RICHMOND ACADEMY



HIGH SCHOOL
Parent & Student Handbook

Updated March 2025

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SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Richmond Academy (RA) was established in 1911 to provide a Christ-centered education to children in central Virginia. From its beginnings as a one-teacher school supported by the only Adventist church in the area, it has grown to a full PreK-12 program, teaching students on multiple campuses, and supported by five local churches.

RA is part of the Adventist educational system that is the largest Protestant school system in the world. RA belongs to the Potomac Conference district of Adventist schools in Virginia, Washington DC, and southern Maryland; and our program is operated according to the standards set by the Columbia Union Conference Office of Education. The RA School Board is the local governance body that oversees Richmond Academy's operation in accordance with our constitution.

Accreditation

RA is fully accredited by the following accrediting agencies:

- National Council for Private School Accreditation
- Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges & Universities
- Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS)
- Virginia Council for Private Education Commission on Accreditation

Educational Philosophy

Richmond Academy offers a holistic education that provides for physical, mental, social and spiritual growth. As the special creation of God, there is a high estimate placed on the worth of each individual regardless of any perceived differences.

Ellen G. White, a founder of Adventist education stated our educational philosophy best: "Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the source of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation." *Education, 17*

Character education is central to our Bible principles and is a prominent element in every class and activity. Our goal is to help our students become productive, compassionate members of society as well as encourage them to develop a personal relationship with God and accept His salvation.

Mission Statement

At Richmond Academy, we believe that education is more than just academic achievement. It is also a journey of faith and character development that prepares our students for life's challenges and opportunities. We strive to create a caring and supportive environment where every student can grow in love, wisdom and service.

Our school mission is based on three core values: *Loving, Learning and Living in Christ*.

Loving according to Matthew 25 is treating others as we would treat God Himself. We will strive to develop traits of compassion and respect in all our students. Students will be taught the joy and obligation of service to their peers and community. Teachers will seek to create in each classroom an atmosphere of positive peer pressure, where healthy relationships flourish, and true Christian love is experienced. Classroom rules will be clear, and discipline will be administered with love and equity.

Learning according to II Timothy 2:15 means that students will strive to do their best with integrity, never settling for second-rate work. Students will have the opportunity to assimilate Seventh-day Adventist beliefs in an environment that is both loving and challenging. Academic excellence is the goal for each child.

Living in Christ according to John 10:10 means that students will live the abundant life. They will learn the joy of service, the rewards of healthful living, and the practical skills needed to ensure an interdependent future. While living the abundant life Jesus promises, they will honor the commission to bring the Gospel of Christ and His soon return to the world.

School Systems

Defined below are the primary systems adopted by RA to facilitate day-to-day operations. They will be referenced throughout this handbook.

School Information System

Richmond Academy has selected FACTS SIS (formerly RenWeb) as our school information system (SIS). This system provides academic and citizenship recordkeeping resources for RA as well as facilitating the flow of information between the school administration, teachers and parents. FACTS SIS holds student grades, transcripts, community service records and family demographic information. Each parent and student (when age appropriate) have access to this system through Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb).

Learning Management System

Schoology is Richmond Academy's learning management system (LMS), primarily for use in grades 7 through 12. Schoology provides a platform on which teachers build their curriculum, create lesson plans and assignments, maintain their gradebook for each class, and provide feedback to students. Parent access to Schoology gives them the ability to monitor their child's progress in each class and opt to receive notifications of their child's activity and/or overdue work.

Financial Management

FACTS Tuition Management provides RA families with convenient, flexible tuition payment options. The FACTS sign up and annual enrollment process is integrated with RA's online enrollment packet.

Educational Productivity Tools

Richmond Academy uses Google Workspace for Education as our productivity and communication tool for students in grades 3 through 12 and for all staff. Workspace's integrated calendar is used to publish RA's school calendar. Google Drive (including Forms) is used widely by the administration, teachers, and students. Gmail is the platform for email communications between staff and students.

Communications Platform

In addition to email, RA uses communications tools built into FACTS SIS. These tools include schoolwide or group email distributions and Parent Alert text messaging. Parent Alert messages are frequently used to notify staff, parents and/or students of time sensitive information, such as schedule changes and weather-related closings.

