

VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK

2024-2025





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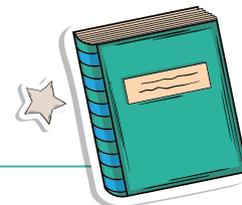


WELCOME TO THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR!

This handbook contains useful information for parents/guardians* and students regarding the daily operations of elementary schools in Virginia Beach City Public Schools. You will find information highlighting some of the School Board's policies and regulations that are necessary for the safety, welfare and well-being of our students. Please keep this handbook throughout the school year. Should you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, please contact your school principal.

**VBCPS recognizes that students may be living with or under the custody of adults other than their biological parents. VBCPS strives to be inclusive of our students' many family arrangements. For simplicity in reading this handbook, the terms "parents" or "guardians" will refer to those adults who have responsibility for the care and control of a minor student.*

Policies & Procedures



Access/Disclosure of Student Records

In compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* and in accordance with School Board Policy (5-31) and Regulations (5-31.1 & 2), adult students and parents/guardians of minor students may review a student's education records at the school office upon request. If student education records are inaccurate or misleading, the adult student and parent/guardian of minor students may request an amendment by contacting the school principal. Education records are considered confidential and the privacy rights of parents and students are safeguarded. Except as provided by law, no outside agencies or individuals may have access to a student's education record without written consent of the adult student and parent/guardian of minor students. If records are copied, a minimal fee may be charged.

Whenever a student transfers from one school or school division to another, upon request, a copy of the student's scholastic and discipline record will be transferred to the new school or school division.

The School Board authorizes making *Student Directory Information* public as permitted under state and federal laws and regulations and in accordance with Policy 5-66 and Regulation 5-66.1. *Student Directory Information* means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. School Board Policy 5-66 defines *Student Directory Information* as the following: name of student in attendance or no longer in attendance; address; date and place of birth; dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if member of athletic team; awards and honors received; recordings of virtual instructional activities, photographs or digital images, including recordings of educational or school related sporting/extracurricular events that third

parties attend, yearbooks, class pictures, playbills or programs for shows, plays, concerts, graduations or similar school created publications or advertisements, and other similar information. Examples include release of student name, school and grade to internal or external media services for scholastic recognition, yearbooks, event programs and award ceremonies or recordings of school sponsored events including online educational activities. Additionally, similar information may be released to elected officials for congratulatory purposes upon a request from the elected official or their governmental office.

School Board policy provides the Superintendent with the discretion of selecting which student directory information may be released. Consent of the adult student or parent/guardian is required before a student's name, telephone number, street address and email address can be released. Adult students and parents/guardians of minor students may "opt out" of release of directory information by providing written notification to the school. In accordance with 20 U.S.C. §7908, as amended, the School Board provides directory information to military recruiters unless the adult student or parent/guardian opts out of release of Student Directory Information. Detailed information is available on vbschools.com.

Adult students and parents/guardians of minor students have the right to file a complaint with the Student Privacy Policy Office, U.S. Department of Education for failure to comply with *FERPA*.

Attendance/Tardiness/ Leaving School Early

Excessive absences and tardiness from school are detrimental to the educational process. When students arrive late or must leave early, they miss valuable information and are at a disadvantage. Plus, late arrivals and early dismissals can be disruptive to other students and to

the teacher. When possible, please try to schedule appointments so they do not conflict with school hours.

Sickness, severe illness or death in the family, exposure to a contagious disease, religious holidays or extremely inclement weather are considered legitimate excuses for absences or tardiness.

If a student is to be absent, parents/guardians are urged to inform the school in advance. Students having more than 18 absences for the year are considered chronically absent and may be denied promotion. The school division will make reasonable attempts to work with students and parents/guardians to address attendance issues. The school division reserves the right to utilize

truancy procedures through the court system when attendance exceed statutory requirements. See Policy 5-17 and Regulations 5-17.1 for more information.

Dress Code

Guidelines are established to promote a standard of appearance which enhances the learning environment while allowing for reasonable comfort and individuality of all students. Students are expected to wear clothing appropriate to the school setting. Any article of clothing or accessory that advertises alcohol or an illegal substance, depicts lewd or obscene language, graphics, or is gang-related is forbidden.

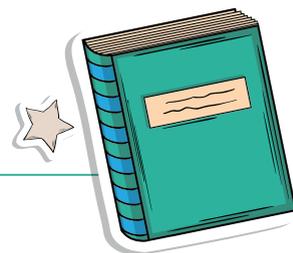
Dress code standards:

- Appropriate shoes are required; either hard-soled or tennis shoes are acceptable. For student safety, rubber-soled shoes are required for physical education.
- Clothing which overexposes the body is unacceptable. Lewd or suggestive attire may not be worn.
- Any item of jewelry, accessories or clothing that might create a hazard to a student's safety may not be worn.

Any questions regarding "appropriateness" will be determined by the principal. See Policy 5-41 for more information.



