JULY 1, 2026 ISSUE NO. 1

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TERRIER TIDBITS

SMALL BITS OF BIG NEWS AT WILLIAM BYRD MIDDLE SCHOOL



WELCOME!

BY PRINCIPAL KATIE HUTCHISON

Welcome to a brand-new school year at William Byrd Middle School! I hope your summer is bringing you rest, fun, and meaningful time with loved ones. We are excited to open our doors and spark another year of learning and growth.

This year, we're focused on preparing our students to be **Opportunity Ready**—through strong **communication**, purposeful **collaboration**, intentional **critical thinking**, and becoming respectful **citizens**. Our incredible staff is committed to creating a safe, inclusive environment where every student is encouraged to explore, connect, and thrive.

Keep an eye on Terrier Tidbits for updates, upcoming events, and highlights from our students and staff. It's going to be a fantastic year—let's make it one to remember because we are Terrier Strong and Future Ready!

MEET OUR NEW ADMINSTRATIVE TEAM

AS WE BEGIN THIS EXCITING NEW SCHOOL YEAR, WE WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO INTRODUCE OUR ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM AND SHARE HOW WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS.

- **Mrs. Katie Hutchison, *Principal*** – Entering her 8th year at WBMS, Mrs. Hutchison will serve as the lead administrator for our 8th grade students and families in their final year of middle school.
- **Ms. Allison Thornton, *Assistant Principal*** – Now in her 2nd year at WBMS, Ms. Thornton serves as our DBA and Special Education/504/ELL Administrator. She will work closely with our 7th grade students and families this year.
- **Mrs. Jordan Persinger, *Assistant Principal*** – In her 1st year at WBMS, Mrs. Persinger is our Building Manager and Athletic Director. She will support our 6th grade students and families as they begin their exciting middle school journey.

Together, our team is committed to helping every student grow as a **communicator, collaborator, critical thinker, and citizen**—and to ensuring they are **Opportunity Ready** for the future. Whether it's academic success, behavior support, or just navigating middle school life, we're here to partner with you every step of the way.

Please don't hesitate to reach out—we're looking forward to a fantastic school year!

Terrier Strong. Future Ready.



MRS. HUTCHISON



MS. THORNTON



MRS. PERSIGNER

"COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING. KEEPING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS. WORKING TOGETHER IS SUCCESS.

