

2024-2025 Richmond Community High School Profile

201 East Brookland Park Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23222 ♦ Telephone 804-780-4332 ♦ Fax 804-780-4423

School Type: Public

District: Richmond Public Schools

Enrollment: 210

Grades: 9-12

School Colors: Blue and Yellow

Mascot: Pharaohs

School Opened: 1968

School Begins: 9:00 a.m.

School Ends: 4:00 p.m.

Teachers: 18 Full-time and 2 Part-time

School Counselor: Ms. Bernita Williams

Principal: Mrs. Kenya Massenburg

Support Staff: Seven

Website:

<http://www.rvaschools.net/schools/rchs>

Class Size: 18 to 1 (average)

GENERAL INFORMATION



Richmond Community High School (RCHS) is a college preparatory specialty public high school with an enrollment of approximately 210

students in grades 9 – 12 within the Richmond Public Schools. Enrollment is open to all public, private, and homeschooled children who reside in the City. The school is housed in the historic J. A. C. Chandler building at 201 East Brookland Park Boulevard on the city's north side.

RCHS was initiated by the late Andrew J. Asch, Jr., a Richmond business leader who envisioned creating a public-private education partnership that would provide outstanding education for students whose socio-economic circumstances limited their ability to succeed academically. Mr. Asch provided leadership as well as giving and garnering financial support to begin the school.

Through a special admission process, students are selected to attend RCHS on the basis of a rated personal interview and performance on tests that examine their creative and general academic ability. According to the principles on which the school was founded, approximately 60 percent of the admission spaces for incoming freshmen are designated for students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

RCHS consistently has produced the highest achievement in its students. Since its inception, nearly all of the students have been accepted by institutions of higher education,

including Ivy League schools, prestigious engineering and technical universities, and the armed forces academies. Ninety-eight (98) percent have attended college. Each year, the graduating class of roughly 50 – 70 students is awarded between 8 and 11 million dollars in scholarships and grants.

RCHS has received numerous important recognitions, including the following:

- The Carnegie Foundation selected RCHS as one of 200 high schools in the nation that promotes excellence in education.
- Kappa Delta Pi, a national honorary fraternity, listed RCHS in its "Report of the Good School Project: One Hundred Good Schools."
- Education Week, one of the foremost national school publications, featured RCHS in July 1997.
- In 1998, Charles Osgood's national radio program featured the school as a model.
- U.S. News & World Report magazine ranked RCHS among the nation's top 500 high schools for the years 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. This year (2024), RCHS is ranked #8 in Virginia and #2 in the Richmond metro area.
- VA Board of Education "Excellence Award" recipient for 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015.
- National Blue Ribbon School Award in 2011 by the U.S. Office of Education.
- Wise Financial Literacy Blue Star Award 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024; national ranking of 1 (small high school category); no. 2 rank (overall) 2024.

THE RCHS CURRICULUM

All RCHS students must earn 32 credits for graduation, which provides an Advanced Studies Diploma. The typical Advanced Studies Diploma in RPS and the State of VA requires 26 credits. The curriculum is distinguished by its in-depth and broad-based nature and an interdisciplinary and future-oriented emphasis. All students must complete a freshman research paper and senior thesis prior to graduation.

Outstanding teachers offer students a challenging and advanced 4 x 4 schedule. All core classes at RCHS are honors-level, and graduating automatically qualifies a student for the Commonwealth's Advanced Studies Diploma. Students are encouraged to take at least one college-level class at a local college/university during their four years at RCHS. Students also may take select technical classes at the Richmond Technical

Center (RTC). The school consistently tops all Richmond high schools in SOL achievement and is competitive with the best schools in the Richmond region.

RCHS strives to enlarge the students' experiences and give them a "jump-start" for college. An extensive program of enrichment opportunities takes students "outside the walls" and prepares them for their future professional, community, and personal lives. These programs include the following:

- Twenty hours of summer orientation prepare incoming students and parents for a rigorous four-year experience. This program is the only one of its kind in Richmond Public Schools.
- One week-long "mini-mesters" field trips in grades 9, 10, and 11 allow students to apply what they learn in mathematics, science, social studies, and the humanities through a camping trip to the Chesapeake Bay for ninth graders, Civil Rights era study, and college visits in Atlanta, Georgia for sophomores and a study of the Civil War in Philadelphia, PA for juniors.
- Students start planning for college in their first year, meet with representatives from the college who visit the campus, and visit college campuses as part of the "mini-mester" experience. Experiences outside the classroom open the larger world of museums, libraries, historical places, theater and film, musical performances, camps, and environmental explorations.
- Thursday activity blocks offer student club and organization meetings, special seminars, field experiences, and other opportunities to complement and enrich their academic work.
- All students are required to complete community service before graduation.