Policies & Procedures



Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) requires parental/guardian consent before minor students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

PPRA also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes as well as certain physical exams and screenings. Parents will receive notice and an opportunity to opt their minor child out of the following:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Parents may inspect the following before the school administers or uses:

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.



These rights transfer from the parents/guardians to a student who is 18 or an emancipated minor under state law. VBCPS has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution purposes. VBCPS will directly notify parents/guardians of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.

VBCPS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents/guardians of minor students who are scheduled to participate in specific activities or surveys and will provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian to opt the minor child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. VBCPS will make this notification to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year if the school division has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents/guardians will be provided reasonable notification of planned activities and surveys and be provided an opportunity to opt their minor child out of such activities and surveys. Parents/guardians will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Parents/guardians who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Section 504



Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, is a civil right that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The statute ensures that a qualified student with a disability receives reasonable accommodations necessary for that student to access the general education curriculum or school-related programs and activities. A student suspected of needing a Section 504 Plan can be referred by any source. Parents/guardians should bring all concerns about health or learning conditions to the school's attention. Upon referral, the process for determining whether the student meets the qualifications under this federal law will be initiated. For more information on Section 504, please contact the 504 Coordinator at your child's school or visit vbschools.com.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL YEAR

Talk to your child's teacher frequently. Together you are a team for your child's academic success.

Provide a quiet place and a consistent time to do homework. Support your child in homework efforts, but refrain from doing it for your child.

Help your child learn to follow directions. Give one- and two-step directions and see that the task is completed.

Teach your child to show respect for others by using polite phrases such as "please," "thank you" and "excuse me."

Model and reinforce appropriate behavior.

Help your child learn your address and telephone number.

Guide and monitor your child's television and digital device viewing.

Listen to your child and encourage your child to talk about new experiences.

Encourage your child to succeed by encouraging your child's best work, and praise their efforts working towards a goal.

Involve your child with reading and writing activities.

See that your child gets a good night's sleep and has a nutritious breakfast.

Write your child's name on all personal items brought to school such as coat, hat, gloves, boots, sweater, lunch box, etc.

Refrain from sending a sick child to school. This precaution will help preserve the health of other children.

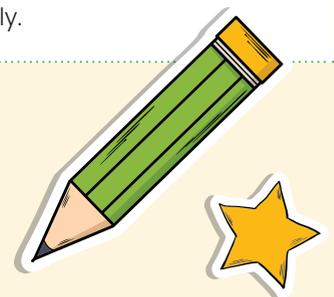
Please call the school when your child will be absent. Your child will need a written excuse upon returning to class.

Dress your child according to the weather; outside activities will take place when the weather permits. A note from you will be required if your child should remain inside because of a physical condition.

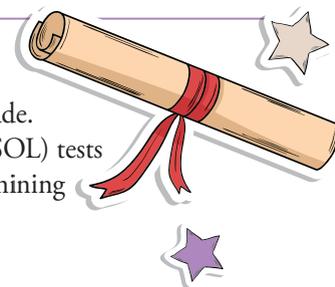
Provide the teacher with a correct telephone number where parents/guardians or a family friend may be reached during the school day, in case of an emergency.

Discuss with your child what to do and where to go in the event you are not at home when he/she arrives.

Discuss with your child what it means to be a responsible digital citizen and the important role we all have in using technology and social media wisely.



Grading & Promotion Guidelines



Promotion Guidelines

Each student should learn the relevant grade level subject matter before promotion to the next grade. Each student shall take and be expected to achieve a passing score on the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests for the student's respective grade. Schools will use SOL test results as part of the criteria for determining promotion in grades three through eight, according to School Board Policy 5-27.

Reporting Student Progress

A formal report on a student's progress in school is sent to parents/guardians at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Progress reports are issued at various times throughout the school year. These dates are included on the school calendar. In third, fourth and fifth grade, parents/guardians will also receive their child's scores on state-mandated Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.

Grading Scale

Grades K-5	
AP	Advanced Proficient
P	Proficient
DP	Developing Proficiency
N	Novice
NE	Not evaluated at this time

- AP** indicates a student consistently grasps, applies and extends key concepts, processes and skills.
- P** indicates a student is meeting grade level standards and expectations. The student, with limited errors, regularly grasps and applies key concepts, processes and skills.
- DP** indicates a student is experiencing difficulty meeting grade level standards and expectations. The student is beginning to grasp and apply key concepts, processes and skills.
- N** indicates a student does not meet grade level expectations. The student needs improvement in grasping and applying key concepts, processes and skills.
- NE** or a shaded box indicates that the criterion was not evaluated during the grading period.



Curriculum & Programs



Child Find/Notice of General Screening

VBCPS maintains an active and continuing child find program designed to locate, evaluate and identify children who are in need of special education and related services. Child find includes children who are migrant, homeless, attend private schools, or are receiving homebound or home-based instruction.

Any child, whether enrolled in public education or a private school, suspected of having a disability, should be referred to the special education administrator or designee. Referrals may be made by any source including school staff, parents/guardians and other individuals who have knowledge of the child. For children of school age, the special education administrator or designee at the neighborhood school will initiate the process for determining eligibility for special education and related services.