- HENRY FORD

UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD

July

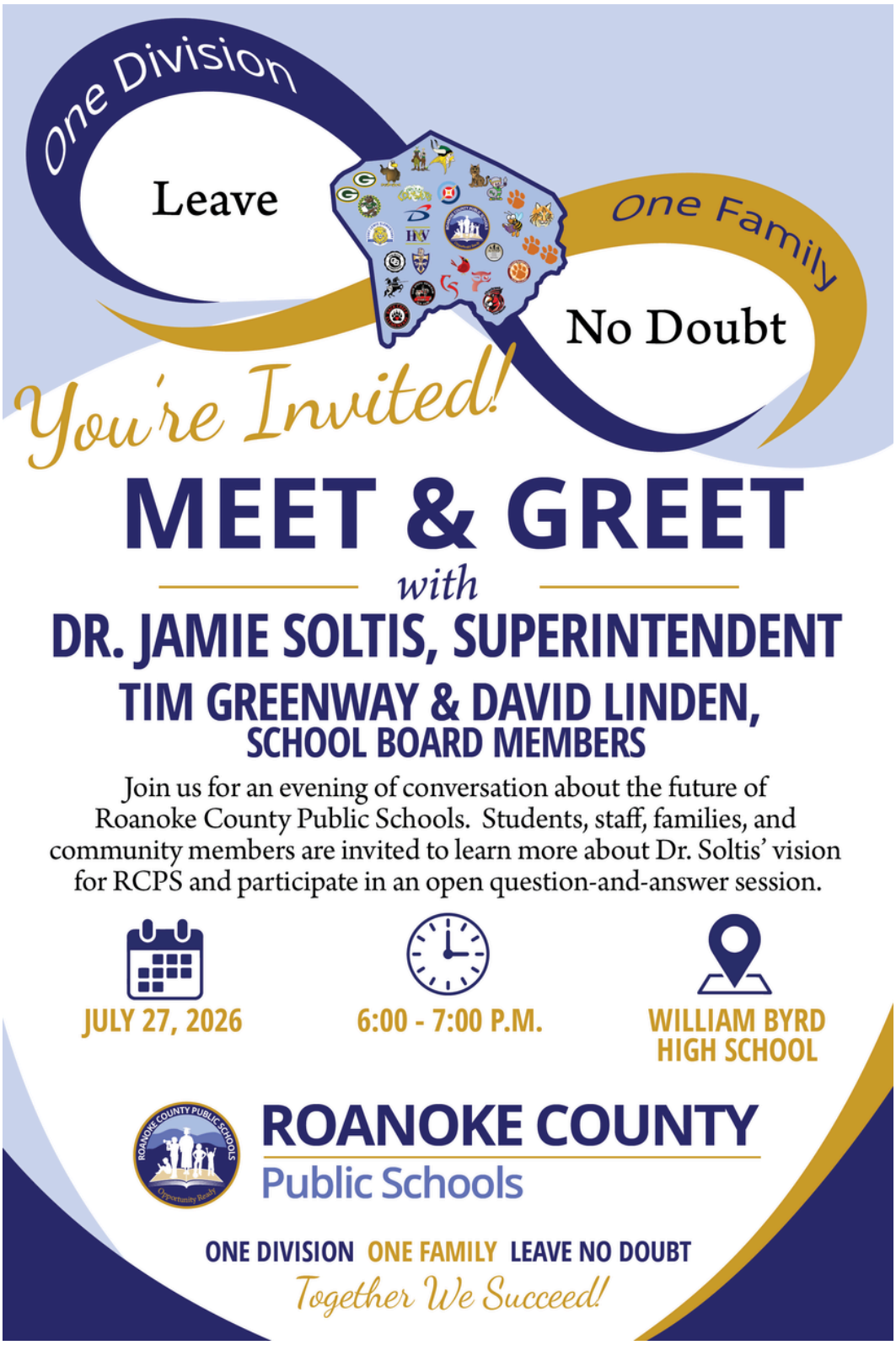
- **July 1-31:** Summer Break
- **July 17:** Annual Verification Forms (ANVER) will be available in ParentVue
- **July 27:** Community Meet & Greet with Dr. Soltis, Mr. Greenway, and Mr. Linden
  - 6:00-7:00 PM
  - WBHS Auditorium
- **July 31:** Schedules will be available in ParentVue/StudentVue
  - **Note:** There is not a specific time, but they will be posted by the evening. ANVER forms must be submitted before you or your child can view their schedule.
  - **The deadline for changes to course requests will be July 31.**
    - Please note that schedule change requests will be placed on hold from August 1 through August 28, except for level changes (e.g., Advanced to General Education) and changes required to implement a student's IEP or 504 Plan. This temporary pause allows us time to balance class sizes, finalize schedules, and ensure adequate space is available for newly enrolled students.
    - Beginning August 31, changes from one course to another will be made under the following circumstances only:
      - Failure of a course that is a prerequisite for a scheduled course or a graduation requirement (high school only);
      - Human or computer error;
      - Grouping adjustments and/or balancing of class sizes;
      - Recommendation of Child Study,504 or IEP Committee;
      - Acceptance or removal from an Apprenticeship (high school only)
    - 8th Grade Students: Elective choices are not guaranteed unless it is a high school credit course (Spanish, French, Latin, World History, or Earth Science). Every effort is made to give students their top elective choices, but schedule constraints do not always make it possible. The deadline to drop a high school credit class will be September 14.

August

- **August 3-12:** Teacher Work Days
- **August 10:**
  - New 7th & 8Th Grade Orientation -- 1:30-2:30 PM
  - 6th Grade Orientation -- 3:00-4:30 PM
  - Open House for All Students -- 4:30-6:00 PM
- **August 13:** First Day of School

UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD



UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD

JULY 17

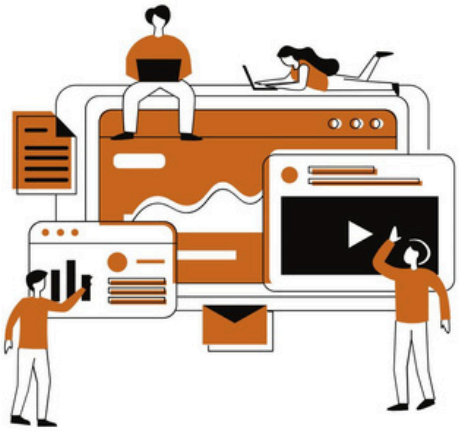
ANVER (Annual Verification) forms will be available in ParentVue. Be sure to update your student's information! You must complete ANVER before you are able to view your child's schedule in ParentVue and StudentVue on July 31.