THE BELL SCHEDULE

RCHS offers a 4 x 4 bell schedule. This schedule enables students to take 4 classes per semester during the school year. Students take four classes of approximately 90 minutes in length both the first semester and second semester.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the federal government's measure that requires schools to meet state-approved test score goals school-wide and for each subgroup of students in the school. If one group of students fails to meet its goal, the school does not meet AYP.

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SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Numerous school support services are available for RCHS students. These programs include a media center, two computer laboratories, and a part-time social worker and nurse.

A full-time school counselor is assigned to RCHS. The counselor works with the students throughout their time at RCHS to ensure they gain maximum benefit from their high school experience. During the senior year, the counselor is a key player in helping students apply for scholarships and colleges/universities. In addition, the counselor serves as an advocate for students during those times when they may be experiencing some of the social, emotional, and/or academic challenges most adolescents are confronted with in high school.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The faculty/staff at RCHS insist that parents take an active role in their children's education experience. Therefore, a mandatory parent orientation meeting is held during the New Student Orientation Program.

The school is also organized by "family" units instead of homerooms. These "families" meet weekly and combine students from different grade levels, backgrounds, and classes under the leadership of a talented faculty member. Families offer a "protected place" to keep watch over each student and provide the emotional, social, and academic support they need to succeed in the school curriculum.

CORE CLASSES

The core classes at RCHS include English, math, history/social studies, science, and world languages. These classes are taught as honors (H) or Advanced Placement (AP) courses at all grade levels. AP courses include English Language, English Literature, Calculus AB, Statistics, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics, United States History, United States Government & Politics, Psychology, Music Theory, Art History, Spanish Language & Culture, Computer Science Applications, Computer Science Principles, Seminar, and Research.

Students must complete at least three college-level courses before graduation. In addition, the dual Enrollment Program (Early College Academy) at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College allows students to earn college and high school credits simultaneously.

RCHS GRADING SCALE

RCHS assigns letter grades using a 4.0 Richmond Public Schools grading scale. Honors classes offered at the school carry a 0.5-point weight increase and are designed to be a more in-depth variation of core classes, such as Honors 10 English. At the next level — with a typical 1.0-point weight increase — are the school's advanced placement (AP) classes. Letter grades are assigned as follows:

- A = 90 - 100 (Excellence)**
- B = 80 - 89 (Above Average)**
- C = 70 - 79 (Average)**
- D = 60 - 69 (Below Average)**
- F = 59 and Less (Unsatisfactory)**

RCHS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

RCHS students must earn an advanced studies diploma and at least 32 credits for graduation. The table below shows the credits students must earn to receive the school's diploma:

Honors English	2 Credits
Honors Mathematics	4 Credits
Honors Science	4 Credits
Honors/AP Social Studies	4 Credits
* Foreign Language	3 Credits
Health & Physical Ed.	2 Credits
Fine Arts	2 Credits
Career & Technical Ed (CTE)	1 Credit
Economic & Personal Finance	1 Credit
AP Eng Lang/AP Eng Lit	2 Credits
General Electives	7 Credits
TOTAL	32 Credits

**Three years of one language or two years of two languages are required.*

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

New Student Orientation
Freshman Research Paper
Community Service

Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors must participate in "mini-mester" field trips.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

All students are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours of community service over a four-year period. Through community service, students learn new skills, assume responsibility, become aware of the needs of others, and understand the importance of unselfish serving and giving. All community service must be supervised, performed in a non-profit atmosphere, involve service

delivery rather than administrative work, and be appropriately documented.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

RCHS is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

ADMISSIONS

Admission to RCHS is open to all City residents. The faculty actively seeks to enroll the disadvantaged child, not only those identified as gifted students but also those whose potential may not have been recognized. The faculty works closely with the staff at ALL RPS middle schools to recruit. Students from RCHS often participate in recruitment trips to explain, encourage, and demystify the program. More than 400 students, including home-schooled and those from many area private schools, compete annually for the limited number of spaces in each incoming class. Students applying to RCHS are required to complete Algebra I before enrolling in the 9th grade.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

RCHS offers an extended day tutorial program designed to ensure that students have an opportunity to be fully engaged in learning beyond the traditional school day (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). The program attempts to create bonds between students and teachers that will develop warm, supportive relationships within which instruction provides optimal learning experiences. During the tutoring sessions, teachers identify the competencies that need reinforcing in each student by providing intense instruction in a small setting.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

RCHS offers a wide variety of clubs and organizations for students. Requirements for participation follow the eligibility standards established by the club/ organization. Students are also encouraged to create clubs if the school doesn't have one of interest to them.

Virginia High School League (VHSL) athletics are not offered at RCHS. Students interested in participating in interscholastic sports must do so at their zone high school. ♦