



FIRST DAY INFORMATION PACKET

www.rcps.us

This document contains various notifications of daily and annual school procedures regarding multiple categories. Please read carefully and completely.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Policy 7.07

Daily student attendance is a key factor in student success in school. Being present each day contributes to a student’s feeling connected to the school and to the student’s learning. Roanoke County Public Schools (RCPS) takes seriously our obligation to provide high quality, engaging, and purposeful learning experiences designed to meet students’ needs and to prepare them for future opportunities. Our goal is to create and sustain schools and classrooms to which students are eager to go and learn. RCPS welcomes you as a valued partner in supporting acceptable levels of school attendance for our students. We want to keep you informed of student attendance procedures that RCPS schools follow in order to support this cooperative effort.

RCPS schools will follow the procedures below for student attendance. The full version is located in Policy 7.07 and Administrative Regulation 7.07AR under School Board Policies on the RCPS website: www.rcps.us.

Thank you for your support of our joint efforts to promote student learning through good student attendance. If you have any questions, please contact your school’s principal, school counselor, or school social worker.

Excused Absences and Tardies and Early Dismissals

1. Parents of students who are absent, tardy, or dismissed early must inform the school **in writing, by phone, email, or other electronic means** of the reason for the absence, tardy, or early dismissal upon the student’s return to school. School staff records the student’s absence, tardy, or early dismissal for each day as “excused” or “unexcused”. Notification will not be accepted after three days upon the student’s return to school.

2. Absences, tardies, and early dismissals are excused for the following reasons when the parent/guardian provides the school with documented explanations for each absence, tardy, and early dismissal:

Absences	Documentation Required
Personal illness	Five (5) parent notes accepted each semester
Medical/therapist appointment	Statement from attending professional
Severe illness in the immediate family	Statement from attending physician or parent note
Death of immediate family	Memorial from funeral or parent note
Religious observance	Prearranged- contact school administrator
Pre-arranged college visits (maximum of 2 per school year for Juniors and Seniors only)	Verification from college or parent note
Student court appearance	Document from the court
Other extenuating circumstances or prior notification of absence	Prearranged- contact school administrator (The school administrator may require the student to attend before or after school remediation sessions if they have missed 15 or more cumulative days of school)
School sponsored activities	Approved by school administrator
Civic Engagement for middle and high school (1 per school year), 4-H (3 per school year) or state or federally recognized tribal nation headquartered in Virginia	Prearranged – contact school administrator (one day per school year)
Student suspensions	Assigned by school administrator

***Chronic absenteeism is defined by the Virginia Department of Education as missing ten percent or more of the academic year for any reason, including excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions. Based on a 180-day school year, that means approximately 18 days per school year or 2 or 3 days per month.

If absences and tardies that are excused solely by parent explanation become excessive, the school will require additional documentation to ensure compliance with compulsory school attendance law.

Appropriate interventions will be followed as outlined below when a student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day with an explanation that would not be excused if it were a full-day absence.

Senior late arrival and early release may be removed from a student's schedule and replaced with a study hall for students who miss more than ten (10) days of school. Parking privileges may be removed from students who miss more than ten (10) days of school.

A student whose absence is excused due to the observance of a nationally recognized religious holiday is not deprived of any award or eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reasons of such absence.

Students shall attend school a full day unless excused by the principal or principal's designee.

Absences and tardies that do not meet the criteria for being excused absences or tardies are considered unexcused absences or tardies. Students in grades 9-12 may be denied full credit for assignments missed due to an unexcused absence, tardy, or early dismissal.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.

An attendance officer, or a division superintendent or the superintendent's designee when acting as an attendance officer pursuant to Va. Code 22.1-258, may complete, sign, and file with the intake officer of the juvenile and domestic relations district court, on forms approved by the Supreme Court of Virginia, a petition for a violation of a school attendance order entered by the juvenile and domestic relations court pursuant to Va. Code 16.1-278.5 in response to the filing of a petition alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code 16.1-228.

Compliance with the Compulsory Attendance Law

1. For safety reasons, whenever a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no information has been received by school personnel that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence, or the parent provides a reason for the absence that is unacceptable to the school administration, the school principal, principal's designee, attendance officer or other school personnel or volunteer notifies the parent by phone, email or other electronic means to obtain an explanation. Additionally, parents must provide a written note upon the student's return to school. Early intervention with the student and parent or parents takes place for repeated unexcused absences.

