

OPEN HIGH SCHOOL

Student & Parent Guidebook

2022-2023



Open High School
600 S. Pine St.
Richmond, VA 23220
(804) 780-4661

Official 2022-23 School Year Calendar - Revised

2022

July 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2		
3	4*	5	6	7	8	9
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31						

August 2022						
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September 2022						
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November 2022						
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26	27	28	29	30		

July 4: Independence Day (RPS Closed)
 August 19: Orientation for New-to-RPS Teachers
 August 22-23: School-Based Professional Learning Days
 August 24: Choice-Based Professional Learning Day
 August 25-26: Teacher Planning Days
August 29: First Day of School
 August 29-September 1: Culture & Relationship Building Week
 September 2: Pre-Labor Day (RPS Closed)
 September 5: Labor Day (RPS Closed)
 October 5: Yom Kippur (RPS Closed)
 October 24: Diwali (RPS Closed)
 November 4: End of First Quarter
 November 7: Wellness Day (RPS Closed)
 November 8: Professional Learning & Caregiver/Teacher Conference Day (Schools Closed for Students)
November 23-25: Thanksgiving Break
December 19-30: Winter Break
 (Schools closed, see * for 12-month staff holidays)
 January 16: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (RPS Closed)
 January 27: Student Half Day/Teacher Planning Half Day
 End of Second Quarter/First Semester
 March 10: Professional Learning & Caregiver/Teacher Conference Day (Schools Closed for Students)
 March 31: End of 3rd Quarter
April 3-7: Spring Break (No Classes)
 May 29: Memorial Day (RPS Closed)
June 9: Two-Hour Early Release/Last Day of School
 June 9: Juneteenth (RPS Closed)
 July 4: Independence Day (RPS Closed)

December 2022						
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January 2023						
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April 2023						
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May 2023						
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June 2023						
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Scan the QR code with your phone to view our calendar, meetings, and other important updates on our website.

Color Legend

- Regular School Days
- Quarter & Semester Beginning and End Dates
- Holidays and Breaks
- *12-Month Employees Off for Holidays & Breaks
- Summer Fridays Schedule for Designated Staff
- Professional Learning Days (Schools Closed for Students)
- Teacher Planning Days (Schools Closed for Students)

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HISTORY

Open High School was established in 1972 as an alternative public high school in Richmond, Virginia. Established on the premise that students are self-directed, independent learners, Open High School offers a college preparatory education to approximately 200 high school students in a small personal setting. Successful students develop the initiative, independence and responsibility to manage an individualized schedule and maneuver around the city. An emphasis on curiosity, creativity, and community guides our program's direction. Teachers work collaboratively to make lessons relevant to students and real world situations. All classes are geared towards preparation for the upper level rigor of Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment course offerings.

MISSION

The mission of Open High is to develop responsible, resilient, creative, and compassionate students who value intellectual inquiry and social responsibility.

OHS DISPOSITIONS

During the 2015-2016 school year, teachers came together to define ten dispositions critical to academic success, independent learning, and self-actualization. These "habits of mind" reflect our mission statement and are supported through our academics, our representative structure, and our Thursday Elective program.

PERSEVERANCE

Persistence and Resilience. The willingness to work through difficult tasks or situations. The ability to remain whole through adversity.

INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY

The desire to explore topics further. A questioning mind.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

The ability to work well with others. A sense of open-mindedness. Strong listening skills.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A participatory nature. Commitment to OHS community values such as volunteerism, class and town meeting attendance. A willingness to give back.

SELF-ADVOCACY

A person who can ask for what they need. The ability to speak up for one's needs and desires.

CREATIVITY

Original expression of any kind. The ability to think "outside the box" to dream of better or different ways of being and doing.

ORGANIZATION

The ability to create systems that ensure the completion of tasks in a timely manner. Organization includes punctuality, time management and study skills.

SELF-REFLECTION

The ability to recognize personal strengths and weaknesses and to create goals for improvement based on an honest understanding of self.

ARTICULATION

An effective communicator. A person who thinks before they speak, then speaks clearly and confidently.

RESPONSIBILITY

The display of self-governing behaviors. Accountability to systems and ideas that define individuals, our school, and our school division.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Statement of Principles is a partnership between parents, students, and school. We ask students, parents, and family heads to sign and return this statement as an indication of commitment to our program.

WHEREAS, Open High School is a community based school dedicated to the educational, emotional and social growth of its students, and **WHEREAS**, Open High is dedicated to the development of shared partnerships within its community, and **WHEREAS** the students, parents, staff and community are major participants in achieving the objectives of Open High,

I understand that education is a team effort, and I agree to the following guidelines as an expression of my commitment. In doing so, I will commit to maintaining a strong, positive environment for learning and for growth.

PROGRAM: I agree to attend and actively participate in all Family, Town, Class Meetings and Thursday classes. I will also participate in family projects, class projects, Senior Project, and other school-related activities. I understand that these activities are instrumental in creating a strong environment of student engagement.

BEHAVIOR: I agree to follow the Richmond Public Schools' Student Code of Responsible Ethics and be a respectful member of the Open High Community. I promise to stand up to bullying and be a positive advocate for myself and others.

ATTENDANCE: I agree to meet Richmond City Public School's attendance policies and will attend each class regularly and on time, as I understand this promotes learning and responsibility.

VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY SERVICE: I agree that I will perform a minimum of 30 volunteer hours for each year I am in attendance at Open High School and participate fully in any school sanctioned community service projects, as I understand these speak to what we value as a school and a community.

ACADEMICS: I agree that I will work hard academically, meeting the objectives for each class and will work with the expectation of graduating with an Advanced Studies Diploma. I will abstain from any dishonesty in my academic work, including plagiarism, cheating, or misrepresentation of my work. I will follow the steps of any academic sanctions given to me, attend tutoring if I am struggling, and be committed to completing my own work with the highest honor and effort.