DEADLINE IS AUGUST 7

Questions? Contact jrhodes@rcps.us

Schedules will be available in ParentVue and StudentVue

JULY 31



VDH Vaccination Clinics



July 28 4:00-6:00 PM @ Cave Spring MS
July 29 4:00-6:00 PM @ William Byrd MS
July 30 4:00-6:00 PM @ Northside MS

Students under 18 must be accompanied by their parent/guardian. Please bring your insurance card.

REMINDERS

The deadline for changes to course requests will be July 31.

- Except for level changes (e.g., Advanced to General Education) and changes required to implement a student's IEP or 504 Plan, schedule change requests will be placed on hold from August 1 through August 28 to allow us time to balance class sizes, finalize schedules, and ensure adequate space is available for newly enrolled students.

All schedules received prior to the start of school are subject to change due to the balancing of classes following student enrollments or withdrawals.

8TH GRADERS

Elective choices are not guaranteed unless it is a high school credit course (Spanish, French, Latin, World History, or Earth Science). Every effort is made to give students their top elective choices, but schedule constraints do not always make it possible. The deadline to drop a high school credit class will be September 14.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE IMPORTANT DATES, INCLUDING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND EARLY DISSMISSALS.

ACCESSIBLE LIST BELOW

ROANOKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2026-2027 Academic Calendar

Updated draft approved by the school board on Feb. 19, 2026

July '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

4 Independence Day

August '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3 - 7 Teacher Workdays
10 - 12 Teacher Workdays
13 First Day of School

September '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7 Schools Closed: Labor Day
11 Interim Midpoint
18 Interim Reports Available
23 3 Hr. Early Dismissal No PD (11:25-12:25)

October '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

9 End of 1st Grading Period
12 Teacher Workday- No Meetings
21 3 Hr.. Early Dismissal PD (11:25-12:25)
21 Report Cards Sent Home

November '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

2 Schools Closed: Student Conferences*
3 Schools Closed-Election Day
13 Interim Midpoint
20 Interim Reports Available
25-27 Schools Closed: Thanksgiving Holiday
*Conferences during regular school hours

December '26

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18 End of 2nd Grading Period
21-31 Schools Closed: Winter Break

January '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 Schools Closed: Winter Break
4 Teacher Workday-No Meetings
15 Report Cards Sent Home
18 Schools Closed: MLK Day

February '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

5 Interim Midpoint
8 Schools Closed
9 Kindergarten Registration Begins
12 Interim Reports Available
24 3 Hr.. Early Dismissal PD (11:25-12:25)

March '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

11 End of 3rd Grading Period
12 Teacher Workday-No Meetings
15 Schools Closed: Parent-Student Conferences
16-17 Virtual Learning Days (High Schools ONLY)
19 Report Cards Sent Home
22-26 Schools Closed: Spring Break
29 Schools Closed: Easter Holiday

April '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

22 Interim report
28 3 Hr. early Dismissal No PD (11:25-12:25)
28 Student-led conferences (Middle School ONLY)
28 Interim reports available

May '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

25-26 3 Hr.. Early Dismissal Secondary (12:25)
25-26 Graduation Ceremonies (2:30-5:30)
27 3 Hr. Early Dismissal (11:25-12:25)
27 End of Second Semester
28 Teacher Workday (All)
31 Memorial Day

June '27

Sun	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

18 Juneteenth Holiday (Observed)

***SCHEDULE FOR MAKE-UP DAYS, IF NEEDED**

1	Banked Day
2	Banked Day
3	Banked Day
4	Banked Day
5	Banked Day
6	Jan. 4
7	Feb. 8
8	Mar. 12
9	Not Required
10+	Add time to school day, if needed

KEY	Student Day	Non-School Day	Teacher Workday			
	3 Hr. Early Dismissal	Virtual Learning Day				
DAYS SEM 1	13	21	21	16	14	85
DAYS SEM 2	18	19	15	22	19	92
TOTAL DAYS						178

WBMS ATHLETICS

ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS, INCLUDING 6TH GRADERS, ARE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS AT WBMS. WHILE MANY OF OUR SPORTS HAVE TRY-OUTS, FOOTBALL, CROSS COUNTRY, WRESTLING, AND TRACK DO NOT.