2. Excessive Absences Without Parental Awareness and Support

a. Upon Fifth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support: If (1) a student fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year, and (2) there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence; and (3) a reasonable effort to notify the parent has failed, then the principal or the principal's designee makes a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other communication devices, to obtain an explanation for the student's absence and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal, the principal's designee, the student, and the student's parent shall jointly develop a plan to resolve the student's nonattendance. Such plan shall include documentation of the reasons for the student's nonattendance.

b. Upon Additional Absences Without Parental Awareness and Support: If the student is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the student's parent and school personnel have received no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the student's absence, either the school principal or the principal's designee shall schedule a conference with the student, the student's parent and school personnel. Such conference may include the attendance officer and the other community service providers to resolve issues related to the pupil's nonattendance. The conference shall be held no later than 10 school days after the tenth absence of the pupil, regardless of whether the student's parent approves of the conference. The conference team shall monitor the pupil's attendance and may meet again as necessary to address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In circumstance in which the parent is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory attendance requirements or the pupil is resisting parental efforts to comply with compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or principal's designee shall make a referral to the attendance officer. The attendance officer shall schedule a conference with the pupil and pupil's parent within 10 school days and may (i) file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in Va. Code 16.1-228 or (ii) institute proceedings against the parent pursuant to Va. Code 18.2-371 or 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer shall provide written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of this policy. In the event that both parents have been awarded joint custody pursuant to Va.

Code 20-124.2 and the school has received notice of such order, both parents shall be notified at the last known addresses of the parents.

3. Excessive Absences or Tardies Solely Based on Parent Documentation

a. **If absences, tardies, and early dismissals that are excused solely by parent explanation become excessive, more than five (5) a semester, the school will require additional documentation to ensure compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.** The school will accept five (5) days of medical absences that are justified by a parent note. After the fifth absence, official documentation will be required. Such additional documentation may include written documentation from a physician treating the student for a chronic or extended illness or court documentation resulting from student involvement in a legal matter.

School principals and school counselors regularly collaborate with school social workers to monitor student attendance and communicate with students, parents, and families regarding excessive absences unsupported by adequate documentation.

b. For the purposes of avoiding excessive tardiness to school that results in frequent loss of instructional time, five (5) tardies to school without adequate written documentation will be considered the equivalent of one (1) absence.

c. For the purpose of avoiding excessive early releases from school that result in frequent loss of instructional time, five (5) early releases from school without adequate written documentation will be considered the equivalent of (1) one absence.

d. The following procedures are followed when a student has been absent excessively solely based on parent documentation:

The following procedures are followed when a student has been absent excessively solely based on parent documentation. The absences counted in the total number of absences include:

- Absence Excused – Parent Note (illness)
- Absence Unexcused
- College Visitation
- Prior Notification (vacation, travel)
- Truant
- Tardy Excused – Parent Note
- Tardy Unexcused
- Early Dismissal Unexcused

First Notification Letter

If a student accumulates five absences excused solely based on parent explanation, without adequate documentation, the school will notify the parent of the student (First Notification Letter) and list the dates the student has been absent.

Second Notification Letter

After the First Notification Letter has been sent to a parent as required in section (a)(i), the school will send a Second Notification Letter to the parent if the student accumulates ten (10) absences without adequate documentation. The Second Notification Letter will list the dates the student has been absent, and the parent will be advised that the matter may be referred to the 23rd District Court Service Unit or Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

Student Support Meeting

After the school has sent the First and Second Notification Letters and upon the eleventh (11th) absence without adequate documentation, the school will schedule a mandatory Student Support Meeting with the parent to address the excessive number of absences and develop a plan of support. The Student Support Meeting will include the parent, student, school-level administrator, school counselor, and school social worker.

If the parent has been adequately notified of the Student Support Meeting but fails to attend the meeting, the Executive Director of Administration will be notified and will reschedule the meeting

to be held at the home school. The Student Support Meeting will include the parent, student, school level administrator, and social worker.