WHEREAS, the students of Open High school are called to demonstrate respect, integrity, and fairness. I will respect others' opinions, space, and personal property at all times. By signing this I also am demonstrating my commitment to the Open High Dispositions.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All students attending Open High School are programmed to earn the Advanced Studies Diploma. For information about the standard diploma, please visit the [Virginia Department of Education](#) website. To graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma a student must earn at least 26 standard units of credit and five verified units of credit. Students earn *standard credits* by successfully completing required and elective courses. The majority of courses offered by RPS are equal to 1.0 course credit. Students earn *verified credits* by successfully completing required courses and passing associated end-of-course SOL tests or other assessments approved by

the State Board of Education. If a student does not pass an SOL, they may be eligible to retake the SOL test after receiving remediation.

Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-51) for Students Entering the Ninth Grade for the First Time in 2018-2019 and Beyond

Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits	Specifications
English	4	2	N/A
Mathematics	4	1	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: algebra I, geometry, algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.
Laboratory Science	4	1	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and shall include interdisciplinary courses that incorporate Standards of Learning content from multiple academic areas. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science course credit.
History and Social Sciences	4	1	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include Virginia and U.S. history, Virginia and U.S. government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.
World Language	3	0	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.
Health and Physical Education	2	0	N/A
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Ed	1	0	Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a career and technical credit.
Economics & Personal Finance	1	0	N/A
Electives	3	0	Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.
Total Credits	26	5	N/A

Additional Requirements for Graduation

- **Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate Course or Career and Technical Education Credential** - In accordance with the Standards of Quality, students shall either (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course or (ii) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the advanced studies diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.
- **Virtual Course** - Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

- **Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED)** - Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in 8VAC20-131-420 B.
- **Demonstration of the five Cs** - Students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board.

State Assessment Program & Verified Credits

All students enrolled in a course that has a SOL test must take the test until they have met their verified credit requirement for that subject area and met all federal accountability requirements.

END-OF-COURSE STANDARDS OF LEARNING TESTS AVAILABLE FOR EARNING VERIFIED CREDITS			
ENGLISH*	MATH	LAB SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
Reading	Algebra I**	Earth Science	World History to 1500 A.D.
Writing	Geometry	Biology***	World History from 1500 A.D.
	Algebra II	Chemistry	World Geography
			Virginia and U.S. History

*Students should have completed course instruction in the SOL for English 9, 10, and 11 before attempting the EOC Reading and Writing tests.

**Students who completed Algebra I in middle school will take the Geometry or the Algebra II SOL EOC test in high school to meet federal accountability requirements.; those that take Geometry in middle school will take Algebra II SOL EOC test in high school to meet federal accountability requirements.

***All students who take Biology will take the Biology SOL EOC test to meet federal accountability requirements even if they have already met the requirement for verified credits in Science.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

RPS offers a wide range of Advanced Placement (AP) courses to all students at every RPS high school. Though typically taken in 11th and 12th grade, students may enroll in these courses at any grade level as long as they meet course-specific prerequisites. All students who take an AP course are expected to take the AP exam at the end of the course; RPS will cover the cost of the exam. Students earning a qualifying score may earn college credit and, in some cases, the exams can be used as a substitute for the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. Students who earn a high enough score on their AP exam may be eligible to receive college credit, advanced placement or both at most colleges across the country.

2023 AP Exam Dates

Subject	Date	Time
AP US Government & Politics	May 1	8:00 AM
AP Environmental Science	May 2	8:00 AM
AP English Literature	May 3	8:00 AM

AP Human Geography	May 4	8:00 AM
AP Seminar	May 5	12:00 PM
AP Statistics	May 5	12:00 PM
AP European History	May 5	8:00 AM
AP US History	May 5	8:00 AM
AP Art History	May 5	12:00 AM
AP Calculus AB	May 8	8:00 AM
AP Computer Science Principles	May 8	12:00 PM
AP English Language	May 9	8:00 AM
AP Spanish Language	May 10	8:00 AM
AP Biology	May 10	12:00 PM
AP World History: Modern	May 11	8:00 AM

- May 1, 2023 (11:59 p.m. ET) is the deadline for:
 - AP Seminar and AP Research students to submit performance tasks as final and their presentations to be scored by their AP Seminar or AP Research teachers.
 - AP Computer Science Principles students to submit their Create performance task as final.
- May 5, 2023 (8 p.m. ET), is the deadline for AP Art and Design digital portfolios to be submitted to the AP Program. May 5 is also the last day to gather 2-D Art and Design and Drawing students to assemble physical portfolios.

EARLY COLLEGE ACADEMY AT REYNOLDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Early College Academy (ECA) at Reynolds Community College provides RPS high school students the opportunity to earn an Associate Degree while completing requirements for their high school diploma concurrently. Students can apply to the ECA program in the 10th grade through their school counseling office. Once accepted, students begin college coursework for the Associate Degree during their 11th and 12th grade year at the Downtown Campus of JSRCC (700 E. Jackson Street, Richmond, VA 23219). Classes are taught by Reynolds Community College professors and are held in the morning Monday through Friday, after which students return to their school for the remainder of their high school classes. Transportation to and from the Reynolds campus and on-site breakfast is provided by RPS. The cost of this program is provided by RPS at no charge to students; however, students will be responsible for covering the cost of courses that have to be retaken due to failure to complete the course successfully. Dual enrollment students must participate in all required activities, including summer orientation, and demonstrate satisfactory academic performance in order to remain eligible for continued participation. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 after each semester to continue in the program.