As part of the child find program, the school division conducts a general screening of all children to identify previously unrecognized needs, which may result in a referral for special education and related services or other referral or intervention. The following areas of development are screened as indicated below. Parents/guardians are notified by the school if their child fails one or more parts of the general screenings.

The vision and hearing of students in grades kindergarten, two or three, seven and ten may be conducted at any time during the school year; however, the scheduling of such screenings shall be completed within 60 administrative working days of the school year. In addition, vision and hearing screenings are conducted during the school year for all students new to the school division in non-mandated screening grades after the mandated grade requirements are completed.

Scoliosis educational information will be provided to the parents of students in grades five through 10 within

60 days of the opening of school each year, as well as to parents of students new to the division.

Students in kindergarten and students new to the division will be screened within 60 business days of the opening of school in the areas of speech, voice, language skills and gross and fine motor functions.

Students new to the school division enrolled after the start of the school year will have these areas screened in a timely manner, no later than 60 days after their first day of enrollment. All general screenings for speech, voice, language, gross motor and fine motor are completed by the general education classroom teachers. Results of the general screenings in all areas are confidential and are maintained as a part of the student's scholastic record.

NOTE: No general screening procedures are considered to be evaluations for eligibility for special education and related services. General screenings do not require parental consent, but do require parental notification such as the notice included in this handbook. However, during school closings, screenings may be delayed.



Course Information

Parent/Student Course Information Guides for students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade are available on [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com) and provide insight into the instructional program and learning expectations for every child to thrive as 21st century learners, workers and citizens. These guides also contain information regarding the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL).

Environmentally Sustainable Practices

VBCPS understands the importance of conserving resources, protecting our environment, and helping students understand the interconnectedness and interdependencies of all systems that enable life on this planet. In support of this, VBCPS is committed to fostering the “Triple Bottom Line” principles of balancing social, economic, and environmental stewardship through the incorporation of sustainable practices throughout the school division.

In addition to lowering division-wide emissions by constructing sustainable schools, installing rooftop solar, and converting to LED lighting and more efficient HVAC systems, each of the school division’s 86 schools and centers has a Sustainable School Liaison (SSL). The SSL is tasked with increasing sustainability awareness throughout their school. Furthermore, VBCPS is helping schools connect the garden to the classroom and cafeteria by supporting the installation of school gardens.

Full Day Kindergarten Program

VBCPS provides a full-day kindergarten program in 53 elementary schools. For more information on the kindergarten instructional program, visit [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com).

Gifted Education

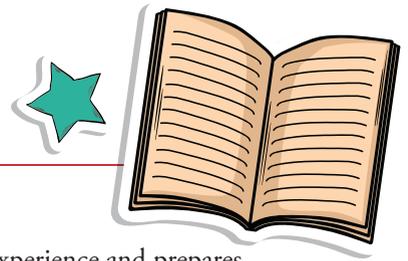
Kindergarten to first grade students receive talent development lessons designed to identify gifted learners. Beginning in first grade, students undergo the gifted identification screening process. If found eligible, identified students in grades 2-12 receive gifted services at their home school through the gifted resource cluster model or division wide programming.

For additional information call (757) 263-1405 or visit [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com).

Gifted identification and ODS selection information and timelines may be found on [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com) under Academic Programs: Gifted.



Curriculum & Programs



Health and Physical Education

Elementary health and physical education is an important part of the elementary education experience and prepares students for a lifetime of health and wellness. Students learn to perform fundamental motor skills and specialized movement patterns and use cognitive information to enhance motor skill acquisition and performance. Students have opportunities to practice communication and collaboration skills to demonstrate responsible behaviors while maintaining a health-enhancing level of fitness. All students will demonstrate the ability to access, evaluate and use health information to recognize the relationship between healthy decision-making and overall personal health. If a health condition prevents a student from participating in physical activities over an extended period of time, a note from a medical professional indicating the limitation is required. For a student to be excused from physical education for a short period of time (up to three days) due to a temporary illness or physical condition, a written request from a parent is sufficient.

Pre-Kindergarten

VBCPS offers a pre-kindergarten program for children who meet eligibility criteria and will be four years old on or before September 30. The full-day program is hosted at 30 elementary school sites and is funded through the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) and the Title I grants awarded to VBCPS. The curriculum supports kindergarten readiness by focusing on the Early Learning and Development Standards provided by the Virginia Department of Education. It promotes emotional, social, cognitive and physical growth. Students are involved in exploring and manipulating a variety of materials and resources in a developmentally-appropriate environment. Engaging and child-friendly themes promote academic development with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the areas of phonemic awareness, language enrichment, letters/sounds, decoding, beginning reading and writing, counting with understanding, and patterns and shapes. For more information about pre-kindergarten or to apply, visit <https://www.vbschools.com/academics/pre-kindergarten>. You may also call (757) 263-1420 or email VBPre-Kinfo@vbschools.com.

