalency credentials, but who are not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan;
6. persons 16 years of age or older who have been expelled from school by the School Board; and
7. persons required by court order to participate in the testing program.

**Tuition and Fees**

The School Board shall set tuition and fees for the adult education classes.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-210, 22.1-223, 22.1-224, 22.1-225, 22.1-254.2.

Adopted September 7, 2010  
Revised June 16, 2014

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## **POLICY 5-3.2            ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **Reasons for Establishing**

As special needs are determined, alternative programs may be established by the School Board within existing schools or at separate sites that are within the jurisdiction of RPS.

### **Proposals for Alternative Programs**

Proposals for alternative school programs shall be developed by the division superintendent or his/her designee and will be submitted to the School Board for review and endorsement prior to implementation. Proposals shall include:

1. a statement of justification for the alternative program explaining how it will meet the special needs or expectations of the target population and the community;
2. a plan which delineates the proposed organizational structure as it relates to staffing and the scope and structure of the total instructional program;
3. a statement of financial impact identifying all costs, including administration, staffing, equipment, supplies, transportation, support services, and cost of maintaining the program;
4. a statement of related impact explaining how the proposed program will affect and interrelate with other programs and populations served in existing programs and facilities;
5. a statement verifying that all aspects of the program are in compliance with all appropriate federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and there is compliance with all applicable accreditation requirements;
6. special evidence of authorization from the Virginia Department of Education must accompany it if the proposal presents a potential conflict with existing regulations of the Virginia Department of Education; and
7. plan for evaluating achieved outcomes.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-209.1:1, 22.1-209.1:2, 22.1-209.1:3, 22.1-201.1:6, 22.1-253.12:1, 22.1-227.2:1; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-330-10.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-3.3            CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

### **Generally**

The School Board believes in the importance of a sound career and technical program for all pupils desiring the same. Richmond Public Schools shall provide a program of career and technical education in order that pupils may acquire skills, knowledge, attitudes and habits of work necessary for life and success in employment. Career and technical programs for pupils shall be aligned with industry and professional standard certifications, if applicable. The division superintendent and staff shall plan and shall make recommendations for career and technical education in compliance with the Standards of Quality and Virginia Board of Education Regulations.

## **Development and Implementation of a Career and Technical Education Plan**

### ***Career Education***

The School Board shall incorporate career education into the kindergarten through twelfth grade curricula, which shall include knowledge of careers and all types of employment opportunities including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship and small business ownership, the military, career education school, and the teaching profession. The program shall emphasize the advantage of completing school with marketable skills. The school division shall also provide career exploration opportunities in the middle school grades.

### ***Career and Technical Education***

A general career and technical education advisory council shall be formed, and shall be composed of memberships of the public, including pupils, teachers, parents and representatives from business industry and labor, with appropriate representation of both sexes and racial and ethnic minorities found in the school, community, or region. The council shall meet at regular intervals during the year to assist in the planning, implementing and assessing of career and technical education programs. The need for new occupational preparation programs shall be based on pupil and labor market demands.

The School Board shall develop and implement a plan to ensure that competency based career and technical education programs are implemented. These programs shall integrate academic outcomes, career guidance and job-seeking skills for all secondary pupils based on labor market needs and pupil interest. Career and Technical Education shall offer pupils challenging and meaningful educational experiences that prepare them for entry level job preparation skills or for advanced educational opportunities. Career and Technical Education shall be offered at individual schools, in specialized career and technical centers and/or via distance learning.

Career guidance shall include counseling regarding available employment opportunities to all pupils and placement services for pupils exiting school. This plan shall be developed with the input of area business and industry representatives and local community colleges and shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with the timelines established by federal law.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-209, 22.1-227 through 22.1-237, 22.1-253.13:1; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-120-10, et seq., 8 VAC 20-120-50, 8 VAC 20-120-110, 8 VAC 20-120-120.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-3.4 CHARACTER EDUCATION**

### **Generally**

Richmond Public Schools shall establish, within its existing programs, a character education program in its schools. The purpose of the program is to foster civic virtues and personal character traits so as to improve the learning environment, promote pupil achievement, reduce disciplinary problems, and develop civic-minded pupils of high character. The program shall be cooperatively developed with pupils, parents, and the community. Specific character traits emphasized include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Character education shall be interwoven into the school procedures and environment so as to instruct primarily by example, illustration, and participation, in such

a way as to complement the Standards of Learning. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program. The program shall also address the inappropriateness of bullying, as defined in the Student Code of Conduct Guidelines adopted by the Virginia Board of Education.

Character education is intended to educate pupils regarding those core civic values and virtues, which are fundamental to civilized society and are common to the diverse social, cultural, and religious groups of the Commonwealth of Virginia. It shall not include indoctrination in any particular religious or political belief. Consistent with this purpose, Virginia's civic values, which are the principles articulated in the Bill of Rights (Article I) of the Constitution of Virginia and the ideals reflected in the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, as described in the Code of Virginia §1-500, may be taught as representative of such civic values.

### **Program Criteria**

The character education program shall conform to the following criteria established by the Virginia Board of Education. The program must:

1. specify those character traits to be taught, selecting from those, which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups;
2. be implemented at the elementary and secondary levels;
3. provide for relevant professional development and adequate resources; and
4. include a method for program evaluation.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§1-500, 22.1-208, 22.1-208.1; United States Constitution, First Amendment; Constitution of Virginia, Article I.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-3.5                      PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED PUPILS**

The School Board shall operate a Title I program for disadvantaged pupils as authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The School Board shall provide opportunities for parental involvement in the operation of the Title I program as authorized by regulations contained in the Code of Federal Regulations and those approved by the School Board.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-253.12:1; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; 20 USC §603 et seq.; Virginia Administrative Code 8 VAC 20-131-5 et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-3.6                      DRIVER EDUCATION**

#### **Generally**

A course in Driver Education (classroom) shall be included in the tenth grade Health and Physical Education curriculum in each high school. Classroom Driver Education must include instruction in Alcohol and Drug Use and Abuse, aggressive driving, motorcycle awareness, distracted driving, and

organ and tissue donor awareness. Classroom instruction hours must satisfy the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requirements.

### **Instructors**

The instructors for this course shall be regular faculty members with valid teacher certificates, shall be endorsed as driver education instructors by the Virginia Department of Education and shall meet all standards set forth by the Virginia Board of Education. At the beginning of each school year and thereafter as necessary, the division superintendent or his/her designee shall report to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) the name and driver's license number of all persons providing instruction in driver education for the school division.

### **Instruction**

Behind-the-Wheel ("BTW") instruction will be offered to pupils who have reached the age at which a pupil qualifies for a learner's permit from the DMV. Seven hours of BTW instruction are offered with 3.5 hours occurring on the driving range and 3.5 hours of behind the wheel.

No pupil shall be permitted to operate a motor vehicle without either a learner's permit or license. Necessary certification of the pupil's academic standing and compliance with compulsory attendance laws shall be provided by the administration to the DMV upon request, in accordance with state law.

### **Program Cost**

The cost of BTW instruction will vary according to the cost of the program, which is determined by the number of pupils, number of teachers, and maintenance costs of vehicles. The cost shall not exceed the school division's cost in operating the program prorated on an individual basis.

### **Program Completion**

Upon successful completion of classroom and BTW instruction, the pupil must meet the Virginia Board of Education requirements for good academic standing in order to qualify for a Virginia driver's license.

### **Precautions**

The administration will take steps to implement the following precautions when cars are being used for BTW instruction:

1. keep the driver training cars in a safe, designated area when not in use;
2. Defer use of the car until insurance has been provided for the protection of the school, the care dealer (if cars are leased or rented), the instructor, the user of the car and others involved in obtaining the use of the car for the school division. The insurance coverage shall include a minimum coverage prescribed by law;
3. drive the car only when delivering it or returning it, when giving driver instruction, and when having it serviced. Under no conditions shall a pupil drive the car unless the instructor is in the car except under driving range conditions and supervision; and
4. Keep records necessary for reports and submit all reports concerning the course and the use of the car to the Driver Education Services of the Virginia Department of Education.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-204, 22.1-205, 22.1-206, 46.2-323, 46.2-340; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-340-10, 8 VAC 20-340-20, 8 VAC 20-340-30.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-3.7            ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

The School Board shall identify pupils with limited English proficiency and enroll such pupils in appropriate instructional programs that will encourage them to become proficient in the use of the English language.

RPS shall administer a limited English proficiency assessment mandated for students pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act that may be locally developed or selected and has been approved by the Board of Education in accordance with federal requirements.

**Foreign Language Credit Program for Native and Heritage Speakers**

The School Board shall provide a foreign language credit program for native and heritage speakers. This program is designed to assess pupils' native language proficiency so they may earn credits toward fulfilling the foreign language requirement for the Advanced Studies Diploma, Standard Diploma and the Commonwealth Scholars designation. Initially, the languages included in this program will be Spanish and French. The administration may add additional languages within the program in subsequent school years.