POST-SECONDARY ASSESSMENTS

RPS provides access to certain assessments needed for an array of post-secondary preparation and enrollment:

PSAT 8/9

The PSAT 8/9 tests the same skills as the SAT, PSAT, and PSAT/NMSQT but is geared towards 8th and 9th graders. It measures whether students are on track for college and provides valuable information about strengths and areas for improvement. *All RPS 9th graders are required to take the PSAT 8/9 at no cost to students.*

PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a co-sponsored program by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The PSAT is a standardized test that provides first-hand practice for the SAT. It also gives students a chance to enter the National Merit Scholarship program. The PSAT measures critical reading skills, critical reasoning skills, math problem solving skills and writing skills. These are skills that students acquire over many years, both in and out of school, and do not require recall of specific facts. The PSAT enables students and families to understand their progress towards college and career readiness. *All RPS high school students will take the PSAT annually in grades 10 and 11 at no cost to students.*

SAT

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is a standardized test designed to assess a high school student's readiness for post-secondary opportunities. The SAT is also used by many college/universities as part of their application process. All 11th graders are expected to take the exam during SAT School Day each spring at no cost to students. Students wishing to take the SAT multiple times are encouraged to do so at their own expense, and our School Counselor can provide support in requesting fee waivers.

DAILY SCHEDULE

For the 2022-2023 school year, we will return to our pre-pandemic, hybrid schedule with Even and Odd Day morning classes, and daily afternoon classes. This allows for a full schedule of 7 classes.

Open High Class Schedule 2022-2023

EVEN DAYS (87 days)	ODD DAYS (89 days)
Class 1: 8:15-9:50 (95 min)	Class 3: 8:15-9:50 (95 min)
Class 2: 9:55-11:30 (95 min)	Class 4: 9:55-11:30 (95 min)
Lunch: 11:35-12:30 (55 min)	
Class 5: 12:35-1:30 (55 min)	
Class 6: 1:35-2:30 (55 min)	
Class 7: 2:35-3:30 (55 min)	

Daily Schedule		Thursday with Electives (20 weeks)	
TIME	ACTIVITY	TIME	ACTIVITY
8:15-9:50	Period 1	8:15-9:50	Period 1
9:55-11:30	Period 2	9:55-11:30	Period 2
11:35-12:30	LUNCH	11:35-12:30	LUNCH
12:35-1:30	Period 4	12:35-1:30	Elective
1:35-2:30	Period 5	1:35-2:30	Elective
2:35-3:30	Period 6	2:35-3:30	Family/Class/Town

THURSDAYS AT OPEN

Thursday elective classes provide students with additional learning opportunities through a wide-variety of course options. The courses support our academic program and correlate directly to our Ten Dispositions. We offer two terms (Fall and Spring) consisting of ten sessions each, running from September to April. Students take two electives per term. Students and members of the community are also invited to propose courses with the support of a teacher sponsor. In addition to elective classes, Open High conducts Student Government meetings in the form of Student Representatives, Family Meeting, Town Meeting, and Class Meetings on Thursdays throughout the year. See the Open High Constitution for more details. *Meeting dates/times are subject to change.*

Month & Day	Meetings
SEPTEMBER 8 15 22 29	Family (Period 4) Class (Period 5) Town (Period 6) <i>Sem 1 Electives Begin</i> Family
OCTOBER 6 13 20 27	Family Family Town Class
NOVEMBER 3 10 17 24	Family Family Family No School, Thanksgiving
DECEMBER 1 8 15 22 29	Town Family <i>Sem 1 Electives End</i> Family (Period 4) No School, Winter Break No School, Winter Break
JANUARY 5 12 19 26	Family (Period 5) Family (Period 6) <i>Sem 2 Electives Begin</i> Town Family
FEBRUARY 2 9 16 23	Family Class Family Town

Month & Day	Meetings
MARCH 2 9 16 23 30	Family Class Family Town Family <i>Sem 2 Electives Ends</i>
APRIL 6 13 20 27	Spring Break Town (Period 4) Family (Period 5) Class (Period 6)
MAY 4 11 18 25	No Meeting No Meeting No Meeting Awards Ceremony, RPL
JUNE 1 8	Family (Period 4) End of Year Picnic

Thursday with Electives	
TIME	ACTIVITY
8:15-9:50	Period 1
9:55-11:30	Period 2
11:35-12:30	Lunch/Period 3
12:35-1:30	Elective/Period 4

1:35-2:30	Elective/Period 5
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2:35-3:30	Family, Class, or Town/Period 6
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SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Research shows that attendance is directly correlated to student achievement. Good attendance is essential for students to keep up with class assignments and take advantage of learning opportunities.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are classified as those that have resulted from conditions beyond the control of students, parents/guardians, or the school. More than 15 days of excused absences in a semester is considered excessive. The only excuses for absence that shall be deemed acceptable are:

- Personal illness: if over 3 days, the school will require a note from the doctor
- Personal court appearance
- Death in the family
- Religious holidays regularly observed by the student
- Extenuating circumstances, as approved by the school administration

Parental Responsibilities

Parents/guardians must send a note providing reasons and dates for any absence from school, on the day of the student's return to school. If a note is not provided within 5 school days of the last day of school missed, the period of absence will be considered unexcused. We encourage parents/guardians to contact the school in advance of the absence or as soon as possible. Please email our Office Associate Ryan Eldridge at reldridg@rvaschools.net or call the school at 780-4661.

Chronic Absenteeism is considered missing 10% of school or 18 days over the course of a year. According to School Board Policy, students shall not be absent from school (for excused or unexcused reasons, excluding suspensions) for:

- Eighteen (18) or more school days per year
- Eighteen (18) class periods of a year-long course or nine (9) days for a one semester course.

Students risk losing credit in courses where they miss 18 or more days of class, even if they earn a passing grade. For more information on attendance, please see the Student Code or Responsible Ethics.