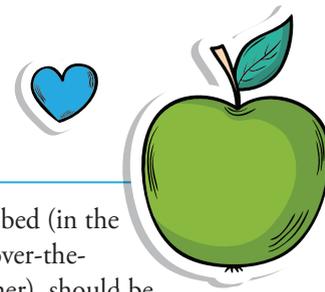


School Counseling Program

Each elementary school offers a comprehensive and developmental counseling program designed to promote the academic, social and career development of all students. As an essential part of the instructional program, school counseling helps to build a foundation for student learning and academic success. Licensed school counselors provide a variety of services including classroom instruction; crisis intervention; individual and group counseling; consultation with parents, teachers and administrators; and coordination of services with outside agencies. Parents/guardians have the right to opt their students out of counseling services.



Health & Wellness



Clinic: Overview of Health Services for Students

School clinics are staffed with a full-time registered nurse, along with trained clinic assistants in the larger schools. They provide health screenings, assessments for chronic and acute illness and first aid. The registered nurse at each school is available to consult with parents, as needed, regarding health concerns of students.

Parents/guardians are asked to contact the school nurse if a child has any special nursing care needs that must be provided during school hours. Examples of this include catheterization, blood sugar checking, seizure precautions, life threatening allergies and other medical needs. The nurse will facilitate and coordinate arrangements for meeting these needs, along with parent and physician collaboration and input.

Administration of medications, especially short term, should be done at home whenever possible. If a student is required to take prescription or non-prescription medication during the school day, the medication should be taken to school by parents or guardians or an adult

designee. All medication, prescribed (in the original labeled container) and over-the-counter (in a new, sealed container), should be accompanied by a Request for Administration of Medication in Hampton Roads School form completed by either a physician, nurse practitioner or dentist and include the parent's/guardian's signature. Students are not authorized to carry or administer medication while at school or participating in school activities unless approved by the school division.

All medicine must be picked up by a parent/guardian on the last day of the school year. Medicine not picked up will be disposed.

Students with asthma or the potential for severe allergic reactions require written health care plans to self-administer their inhaled asthma medication or their auto-injectable (epi-pen) medication. Information concerning a student's allergies should be brought to the nurse's attention. For more information on allergies, please refer to vbschools.com. Additional questions and concerns may be directed to the registered nurse at your school.



As per the Code of Virginia, the school division must comply with all requirements for immunizations of school age children.

There are specific requirements for DTaP, Polio, MMR, Hepatitis B, Varicella, Hepatitis A, which can be located on vbschools.com and <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/>.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep the school nurse informed of significant health concerns and diagnoses for their children.

It is essential that the clinic staff have current work, cell and home phone numbers and any other means whereby parents/guardians can be contacted should the need arise. Emergencies can occur at any time. It is imperative that each student's school be able to reach parents and caregivers during the school day.

Health Insurance for Children

Health insurance is available for children of families who qualify based on income. For more information on Virginia Medicaid & Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS), FAMIS programs for children or to determine eligibility, call 1-888-221-1590 or visit Cover Virginia, www.coverva.org, or contact your school nurse during the regular school year.

Help Keep the Flu/Virus Out of School

Flu/Virus season typically occurs in the fall and winter months. With this in mind, our health services staff suggests that parents remind their children that the most effective flu-fighting strategies are regular and thorough hand-washing and staying home when ill.



Flu/Virus Prevention Tips

Encourage all family members to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. Vaccinate your child for seasonal flu and COVID-19 when the vaccine becomes available to protect against flu and COVID-19 illness. Should your child display any flu or COVID-like symptoms while at school, he or she will be referred to the school nurse. For the safety of others, students and staff with flu or COVID-like symptoms will not be able to stay in school. Should a student display flu or COVID-like symptoms, his or her parent/guardian will be contacted.

Additional information on the guidelines school nurses will follow to minimize the impact of seasonal flu can be found on vbschools.com.



School Safety



Security and Emergency Management Procedures

VBCPS is committed to providing a safe environment for students, staff and visitors and conducts annual safe school audits of all school facilities in accordance with *Virginia State Code*.

The division works closely with national, state and local safety officials – police, fire, emergency medical services and public health – for our schools to be prepared to prevent and respond to an emergency. Staff have developed a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan that covers a wide variety of emergencies that serves as a guide to help staff and our public safety partners respond swiftly should a crisis occur in our schools.

In the case of a school emergency, parents/guardians will be notified and updated by phone and/or email using *AlertNow*. Prior to reporting to your child’s school during an emergency, it is critical for parents/guardians to follow directions communicated via *AlertNow*. Additional information is available on vbschools.com.

Should a school be evacuated, each school has a procedure for helping parents/guardians locate their child. Parents/guardians will be directed to a specific location where they will be required to show proper identification. A student can only be released to an adult who is documented as an emergency contact. If you are a non-custodial parent/guardian, you must be listed with your child’s emergency contact information as a guardian and show proper identification.