Handbook Policies and Procedures

Each student and parent must be familiar with the policies and practices contained in this handbook. Lack of knowledge of a particular policy provided will not excuse a parent or student from the responsibility of obeying it.

RA Parents agree to adhere to, and require their child(ren) to adhere to, the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. This includes any future amendments made to this handbook. Any violation of these policies or procedures by parents or students may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or non-renewal of enrollment for future academic years, at the sole discretion of Richmond Academy's administration.

Upon approval of a student's application, parents will be provided a link to this High School Parent & Student Handbook. It is the parent's responsibility to read and understand the policies and procedures as outlined in this document. The Handbook Agreement, included in the enrollment and re-enrollment packet, is required for every enrolled student.

It should be understood that this handbook does not address all issues that may arise. In case of differences in interpretation, school administrators will render decisions at their sole discretion that take into account the best interests of both the student and school.

Richmond Academy reserves the right to change policies and procedures at any time with or without notice. The handbook does not constitute a contract between the school and the student or parent nor any expectation of enrollment in future years. Richmond Academy reserves the right to suspend or dismiss during the school year or decline re-enrollment of any student who in effort, conduct, or progress is not fulfilling RA's expectations, as determined by the school administration. RA also reserves the right to suspend, dismiss during the school year or decline re-enrollment of any student whose enrollment is deemed by the administration not

to be in the best interests of the school or whose parents are deemed by the administration not to support the school's mission, philosophy, expectations or rules.

Christian Conflict Resolution

Issues between parents and teachers may arise from time to time. As a Christian school, we believe that issues and concerns should be resolved Biblically according to the Matthew 18 principle. This is practiced among administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents at Richmond Academy.

> *"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."*
>
> *Matthew 18:15-17 ESV*

Richmond Academy administration believes this principle is essential for maintaining good relationships. Therefore, if a parent has an issue or concern with a teacher or other staff member they should follow this principle to address their concerns and work toward resolution and restoration:

1. **Keep the matter confidential** - Share only with those directly involved, and respect confidentiality. Do not involve other parents or Richmond Academy staff, or other third-parties.
2. **Keep the circle small** - Person-to-person problems are usually solved at the two-person level.
3. **Be straightforward and kind** - Sometimes it can be difficult to reveal the very heart of the matter. Only when conflict is addressed in a straightforward and loving manner can it result in true restoration. Anger should not be present during the meeting.
4. **Be forgiving** - Once the matter is resolved, wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person who has offended you. The Bible counsels us in Galatians 6:1, "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted"
5. **Agree to share the matter with the principal** - If both parties agree that you have been unable to resolve the concern, then share the matter with the principal. Meet together, parent, teacher, and principal, in a spirit of prayer and humility, willing to submit to the Lord's will in the matter and also willing to submit to reproof and correction if needed. An open and honest discussion and submission to godly principles will most likely result in an amicable solution.
6. **Principal shares the matter with the school board chairman** - If further intervention is necessary due to a complex problem, the principal will explain the matter to the chairman and together they will determine whether it needs to be presented to the board, and the manner in which this will be done.

Adapted from *The Matthew 18 Principle for Solving School Problems* by Dr. Paul A. Kienel

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Academic Placement

Appropriate grade placement of each student is determined based on the following factors:

- Chronological age
- Emotional, physical, and social development
- Scholastic achievement as determined by standardized test scores, teacher observation of the student's ability to reason and to express ideas logically, and teacher evaluation of academic progress
- Readiness as indicated by school-administered readiness tests

Acceptance of Transfer Students

Prior to accepting students transferring from another school, RA will request and review the student's cumulative records from their previous school. These records should include report cards, high school transcripts, standardized test scores, behavioral records, and information on academic accommodations, if applicable.