Tardiness/Early Dismissal/Leaving School without Permission

Tardiness is disruptive for the individual, the teacher, and the class. Students are expected to be in class by 8:15 AM and should be picked up at the scheduled dismissal time unless in a supervised after-school activity. Tardiness and early dismissals may be considered excused for the same reasons listed for absences. While students may leave campus during their designated lunch time, students may not otherwise leave campus without permission from their parents and/or the principal. Students must sign out in the office when leaving early with parental permission. Consequences for tardies:

- 1 - 5: Warning
- 6 - 10: Lunch Detention with Tardiness Intervention Plan
- 11 - 15: Parent Meeting and/or After-school Detention
- 16 +: Saturday Detention

GRADING

The chart below indicates the RPS grading scale and grade values. Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses are assigned weighted values.

RPS Grading Scale	Final Grade	Standard	Honors	Advanced Placement	Dual Enrollment
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A (Outstanding)	90-100	4	5	6	6
B (Above Average)	80-90	3	4	5	5
C (Average)	70-79	2	3	4	4
D (Below Average)	60-69	1	2	3	3
F (Unsatisfactory)	0-59	0	0	0	0

Grade information can be gathered from ASPEN, and access to the parent portal of ASPEN can be obtained from the main office by a parent/guardian.

TECHNOLOGY

All students will be assigned an RPS Chromebook for school and home use. Google Classroom will be the primary way that students and teachers will communicate online. Each student has a unique RPS email, and each class will have a unique code for students to log into. We encourage students to utilize Google Calendar and notifications to stay organized and keep up with their school work. We also encourage them to use email and other two-way communication tools to communicate with teachers. Students are expected to follow the Student Code of Responsible Ethics regarding acceptable use of the internet. RPS also uses Gaggle Safety Management to proactively monitor digital content and communication among students from minor policy violations to threats of imminent harm.

Please follow these guidelines for computer usage:

- Computers are for educational purposes only. No gaming, social media, shopping, etc. is allowed.
- Downloading/uploading any software or files is prohibited unless it is being done for a class with permission from a teacher.
- DO NOT change the settings on any computer. This includes wallpaper, screensavers, etc.

PARENT/CAREGIVER CONFERENCE DAYS

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and spring of each year. It is our expectation that all parents/caregivers AND students participate in these conferences which may be virtual to allow for fuller participation. This year, conferences will be held on the following dates, and school will be closed for students:

- Tuesday, November 8, 2022
- Friday, March 10, 2022

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

With the exception of the Richmond Technical Center and the Early College Academy (ECA), student transportation is the responsibility of the parent, guardian, and student. GRTC, the City of Richmond, and Richmond Public Schools have an agreement to provide unlimited transportation for Richmond Public School high school students on GRTC Local Richmond City Routes (including the GRTC Pulse Bus Rapid Transit) at no cost to students. For more information, please visit [Richmond Public Schools Pass Program](#).

Part of being an Open student is learning to navigate the downtown area by foot. Students should familiarize themselves with a map of the Open High “universe” which you can find at <https://tinyurl.com/6ch6sndh>. Health/PE Grades 9 and 10, along with core Social Studies classes, take

place at Randolph Community Center, 1415 Grayland Ave. This is an 18 minute walk from the Open campus. For 2022-2023, tenth graders will begin their EVEN days at Randolph and ninth grades will begin their ODD days at Randolph. Students should not arrive before 8:00 a.m. when an Open teacher is there to supervise them. Students use the longer lunch period to travel to Open for their afternoon classes. Regardless of the location, students are expected to follow all school rules throughout the school day. Additionally, students must wear tennis shoes on the gym floor, and no food or water is allowed in the gym area.

Safety While Traveling

Students and parents are encouraged to sign up for VCU Alerts at <https://vcu.omnilert.net/subscriber.php>. All students are expected to abide by the following safety rules while traveling throughout the city.

- **NEVER TRAVEL ALONE.** Always travel in groups of at least three students.
- Cross streets **ONLY AT CROSSWALKS WHEN GIVEN THE SIGNAL TO CROSS.**
- Make sure to look both ways before crossing the street at any time, even if you have the right of way or the signal to cross.
- Be **COMPLETELY** aware of your surroundings while walking; this includes being able to clearly hear the sounds of the road.
- Follow all state regulations regarding driving.
- Take a cell phone with you when traveling, and call the school immediately regarding unexpected delays. The number to the school is 780-4661.
- In the event of an emergency, call 911.

STUDENT LIFE

Family

Family groups ensure that each student has a multi-generational peer group from the onset of their experience at Open High. Emphasis is placed on diversity within family groups. Families form the basic organizational structure for program orientation, character development, and student government. Led by a faculty member known as a “Family Head,” Family Heads assist with student advising, adjustment to Open High School and learning opportunities. Family Heads advocate for their family members and guide students to needed supports. Each family sends representatives to the Student Representative body that discusses school concerns, suggests school improvements, plans school events and activities, and presides over whole-school Town Meetings.

Lockers

Lockers are assigned via Family groups during the first week of school. Lockers are the property of Richmond Public Schools and may be searched at any time. Students may use locks, but even without locks we expect students to respect others' personal property and space.

Staying Informed

The Open High School Website at <https://ohs.rvaschools.net> is the central location for important school information. In addition to a monthly calendar, our Open Announcements – which are shared by email and social media – are also housed here each week. Please provide the most up to date telephone numbers and email addresses so that we can communicate appropriately.

We also use Remind which allows 2-way messaging between teachers, schools, and families. It includes the ability to receive and send messages and phone calls on multiple devices. For complete information please visit <https://www.rvaschools.net/remind>. Students may join Remind classes by class codes and opt-in to Remind notifications and messaging. Download the mobile app to your phone for ease of use. Sign up to receive school-wide messages through Remind by texting **@openhig to 81010. This is how we will communicate in the event of an emergency.**

Our community can also connect to us through social media:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/officialopenhighschoolpage/>

Instagram @openhighrva

Twitter @openhighrva

Up to the minute information and reminders can be found on our digital announcement board along with the White Board located on the first floor by the office. Students should check the Announcements/White Board every day when they enter the building.