If the parent does not attend the second attempt to hold the Student Support Meeting, a referral will be made to the RCPS Truancy Intervention Program (TIPS) Show Up for Success meeting with the parent, student, school administrator, social worker, Executive Director of Administration, and other community providers. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a complaint filed with 23rd District Court Service Unit or Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

When a Student Support Plan is implemented, the plan is in effect for twelve (12) months after the date of implementation.

When a student returns to school the following year with an active Student Support Plan, the student will be referred to the RCPS TIPS Program upon receiving their First Notification Letter.

Complaint filed with 23rd District Court Service Unit or Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court

After conferencing with the parent, if a student accumulates three (3) additional absences without adequate documentation, the school social worker will file a complaint with the 23rd District Court Service Unit or Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

D. Report for Suspension of Driver's License

In addition to any other actions taken pursuant to this policy, if a student who is under 18 years of age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student's driver's license.

E. Attendance Reporting

Student attendance is monitored and reported as required by state law and regulations. At the end of each school year, each public-school principal reports to the superintendent the number of students by grade level for whom a conference was scheduled pursuant to Part C above. The superintendent compiles this information and provides it annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

F. Dismissal Precautions

Principals shall not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the student's parent/guardian to assume responsibility for the student. Students are released only on request and authorization of the parent or guardian. The superintendent shall provide procedures for release of pupils who are not residing with or under the supervision of a parent/guardian. The burden of proof on the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party. A formal check-out system is maintained in each school.

G. Make-up Work

Students in grades K-12 are expected to make up all missed work from an absence within 10 school days upon the student's return to school. If the student does not complete the make-up work within that time frame, the student may be denied full credit.

Assignments made prior to an absence are due upon the return to school. Exceptions may be granted by individual teachers.

Teachers are expected to contact parents regarding the completion of make-up work in an effort to ensure that the student completes the work and meets the 10 school day deadline.

1. Excused Absence:

Students are required to request make-up work on the first day of return to class. Students will be given 10 school days to make up the work. Exceptions for a longer time period for make-up work may be granted by individual teachers.

2. Unexcused Absence:

Students in grades 9-12 may be denied full credit for assignments missed due to an unexcused absence.

3. Incomplete Work:

A grade of incomplete (I) will be entered on a student's report card when make-up work has not been completed, and the allowed make-up time extends across the end of the grading period into another. After make-up work is completed, a corrected grade will be submitted by the teacher. If make-up work is not completed by the established deadline, the incomplete (I) will be changed to the grade average computed with the grade earned for the assignment.

4. Prior Notification of Absences

If the student is absent from school for a planned event (such as a vacation or travel) the parent must send the school written prior notification of the absence. These absences will count against exam exemption and chronic absenteeism. Make-up work for students with prior notification of absence that is not available to the student prior to the absence is given to the student upon the student's return to school. The student shall be responsible for contacting the teacher to arrange for completing the make-up work. The school administrator may require the student to attend before or after school remediation sessions if they have missed 15 or more cumulative days of school.

H. Recognition for Outstanding Attendance

1. Grades K-12 students will be recognized for Outstanding School Attendance at the end of each school year if they have been absent no more than five days and tardy no more than five days and dismissed early no more than five days.

2. Seniors
An Outstanding Attendance Seal will be awarded if he/she has maintained 97% attendance through his/her high school career (Grades 9-12).

I. Perfect Attendance

A cumulative perfect attendance recognition is given to graduating seniors who have not been absent in grades K-12.

FINAL ASSESSMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS FOR FULL-YEAR CREDIT BEARING COURSES

Policy 6.16

Roanoke County Public Schools Policy 6.16 permits students to be exempt from end of the year final assessments provided students meet all of the following requirements:

1. Seniors enrolled in any full-year credit bearing class, with the exception of classes taken for dual enrollment credit, may be exempt if they meet the criteria listed in (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) below. Students taking courses for dual enrollment credit must take all exams in conformance to the policies of the college and, therefore, are not eligible for exemption from final assessments.
AND
 - a. Must have an A or B average in course for the second semester at the time exemptions are declared.
 - b. Students may not miss more than five days of school for the second semester for courses on the A/B day and seven days of school for the second semester for courses that meet daily. Exceptions include school-sponsored activities and nationally recognized religious holidays. Students must attend at least 50% of a class period in order to be counted present in a class for the purpose of exemption from final assessments.
 - c. The student may not be absent more than 13 full days during the entire school year (includes A and B days combined and not counting days absent for exam exemptions) Students must miss 100% of the school day to be considered as absent for a full day.
 - d. The student must attend all review sessions held for a course. (Students are still responsible for all work and must maintain their A or B grade average through the review sessions)
 - e. If the student is enrolled in a subject with an industry certification, the student must have passed the corresponding industry certification.