Eligibility - In order to be eligible to participate in athletics, including any open gyms/fields, try-outs, and practices at WBMS, students must meet the following requirements:

- Be fully enrolled at WBMS prior to the start of sports season.
- Have a current VHSL Physical on file with the school.
  - New for this school year - VHSL Physicals must be submitted in Arbiter (see page 7 for instructions). Paper copies will no longer be accepted.
- Be in good academic standing according to RCPS Policy 6.44
  - "**First Semester:** To be eligible, the student must be promoted or assigned to six, seventh, or eighth grade. Students repeating grade seven or eight are not eligible first semester. The athlete must be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent.
  - **Second Semester:** To be eligible, the student must have no more than one "F" grade for semester-one final grades. The athlete must be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent.
  - To be eligible for eighth grade participation, a student must not have reached the age of 15 on or before August 1 of the school year in which he wishes to compete."
- Additionally per RCPS policy 6.44, "eighth grade students, with parental permission, may try out for ninth grade or junior varsity teams at the high school. The high school coach must notify the middle school coach within the first ten practice days if the player is to remain on the ninth grade or junior varsity team. Students returning to the middle school team must remain at that level for the duration of that sports season. Eighth grade students who play on the JV level may not return to the middle school team."
- Be in good behavior standing at WBMS, including adhering to all guidelines in the Athletic Handbook.

Coaches alongside the Athletic Director reserve the right to remove students who are not in good standing at WBMS. **Please contact Jordan Persinger (jpersinger@rcps.us), our Athletic Director, if you have any questions related to eligibility or participating on a sports team at WBMS.**

FALL SPORTS:

- **Football**
  - **Head Coach:** Cody Underwood (caunderwood@rcps.us)
- **Girls Volleyball**
  - **Head Coach:** Stephanie Brady (sbrady@rcps.us)
- **Cheerleading**
  - **Head Coach:** Shannon McCulloch (smcculloch@rcps.us)
- **Cross Country (Co-Ed)**
  - **Head Coach:** Michelle Gantzhorn (mgantzhorn@rcps.us)

WINTER SPORTS:

- **Boys Basketball**
  - **Head Coach:** Brian Bartley (bbartley@rcps.us)
- **Girls Basketball**
  - **Head Coach:** Brandy Helton (bhelton@rcps.us)
- **Wrestling (Co-Ed)**
  - **Head Coach:** Shane Shepherd (sshepherd@rcps.us)

SPRING SPORTS:

- **Boys Baseball**
  - **Head Coach:** Matt Tingler (mtingler@rcps.us)
- **Girls Softball**
  - **Head Coach:** Jorden Frye (jfrye@rcps.us)
- **Boys Soccer**
  - **Head Coach:** Seth Fisher (sfisher@rcps.us)
- **Girls Soccer**
  - **Head Coach:** Ashey Huff (ahuff@rcps.us)
- **Boys Track**
  - **Head Coach:** Shane Shepherd (sshepherd@rcps.us)
- **Girls Track**
  - **Head Coach:** Jamie Nichols (jdnichols@rcps.us)

William Byrd Middle School Arbiter Registration

Starting with the 2026-2027 school year, all athletic registration and sports physical turn-in will be done digitally through the Arbiter platform (We will no longer be accepting paper copies of physicals). We have simplified the registration process, and all waivers for athletic participation are now signed digitally! ALL ATHLETES WILL NEED TO BE REGISTERED – EVEN IF YOUR PHYSICAL IS STILL VALID. Please be sure to follow these steps to complete your registration and ensure that your student is registered for participation:

1. Create an Arbiter Registration account *(you only need one account for your whole family)*
    a. You may create your account by clicking here: https://account.familyid.com/signup
2. Activate your Arbiter Registration account, from the activation link that will be automatically sent to your email. (Note: this email may go into your junk folder).
    a. If you are having trouble creating your account, receiving the activation email, or logging into it, you may contact support at 800-311-4060.
3. Once you have successfully created your account and are logged in, please click or scan the QR below to complete your registration:

4. Once you have completed your registration, you will receive an email notification to let you know we have received your registration. Students MUST be registered and cleared to be eligible for participation.
5. Please note that all athletes must be registered. If your physical from the 2025–26 school year is still valid (physicals are valid for 14 months) and WBMS already has a copy on file from last year, you do not need to upload it again.
6. Moving forward, however, all new physicals must be uploaded through the registration system to ensure records remain current and accessible. Please make sure all required information is completed before the start of the season.

WBMS ATHLETICS

WE'RE EXCITED TO KICK OFF THE FALL SEASON IN A FEW WEEKS. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE HEAD COACH.