Breakfast and Lunch

While there is no cafeteria in our building, we participate in the school breakfast and lunch program which provides grab-and-go meals at no cost to students. Meals are brought into our building each day and are available just before school and during the lunch period. Students also have access to a microwave and a refrigerator to store lunches from home. In addition, there is a snack and drink machine in the Student Lounge.

Upon arrival, students may receive a grab-and-go breakfast bag and take to their first period classroom. Students at Open High have an extended lunch period to accommodate travel from off-site locations. Though students may also travel off-site for lunch, they must return to Open on time for their next class. Lunch is unsupervised at Open. Students who are unable to get back to school for their afternoon class on time will lose the privilege of leaving the building for lunch. Positive behaviors and safety precautions are also required at all outside lunch locations. Failure to follow expectations will result in loss of privileges.

Food delivery drivers will not be allowed inside the building. If you order food, you must meet the driver outside. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to leave class to pick up food.

Cell Phones and Listening Devices

- Cell phones should be OUT OF SIGHT during class time unless a teacher has specifically given permission to use for instructional purposes.
- Teachers may ask students to turn in devices when entering the classroom. If you do not comply, and the cell phone becomes a distraction, the teacher may confiscate it. Students can then pick up at the end of the day from the principal. If the cell phone continues to be a problem, a parent will need to come to the school to retrieve it.
- Assume people don't want to hear your private conversations. The hallway is a public space; therefore, cell phones must be used with discretion. While in school (or any public setting), turn your phone off or set your ring mode to silent.
- Earbuds and headphones should not be worn unless a teacher has specifically given permission to use. When you speak to others, take your earbuds out (even if your device is turned off). This is a sign of respect telling the speaker you want to hear what they have to say.
- Parents, relatives, and friends should be instructed not to phone or text you during school hours unless a true emergency. In the case of true emergencies, the school office (804-780-4661) should also be informed.

Cleanliness

Built in 1911, the historic Grace Arents building has housed the Open High program since 1989. Like any old building, it requires lots of love. Keeping the building clean and neat is the responsibility of the entire community, and this includes the school grounds. Trash cans and recycling bins are available throughout the building, as well as outside. Recycling of appropriate material is expected, and students should never use recycling bins for trash or food. They should also rinse out drink containers before recycling. All Families are responsible for taking their recycling to the recycling dumpster every Family meeting (or when full). Our custodian, Tony Brown, is not responsible for cleaning up after individual students. If you have a significant accident, please alert him and the office ASAP.

GRAFFITI OF ANY KIND in any location will be punished according to the Student Code of Responsible Ethics. Signage and student work may only be posted on areas designated by cork strips. No tape, staples, pushpins, or nails may be used on any wall without the permission of the principal.

Student Lounge Decorum

The students of Open High have the privilege of using the Student Lounge. The purpose of the Lounge is to provide a space for students who are not in class to eat lunch, study, or socialize quietly. Because the Lounge is a privilege, failure by the student body to maintain decorum can result in closure. Following are the rules of decorum for the lounge:

- Visit the Lounge only during your free time.
- Keep the noise level low. Activity in the lounge should not disturb other people in other spaces.
- If you want to listen to music, use earbuds.
- Remove old food from the refrigerator each day, and regularly wipe down the inside of microwaves.
- Keep the tables and floors clean; throw away trash and wipe up spills.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Open High School students are expected to follow the guidelines for acceptable behavior as outlined in the Richmond Public School's SCORE (Student Code of Responsible Ethics) manual. The SCORE can be accessed at <https://www.rvaschools.net/students-families/score>

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Students are required to complete 120 hours of community service at a non-profit organization with 30 completed by the end of each school year until their senior year. The last 30 must be completed by April of the student's senior year. We encourage students to complete volunteer service far exceeding the minimum requirement, but even if a student reaches 120 hours before their senior year, they should still aim to complete 30 within each school year. Volunteer forms can be found on the volunteer bulletin board or on the website. Completed forms should be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator, Brigette Newberry.

In response to Covid, some hours have been waived:

- Class of 2023: 60 hours
- Class of 2024: 75 hours
- Class of 2025: 105 hours
- Class of 2026: 120 hours

CLASS MEETINGS

Multiple times throughout the year, class groups come together for Class Meeting. The purpose of Class Meeting is to support class groups and projects. It is also an opportunity for students to develop

leadership skills as well as the OHS Dispositions. Class Meeting is organized with two faculty sponsors. Students elect Class Officers who have specific responsibilities:

- **The President** creates meeting agendas; facilitates Class Meetings; and communicates with class members, committee chairs, and class sponsors.
- **The Vice President** assists the President, facilitates Class Meetings in the absence of the President, and communicates with class members, committee chairs, and class sponsors.
- **The Secretary** takes and shares minutes of each meeting.

Each Class will develop skills and attributes through specific tasks and learning opportunities in preparation for the Senior Project (see below):

- Grade 9: Collaborate to meet a need within the school
- Grade 10: Collaborate to meet a need within the community
- Grade 11: Explore topics and begin Senior Project
- Grade 12: Complete and present Senior Project

Committees are created as needed—some ad hoc and some permanent. Committees might include Fundraising, Prom, Yearbook, Class Trip, etc. The Committee Chairs report back to the President, the sponsors, and the group. Class officers should use a simplified parliamentary procedure format to conduct productive meetings. Dues can be paid to <http://osp.osmsinc.com/RichmondVA>

SENIOR PROJECT

The Senior Project is an opportunity for students to explore their interests while developing academic skills and the OHS Dispositions. The Senior Project incorporates personal exploration of a topic; documented research; volunteerism; and a presentation. The culminating project will be part of a community-wide exhibition at the end of the school year. The experience of developing a project addresses the Virginia Department of Education’s “Profile of a Virginia Graduate,” encompassing critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship. This project will also help students develop a more in-depth college application; explore an area of interest prior to choosing a college major; and raise the level of community involvement of Open students.

PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PTSA)

Information about membership and participation will be available at our Back to School Night and other major OHS events. The PTSA meets at Open High School on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. All community members are welcome. Open High School’s PTSA president for 2022-2023 is Priscilla Wright. Please visit the Open High website to join or donate at <https://openhigh.memberhub.com/store>

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The main body of student government at Open High School is Student Representatives. Student “Reps” meet on Thursday when Thursday schedule is in session and at various times for other weeks of the year. Each Family group sends two representatives to the meeting and maintains two alternates should the Family Representative be unable to attend the meeting. All students and staff are welcome to attend Reps, but only Family Representatives can vote.

Student Reps are the voice of the student body, charged with discussing student concerns with policies/programs/initiatives, proposing actions to improve the overall student experience, and working together with the principal to make the Open experience positive for the entire community. Student Reps organize school wide activities such as Spirit Week, Day in the Park, Thanksgiving Feast, and Winter Project. Student Reps are sponsored by two teachers and are most often led by a Student Reps

Chairperson or Co-chairs elected by the group within the first few weeks of the school year. Student leaders should use a simplified parliamentary procedure format to conduct productive meetings.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Inclement Weather

At times, situations occur that force the school division to alter the regular schedule of schools. In the event of inclement weather or other emergency situations, check the Richmond Public School's website and stay tuned to local television and radio for instructions regarding the status of school. Unless otherwise noted, a 2 Hour Delay schedule means that all students will meet at Open rather than at an offsite location.

Emergency Alerts

Emergency instructions are provided in each classroom. Listen to the PA for emergency alerts/drills. During an emergency, there are six common responses:

LOCK AND HIDE

- Crisis Condition.
- Return to Class and Secure door.

LOCK AND TEACH

- Trouble in the local area, but off campus.
- Secure your facility and/or room.
- Continue teaching until further notice.

LOCK AND CHECK

- Bomb threat procedures

EVACUATE

- Exit building due to an emergency.
- Take Fire Exit Route.

REVERSE EVACUATION (persons outside are brought safely inside)

RESTRICTIVE MOVEMENT

- Only essential personnel may move freely.

SHELTER IN PLACE

- Report to designated areas.
- Assume required position(s).

Fire Drills

- According to state law, the school is required to have at least one (1) fire drill per week for the first month of school and at least one (1) per month for the remainder of the school year.
- As the fire drill signal sounds, students should follow their teacher to the assigned area. Students will remain outside the building until they are given verbal instructions to return to the classroom. Students should stand quietly and listen for any instruction from staff.
- No students are to remain inside the building during a fire drill or evacuation.

Other Emergency Drills

Lockdown Drills

In every public school there shall be at least four lock-down drills every school year in order that students may be thoroughly practiced in such drills. One lock-down drill shall be completed in September of each school year and one lock-down drill shall be completed in January of each school year. State Code 22.1-137.3. The process is as follows:

- Emergency Alert given (see above)

- Students in hallway/lounge pulled into nearest room
- Doors closed and locked
- Remain quietly in place until all clear is given.

Tornado Drills

In every public school there shall be at least one tornado drill every school year in order that students may be thoroughly practiced in such drills. State Code 22.1-137.1. The process is as follows:

- Students are brought to the basement quickly and safely.
- Teachers help students find a safe place, facing the wall, away from windows.
- Remain quietly in place until all clear is given.

Earthquake Drills

There will be at least one earthquake drill each school year, usually during October. The drill will use the “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” protocol.

ACADEMIC SANCTIONS

Student progress is reviewed at the end of each semester. When a student’s performance falls below expectations they will be recommended for an Academic Sanction. **Students who fail to show significant progress may forfeit their placement at Open High School and be returned to their zoned high school.**

Academic Warning (2 Ds or 1 F)

Purpose: To give additional support to students showing an area or two of academic struggle. Requirements vary depending on individual concerns. Some aspects of Academic Warning include, but are not limited to:

- Student to attend tutoring as needed.
- Student monthly check-in meeting with their family head to review academic progress.

Academic Contract (3 Ds or 1 D and 1 F)

Purpose: To give additional support to students with multiple low grades or students who did not show improvement under Academic Warning. Requirements vary depending on individual concerns. Some aspects of Academic Contract include, but are not limited to:

- Student to attend tutoring as needed.
- Student monthly check-in meeting with their family head to review academic progress
- Required attendance at monthly meetings with a member of the school administrative or academic review team.

Academic Probation (More than 1 F or 2 Ds and 1 F)

Purpose: To give additional support to students who earn minimum competency or failing grades in multiple classes or students who did not show improvement under Academic Contract. Requirements vary depending on individual concerns. Some aspects of Academic Probation include, but are not limited to:

- Student to attend tutoring as needed.
- Required attendance at monthly meetings with a member of the school administrative or academic review team.
- Suspension or limitation of access to off-campus/independent classes such as dual enrollment.
- Other requirements as stated in an individual contract created for the student.

Students who fail to show significant academic progress may be returned to their zoned high school.

Other Sanctions

Attendance and commitment to the Open High School program are additional areas of great importance to student success. Students who have issues surrounding attendance and/or tardiness or who do not engage in the programming components of Open High School will receive notification of concern. These students will be referred to the School Counselor or another member of the administrative team.

OHS CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the members of the Open High School Community, do ordain and establish this Constitution to maintain a school where individuality, creativity, and responsibility in learning are encouraged; where the integrity of individuals and groups is respected; and where cooperation is valued over competition; and decision-making power is shared by all members of the Open High School Community.

Article I

The highest form of student government in Open High School is Town Meeting.

Section I

During Town Meeting, all propositions presented to the school must be approved by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of Town Meeting.