The Executive Director of Secondary Instruction may grant an appeal for excessive absences based on prolonged illness, hospitalization, doctor visits/directed bed rest, severe injury, and bereavement. All absences considered under the appeal process must be supported by medical or supporting documentation.

Seniors with incompletes will not be eligible for exemption from final assessments.

2. Students in grades 9-12 who take the following course related assessments are exempt from the final assessment for that course:
 - a. Mandatory End-of-Course SOL test
 - b. End-of-Course credentialing or certification test
 - c. Advanced Placement examination

The student must attend all review sessions held for a course

SCHOOL NUTRITION

The School Nutrition program offers nutritious, delicious school meals that meet the needs of the various age groups in our student community. Breakfast and lunch are served daily at all Roanoke County schools except Burton Center for Arts and Technology.

The School Nutrition Program operates under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and is therefore subject to all rules and regulations that apply to those programs.

Families may apply to participate in the free and reduced-priced meal program. Household applications are evaluated according to USDA Income Eligibility Guidelines. To apply, complete ONE application for ALL children in the household who are enrolled in Roanoke County Public Schools. A new application must be filled out each year in order to be eligible. Once completed and submitted, the application comes directly to the Nutrition Services and is processed accordingly.

To apply, please choose ONE of the following options:

- A confidential and secure online application may be completed at <https://lingconnect.com>. Multiple language options are available. The SY25-26 application will open in late July 2025 and families at all non-CEP schools will receive an email from LINQ notifying them the application is available.
- A paper application may be obtained and turned in at any school site. Spanish language applications are also available, with additional languages available upon request. Paper applications will be available as of the first day of school.

All students enrolled at **Burlington Elementary, Glen Cove Elementary, Herman L. Horn Elementary, Masons Cove Elementary, Mount Pleasant Elementary, Mountain View Elementary, Northside High, Northside Middle, W.E. Cundiff Elementary, and William Byrd Middle** will eat for free as part of the Community Eligibility Provision as implemented under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Households with students attending these schools will not be required to submit a meal application form for these students to receive meals at no charge.

Payment for school meals and a la carte items may be made in the cafeteria of each school by cash or check. This is a free option for adding funds to meal accounts. Payments may also be made through LINQ Connect a secure online provider, at <https://lingconnect.com> using a major credit card. There is a third-party service fee for using the online payment service. Parents may monitor their child's cafeteria purchases on LINQ Connect at no cost.

Meal prices:

Lunch: \$3.25 student \$4.85 adult **Breakfast:** \$1.75 student \$2.85 adult **Milk:** \$0.50

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

Policy 9.14

Students who do not have money on account or in hand to cover the cost of a meal at the time of service may be permitted to charge the meal. Reasonable efforts are used to avoid calling attention to a student's inability to pay.

Notice of negative balances in a student's meal account are sent to parents and the school principal. Parents are expected to pay all meal charges in full by the last day of the school year.

If a parent regularly fails to provide meal money or send food to school with the student and the student does not qualify for free or reduced benefits, the nutrition supervisor will inform the principal, who will determine the next course of action, which may include notifying the department of social services of suspected child neglect.

The superintendent or superintendent's designee ensures that federal child nutrition funds are not used to offset the cost of unpaid meals, and that the child nutrition program is reimbursed for bad debt. In order to accomplish those goals, the following procedures are followed:

- Communications via automated text message, email, and U.S. mail are sent to parent or guardian with unpaid student meal charges. Payment is requested and arrangements for a payment plan are offered, if necessary.
- If the debt is not paid and the student has left the school district, it is considered bad debt for the purpose of federal law concerning unpaid meal charge. This is reviewed and the nutrition program is reimbursed by the School Board general operating funds.