Admissions Standards

RA admits students regardless of race, color, religion, national and ethnic origins. All students have the right to the privileges, programs and activities offered by the school. RA makes no discrimination based on race, color, ethnic background, country of origin or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship programs, and extracurricular programs. In order to maintain the objectives of RA, and because it is a Christian educational institution, admission qualifications have been established as follows:

- Only those students and their families who agree with the philosophy and objectives of RA, and who will cooperate with the principles of the school should apply for admission. Students of other faiths are welcome provided they will respect the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist faith and maintain a reverent attitude during religious programs and Bible classes.
- Applicants should be in good physical health. Any identified physical conditions should be shared with the administrator and appropriate faculty to ensure the student's learning is not hindered.
- Transfer applicants should be in good academic and citizenship standing at their previous school.
- Applicants should have sufficient English skills to speak, write, read and comprehend the language.
- While RA strives to provide differentiated instruction for students, it does not have the staffing to handle all special educational needs (See "IDEA Special Education Policy Statement" below).
- Academic assessments are used for transfer students to assist in determining proper grade placement.

Richmond Academy is a Christ-centered learning community that welcomes all whose behavior and lifestyle are consistent with the teachings of Scripture as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Students can remain in good standing provided they conduct themselves consistently with the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on sexual conduct, sexual orientation, and gender expression as set forth below.

Richmond Academy upholds Biblical principles which include, but are not limited to, behaviors related to sexual matters. Human sexuality is a gift from God, and it is to be respected within the confines of a marital union between a man and a woman. Sexual conduct outside of this union is not acceptable. The local school administration and board will uphold these Biblical principles. Students' gender expression is expected to align with their biological gender at birth. Richmond Academy will only accept and retain students whose gender expression aligns with their biological gender at birth.

References:
Biblical references - Gen 1:27; Gen 2:22-24; Gen 3:6-19; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:9; 7:14-23; 8:20-23; Gal 5:17; Rom 12:2; Prov 14:12; Prov 16:25; 2 Tim 3:16; Gen 2:7; Jer 13:17; 52:28-30; Ezek 18:4; Acts 2:41; 1 Cor 15:45; Eph 5:28; Rom 12:1-2; Rev 18:13; 1 Pet 1:24; 2 Tim 4:22; 1 John 4:1-3; 1 Tim 6:14-16; 1 Cor 15:51-54; Gen 1:27; 5:1-2; Ps 139:13-14; Mark 10:6; Matt 5:28, 31-32; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Heb 13:4; Rom 1:21-28; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Mark 12:31; Matt 12:20; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 1 Cor 6:19

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's official statement on transgenderism

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's website on human sexuality

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Special Education Policy Statement

Richmond Academy offers limited support for students with learning, behavior, or language challenges. RA does not have the necessary equipment or staff to meet all potential needs of students who exhibit serious academic, physical, social, or language learning acquisition needs. Therefore, students who have serious academic, physical, social, or language needs may not be accepted at Richmond Academy.

Should these problems be indicated after the student is enrolled, the school administration will assist the parent(s) in accessing services through the local school district such as student testing, implementation of an IEP or ISP, or intervention by the school district. If the child's discovered needs are unable to be met, Richmond Academy reserves the right to request or require the student to be transferred to a school or program where assistance is available.

Application and Admission Process

1. Begin the application process by using RA's online application packet.*
2. Parents will receive an email acknowledgement of the application.
3. If applicable, parents should clear financial obligations with the previous school.
4. Parents submit the applicant's original birth certificate and a signed Transcript Request form to the school office.

5. If space is available in the applicant's target classroom/grade, RA will schedule placement testing for the applicant and an interview with the principal.
6. The Admissions Committee reviews all pertinent information in the applicant's file and decides on admission.
7. Parents are notified of the Admissions Committee's decision and, if accepted, provided instructions on how to proceed with the process of enrolling the applicant for classes.

**Families without readily available Internet access may make an appointment with the school office for assistance with the online process.*

Enrollment

New and returning students must complete all portions of the enrollment/re enrollment packet before attending classes. Enrollment/Reenrollment packets are online and are accessed through Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb). This process should be completed as early as possible to enable RA's administration and staff to complete the necessary preparations for the upcoming school year. This includes textbooks, technology and other resource assignments as well as providing important communications to parents and students prior to the start of school. While first-time enrollments take longer for obvious reasons, the re-enrollment process is streamlined so that it only requires a few minutes of parent's time to complete. Enrollment/Reenrollment includes:

- Family/household information
- Student history and medical information
- Authorizing alternate contacts and ride pickup
- Agreement for handbook and other key policy guidelines
- Enrollment in FACTS Tuition Management, if applicable

Physical Exams and Immunizations

Examinations and immunizations are required of all new students upon initial enrollment. The Virginia School Entrance Health Form, Form MCH 213G, must be completed no more than one year before entrance to school.