The target group for this program is pupils whose native languages are Spanish or French and who have not received a foreign language credit in grades 7 – 12. Pupils who have received one or more credits will not be eligible to participate in this program.

**Credit Earned**

Pupils must demonstrate oral and written evidence that they have reached the intermediate range of proficiency as described by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) K-12 Performance guidelines. This means that pupils can speak and write about personal experiences using complete sentences and paragraphs. Upon completion of the proficiency test, the pupil will have met the aims and objectives of the course and will be awarded one or two foreign language credits towards graduation.

***Foreign language Criterion for Graduation***

1. Advanced Studies Diploma pupils must earn three credits in one foreign language or two credits in two different foreign languages.
2. Commonwealth Scholars designation requires two years of a foreign language.

3. Standard Diploma/Modified Standard Diploma pupils can apply foreign language credit towards elective requirements.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§1-511, 22.1-212.1.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-3.8            FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE)**

### **Generally**

The School Board of the City of Richmond provides Family Life Education (FLE) based on the FLE Standards of Learning objectives developed by the Virginia Department of Education. The FLE curriculum shall be reviewed annually. Such review shall allow for community input.

### **Community Involvement Team**

Under procedures approved by the School Board, a community involvement team shall be established. The team may include, but not be limited to, school administrators, teachers, parents, clergy, medical professionals, mental health professionals and others in the community.

### **Staff Training**

Teachers in the FLE program will participate in the training program sponsored by the Department of Education.

### **Separate Sessions**

A plan for teaching sensitive conduct in gender-separated classes will be announced publicly.

### **"Opt-out" Procedures**

The division superintendent or his/her designee shall develop "opt-out" procedures to ensure communication with parents or guardians to obtain permission for students to be excused from all or part of the FLE program.

### **Right of Parental Review**

A parent or guardian shall have the right to review the FLE curricula, including all supplemental materials used in the program. A summary of the FLE program designed to assist the parent in understanding the program and to encourage parental involvement in the instruction of pupils in FLE shall be prepared and available. Such summary shall reflect the curricula of the program as taught in the classroom. The following statement will be included on the summary: "Parents and guardians have the right to review the family life education program offered by the school division, including written and audio-visual educational materials used in the program. Parents and guardians also have the right to excuse their child from all or part of family life education instruction."

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-207.1, 22.1-207.2; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-170; 34 C.F.R. § 106.34.

Adopted September 7, 2010

Revised/Adopted July 13, 2015

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**POLICY 5-3.9**

**PROGRAM FOR GIFTED PUPILS, ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**Generally**

Educational opportunities appropriate to the exceptional abilities of gifted pupils will be provided. Every pupil in RPS shall be given the opportunity to realize his/her potential through an array of appropriately engaging and challenging educational experiences. Gifted pupils require a differentiated educational program in order to maximize the development of their special abilities.

**Screening and Identification**

*Screening and Identification*

Richmond Public Schools shall use a uniform procedure with multiple criteria for early screening and identification of gifted and accelerated-learning pupils in all populations, as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education. Richmond Public Schools shall use four or more of the following criteria for determining giftedness:

1. assessment of appropriate pupil products, performance, or portfolio;
2. record of observation of in-class behavior;
3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires;
4. Individual interview;
5. Individual or group achievement tests;
6. Record of previous accomplishments (such as awards, honors, grades, etc.); and
7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures.

Procedures for the early and on-going identification of gifted and accelerated-learning pupils beginning with kindergarten and placement at grades two through secondary graduation in at least one of the four defined areas of giftedness:

1. general intellectual ability;
2. specific academic aptitudes;
3. visual and performing arts; and
4. technical and practical arts.

Referrals for giftedness screening may be submitted by school personnel, parents or legal guardians, other persons of related expertise, peer referral and self-referral of those pupils believed to be gifted. Pertinent information, records, and other performance evidence of referred pupils will be examined by a building level or division level Identification/Placement Committee.

*Appeals*

Richmond Public Schools shall maintain a division review procedure for pupils whose cases are appealed. This procedure shall involve individuals, the majority of whom did not serve on the Identification/Placement Committee.

## **Reporting**

The School Board shall submit a plan for approval and an annual report of the RPS Program of Gifted Education to the Virginia Department of Education as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education.

## **Local Advisory Committee**

The School Board supports the development of an appropriately differentiated educational program for gifted pupils in order to facilitate the fullest development of their potential. The School Board may establish a local advisory committee for the gifted education program. Once established, the committee will review the gifted education program, including any revisions to the program on an annual basis. The committee will also determine the extent to which the program for the previous year was implemented by the division. The comments and recommendations of the committee shall be provided in writing through the division superintendent or his/her designee to the School Board.

## **Programming**

### *Elementary*

Special provisions shall be made for developing the talents of gifted and accelerated learning children within the regular program in the elementary schools.

### *Secondary*

Secondary schools shall provide advanced placement programs and other special courses for gifted and accelerated-learning pupils wherever possible. Richmond Public School pupils and their parents shall be notified of the availability of dual enrollment and advanced placement classes, and the Academic year Governor's School Programs, the qualifications for enrolling in such classes and programs, and the availability of financial assistance to low income pupils to take the advanced placement examinations. The division superintendent may promulgate regulations to implement this policy, which shall ensure the provisions of timely and adequate notice to pupils and their parents.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-18.1, 22.1-253.12:1; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-40-10 through 8 VAC 20-40-60.

Adopted September 7, 2010

Revised/Adopted June 18, 2012

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## **POLICY 5-3.10**

## **HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Each Richmond Public School shall organize and maintain a physical and health education program in accordance with Virginia Board of Education regulations and Virginia Board of Health guidelines.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-207; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-320-10.

Adopted September 7, 2012

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## **POLICY 5-3.11            PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Generally**

The School Board of the City of Richmond provides a free, appropriate public education for all children and youth with disabilities, ages 2 through 21, inclusive, who are residents of the City of Richmond or who are not residents of the City of Richmond but are residents of Virginia and who are enrolled in a full-time virtual school program provided by the School Board. Richmond Public Schools shall identify and provide special education and related services to eligible and qualifying students in accordance with state and federal requirements and the special education policies and procedures approved by the School Board.

### **Child Find: Identification, Location, Evaluation**

The School Board maintains an active and continuing child find program designed to identify, locate and evaluate those children residing in the division who are birth through 21 inclusive who may need special education and related services in accordance with all federal and state requirements and the special education policies and procedures approved by the School Board.

### **Eligibility and Provision of Services**

The School Board shall ensure that all children determined eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are provided services in accordance with all federal and state requirements and the special education policies and procedures approved by the School Board. Additionally, for all students who are qualified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the School Board shall ensure that services are provided in accordance with all federal requirements.

### **Procedural Safeguards**

A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parent(s) of a child with a disability is given to the parent(s). The procedural safeguards notice includes a full explanation of all the procedural safeguards available.

### **Least Restrictive Environment**

The School Board shall ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including those in public or private institutions or other care facilities will be educated with children who do not have a disability.

Richmond Public Schools will serve students with disabilities in a variety of educational settings. A continuum of alternative placements shall be considered for each student found eligible for special education and related services. Such consideration will seek to ensure that each student will receive services in an environment in which the individual needs of the student will appropriately be met.

### **Individualized Education Program and/or 504 Plan**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan for each student shall determine the needs and services for each student found eligible for special education services. Specifically, the IEP or 504 Plan shall indicate the manner in which the student will participate in school division and state

required assessments, and any modification, accommodations, supplementary aids and services the student needs in order to access and participate in school programs.

Richmond Public Schools ensures that the IEP and/or 504 Plan for each student will be reviewed at least annually and revised as needed in accordance with all federal and state requirements and the special education policies and procedures approved by the School Board.

### **Visually and Hearing Impaired Students**

Annually, the School Board will post information, as provided by the Department of Education, describing the educational and other services available through the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, and the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired to students who are identified as hearing impaired or visually impaired, on the division website.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004); Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 20 U.S.C. § 1400, et seq.; 29 U.S.C § 701 et seq.; 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.; Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-213 through 22.1-216, 22.1-217.01; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-81-10 et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

Revised/Adopted June 16, 2014

Revised/Adopted July 13, 2015

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### **POLICY 5-3.12**

### **TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO**

Each RPS pupil shall receive instruction in drug, alcohol, and tobacco education and their abuse in accordance with the guideline set forth by the Virginia Board of Education.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-206; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-310-10

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-3.13**

### **TECHNOLOGY**

#### **Generally**

The responsible use of computers and computer networks is a powerful tool in support of the instructional program. Richmond Public Schools' computer network is a wide-area network linking the schools and the administrative office to the Internet.

#### **Liability**

The School Board makes no warranties for the computer system it provides. The School Board shall not be responsible for any damages to the user from use of the computer system including loss of data, non-delivery or missed delivery of information, or service interruptions. The School Board shall not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the computer system. The user agrees to indemnify the School Board for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the School Board relating to or arising out of any violation of this policy.