Section II

There must be a minimum of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the student population present in order for anything to be approved at Town Meeting.

Section III

Town Meeting will meet at least once a month. Only Student Representatives, by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote, shall have the authority to call an Emergency Town Meeting. An Emergency Town Meeting shall pertain to the following circumstances:

1. Information that needs to be spread to the students quickly
2. A growing concern that has to be addressed immediately
3. A decision that needs to be made immediately

Section IV

Only Student Representatives (Reps) shall moderate Town Meeting.

Section V

Town Meeting will have the following responsibilities:

1. Making general announcements
2. Governing student activities
3. Give solutions to problems in the Open High School Community
4. Acknowledge inputs from the current staff in regards to the student population as a whole
5. Recognizing students, talents, awards, and accomplishments
6. Vote on proposals and/or committees

Section VI

Attendance at Town Meeting is mandatory.

Article II

Open High School will have a student-led government called Student Representatives (Reps) composed of two (2) representatives from each family and one (1) alternate representative in the case of absence of the original representatives.

Section I

Reps will have the following responsibility:

1. Report the concerns of their Families to Reps
2. Decided where Rep meetings will take place
3. Establish committees to divide the responsibilities of the group
4. Discuss ideas to make the school run more efficiently

5. Plan events such as Town Meeting, Day in the Park, Winterfest, etc.
6. There is to be a designated moderator at every Rep meeting and permanent secretary chosen at the beginning of the year.
7. Opening the meetings up to everyone unless the meeting is deemed as closed, or a conflicting situation occurs that prevents the meeting from being held
8. Work with parent associations, staff meetings, and other school organizations to build upon the functioning of Open High School. A mandatory of two (2) Reps is required to attend each.
9. Create legislation that is necessary and proper for the development of Open High's community and in agreement with the student body.

Section II

Reps are to meet at least once (1) a week.

Section III

Each Rep shall get one (1) vote in all matters. Alternate Reps may only vote in the case of absence of their official Rep from their Family. The Reps sponsor is allotted one (1) vote, but no other staff member may partake in voting during a Reps meeting.

Sectional V

A maximum of two (2) Reps have the right to attend Staff Meeting and are allotted one (1) vote to represent the student body, unless the meeting is deemed as closed or confidential, in matters pertaining to decisions made in Staff Meeting.

Section VI

Reps have the power to edit or add any section of the Constitution with the approval of Town Meeting.

Article III

Open High School's student body will have a judicial system called Community Court.

Section I

There will be a maximum of seven (7) members of Community Court. They will consist of five (5) students and one (1) staff member that is not official administration personnel, and one (1) optional parent representative. Such staff member must be approved by Reps. There must always be an odd number of judges and a minimum of three (3) judge's ruling on a case. All members of Community Court, including the staff member, shall have one (1) equal vote.

Section II

Community Court has the power of Judicial Review and to decide on a verdict for cases presented.

Section III

Cases must be presented in writing and brought to the staff member in charge of Community Court.

Section IV

A trial brought to Community Court shall follow the following format:

1. The plaintiff shall present their argument and any witness to the Court.
2. The defendant shall present their argument and any witness (es) to the Court.
3. The judges of Community Court shall ask questions to the plaintiff, defendant, and witness if necessary.
4. The Court will make its ruling within one (1) school week of the final hearing.

Section V

The court will make its decision by majority vote. The ruling will be presented to the school within five (5) school days, unless the case is deemed confidential by the plaintiff and/or defendant. However, all students have the right to know a case is taking place and the verdict, excluding the stating of specific names for confidential cases.

Section VI

Any one has the right to sit and observe a public trial while the Court is in session. If an observer(s) is causing too much of a disturbance, they may be asked to leave.

Section VII

No Community Court Member is allowed to judge a case that he or she is personally involved in or there is a conflict of interest. Under such circumstances, he/she must notify the staff member of Community Court.

Section VIII

No Community Court member is allowed to be a Rep or Alternate Rep.

Section IX

The losing party has the right to appeal the ruling at Staff Meeting and Town Meeting. The appeal process must be approved by Staff Meeting with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. The staff member that is on Community Court will not vote in the appeal process. The case will then be sent to the Town Meeting which must also approved by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority.

Section X

If a party refuses to attend court proceedings, then the Court shall rule in favor of the opposite party.

Section XI

Elections for Community Court must be held every new school year.

Section XII

An official of Reps or Community Court member who is abusing power, will be put to trial by Reps. An official case will be held in Community Court. An appointed member of Reps will stand in as a judge for said Community Court member involved in the case, and will represent the official vote of all Reps in determining the verdict. Both parties have the right to present all arguments and defenses. Dismissal of an official must be in accordance with $\frac{3}{4}$ majority from members of Reps and $\frac{2}{3}$ of Community Court. The official shall be given a two (2) week notice on the verdict; in the meantime, he/she is not allowed to fulfill their position and an elected Rep must stand in their place.

Article IV

The students of Open High School shall be divided into families according to a random draw.

Section I

The Open High School Community shall be divided into family units, each under the leadership of a staff member who acts as a family head.

Section II

Families shall meet at least once a week. The responsibility of Families will consist of the following:

1. Choose two (2) Reps and one alternate Rep.
2. Inform family members of official announcements administered from OHS
3. Discuss problems that the school and/or students are facing
4. Aiding students who are having any difficulties adjusting to Open High School or have personal complaints
5. Discuss the weekly announcements from Reps
6. Provide a place for students to freely interact and connect with other students within their Family.

Section III

All rising seniors will be able to choose their family head prior to the beginning of the school year. Seniors must admit three (3) of their top choices of family heads with the knowledge that not all wishes can be accommodated. There can only be a maximum of five (5) seniors per family head. All other students will be randomly placed into families.

Section IV

No student is allowed to switch Families once their family head has been chosen, unless they have a serious conflict with such family head. In such a case, the student may appeal to the Principal.

