Roanoke City Public Schools
Approach for Addressing Questions & Concerns

Roanoke City Public Schools (RCPS) understands families, students, staff, and community members will from time to time have questions and concerns. RCPS believes it is important to empower and expect all employees to be responsive to students, parents, and the community. Likewise, the Roanoke City School Board strives to provide a prompt response to inquiries while also respecting and supporting the roles and responsibilities of staff and safeguarding confidentiality.

In most cases, questions and/or concerns should be addressed first with your **student's teacher** or a **school administrator.**

For More Help

Central Office: Questions and/or concerns received by Central Office will be directed to the appropriate administrator or division leader. You should expect to be asked if you have already attempted to speak with the school. Contact Central Office at (540) 853-2502 or info@rcps.info or visit **www.rcps.info**.

The Constituent Services & Government Relations Office: Contact Dr. Alan Seibert, Constituent Services & Government Relations Officer, at (540) 853-2007 or aseibert@rcps.info. This office assists students, families, community members, and employees who need assistance with questions, resolving concerns, and voicing complaints.

The Roanoke City School Board: The Clerk of the Board serves as the point of contact for Board communications and is available at boardclerk@rcps.info or by calling (540) 853-1655.

Appeals, Reviews, and Policies

Appeal/Administrative Review: Continuous improvement frequently involves learning from experience and engaging in purposeful review of policies and procedures. Although all programs and Board Policies are routinely reviewed in accordance with established timelines, students, parents, staff, and citizens are welcome to request an Administrative Review for the purpose of informing future practice in accordance with Board Policy GBLA – Third Party Complaints.

Administrative reviews are internal functions intended to inform future practice. When a Review involves practices and procedures, the administration may elect to share outcomes with the person(s) requesting or otherwise involved in the Administrative Review. When a review involves matters protected by student or employee confidentiality, reporting will be limited to authorized persons.

School Boards are "Divisions" of the State Board of Education BOE): In Virginia, unlike many states that have school "districts," local school boards are divisions of the BOE and only have authority expressly granted by the Commonwealth. Also, as noted in RCPS Policy KL – Public Complaints, in Virginia, local circuit courts may be petitioned to review actions by local school boards.

RCPS' Communications Approach: the RCPS communications approach is reflective of the policies of the Roanoke City School Board. Related policies are available on the Constituent Services webpage at **www.rcps.info/csgro**.

Tips for Connecting with Your Student's School & RCPS

Begin at the Source: Begin your inquiry, suggestion, or information request at your student's school. Typically, your best contacts are the teacher, assistant principal, or principal. School contact details can be found at **www.rcps.info/schools**.

Take Full Advantage of Available Information: School and division webpages contain a wealth of information and are updated frequently. Get started by visiting **www.rcps.info**.

Consider the Method of Communication: Decide between phone, email, or in-person for addressing your question or concern. For in-person meetings, please schedule an appointment to ensure availability.

Be Prepared to Identify Yourself: Student privacy is a top priority for RCPS. Before discussing specific student information, we will need to confirm if you are the parent or legal guardian of the student. We can only discuss a specific student with that student's legal guardian(s). We encourage everyone to feel comfortable providing feedback and identifying themselves so a response can be provided.

Anonymous concerns are difficult to investigate, confirm, and provide a response, but RCPS respects there may be situations where individuals choose to remain anonymous. Therefore, the School Board has established a portal to facilitate anonymous feedback, which is available by visiting **rcps.info/csgro**.

Be Patient: Please allow time for school staff to investigate and consult. Generally, expect an acknowledgment within 24 business hours. If you do not receive a response, call to confirm receipt.

Keep an Open Mind: If your student makes you aware of a situation, please keep in mind they may not be aware of actions the school has taken if the situation involves other students. By contacting your student's teacher or principal, you will gain a greater perspective on the situation, while also respecting the confidentiality of all involved.

Follow Existing Channels of Responsibility: If you do not feel your questions and/or concerns are being addressed, it is best to contact the next person in the chain of responsibility. For example, if you are speaking with the teacher, you may wish to talk with the assistant principal next, followed by the principal.