It is important that parents/guardians are familiar with these terms:

Internal lockdown - main entrance doors and all school interior doors are locked, students are confined to their classrooms, and no entry or exit of the school is allowed. This takes place if there is a threat or possible threat inside the school. If this occurs, you will be referred to the VBCPS Emergency Hotline at (757) 263-1000 for information regarding this incident.

External lockdown - all school exterior doors are locked. This takes place if the threat is outside of the school. If the situation allows, parents could be admitted into the school with proper identification. Instructional activities will continue.

Shelter-in-Place - means selecting small, interior rooms in the school, with no or few windows and taking refuge there until it is safe to release students. This procedure

is implemented if it is determined that evacuation or dismissal could possibly place students at risk.

Run, Hide, Protect - is a concept to provide staff and students with options in the event of a crisis situation. If there is a danger located inside the school, and teachers and students can escape safely and quickly, they should escape the danger by leaving the school and finding a safe place to call 9-1-1. If escape is not an option, teachers and students should hide in the nearest classroom (*or the room they are in – library, cafeteria, etc*), away from doors and windows. Teachers will turn off the lights and cover the interior windows. The classroom doors will be closed and locked if it is an internal lockdown emergency. As a last resort, if escape (run) and hide are not options, teachers should take whatever actions are necessary in order to protect their children and themselves.

For additional information, call (757) 263-2450.



Transportation



School Bus Route

Bus Stops are centralized, predetermined locations based on a school's student population. Bus and bus stop information for all students, including Kindergarten students, will be available, via Parent Portal, prior to the start of each school year. Students who reside or receive daycare inside the school's "Non-Transportation Zone" will not be provided bus transportation.

Bus transportation is provided to and from school for VBCPS students and is based on each school's transportation zone. All students residing in areas eligible for transportation who request bus service will be assigned to bus stops. Bus route, bus stop, and pick-up times will be posted to each student's ParentVue account. Answers to common transportation FAQs can be found on [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com).

As a parent, you can help ensure our students arrive to and from school safely each day. Be sure your child arrives at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive and remind your child to stand at least five giant steps (10 feet) away from the curb and line up away from the bus. Please consider sharing "watch" responsibilities with a neighbor so your child has an adult overseeing safety at the bus stops. If possible, use the buddy system and have your child travel in a group or with fellow students.

Pre-kindergarten students must be accompanied to the bus stop by a parent/guardian or an adult designee who

is 18 years of age or older. At the end of the school day, an adult 18 years of age or older must be at the bus stop to meet the child. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or their designee to be at the stop to receive the child after school. If an authorized adult (18 years of age or older) is not at the bus stop to receive a student, the student will be returned to the school, and the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. A bus referral may also be submitted. If this happens often, it may result in the child's bus privileges being revoked. At that point, the parent/guardian will have to provide transportation.

Bus drivers do their best to keep a timely schedule. Sometimes the bus may be early or late due to breakdowns, substitute drivers, traffic problems or other unforeseen circumstances. Plan to be at the stop at least **5 minutes before** the scheduled time. If a bus is late, please be patient. To help parents feel secure about their child's trip on the school bus, an app, *EduLog Parent Portal*, may be downloaded from the [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com) website under transportation. The app gives real-time bus location information and sends notifications when the bus enters a user-defined geographic area around the stop. Please visit [vbschools.com](https://www.vbschools.com) to learn more. Calls may be made to the Transportation Services Office at (757) 263-1545 with additional questions.

All parents must fill out a Transportation Registration Request Form during the time they register their child, and thereafter, annually by the last day of school.

SAFETY TIPS FOR STUDENTS RIDING THE BUS



- Children should never run in front of or behind the school bus.
- Children should be taught never to run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
- Make sure your child does not step onto the bus until it has completely stopped.
- After the bus stops and the door opens, remind your child to take firm hold of the handrail and get onto the bus.
- Your child should never push another student while getting on or off the bus.
- All students riding the bus should go directly to a seat and sit quietly. This allows the bus driver to concentrate on driving safely.
- Students should never place any part of their body through the bus window.
- Make sure your child is aware of the Danger Zone and is always within sight of the bus driver. The **Danger Zone** is a 10-foot wide area on all sides of a school bus – an area where children are in the most danger of being hit. Children should be taught to stay 10 feet away from a school bus and to never go behind it.

WILL YOUR CHILD BE WALKING TO SCHOOL INSTEAD?

If possible, use the buddy system and have your child travel in a group. Parents/guardians are welcome to organize a “group walk” so that students who walk to school could meet at a certain time and place and walk together in a large group. In addition, remind your child to:

- Always walk on the sidewalk, or if there isn’t one, on the road facing traffic.
- Only cross streets at corners or crosswalks.
- Look left, then right, then left again before stepping into the road.
- Run away if a stranger approaches and immediately report the incident to an adult.