Section V

Two (2) members from each family shall be elected to join their family head to partake in prospective student interviews.

Article V

At the end of every attendance check or at any time determined suitable to the community, those students who have not adjusted well to the Open High School shall be referred to the Peer Counseling Group (PCG). The PCG shall be overseen by the school counselling office at OHS.

Section I

Staff and community court shall determine eligible students based on attendance and behavior reports.

Section II

PCG shall meet at least once a week. Attendance shall be mandatory for each student until the group determines that the group is no longer necessary or beneficial to that student.

Section III

The Student Representatives shall appoint three (3) students, with the consent of Town Meeting, and the staff shall appoint one (1) member to serve on PCG each new school year. PCG may make recommendations to staff concerning its students and potential members.

Section IV

PCG Meetings shall consist of

1. a review of the Open High School Rules and Constitution
2. a review of common problems and experiences of students
3. counseling of students about their problems and habitual behavior
4. advising students on ways to adapt to Open High School
5. exercises in human relations and communications skills

Section V

Upon leaving PCG, students shall complete a standard Open High School evaluation form which may be placed in the students' transcripts if so desired. However, no credit shall be awarded for PCG.

Article VI

Section I

OHS will have (a minimum of) a 16 week Elective course schedule dedicated to the interests of the OHS community.

Section II

Staff members may decide on their course schedule on said elective day, and whether such class is taught in the OHS building.

Section III

Classes on said Elective day can be taught by current teachers at OHS, as well as students, with the approval of the Principal and the sponsoring of a current teacher at OHS.

Section IV

Choice of electives shall be determined by a random lottery system of the families. All seniors will get first priority within their family.

Section V

Elective day will also be the day Town Meeting, Class Meeting, or Staff Meeting will be held.

Article VII

All students at OHS have the right to amend the school's constitution through the following processes.

Section I

In order for the constitution to be changed, these steps must be followed:

1. Proposal in Reps
2. Passed by Reps with $\frac{2}{3}$ majority
3. Voted by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the current OHS students at Town Meeting
4. Reps makes the changes to the constitution within two (2) weeks of ratification along with the date it was ratified.

or

1. A proposal is brought to Town Meeting by petition of sixty (60) percent of the current student population
2. Voted in Town Meeting by $\frac{3}{4}$ of the current students of OHS
3. Reps makes the changes to the constitution within two (2) weeks of ratification along with the date it was ratified.

Article VIII

The Constitution applies to everyone that is a part of the Open High School community.

Section I

Everyone has access to the Constitution.

Section II

The Constitution will always be kept in the office and administered per student request; it shall also be published on the school's website. If there are any changes to the Constitution, all published Constitutions must be updated within two (2) weeks of ratification. One (1) copy of the previous Constitution must be saved by the Sponsor of Reps. All students have access to previous Constitutions.

Constitutional Bylaws

1. Volunteer Credit: students shall perform thirty (30) hours of community service each year, one hundred and twenty (120) hours over the course of all four (4) years at OHS.
2. Textbooks shall be returned or paid for before report cards and/or transcripts are administered
3. Attendance is mandatory in Class Meeting, Family Meeting, and Town Meeting. If a student misses three (3) consecutive meetings due to unexcused absences, their attendance record will be brought to the attention of the Family Head. The family will review those absences and discuss the situation with the student. If the student continues to disregard Family, Class and/or Town Meetings, the family may decide on appropriate consequences. If the Family Head misses three (3) consecutive meetings due to unexcused absences, the family has the right to discuss said absences and/or bring these absences to the attention of administration
4. All moderators of Town Meeting shall hold a copy of the OHS Constitution
5. The moderator of Town Meeting shall not be allowed to make a proposal while functioning as moderator unless he/she has approval from Reps. In such a case, said moderator must make it known that his/her proposal is not a representation of Reps, but announced as a student of OHS.
6. OHS is required to have a form of lounge for all student access that may serve as an area to study, recreation, and communication. The lounge may be closed by a majority vote of Reps; this decision may be brought, by appeal, to Town Meeting, where it may be overturned by $\frac{2}{3}$ of Town Meeting. Once closed, the lounge may be reopened by a majority vote of Community Court and/or a detailed agreement stating the deadline for the evacuation of the lounge.
7. Reps is required to maintain an available refrigerator and microwave for student use.
8. The privilege of using other facilities outside of OHS may be taken away for improper use. All privileges taken away are automatically given back at the end of the school year or in accordance with another agreement.

9. The privilege of using school property may be taken away due to improper use or abandonment shall it be deemed necessary. Said property may be returned in agreement of parties or upon the following semester and/or school year.
10. All proposals for class fundraisers and events must have a starting date and be presented via a written source.
11. No eating, drinking, or concession selling in/during Town Meeting.

Bill of Rights

In order to maintain the tradition and spirit of Open High School, the Bill of Rights contains a list of essential privileges all students, teachers, and staff are granted. The Constitution defines the framework by which a member of the Open High Community may seek redress for their grievance(s). It is the responsibility of all members to uphold these rights.

1. All members of the Open High community have the right to be called by their preferred name.
2. Every member of the Open High community has the right to an assigned space for personal belongings.
3. All students have the right to peacefully assemble/protest their beliefs and opinions.
4. All members of the Open High community have freedom of expression in accordance with the OHS Constitution and RPS Policies.
5. All members of OHS have the right to vote in Town Meeting.
6. All members of OHS have the right to appeal to Community Court.
7. All students are allowed a lunch period off campus unless a scheduling constraint, inclement weather or an outside threat poses a danger to the students
8. Students have the right to a student lounge.
9. Every current student of OHS has the right to attend prom.
10. Each class sponsor and/or officer has the right to know their financial status and to determine the goals/rules of the class in compliance with the OHS Constitution and RPS Policy.