## **Internet Use**

### ***Internet Privacy Statement***

The School Board maintains and operates a website for the dissemination of information about the school division. The School Board does not collect any information from persons who access its website, including personally identifiable information. The School Board website does not automatically place a computer file - commonly known as a “cookie” – on any person’s computer who accesses the website.

### ***Acceptable Internet Use and Internet Safety Policy***

The School Board adopts this Acceptable Use Policy, which outlines appropriate uses, ethics and protocol for the School Board’s computer network.

1. School Board employees and pupils shall not use the division’s computer equipment and communications services for sending, receiving, viewing or downloading inappropriate and/or illegal material via the Internet and World Wide Web.
2. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall select and operate technology that protects against, filters or blocks access through school division computers to visual depictions that are –
  - a. child pornography, as set out in Virginia Code §18.2-374.1:1 or as defined in 18 U.S.C. §2256;
  - b. obscenity, as defined in Virginia Code §18.2-372 or 18 U.S.C. §1460; and
  - c. material that RPS deems to be harmful to juveniles, as defined in Virginia Code §18.2-390, material that is harmful to minors, as defined in 47 U.S.C. §254(h)(7)(G), and material that is otherwise inappropriate for minors.
3. The technology protection measures shall be utilized and enforced during any use of the division’s computers by minors.
4. The school administration shall monitor online activities of minors.
5. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall select and operate technology and take administrative measures to protect the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication.
6. Minors shall not obtain unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities, while online.
7. The School Board, its employees, agents and pupils shall not disclose, use, or disseminate personal identification information regarding minors.
8. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that RPS includes a component on Internet safety for pupils that is integrated in the division’s instructional program and that is consistent with the guidelines for instructional programs related to Internet Safety issued by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The failure of any pupil, teacher or administrator to follow the terms of this policy may result in the loss of computer network privileges, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action.

A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy shall be posted on the school division's website in accordance with applicable state law. The School Board will review, amend if necessary and approve the school divisions' Acceptable Use Policy every two years.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§2.2-3803, 18.2-372, 18.2-374.1:1, 18.2-390, 22.1-70.2; 18 U.S.C. §2256; 47 U. S. C. §254(h)(7)(G).

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-3.14      REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION PROGRAM**

### **Remedial Instruction Programs**

The School Board shall provide remedial programs that supplement the regular classroom programs, will serve to strengthen pupils in need of remediation, and are consistent with applicable law. Specifically, the School Board shall review and report on the remedial program as from time-to-time is required by the Virginia General Assembly and the Virginia Department of Education. These programs are contingent upon annual appropriations.

### **Criteria for Admission**

To be eligible for placement, a pupil must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. be below average in measured ability and be unable to function or is not functioning successfully in regular required course(s) because of limited ability;
2. be below average in achievement in the required course(s) and need remediation and/or supplemental work to function successfully in required course(s) – a general rule of at least one year below grade level should apply; or
3. score in the bottom national quartile on Virginia State Assessment Program tests.

### **Literacy and Standards of Learning Assessment Tests**

The School Board shall implement programs of prevention, intervention or remediation for pupils who are educationally at risk, including those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standard of Learning assessment in grades three through eight, or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research based.

Any pupil who achieves a passing score on one or more, but not all, of the Standards of Learning assessments for the relevant grade level in grades three through eight or who fails an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit may be required to attend a remediation program, which may include summer school.

Any pupil who fails to achieve a passing score on all of the Standards of Learning assessments for the relevant grade level in grades three through eight shall be required to attend a summer school program or participate in another form of remediation. The division superintendent or his/her designee

shall require such pupils to take special programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation, which may include attendance in public summer school programs, in accordance with applicable law. Such summer school programs or other form of remediation shall be chosen by the division superintendent or his/her designee to be appropriate to the academic needs of the pupil. Pupils who are required to attend such summer school programs or to participate in another form of remediation shall not be charged tuition.

The requirement for remediation may, however, be satisfied by the pupil's attendance in a program of prevention, intervention or remediation which has been selected by his parent, in consultation with the division superintendent or his/her designee, and is either (i) conducted by an accredited private school or (ii) a special program which has been determined to be comparable to the required public school remediation program by the division superintendent or his/her designee. The costs of such private school remediation program or other special remediation program shall be borne by the pupil's parent.

### **Instruction and Remediation Recovery Program**

Within the context of the Instruction and Remediation Recovery Program, material shall be presented in such a way as to be motivational for the pupil and within a time frame that is most conducive to maximizing the pupil's ability to learn.

The School Board will establish a Remediation Recovery Program. Pupils eligible to participate in the program will be pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade who have failed the Standards of Learning assessment in the areas of English (reading, literature and research) or mathematics, and pupils at the high school level who have failed to pass a Standards of Learning assessment in mathematics. The school division shall provide targeted mathematics remediation and intervention to students in grades six through eight who show computational deficiencies as demonstrated by their individual performance on any diagnostic test or grade-level Standards of Learning mathematics test that measures non-calculator computational skills.

Pupils who retake a Standards of Learning assessment must have participated in some form of remediation, including the Remediation Recovery Program, to be eligible for re-testing. Also, pupils who participate in the Remediation Recovery Program are expected to re-take the applicable Standards of Learning assessment at the next regularly scheduled administration, and may only be counted in Remediation Recovery once for one grade/Standards of Learning assessment. At the high school level, pupils may continue to re-take end-of-course tests as many times as necessary to earn verified credit.

Richmond Public Schools shall maintain evidence of a pupil's participation in a Remediation Recovery Program, along with the scores of any Standards of Learning assessment taken following remediation, in the pupil's record.

The following pupils are ineligible for the Remediation Recovery Program:

1. Pupils in kindergarten through grade eight who are re-tested because they were retained and had not previously passed a grade level test in English (reading, literature and research) or mathematics.
2. Pupils who re-take an end-of-course test as a result of failing and re-taking mathematics course at the high school level.

In designing remediation programs required by the Standards of Quality, the School Board shall annually evaluate and modify, as appropriate, the remediation plan based on an analysis of the percentage of pupils meeting their remediation goals and consideration of the pass rate on the Standards of Learning

assessments. The program shall include, when appropriate, a procedure for early identification of pupils who are at-risk of failing the Standards of Learning assessments in grades three through eight or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit required for the pupil's graduation. Such pupils shall be provided appropriate remediation activities.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

The division superintendent or his/her designee may seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law after a reasonable effort to seek the pupil's attendance in the summer school program or after-school session has failed, including direct notification of the parents of such pupil of the attendance requirement and failure of the parents to secure the pupil's attendance when:

1. the pupil is required to take a special program of prevention, intervention, or remediation in the summer school program or to participate in another form of remediation as provided by law; and
2. the division superintendent determines that remediation of the pupil's poor academic performance, passage of the Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight or promotion is related directly to the pupil's attendance in the summer school program or participation in another form of remediation.

### **Reporting**

The School Board shall annually report the following information to the Virginia Board of Education pertaining to pupils eligible for remediation:

1. the number of pupils failing a state-sponsored test required by the Standards of Quality or Standards of Accreditation;
2. a demographic profile of pupils attending state-funded remedial programs;
3. the academic status of each pupil attending state-funded remedial programs;
4. the types of instruction offered;
5. the length of the program;
6. the cost of the program;
7. the number of ungraded and disabled pupils, and those with limited English proficiency;
8. as required, the pass rate on Standards of Learning assessments; and
9. the percentage of pupils at each grade level who have met their remediation goals.

### **Summer School**

The School Board encourages the summer school program to offer any school subject for which there is sufficient demand. Summer school shall be provided to meet the needs of pupils for reinforcement, acceleration, enrichment, or advanced study. Summer school programs will adhere to the same performance standards of excellence as regular school programs.

Pupils who attend summer school and demonstrate significant growth may have the opportunity to advance to a higher level of placement, if they are repeating a grade or are over age.

Credit for repeated work ordinarily will be granted on the same basis as that for new work. With prior approval of the principal, certain pupils may be allowed to enroll in two repeated subjects to be completed within not less than 75 clock hours of instruction per unit of credit.

Any pupil of RPS, adults, non-residents, and war veterans are eligible to enroll in summer school, as long as they meet divisional criteria.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-199.2, 22.1-211, 22.1-212, 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-254, 22.1-254.01; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-120, 8 VAC 20-630-40, 8 VAC 20-630-50.

Adopted September 7, 2010

Revised July 15, 2013

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### **POLICY 5-3.15**

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

The School Board shall provide homebound instruction for pupils who are confined for periods that would prevent normal school attendance based upon certification of need by a licensed physician, clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner. Termination of homebound instruction shall be certified by a licensed physician, clinical psychologist, or nurse practitioner. Upon request of the pupils' parent or guardian, and provided such request is recommended by a licensed physician, clinical psychologist, nurse practitioner or psychiatrist, the School Board shall furnish teacher to instruct the pupil at home.