Technology

Acceptable Use Agreement for Computer Technology

Virginia Beach City Public Schools provides internet access and email accounts (*collectively, the "System"*). In order to use the System, students under the age of 18 must obtain parental/guardian acknowledgment of the provisions of the *Acceptable Use Policy* which is integrated into the *Code of Student Conduct*. Parents/guardians will receive a **Parent Acknowledgment Form** via *ParentVue* during the first week of the school year. Parents/guardians must acknowledge that they have read and understand the policies and regulations (Policies 6-62 and 6-64; Regulations 6-62.1 and 6-64.1). Inappropriate use of the computer can result in disciplinary action taken under the provisions of the *Code of Student Conduct* and/or other School Board policies and division regulations governing student discipline. Any violation will be handled in accordance with School Board Policy 5-21 and its implementing regulations. Understanding the importance of internet/computer safety, information on this subject will be made available to all students throughout the school year.

Personal Technology Use

All possession or use of non-VBCPS issued technology, such as cellular telephones, or other devices, shall be regulated and/or prohibited at each school or school event as deemed necessary to prevent disruption of the educational environment and to maintain order on school property and at school activities. Cellular phones and personal communication devices during instructional time are prohibited. (Policy 3-65; Regulation 3-65.1). For additional information, visit vbschools.com. Recording, either

audio or visual, of school activities is strictly prohibited without prior approval from the principal or designee.

The school division reserves the right to inspect or search both school division owned and private electronic devices or storage systems. The school division is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.

Inappropriate Use of Social Networking Tools

Social networking tools provide students easy access to share news and events with each other. However, using these communication tools in an inappropriate manner can have negative consequences — especially if unkind words or threats are used with the intent to hurt others. Any use of school computer software, computer networks, personal virtual networks, telecommunication devices, information technology, and related technologies which disrupts or interferes with the educational process in any manner, whether in or out of school, is prohibited and may result in disciplinary consequences. As a reminder, most social networking tools do not permit children under the age of 13 to access their sites.



Staying Connected with VBCPS



Keeping in Touch with Your Child’s School

As a parent/guardian of an elementary level student, keeping in touch with your child’s school and teacher is important to the academic success of your child’s education.

Parents/guardians are always encouraged to communicate with teachers about their child’s progress. This can be done by participating in back-to-school and orientation programs scheduled at each school, by arranging a meeting with your child’s teachers and school counselor to monitor their progress and by contacting teachers using email or telephones. Email addresses of all teachers are posted on each school’s website. “Drop by” or unscheduled meetings are discouraged as they may take time away from the delivery of educational services and may not be able to be accommodated.

AlertNow is the rapid notification system used by the school division to send important information quickly via phone, email and/or text to parents/guardians of VBCPS students. This system is used to send messages about emergency situations, health or safety updates, inclement weather notifications, school delays and more. The system also allows the school division and individual schools to remind families about upcoming events and activities, such as report card distribution, open houses and class field trips. All VBCPS students are automatically enrolled in the *AlertNow* notification system; however, to ensure families receive all intended messages, schools should immediately be notified of any changes or updates to a student’s contact information.

Text messaging is optional, although recommended. Standard message and data rates may apply. You may opt-out of text messaging at any time by replying to any division text message with “STOP.” More information on *AlertNow* can be found by visiting www.vbschools.com/AlertNow.

Parents/guardians are also encouraged to download the VBSchools app which is available on Google Play or the App store.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents/guardians are encouraged to have periodic conferences with teachers. For a conference at any time other than on a regularly scheduled school conference date, please call the school for arrangements to meet with the teacher.

VBCPS Parent Portal/ParentVUE

Parents/guardians with educational rights can monitor their child's progress via the *VBCPS Parent Portal*. This powerful tool can be accessed via the internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Parents/guardians are able to view important current school year information such as:

- Grades
- Attendance records
- Student assignments
- Select standardized test scores
- Progress Reports
- Report cards

Sign up for emails notifying parents/guardians when their child has an unexcused absence or receives a certain class grade, detailed attendance reports, detailed assignments, reports and grade summary reports.

To access this resource, select the *Parent Portal* link found on the home page of each school's website and vbschools.com.



What Parents/Guardians Need to Know



Behavior Supports and Code of Student Conduct

The *Code of Student Conduct* is always available on vbschools.com, under “Families.” It contains specific information concerning behavior which will not be tolerated, disciplinary consequences and expectations and rights of students. Both parents/guardians and students should read and understand its contents thoroughly. Students who interfere with the educational process and/or do not comply with regulations and procedures are subject to administrative action.

Breakfasts/Lunches

VBCPS participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. It is extremely important for parents to submit Free and Reduced Meal Applications as soon as possible. Doing so will enable families to receive needed award letters and take advantage of the 30-day grace period leading into the 2024-25 school year application process and avoid accumulating negative meal account balances at the onset of the school year. Meal applications can be submitted online through our secure third party service at www.schoolcafe.com. Current prices for breakfast, lunch and a la carte items can be found on vbschools.com.

Each school uses a computerized point of sale system which allows students to have individual accounts for pre-payment or payment at the time of service for their meals and a la carte purchases. This system lessens the need for students to bring money to the cafeteria each day. Student accounts are used for full-price, reduced-price, free meals and a la carte items.