FOOD ALLERGY NOTIFICATION

We are notifying you of our procedure for accommodating meal allergies in the school cafeteria.

If you noted a food allergy on your student's health information, the allergen will not be served to your student in any form. For example, a student with a milk allergy will not be served fluid milk, cheese, yogurt, or baked items that may include milk.

This procedure is in place to ensure your student is not exposed to a life-threatening allergic reaction.

To update or remove allergies that may already be on file, please contact the nurse at your student's school. For any special meal accommodations, such as those requiring substitutions, a doctor's signed food allergy action plan is required. Please obtain this from your doctor and submit it to your school nurse so a school allergy plan can be developed.

If you have any questions, please contact Nutrition Services at (540) 562-3788.

SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Roanoke County Public Schools has partnered with K&K Insurance Group to offer parents an optional student insurance package for the school year. Parents may access K&K Insurance at this link: www.StudentInsurance-kk.com to view additional information and sign up for coverage.

Coverage provided by this company is not medical insurance and does not cover sickness or wellness medical visits. Benefits amounts are payable only in the event of accidental injury to any covered student based on coverage tier selected.

PARENTLINK

Keeping parents informed and involved helps to assure student safety and improve student success. As it has become more challenging for schools to reach families quickly and effectively, our school district uses a system called ParentLink which is a product from Blackboard.

ParentLink is an essential tool for notification and communication. Within minutes of an emergency, school officials can use ParentLink to deliver a single, clear message to the students' parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone or e-mail in any combination. ParentLink can also be used to notify you of a school closing due to inclement weather.

We will automatically send an alert to the home telephone number of students as listed in our Student Information System. In addition, ParentLink is Internet based, allowing each family to maintain a secure, password protected online profile. Using this profile, you may designate additional communication methods, such as additional telephone numbers, cell phones or email to also receive alerts. ParentLink also offers apps for both Apple and Android devices to receive alerts sent by the school district. You can log into your profile at any time to update your contact information. Maintaining the accuracy of your profile will increase the ability of the school to keep you informed. The school does not maintain your delivery options or additional contacts you may have added in this system.

Your online profile will enable you to:

- Input your personal contact information
- Select which type of school information you would like to receive on each of your contact devices
- Add contact information of other caretakers of your children, such as a grandparent or neighbor

The system can be accessed at <https://rcs.parentlink.net>. We encourage all of you to take advantage of this opportunity, as we will be utilizing this system for emergency school-to-home communication and some schools may use it for more routine messaging. Remember, alerts will automatically be sent to your home telephone number, even if you do not register for an account.

If you need assistance with your profile, please contact your student's school. If you do not have access to a computer, please feel free to come to the school to use our facilities.

Contact your child's school for an activation letter if you don't currently have a ParentLink account.

Parents with existing accounts will continue to use the same logon information from last year.

Alerts will automatically be sent to your home telephone number, even if you do not register for an account.

AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

A current copy of the School Board policy manual and administrative regulations is available on the RCPS website under "School Board". Printed copies are available to citizens who do not have online access by contacting the Clerk of the Board at 5937 Cove Rd. Roanoke, VA 24019.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for all Virginia Board of Education-approved diplomas are located in the Course Registration Guide on the RCPS website under "Parents & Students".

PROMOTION, RETENTION AND REMEDIATION POLICIES

School Board policies regarding promotion, retention, and remediation are available on the RCPS website under "School Board". Related policies include 6.18, 6.32, and 6.33.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Information regarding the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) applicable to each grade level is located on the RCPS website under “Departments” and then “Instruction”. Information regarding SOL assessments is located on the RCPS website under “Departments” and then “Student Assessment and Remediation”.

TRANSPORTATION

Pre-K, kindergarten and first grade students must have a parent, adult who is listed on the student’s emergency card, or an individual who is at least 14 years of age at the bus stop (visible to the bus driver) in the afternoon to receive them. The parent must provide written permission, which is pre-approved by the school administration, for individuals not listed on the emergency card and for any minor (age 14 to 17) in the afternoon to receive them. If a parent, other adults listed on the student’s emergency card, or the pre-approved adult or minor is not at the bus stop, the child will be kept on the bus and returned to the elementary school.