Any grades or credits earned shall be considered a part of the pupil's regular schoolwork and recorded as such at the pupil's school. Grades and credit for the work shall be awarded when it is done under the supervision of a certified teacher, a person eligible to hold a Virginia certificate, or other appropriately licensed professional employed by the School Board.

The division superintendent or his/her designee shall approve applicants for homebound instruction. Medical forms must be maintained on file. While receiving homebound instruction, the pupil shall be counted as present in school.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-253.13:2, 54.1-2957.02; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-10, et seq., 8 VAC 20-131-180.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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### **POLICY 5-3.16**

### **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

The School Board directs that the division superintendent or his/her designee develop and implement a program accountability, review, monitoring and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of educational programs. This system shall include a plan and schedule for evaluating the division's instructional programs. To that end, all new and existing programs shall include a program evaluation component that focuses on pupil outcomes. Accountability results shall be reviewed and programs will be continued, modified or eliminated based on the results.

Ad hoc evaluations of programs shall be approved and separately funded by the School Board.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** None

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-3.17 PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS**

A. Purpose

In order to (i) encourage the development of innovative programs within public education; (ii) provide opportunities for innovative instruction and student assessment; (iii) provide parents and students more options within their school divisions; (iv) provide teachers with a vehicle for establishing schools with innovative instruction and school scheduling, management and structure; (v) encourage the use of performance-based educational programs; (vi) establish and maintain high standards for both teachers and administrators; and (vii) develop models for replication in other public schools, the School Board of the City of Richmond shall receive and consider applications for the establishment of public charter schools.

B. Definitions

- (1) A “public charter school” is a public, non-sectarian alternative school located within the Richmond school division. A public charter school may be created as a new school or by converting all or part of an existing public school. No public charter school shall be established through the conversion of a private school or a nonpublic home-based educational program. A public charter school for at-risk students may be established as a residential school.
- (2) A “regional public charter school” is a public charter school operated by two (2) or more school boards and is chartered directly by the relevant school boards.
- (3) An “at-risk student” is a student having a physical, emotional, intellectual, socioeconomic, or cultural risk factor, as defined in Virginia Department of Education criteria, which research indicates may negatively influence educational success.

C. Establishment of Public Charter Schools; Requirements

(1) Public Charter Schools for At-Risk Students

In establishing public charter schools, the School Board shall give priority to public charter school applications designed to increase the educational opportunities of at-risk students, particularly those at-risk students currently served by schools that have not achieved applicable state standards.

(2) Compliance with State and Federal Law

All public charter schools shall be subject to federal and state laws, regulations and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination in admissions, employment or operation on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or the need for special



education services. Public charter schools shall also be subject to any court-ordered desegregation plan in effect in the school division or, in the case of a regional public charter school, any court-ordered desegregation plan in effect for relevant school divisions.

(3) Enrollment

Enrollment shall be open to any child who is deemed to reside (as defined in Section 22.1-3 of the Code of Virginia) within the school division or, in the case of a regional public charter school, within any of the relevant school divisions, through a lottery process on a space-available basis, except that in the case of the conversion of an existing public school, students who attend the school and the siblings of such students are given the opportunity to enroll in advance of the lottery process. A waiting list shall be established if adequate space is not available to accommodate all students whose parents have requested to be entered in the lottery process. Such waiting list shall also be prioritized through a lottery process and parents shall be informed of their student's position on the list.

(4) Tuition and Fees

A public charter school shall not charge tuition. Reasonable fees may be assessed as provided by law. The management committee of an approved charter school shall ensure that a student's inability to pay a fee does not bar that student from fully participating in the educational program and activities of the school.

D. Application and Review Process

(1) Review of Application by the Virginia Board of Education

Prior to submitting its charter application to the School Board, the public charter school applicant shall submit its proposed charter application to the Virginia Board of Education for review and comment and a determination as to whether the application meets the approval criteria developed by the Board. The Board's review shall examine such applications for feasibility, curriculum, financial soundness, and other objective criteria as the Board may establish, consistent with existing state law. The Board's review and comment shall be for the purpose of ensuring that the application conforms with such criteria, and the Board shall make a determination as to whether the application meets the approval criteria developed by the Board. Nothing shall prevent the local school division from working with a public charter school applicant before the application is submitted to the Board of Education for review and recommendation.

(2) Submission of Application to School Board

Any person, group or organization, including any institution of higher education, may submit an application for the formation of a public charter school. The applicant must also complete the application addendum in the format provided in Exhibit A of this policy.

(3) Review Team

The School Board shall establish a "review team" consisting of, at a minimum, appropriate school personnel and relevant community stakeholders. The School Board shall designate the chairman of the review team as the contact person for answering questions about the application process and receiving applications. The review team shall work cooperatively with applicants for public charter schools. When an application is incomplete, the review team shall request the necessary information. If, however, the applicant does not provide the necessary information within a reasonable timeframe (as established by the review team) then the application may be denied.

The review team shall (1) work cooperatively with the applicants for public charter schools; (2) evaluate all public charter school applications based on the review criteria adopted by the School Board; (3) recommend to the School Board the approval or rejection of each application; (4) receive and evaluate petitions for reconsideration; (5) monitor public charter school progress upon approval; and (6) make recommendations for revocation, renewal or non-renewal of charter contracts.

(4) Regulations

The School Board shall require, and the Administration shall promulgate, regulations governing the process for receiving, reviewing and ruling on applications for the establishment of public charter schools. Such regulations must include a timeline for the application and review process and the means for reviewing and evaluating each application, including the criteria on which the decision to grant or deny a charter will be based. A copy of the regulations, including the review criteria, shall be available to any interested party upon request.

E. School Board Decision

(1) Notice of Decision

Written notice of the School Board's decision shall be sent to the applicant. Priority shall be granted to applications designed to increase the educational opportunities of at-risk students.

(2) Reconsideration

If the School Board denies the public charter school application or revokes or fails to renew a charter agreement, it shall provide to the applicant or grantee its reasons in writing, for such decision, and it shall post such reasons on its website. A public charter school applicant whose application was denied, or a grantee whose charter was revoked or not renewed, shall be entitled to

petition the School Board for reconsideration. The petition for reconsideration shall be filed no later than 60 calendar days from the date the public charter school application is denied, revoked, or not renewed. The petition for reconsideration shall address, in writing, the specific reasons for denial, revocation or non-renewal as detailed by the School Board. Such reconsideration shall be decided by the School Board within 60 calendar days of filing the petition. Prior to seeking reconsideration, an applicant or grantee may seek technical assistance from the Superintendent of Public Instruction to address the reasons for denial, revocation, or non-renewal.

The School Board shall establish a process for reviewing petitions of reconsideration, which shall include an opportunity for public comment. The petition of reconsideration may include an amended application based on the reasons given by the School Board for such decision.

(3) Decision of the School Board following Reconsideration

Upon reconsideration, the School Board's decision to grant or deny an application or to revoke or fail to renew a charter agreement shall be final and not subject to appeal. Following a decision to deny a public charter school application or upon revocation or failure to renew a charter agreement, the School Board shall submit documentation to the Board of Education as to the rationale for the decision. The Board of Education shall have no authority to grant or deny a public charter school application or to revoke or fail to renew a charter agreement.

(4) Subsequent Public Charter School Applications

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit an applicant whose application has been denied or a grantee whose charter has been revoked or not renewed from submitting a new charter application pursuant to this policy.

F. Charter Contract

Upon approval of a charter application, the School Board and the management committee of the public charter school shall enter into a contract which contains all agreements between the School Board and the public charter school. The approved application shall serve as the basis for the contract. Such contract between the public charter school and the School Board or relevant school boards shall reflect all requests for release of the public charter school from school division policies and state regulations. The charter contract shall also include other provisions negotiated by the School Board or its designee. A charter may be granted for a period of at least three years not to exceed five years. Any material revision of the charter contract shall be made in writing and must be approved by the School Board or in the case of a regional public charter school, between the regional public charter school and the relevant school boards and the management committee of the public charter school.

G. Liability of Charter School

The charter school contract shall include language that the applicant specifically agrees to hold harmless and indemnify the School Board, its officials, employees, agents and representatives, for all liabilities, debts obligations and other matters arising out of the operation of the charter school. In addition, the charter school shall address procedures for dissolution of the charter school, ensuring that the agreement to hold harmless and indemnify the School Board shall survive dissolution of the charter school, whether due to revocation, non-renewal or other action. Under no circumstances will the School Board assume responsibility for any contractual or other liabilities of the charter school or other entities acting on behalf of the charter school except as agreed to by contract.