Payments for meals can be made using cash or check at time of purchase, or online using a credit or debit card

via SchoolCafe.com. *SchoolCafe.com* allows parents/guardians of students to prepay money directly into their child’s account; monitor their child’s food purchases; set up low-balance email reminders; and schedule recurring payments. The *SchoolCafe* app can be downloaded on the App store or Google Play.

Eligibility benefits cannot transfer from year to year, so applications for free or reduced price benefits must be submitted annually. Parents/guardians will receive a reminder, before school starts, via *AlertNow* when applications become available online. Paper copies will be available at the school if needed. Menus are posted on SchoolCafe.com and can be accessed via <https://www.vbschools.com/families/food-and-nutrition-services>.

For more information on lunch menus/food services, call (757) 263-1101 or your school’s cafeteria manager.

Child Custody

The school division recognizes that issues related to the legal and physical custody of students are complicated and can impact the student’s educational experience. Parents/guardians of students are strongly encouraged to stay involved with their student’s academic progress. Unless a court order decrees otherwise, a parent/guardian may view education records and attend school functions or school meetings regarding the minor student. Official notices and report cards will be sent to the parent/guardian with primary physical custody of the student during the school year.

It is the responsibility of the parent or legal custodian with primary physical custody to provide current copies of court orders to the school. This includes any other court orders

offering access to a child or child's records. ***Child visitation and exchange of custody should not take place during school hours or on school property.*** The school division will assume no responsibility for enforcing visitation or custody orders and reserves the right to prohibit parents/guardians from entering School Board property if their conduct becomes disruptive to the school environment. Concerns regarding custody and visitation should be directed to the school principal.

Chromebooks

Elementary students are provided Chromebooks as a supplement to the instructional program. Protective cases are also provided and should be used for multiple years. The cases are considered consumables and do not need to be returned. Schools are expected to hold students financially responsible for damaged and missing Chromebooks or chargers.

Early Dismissal

When leaving school prior to dismissal or being picked up at dismissal, students must report to the office or security desk to be signed out by a parent/guardian or an adult the parent/guardian designates. This requirement is to ensure the safety and well-being of your child.

Homework

At home support is a vital part of the total learning process. As such, appropriate and meaningful homework practices are communicated to parents and students throughout the year.

Investigating School-Related Incidents

If an allegation is made that an employee was exhibiting poor performance and/or engaging in misconduct (which could include an allegation of child abuse/neglect), a school division Employee Relations Specialist or other administrator could decide to interview one or more students to obtain pertinent information. In appropriate circumstances, an interview(s) may be conducted jointly with the Virginia Beach Department of Social Services

and/or law enforcement personnel. School division administrators are not legally obligated to obtain parental permission before interviewing a student. Virginia law permits law enforcement personnel and/or child protective service workers to interview any child suspected of being abused or neglected and/or siblings without first obtaining parental consent.

Late Arrival

Students arriving to school late must report to the main office or security desk with an adult to sign in before going to class. Documentation from the parent explaining the reason for late arrival is required.

Minute of Silence

School Board Regulation 6-16-1 states the principal of each school shall establish a daily observance of one minute of silence in each classroom.

News Media Coverage

At various times during the school year, news media representatives may photograph or videotape students in incidental news coverage. If a student is not to be interviewed or photographed on school property by the news media, a signed parental consent form is required (*Media Opt-Out Form*).

Parent Acknowledgement Form and Supporting Documents

Parents/guardians will receive a *Parent Acknowledgement Form* via ParentVUE during the first week of the school year. This form is for parents/guardians of minor students or for students who are already 18-years-old enrolled in Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Please log in to ParentVUE, read the *Parent Acknowledgement Form* and confirm receipt.

What Parents/Guardians Need to Know



Recess

Elementary students will participate in recess twice a day. One recess will occur within the PE instruction block with the PE teacher and PE teacher assistants. The other recess will occur with the classroom teacher and/or teacher assistant.

School Pictures

The school division arranges with a local photography studio to have individual and class group photos taken. Funds generated from this activity are used to buy various supplementary materials and equipment for the school.

School Planning Council

Each school has a School Planning Council consisting of staff, parents/guardians and community members who meet multiple times a year. The council's mission is to develop and assess school improvement initiatives.

School Policies, Regulations, Protocols and Guidelines

Guidelines have been established to maintain an effective learning environment and to provide for the safety and well-being of students. School policies and regulations apply in the school building, on the school grounds, while traveling to and from school and at any event where the school is represented.

For the safety of students, fundraising activities which involve door-to-door solicitations by elementary and/or middle school students are prohibited.

Students are to comply with the *Code of Student Conduct*.

Students may not bring personal items such as toys,

radios, microphones, electronic devices, recording devices, etc., to school without permission from the teacher.

Responsibility for loss, damage or theft cannot be assumed by the school.

Chewing gum is not allowed on school property.

Animals, other than qualified service animals used to assist individuals with disabilities, may not be brought on school property without prior approval from the school.

School Board policies and regulations can be found at vbschools.com or upon request to the school division.