H. Waivers of School Board Policy and State Regulation

A public charter school may operate free from specified School Board policies and state regulations, except the Standards of Quality, the Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation, as agreed in the charter contract. The School Board shall designate in its regulations governing public charter schools which School Board policies may not be waived. The School Board, or relevant school boards, shall request from the Board of Education, on behalf of its public charter schools, waivers from state regulations contained in each approved charter application. If the public charter school is designed to increase the opportunities of at-risk students, then the School Board, or relevant school boards, as the case may be, shall request that the Board of Education approve an Individual School Accreditation Plan.

I. Management and Operation

A public charter school shall be administered and operated by a management committee in the manner agreed to in the charter contract. The management committee shall be composed of parents of students enrolled in the school, teachers and administrators working in the school and representatives of any community sponsors, or any combination thereof. A public charter school shall be responsible for its own operations, including, but not limited to, such budget preparation, contracts for services, and personnel matters as are specified in the charter agreement. However, a public charter school may negotiate and contract with the School Board, or any other third party, for the provision of necessary services. Services provided by the School Board must be provided at cost. All purchases made by a public charter school shall be exempt from the Virginia Public Procurement Act, unless otherwise negotiated by contract.

J. Personnel

At the discretion of the School Board, public charter school personnel may be employees of the School Board and shall be selected as agreed in the charter contract. Any personnel not employed by the local school board shall remain subject to the provisions of §§ 22.1-296.1, 22.1-296.2, and 22.1-296.4 of the Code of Virginia. Professional, licensed employees currently employed by the School Board may request an assignment to a public charter school and may be assigned by the School Board to a public charter school for one contract year and reassigned

annually upon the request of the employee and the recommendation of the management committee. Professional, licensed employees assigned to a public charter school shall receive the same employment benefits as such personnel assigned to non-charter schools. Professional, licensed personnel who request assignment to a non-charter school or who are not recommended for reassignment in the public charter school, other than for reasons cited in § 22.1-307 of the Code of Virginia, shall be transferred to a non-charter school according to School Board policy.

The School Board, or in the case of a regional public charter school, relevant school boards may employ such health, mental health, social services, and other related personnel to serve in residential charter schools for at-risk students as determined in the charter agreement; however, the School Board is not required to fund the residential or other services provided by a residential charter school.

The School Board has the final authority to assign professional, licensed personnel to charter or non-charter schools within the division.

K. Funding

The per pupil funding provided to the charter school by the School Board, shall be negotiated in the charter agreement and shall be commensurate with the average school-based costs of educating the students in the existing schools in the division or divisions unless the cost of operating the charter school is less than that average school-based cost. The management committee of an approved charter school shall develop and maintain a strong system for the management of all funds. Such system shall ensure there is a process of accountability for the collection, safeguarding and disbursement of funds.

L. Facilities

As negotiated by contract, the School Board may allow a public charter school to use vacant or unused properties or real estate owned by the School Board. In no event shall a public charter school be required to pay rent for space which is deemed available, as negotiated by contract, in school division facilities. All other costs for the operation and maintenance of the facilities used by the public charter school shall be subject to negotiation between the public charter school and the school division. In no event shall a charter school applicant base its proposed educational program solely on the availability of school division property.

M. Revocation and Renewal of the Charter Contract

The School Board may revoke a charter contract if:

- (1) the public charter school violates the conditions, standards or procedures established in the application;
- (2) the public charter school fails to meet or make reasonable progress toward achievement of the academic or non-academic governance standards as provided in the Charter Schools Accountability Measures Plan;

- (3) the public charter school violates a material term of the charter contract (for example, failing to provide required reports to the School Board);
- (4) the public charter school fails to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- (5) the public charter school violates any provision of law from which it has not been exempted.

A charter contract may be renewed for a period not to exceed five (5) years. The management committee must apply to renew the charter no later than six (6) months prior to the expiration of the charter contract. The application for renewal shall contain:

- (1) a report on the progress of the public charter school in achieving the goals, objectives, program and performance standards for students and other conditions and terms the School Board or relevant school boards required in the charter;
- (2) a financial statement, on forms prescribed by the Board of Education, disclosing the costs of administration, instruction and other spending categories which is written in a way to allow the School Board or relevant school boards and the public to compare such costs to the costs of other schools and comparable organizations; and
- (3) other information the School Board may require.

If a charter contract is revoked or not renewed, or a public charter school is dissolved, the management committee shall be responsible for all financial obligations of the public charter school.

N. Reports

The School Board shall report the following to the Board of Education:

- (1) the grant or denial of public charter school applications, applications for renewal, and the revocation of any charter contract; for any such denial or revocation. The report to the Board of Education shall contain documentation as to the reason for denial or revocation;
- (2) the number of charters granted or denied and the reasons for such denials; and
- (3) whether a public charter school is designed to increase the educational opportunities of at-risk students.

O. Public Participation

- (1) The School Board shall establish a procedure for public notice, and to receive comment on charter school applications to provide an appropriate opportunity for input from parents, teachers, citizens, and other interested

parties. The School Board shall give at least 14 days' notice of its intent to receive public comment on an application.

- (2) The School Board's public charter school policy and procedures shall be posted on the school division's website. A copy of this public charter school policy and procedures shall be made available upon request to all interested parties.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, §§ 22.1-3, 22.1-26, 22.1-212.5 *et seq.* and 22.1-307.

Adopted September 17, 2012

Revised June 16, 2014

**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION  
ARTICLE IV**

**POLICY 5-4.1            GRADE PLACEMENT**

**Entrance**

A pupil who will be age five on or before September 30 of the school year shall enroll in RPS and be classified as a kindergarten pupil except as provided by applicable law.

**Transfer from Non-Accredited Settings**

Pupils transferring from non-accredited private schools, home school, or schools outside the United States will be assessed for grade level placement.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-109; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-30, 8 VAC 20-131-60.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-4.2            PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF PUPILS**

**Generally**

The Virginia Board of Education charges school principals with the ultimate responsibility of assigning pupils to classes, programs, and activities that are designed to promote maximum learning. In accordance with this provision, the school principal is the final authority in all matters of promotion and retention. In making the determination for placement, such factors as reading and math achievement commensurate with ability and social maturation and other requisites necessary to predict success in placement will be considered.

**Promotion and Retention of Elementary Pupils**

All elementary schools shall use the third, fourth and fifth grade Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores as part of a multiple set of criteria for determining the advancement or retention of pupils.

Pupils not passing any portion of the SOL battery tests:

1. will be required to participate in a remediation program that may include a summer program or other extended (day, week, year) program; and
2. will be referred to the appropriate instructional team to determine the mode and extend of the remediation program.

Promotion, placement, or retention will be the decision of the principal with staff and parental input at the conclusion of the remediation program.

**Promotion and Retention of Middle School Pupils**

All middle schools shall use the sixth, seventh and eighth grade SOL test scores as part of a multiple set of criteria for determining the advancement or retention of pupils.



Pupils not passing any portion of the SOL battery tests:

1. will be required to participate in a remediation program that may include a summer program or other extended (day, week, year) program; and
2. will be referred to the appropriate instructional team to determine the mode and extent of the remediation program.

Promotion, placement, or retention will be the decision of the principal with staff and parental input at the conclusion of the remediation program. If a sixth, seventh or eighth grade pupil does not pass all segments of the SOL battery test, a face-to-face meeting of the pupil, parent(s), and school officials is required prior to the pupil's placement or promotion.

Promotion shall be based on successful completion of three out of four core curriculum areas (English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science) for each grade level. SOL test results administered at grades, six, seven, and eight may also be used to determine promotion or retention. Pupils are encouraged to receive strengthening, i.e., summer school, tutoring, etc., in any subject failed. If the pupil fails English and/or Mathematics, he/she may be required to address the deficiency.

A middle school pupil who fails two or more classes in a nine-week period must:

1. have an individual or group meeting with the counselor once every three weeks; and
2. have an individual conference with the teacher of each failed class at least once every three weeks.

### **Promotion and Retention of High School Pupils**

Promotion shall be determined by the successful completion of the required Carnegie units for each grade level and SOL proficiency.

The guidelines for grade placement are as follows:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Credits:</u>
9 to 10	completion of 5 units, and pass 3 core courses
10 to 11	completion of 10 units, and pass 6 core courses
11 to 12	completion of 14 units, and pass 9 core courses

These are minimal requirements that are cumulative in nature. Core courses are English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Each pupil should learn relevant grade subject matter before promotion to the next grade level. For grade levels in which the SOL tests are given, achievement of a passing score on the SOL tests should be considered in addition to promotion/retention policies. Achievement expectations and participation in SOL testing of pupils with disabilities will be guided by provisions of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Each pupil in middle and high school shall take applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction. Pupils who achieve a passing score shall be awarded a verified credit for that course.

Parents shall be notified of unsatisfactory academic progress which might affect a pupil's progression to the next grade level or his/her eligibility for graduation.

A pupil who fails English or two or more classes in a nine-week period must:

1. have an individual or group meeting with the counselor at least once every three weeks; and
2. have an in conference with teacher(s) of courses failed at least once every three weeks.