School Visitors and Employees

VBCPS welcomes parents and visitors in our schools. In order to protect instructional time, parents or guests who wish to meet with an individual teacher or administrator are asked to schedule those appointments in advance. As part of our safe schools practices, all visitors and volunteers are asked to check in at the desk inside the main entrance. Each guest's ID will be scanned in order to print a visitor's badge which includes the person's photo, name, time of arrival and final destination. As an added security feature, the scanning process includes a cross reference to the national and state sex offender registry. Visitors with certain offense records may be denied access to the school or school sponsored events. All visitors are required to wear their badge while on school property, stay within the location approved to visit and sign out at the front desk as they are leaving the building. The school division reserves the right to ban or put a limitation of access on any person who poses a threat or disruption to the educational environment.

Trespassers are subject to legal action. School buildings and grounds are smoke-free at all times.

Textbooks and Electronic Access to Instructional Materials

Free textbooks and electronic instructional materials are provided for use during the school year in some content areas. If parents/guardians prefer to buy new texts or electronic instructional material for students in kindergarten through fifth grade, order forms are available in the office upon request. However, a digital version of all textbooks can be accessed through the student portal. The school does not sell or buy used texts. Students are expected to care for the books and electronic devices they receive. Fees may be assessed for damaged or lost books or electronic devices.

Transfers

Parents/guardians of students withdrawing from school should contact the office at least two days prior to the last day of attendance. This allows time for completion of records, return of books and completion of the transfer form. Parents/guardians may pick up the transfer form from the office on the student's last day or it may be sent home with the student upon request. All accounts with the school should be settled prior to the transfer. Upon request from the child's new school, the previous school will send the student's academic records.

Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation's Before & After School Child Care Programs

Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation offers Out-of-School Time Programs for Kindergarten-5th graders during the school year. KidzQuest before school programs are available at select elementary schools. KidzQuest after school programs are available at all elementary schools, except for Title I schools. RISE after school programs are available at all Title I elementary schools. Please visit www.VBgov.com/childcare, email OSTRegistration@vbgov.com or call (757) 385-0402 directly for more information.



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Produced by the Department of Communications and Community Engagement for the Department of School Leadership.
For further information, please call (757) 263-1088.

Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy

Virginia Beach City Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation/gender identity, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, disability, marital status, age, genetic information or military status in its programs and activities, employment, or enrollment and provides equal access to the Boy or Girl Scouts and other designated youth groups. School Board policies and regulations (including but not limited to, Policies 2-33, 4-4, 5-4, 5-7, 5-19, 5-20, 5-31, 5-44, 6-7, 6-33, 7-48, 7-49, 7-57 and Regulations 2-33.1, 4-4.1, 4-4.2, 4-4.3, 5-7.1, 5-44.1, 5-44.2, 7-11.1 and 7-57.1) provide equal access to courses, programs, enrollment, counseling services, physical education and athletic, vocational education, instructional materials, extracurricular activities, and employment.

Title IX Notice: Complaints or concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex or sexual harassment should be addressed to the Title IX Coordinator, at the VBCPS Office of Student Leadership, 641 Carriage Hill Road, Suite 200, Virginia Beach, 23452, (757) 263-2020, Robin.Reese@vbschools.com (student complaints) or the VBCPS Department of School Leadership, 2512 George Mason Drive, Municipal Center, Building 6, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 23456, (757) 263-1088, Robert.Wnukowski@vbschools.com (employee complaints). Additional information regarding Virginia Beach City Public Schools' policies regarding discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual harassment, as well as the procedures for filing a formal complaint and related grievance processes, can be found in School Board Policies 5-31 and 5-44 and School Board Regulations 5-44.1 and 5-44.2 (students), School Board Policy 4-4 and School Board Regulation 4-4.3 (employees) and on the school division's website at Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/Title IX. Concerns about the application of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act should be addressed to the Section 504 Coordinator/Executive Director of Student Support Services at (757) 263-1980, Plaza Annex/Family and Community Engagement Center, 641 Carriage Hill Road, Suite 200, Virginia Beach, VA 23452 or the Section 504 Coordinator at the student's school. For students who are eligible or suspected of being eligible for special education or related services under IDEA, please contact the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children at (757) 263-2400, Plaza Annex/Family and Community Engagement Center, 641 Carriage Hill Road, Suite 200, Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

The school division is committed to providing educational environments that are free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Students, staff, parents/guardians who have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or bullying should contact the school administration at their school. Promptly reporting concerns will allow the school to take appropriate actions to investigate and resolve issues. School Board Policy 5-7 addresses non-discrimination and anti-harassment, Policy 5-44 addresses sexual harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender. Policy 5-36 and its supporting regulations address other forms of harassment.

Alternative formats of this publication which may include taped, Braille, or large print materials are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Call or write the Department of School Leadership, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, 2512 George Mason Drive, P.O. Box 6038, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038. Telephone (757) 263-1088 (voice); fax (757) 263-1260; (757) 263-1240 (TDD) or email DeptofSchoolLeadership@vbschools.com.

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