### **High School Credit End-of-Course SOL Tests**

The following is a description of the credit offerings:

1. Verified Credit: Pupils must pass the SOL test in order to receive verification of the course credit.
2. Course Credit: A standard unit of credit is awarded when a pupil passes a high school credit-bearing course.
3. The following are possible scenarios detailing pupils receiving verified and/or standard units of credit after completion of a credit-bearing course:
  - a. Pass course for the year and pass SOL test: Pupils scoring at or above the SOL proficiency level as established by the state and passing the course requirements will receive verified credit for the course and a standard unit of credit toward graduation.
  - b. Pass course for the year and fail SOL test: Pupils who pass the course and who score below the SOL proficiency level as established by the state, shall receive a standard unit of credit (not verified) for the course and shall participate in a remediation program designed by an appropriate instructional team. Seniors who have earned the necessary verified credits for graduation are exempt from this remediation requirement.
  - c. Fail course for the year and either pass or fail SOL test: Pupils who fail the course and either pass or fail the SOL test will earn no credit and the course must be repeated if the credit is required to meet graduation requirements.

As school accreditation is tied to pupil success in SOL tests, schools will be expected to explore a variety of proactive means of promotion pupil success on SOL tests.

### **Special Education**

Determinations regarding promotion of special education pupils shall be made consistent with applicable law and relevant IEP.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-19, 22.1-153.13:1, 22.1-253.13:3, 22.1-253.13:4, 22.1-254.01; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-30, 8 VAC 20-131-80, 8 VAC 20-131-90, 8 VAC 20-131-100, 8 VAC 20-131-110, 8 VAC 20-131-210; Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400, et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-4.3 GRADUATION AND SOL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Standards of Learning (SOL), End-of-Course Tests, and Verified Credits**

#### ***Generally***

The Commonwealth of Virginia has established a set of K-12 subject-area SOLs with corresponding end-of-course SOL tests. All pupils enrolled in a grade eight course are required to take a corresponding SOL test in the spring. In addition, all middle and high school pupils enrolled in applicable high school credit-bearing courses are required to take corresponding end-of-course tests.

#### ***Remediation***

Remediation opportunities (during and after school and summer school) will be provided for pupils failing one or more of the SOL tests. Pupils and parents should check with principals in selecting appropriate programs.

#### ***Earning a Verified Credit***

Pupils who pass a course and achieve a passing score on an end-of-course test are awarded a verified unit of credit in that course. A verified credit is defined as 140 clock hours of instruction, successful completion of the course requirements, and the achievement of a passing score on the SOL test for that course or on a substitute assessment. The Virginia Board of Education has established the number of standard credits and verified credits required for the Standard Diploma and for the Advanced Studies Diploma.

#### ***Sequential Electives***

Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, at least two sequential electives are required for the Standard and Modified Standard Diplomas. Guidelines are as follows:

1. Sequential electives may be in any discipline as long as the courses are not specifically required for graduation.
2. Courses used to satisfy the one unit of credit in a fine or practical art may be used to partially satisfy this requirement.
3. An exploratory course followed by an introductory course may not be used to satisfy the requirement.
4. An introductory course followed by another level of the same course of study may be used.
5. Sequential electives do not have to be taken in consecutive years.

#### ***Limited English Proficiency***

Participation in SOL testing by pupils identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) will be guided by a school-based committee convened to make such determinations. In kindergarten through eighth grade, LEP pupils may be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in each of the four core areas. Pupils with disabilities for whom participation in the SOL testing program is deemed inappropriate according to their IEP or 504 Plan will be expected to demonstrate proficiency on an alternative assessment prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education in accordance with federal laws and regulations.

### ***Retaking SOL Assessments***

Eligible pupils may qualify for an expedited retake of an end-of-course SOL assessment to earn a verified credit where the pupil meets the criteria established by the Virginia Board of Education.

Under the criteria established by the Virginia Board of Education, the pupil must:

1. need the SOL test for verified credit; and
2. have passed the course associated with the test, and one of the following:
  - a. failed the SOL test by a narrow margin;
  - b. failed the SOL test by any margin and have extenuating circumstances that would warrant re-testing; or
  - c. did not sit for the regularly scheduled SOL test for legitimate reasons.

For purposes of these criteria, a “narrow margin” is defined as a scaled score of 375-399. The division superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for making the determination of what constitutes “extenuating circumstances” and “legitimate reasons” for purposes of an expedited re-test of an end-of-course SOL assessment.

### **Transfer Pupils**

A secondary school shall accept credits received from other accredited secondary schools, including summer schools, special sessions, schools accredited through the Virginia Council for Private Education, and educational programs operated by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Credit also shall be accepted for courses satisfactorily completed in accredited colleges and universities when prior written approval of the principal has been granted. Course credits earned for online courses taken in the Department of Education’s Virtual Virginia program shall transfer to Virginia public schools in accordance with provisions of the standards for accreditation.

Records of transferred pupils shall be sent directly to the school receiving the pupil upon request of the receiving school in accordance with the provisions of the "Management of the Pupil's Scholastic Records in Virginia."

### **Notice of Credits Needed for Graduation and of the Right to a Free Public Education**

The School Board will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of rising eleventh and twelfth grade pupils of:

1. The number and subject area requirements of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation pursuant to the Standards of Accreditation; and
2. The remaining number and subject area requirements of such units of credit the individual pupil requires for graduation.

The School Board will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of pupils who fail to graduate or who fail to achieve the number of verified units of credit required for graduation as provided in the Standards of Accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1 of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the pupil who does not graduate or achieve such verified units of credit is a pupil for whom English is a second language, the School Board will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the pupil’s opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Virginia Code § 22.1-5.

The School Board will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of pupils with disabilities who have an IEP and who fail to meet the requirements for a standard or advanced studies diploma of the pupil’s right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Virginia Code §

22.1-213, et seq., and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, et seq.

## **Graduation Requirements**

In order to graduate from RPS with a diploma or other certificate, a pupil must meet all applicable requirements set forth in the Standards of Accreditation (SOA), Standards of Quality (SOQ), and RPS policies and procedures.

### ***Diploma Options***

The requirements for a pupil to earn a diploma are those in effect when he/she enters ninth grade for the first time. The available diploma options are as follows:

1. Standard Diploma;
2. Advanced Studies Diploma;
3. Modified Standard Diploma;
4. Applied Studies Diploma; and
5. General Achievement Diploma.

### ***Other Certificates***

The available certificate options are as follows:

1. General Educational Development Certificate; and
2. Certificate of Program Completion.

A definition of each type of available diploma and certificate option may be found in RPS' Program of Studies Guide.

## **Diploma Seals**

As of September 2006, the most recent graduation requirements include the following diploma seals and awards for pupils who demonstrate exemplary academic performance and/or outstanding achievement:

1. ***Standard Diploma:*** The Virginia Board of Education Seal on a 22-credit diploma requires an "A" average.
2. ***Advanced Studies Diploma:*** Pupils with an average of "B" or better who successfully complete college-level coursework that will earn the pupil at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or Dual Enrollment courses shall receive the Governor's Seal on his/her diploma.
3. ***Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma:*** The Virginia Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal will be awarded to pupils who complete a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" average in those courses; or (i) pass an examination in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification

from a recognized industry, trade or professional association or (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

4. ***Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma:*** The Virginia Board of Education’s Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology will be awarded to pupils who (i) satisfy all of the Mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II, two verified units of credit) with a “B” average or better; and (ii) either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry or trade or professional association; (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (c) pass an examination approved by the Virginia Board of Education that confers college-level credit in a technology science area.
  
5. ***Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma:*** The Virginia Board of Education’s Seal for Excellence in Civics Education will be awarded to pupils who earn either a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma and: (i) complete Virginia and United States History and Virginia and United States Government courses with a grade of “B” or higher; and (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by School Board policies; and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that would satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include: (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or a similar youth organization; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-5, 22.1-213, et seq., 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-253.13:4, 22.1-254, 22.1-254.2, 22.1-254.02; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-30, 8 VAC 20-131-50, 8 VAC 20-131-60, 8 VAC 20-131-70, 8 VAC 20-131-110, 8 VAC 20-680-10, 8 VAC 20-680-20; Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, et seq.

Adopted September 7, 2010  
Revised/Adopted July 13, 2015

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**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION  
ARTICLE V**

**POLICY 5-5.1 SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS**

**Generally**

Guidance counseling shall be provided for pupils to ensure that a program of studies contributing to the pupil’s academic achievement and meeting the graduation requirements is being implemented. The counseling program shall strive to devote a minimum of sixty percent of its time to such counseling of pupils.

**Available Counseling Services**

*Generally*

Pursuant to the Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation, RPS shall make reasonably available, with current resources, the following guidance and counseling services to all pupils:

1. Academic Counseling – counseling which assists pupils and their parents in acquiring knowledge of the curricular choices available to pupils, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities;
2. Career Counseling – counseling which helps to acquire information and develop a plan of action concerning employment, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities;
3. Personal/Social Counseling – counseling which assists pupils in developing an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities and aptitudes; and
4. Employment Counseling and Placement Services – counseling which furnishes information relating to the employment opportunities available to pupils graduating from or leaving RPS. Such information will be provided to secondary pupils and will include all types of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, the military, career education schools, and the teaching profession. In providing such services, the School Board will consult and cooperate with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Department of Labor and Industry, local business and labor organizations, and career schools.

*Parental Objection*

No pupil shall be required to participate in any counseling program to which the pupil’s parents or guardians object.

**Notification of Available Counseling**

Written notification to parents or guardians, at least annually, regarding available counseling services shall include the purpose and general description of the programs, information regarding ways parents or guardians may review materials to be used in guidance and counseling programs at their child’s school, and information about the procedures by which parents or guardians may limit their child’s participation in such programs.

## **Scope of Services**

No use shall be made of counseling techniques that are beyond the scope of the professional licensure and/or training of counselors, including hypnosis or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally only appropriate in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology.

## **Confidentiality**

Information and records of personal/social counseling shall be kept confidential and separate from a pupil's educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental/guardian consent or as otherwise provided by law.

## **Consent**

### ***Consent not Required***

Parental/guardian consent is not required for short duration personal/social counseling which is needed to maintain order, discipline or a productive learning environment.

### ***Opting Out***

Personal/Social Counseling – The procedures by which parents or guardians can elect to have their child not participate (opt-out) in any counseling program will be communicated, in writing, to parents or guardians within three weeks of the opening of school each year.

Parents or guardians may elect to have their child not participate (opt-out) in any small group counseling or ongoing, structured individual counseling in the personal/social domain following initial contacts. This must be done in writing and submitted to the school principal or school counselor.

## **Psychological Services**

The services of the school psychologist(s) are available to pupils who have been identified as in need of these services.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-209; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-620-1-, 8 VAC 20-131-240(D).

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## **POLICY 5-5.2            SCHOOL LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTERS**

Each school shall maintain an organized library media center as the resource center of the school and provide a unified program of media services and activities for pupils and teachers.

School libraries/media centers shall be open to pupils and teachers throughout the day and shall contain collections sufficient to meet research, inquiry, and reading requirements of the instructional program and general pupil interest. The collection shall include:

1. print materials;
2. electronic resources;
3. non-print materials; and



4. equipment

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-190.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-5.3            COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS**

### **Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials**

In compliance with the Copyright Act of 1976, including the Guidelines for Classroom Copying and the Guidelines for the Educational Use of Music, copyrighted materials shall not be duplicated by RPS employees or on RPS equipment, whether print or non-print, in violation of the exclusive rights of the holders of the copyright on such materials. The division superintendent shall designate a person responsible for disseminating copyright administrative procedures to RPS employees.

Copyrighted materials may be duplicated with the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Teachers shall get permission to use materials of the copyright owner whenever possible and feasible, unless the use of materials falls within a “fair use” as defined by law. Permission to duplicate copyright material shall be placed on file in the office of the person responsible for disseminating copyright administrative procedures for the school division. RPS assumes no liability for infringement of copyright by individual employees.

### **Computer Software Copyright Compliance**

The School Board recognizes and supports the limitations imposed by copyright laws. These laws specifically prohibit unauthorized duplication of software except to provide for archival back-up copies.

Therefore, the School Board declares it to be inappropriate to use “pirated” or otherwise illegally obtained software on RPS equipment, whether for instruction, administrative or any other purpose. Furthermore, use of RPS equipment to make unauthorized copies of RPS owned, privately owned, or illegally obtained software is prohibited.

To minimize the motivation to use illegal copies of software in instructional programs and administrative systems, RPS is committed to working with software producers and distributors to encourage appropriate pricing, previewing, and replacement policies for software purchases.

The division superintendent or his/her designee shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-70; 17 U.S.C. §§ 101, et seq., specifically, 17 W.S.C. §§ 106, 107, 117, and 501.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-5.4            HOMEWORK**

Homework designed to increase pupil achievement is a vital means of supplementing, reinforcing, and enriching the formal instructional program. Teachers shall assign homework assignments which foster independence and creativity while increasing growth in academic skills, promoting responsibility, and developing good work habits. Pupils in grades one through twelve shall be assigned homework related to their instructional targets. Each elementary school shall provide study skills by grade four to allow successful completion of homework. Teachers shall plan homework assignments which foster independence, promote responsibility, and develop good study habits.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-253.13:7 (C) (5); Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-220.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-5.5            TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

### **Textbooks:    Selection and Adoption**

The School Board shall adopt textbooks subject to regulations of the Virginia Board of Education. The Virginia Board of Education publishes a multiple list of textbooks for each grade level and subjects that are correlated with the Virginia Standards of Learning and from which the School Board adopts textbooks for use in the school division. The School Board may adopt books that are not on the state-adopted list, provided the selection is in accordance with specified guidelines.

The evaluation of textbooks shall be conducted by an adoption committee that is representative of the Department of Instruction, building administrators, classroom teachers, and parents of pupils in the subject fields in which the adoptions are to be made.

All teachers of the subject fields in which adoptions are to be made shall make textbooks being considered for adoption available for review and evaluations. Textbooks being considered for adoption also shall be available for review by parents or guardians and community members. The School Board will adopt textbooks for use in RPS based upon evaluation information and recommendations of the adoption committee as presented by the division superintendent or his/her designee.

### **Free Textbooks for Pupils**

Free textbooks shall be provided for pupils in RPS. Each pupil who has been in attendance in the school division shall return all books at the end of the course. Payment shall be made for books missing or damaged.

### **Instructional Materials**

Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of instructional materials at the appropriate levels to introduce, reinforce, and assess learning in the classroom. The purpose of this policy is to promote a collaborative review of materials that, like textbooks, will be utilized on a broad basis across the school division. The purpose of this policy is not to restrict individual teachers in their selection of daily instructional materials.

The School Board shall review and approve guidelines and procedures for the selection, evaluation, approval, and use of instructional materials. The division superintendent or his/her designee will periodically review guidelines and procedures and bring recommendations for changes to the School Board.

The process for the review and selection of instructional materials (other than textbooks) that are to be used on a division-wide basis shall involve an evaluation committee that includes professional staff, citizens, and, when appropriate, pupils.

### **Supplementary Materials Selection and Use**

The School Board delegates the responsibility for the selection and use of supplemental materials other than those selected for division-wide use to individual teachers and schools. Selection and use shall be in accordance with policies and regulations of the Virginia Board of Education. The same care shall be exercised in the selection of supplemental materials as in the selection of other types of instructional materials.

Materials used by pupils under the guidance of teachers to extend, expand, and supplement basal materials constitute an integral part of the instructional program. Supplemental materials are used to assist the teaching and learning process and include such items as magazines, newspapers, charts, pictures, workbooks, kits, videos, and computer software. Materials selected for supplemental use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used.

Teachers must carefully review materials prior to use and exercise a high degree of professional judgment in their selection and use of supplemental materials to ensure that the use of such materials serves to both support and complement the basic educational objectives within the specific subject areas and classrooms. All materials selected will be appropriate to the age level of the pupil and shall not contain subject matter not suitable for the public school environment, such as sexually explicit material. Principals shall approve all videos to be shown in classrooms to ensure that their content is appropriate and aligned with instructional objectives. Any such supplemental materials shall only be used at times not otherwise scheduled or required for curriculum-based instruction.

The principal and/or division superintendent or his/her designee shall have final authority to determine whether instructional staff will use specific materials.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-238, 22.1-243; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-170-10, 8 VAC 20-230-10, 8 VAC 20-230-20, 8 VAC 20-230-30.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-5.6                    COMPLAINTS REGARDING INSTURCTIONAL MATERIALS AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

### **Challenging Controversial Instructional Materials**

Parents, guardians, and other community members have the opportunity to request reconsideration of selected materials or to challenge the use of selected materials through the following procedure:

1. complete the “Challenge of Controversial Instructional Materials” form;

2. submit the completed form to the building principal
3. the building principal will convene a faculty committee to review the challenged material(s);
4. the committee will recommend the continued use of the removal of the challenged material(s); and
5. the building principal will inform the parent, guardian, or community member who initiated the challenge and forward a report of the committee decision to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Accountability.

If the parent, guardian, or community member is dissatisfied with the outcome of the challenge, he/she may then present that challenge to the Chief Academic Officer, who will review the challenged material and make a recommendation regarding the material. If the parent, guardian, or community member is still dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may appeal to the division superintendent or his/her designee and then to the School Board.

### **Alternate Selections**

If a parent or guardian objects to his/her child reading specific selections, teachers may provide alternate selections or activities for pupils on an individual basis. This provision should not be interpreted as excusing pupils from basic textbook materials necessary for the completion of a course of study.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-253.13:7 (C)(2); Virginia Administrative Code, 9 VAC 20-170-10.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-5.7            FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS**

### **Generally**

Field trips shall serve a worthwhile purpose related to classroom instruction. Field trips extend the learning opportunities provided in the regular instructional program and provide opportunities for competition for pupils in extracurricular programs. Efforts shall be made to ensure that no pupil shall be denied the opportunity to participate in an approved field trip due to lack of funds or because of minor disciplinary infractions. Except in unusual circumstances, all pupils in a given class, club or grade level shall be given the opportunity to participate in any field trip requested and approved for that group in which the pupil is a member.

### **Approval**

#### ***Local***

All local field trips require the approval of the school principal.

#### ***In-State***

All in-state field trips require the approval of the school principal and the appropriate Executive Director of Elementary and/or Secondary Education. Principals are expected to consider the educational value of the field trip, the availability of the learning opportunities, and the distance, time and expense involved in the field trip. Principals are also responsible for following all procedures for requesting approval of field trips. Only properly insured modes of transportation are to be used for field trips.

### ***Out-of-State Field Trips***

All out-of-state field trips require the approval of the school principal and the appropriate Executive Director of Elementary and/or Secondary Education with approval from the Chief Academic Officer.

### ***Field Trips to Foreign Countries***

All field trips to foreign countries, including exchange programs or other sponsored programs, regardless of the age of the pupils participating in the trip, require the prior written approval of the division superintendent or his/her designee and the Department of Risk Management. All field trips abroad must relate to the division's instructional program.

No agent, employee, or pupil, while on School Board property, is authorized to promote, encourage, or solicit individuals or groups for field trips to foreign countries without the written consent of the division superintendent or his/her designee.

For the purposes of this policy, a foreign country shall mean any territory, principality, or nation not under the direct governance or within the boundaries of the fifty states of the United States of America.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-176.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## ***POLICY 5-5.8                      EMPLOYMENT AND WORK-TRAINING CERTIFICATES***

The Commissioner of Labor and Industry shall prescribe the procedures for minors and employers concerning issuance and maintenance of employment certificates. Employment certificates shall be issued by the Department of Labor and Industry only upon application of the child desiring employment. No fee shall be charged for issuing any such certificate or for rendering any services in respect thereto. No person shall, with the intent to assist a minor to procure employment, make a false statement by any means, including by submitting falsified forms electronically, to any employer or to any representative of the Department of Labor in order to obtain the issuance of an employment certificate.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 40.1-92.

Adopted September 7, 2010  
Revised July 15, 2013

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## ***POLICY 5-5.9                      ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS***

Assembly programs may be scheduled at the discretion of the school principal. The School Board encourages the practice of bringing in guest speakers who will offer thought-provoking messages to pupils that stimulate their interest in education.

The School Board recognizes that school administrators and principals cannot be held accountable for each word expressed by a guest speaker. However, guest speakers should be informed of the purpose of pupil assemblies.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-210.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**SECTION V – INSTRUCTION  
ARTICLE VI**

**POLICY 5-6.1 REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Each RPS pupil shall receive a report of scholastic progress and attendance within five school days of the end of each grading period. Teachers shall have periodic conferences with parents of pupils not making satisfactory progress and advise them as to remedial measures to improve classroom performance.

All middle and high schools are required to give mid-term reports to all pupils. All teachers will send mid-term reports home on the same day.

In addition to the notification referenced above, the School Board shall provide the annual notices described in Policy 5-4.3.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-253.13:4; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-30, 8 VAC 20-131-220.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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**POLICY 5-6.2 PUPIL EVALUATION AND GRADING**

The School Board of the City of Richmond shall implement a division-wide uniform grading system for report cards and permanent records. Every student’s grades shall be reported to the student’s parent or guardian through quarterly, written report cards. In addition, instructional staff shall use interim reporting and other informal means of keeping parents and guardians apprised of their student’s general academic performance throughout the school year.

For the 2013 – 2014 school year, grades, including the final average, will be assigned according to the following numerical scale:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Numerical Scale</u>
A	92 – 100
B	83 – 91
C	74 – 82
D	65 – 73
F	0 – 64

Beginning with the 2014 – 2015 school year, grades, including the final average, will be assigned according to the following numerical scale:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Numerical Scale</u>
A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	0 – 59

The division superintendent is directed to develop procedures to implement this policy.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-220.

**POLICY 5-6.3 CLASS RANKINGS AND HONOR ROLLS**

**Calculation of Grade Point Average and Determination of Class Rank**

A pupil’s grade point average (GPA) and class rank shall be computed for the following purposes:

1. to determine honor graduates;
2. to determine if a pupil is eligible for the diploma seal awarded by the Virginia Board of Education;
3. to communicate to college admissions offices and other agencies designated by the pupil and/or parent/guardian; and
4. to determine the valedictorian(s) and salutatorian(s) for the graduating class.

Class rank will be determined by assigning the pupil with the highest GPA the rank of number one; the second highest, the rank of number two, etc. In cases where more than one pupil has the same numerical average, all pupils with that average will be given the same rank. The next highest average will assume the next rank position.

Example:

Pupil No. 1	3.9880	Rank 1
Pupil No. 2	3.9880	Rank 1
Pupil No. 3	3.8972	Rank 2
Pupil No. 4	3.8972	Rank 2

The pupil with the next highest average will have the rank of three in the class.

Pupils are ranked numerically, in descending order, according to GPA at the end of each high school year in grades nine through eleven and at the end of the first semester of the senior year. All credit bearing subjects will be used to compute the GPA and class rank. Ninth grade classes taken in middle school shall also be included in the computation. Courses with the letter grade of “I” or “P” and courses specifically flagged for exclusion (i.e., “dummy” courses used for scheduling such as “Leave Early”, “Media Assistant”, etc.) are excluded from GPA calculation. GPA and class rank are reported to colleges and universities on a 4.0 scale at the end of grade eleven and at the end of the first semester of grade twelve. Pupils transferring during the junior or senior year shall receive a GPA and a standing as to percentage (i.e., top 5%, top 10%, etc.) but shall not be included in the numerical ranking.

The GPA is determined as follows:

1.  $\text{Points} \times \text{Credits} = \text{Calculated Points}$
2.  $\text{Total Calculated Points} / \text{Total Credits Attempted} = \text{GPA}$

The chart below indicates the grading scale and grade values. Honors/Accelerated and Advanced Placement courses are assigned weighted values.



<b>RPS Grading Scale</b>		<b>Aligned Curriculum (M)</b>	<b>Regular</b>	<b>Honors/ Accelerated (H/A)</b>	<b>Advanced Placement (AP)</b>	<b>Dual Enrollment</b>
A Outstanding	100 – 92	2	4	5	6	6
B Above Average	91 - 83	1.5	3	4	5	5
C Average	82 – 74	1	2	3	4	4
D Below Average	73 – 65	0.5	1	2	3	3
F Unsatisfactory	64 – 0	0	0	0	0	0

### **Selection of Valedictorian(s) and Salutatorian(s)**

The pupil(s) with the highest rank at the end of the first semester of the senior year will be the valedictorian(s) of the graduating class. The pupil(s) with the second highest rank at the end of the first semester of the senior year will be the salutatorian(s).

In those instances where two or more pupils have an identical GPA that results in a rank of number one, the pupils shall be designated co-valedictorians. Where there are two or more pupils with an identical GPA that results in a rank of number two, the pupils shall be designated as co-salutatorians for the class.

To be eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian, a pupil must complete the last four consecutive semesters prior to graduation in the high school from which he or she will be graduating. Long-term homebound, exchange and early graduation pupils shall not be eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian.

This policy regarding the eligibility of pupils for valedictorian and salutatorian became effective with the graduating class of 2005.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:4; Virginia Administrative Code, 8 VAC 20-131-50.

Adopted September 7, 2010

### **POLICY 5-6.4 TESTING PROGRAMS**

The School Board directs that the division superintendent or his/her designee develop and implement an accountability program to monitor and assess continuously the achievement of RPS pupils. The measures used shall include, but not be limited to:

1. administering all assessments mandated by the state, applicable national assessments, and state-by-state assessments, as well as criterion referenced tests, teacher-made tests, and alternative, performance-based instruments;

2. training of teachers and principals to prepare pupils for tests and assessments, and to provide methods for assessing classroom work, homework, and pupil progress; and
3. reporting annually to the public results from the state assessment program.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-253.13:3, 22.1-253.13:4; Virginia Administrative Code, VAC 8 20-131-30.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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## **POLICY 5-6.5            ATTEANDANCE**

Richmond Public Schools is committed to providing a quality education for all pupils. Regular school attendance is important to the academic progress of pupils and the development of a healthy school environment. For this reason, parental support of school attendance is both expected and required.

Under the direction of the division superintendent or his/her designee, RPS Attendance Officer(s), in collaboration with school principals and social workers, will enforce school attendance by all children and youth, ages five to eighteen.

**LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §22.1-279.3.

Adopted September 7, 2010

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