Virginia law requires immunization against measles, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, and polio. No student (new or returning) will be admitted to class without providing proof of all Commonwealth of Virginia required immunizations within the first 30 days of the school year.

International Students (I-20 Students)

RA is certified with the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to accept international students who need an F-1 student visa to study in the United States. RA issues the Form I-20 "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status" for applicants who have met admissions standards and the requirements set by the U.S. government for nonimmigrant students.

- Because of our small class sizes and individual attention, RA enrolls students on an immersion basis and does not operate an ESL program.

- **Tuition**: A special tuition rate for international students is established each year to cover processing costs as well as human resources required to establish and maintain the student's record in SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System), to issue Form I-20, and to maintain RA's SEVP certification.
- **Application deadlines:** Due to the potential for delays that can occur in the visa application process, international students are encouraged to apply and submit all necessary documentation to RA as early as possible prior to the semester they intend to enroll in classes. Typically, all applications and fees for international students for the fall semester must be received by June 30 and for the spring semester by October 21. All other applications will be processed for the following semester.
- **Transcripts:** Official transcripts for potential I-20 students must be translated to English either by the school issuing the transcript or by a translation service.
- **Housing:** RA does not offer housing or host family services for international students. The student's family should make housing and guardianship arrangements prior to applying.
- **Insurance:** Students must have medical insurance coverage for the duration of their program at RA.
- **Financial Means:** Before an I-20 can be issued for an applicant, the family must provide evidence of funds available to cover all tuition and living expenses for the school year. If accepted, I-20 students' tuition is due in a single payment prior to the start of school, or in two equal payments, the first due prior to school and the second due prior to the start of the second semester.

International students must first be accepted by RA before a Form I-20 can be issued.

I-20 students must maintain a C-average in classes for continued enrollment at Richmond Academy.

Withdrawal Procedure

The parent should contact the Registrar to request student withdrawal, including the reason for and date of withdrawal. A school-issued form should be completed to insure that school property is returned and that the student's financial account is paid in full. Upon satisfactory completion of this form, the student's records will be released.

- If a student withdraws between August 1 and the first day of classes, one month tuition will be due.
- If a student withdraws after classes begin, tuition through withdrawal date as well as one month's tuition will be due.
- Official transcripts, report cards, and other student records will not be released if there is an outstanding balance on the student account, including any withdrawal balance. Payments by check must clear before records are released.
- Withdrawals must be submitted in writing in order to be processed.
- An exit interview may be requested by the administration.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition and Fees

Current tuition and fees are provided on the fee sheet that is produced annually and is provided upon request.

Tuition Payment Plan

Tuition may be paid in full prior to the start of school, in 2 equal semester payments, or a monthly payment plan through FACTS Tuition Management. There is a yearly enrollment fee of $45 charged by FACTS for the monthly plan, which provides the convenience of automatic debit of your monthly tuition payments from your checking/savings account (or credit card for an additional fee).

Tuition Discounts

Tuition discounts are available under certain circumstances. The Business Office can provide details upon request:

- Constituent church member discount: Because Richmond Academy receives financial support from several local Adventist churches, members of these congregations may qualify to receive a tuition discount.
- Discount for tuition paid in full at enrollment.
- Multi-child discounts.

Textbooks

Electronic textbooks (ebooks) are provided for most high school classes. Students must purchase their own physical textbooks when they are required for classes. A list of the required textbooks is provided to enrolled students prior to the start of school.

Financial Policy

Parents are responsible for all tuition and other charges on the student's account.

Tuition and fees billed at registration are due in full prior to the first day of classes, unless the financially responsible party has enrolled in the FACTS Tuition Management payment plan.

Accounts need to be up-to-date or payment arrangements made with the Business Office before student records, final grades, transcripts or diplomas are released. A parent's online access to student grades and other records may be disabled if accounts are not current. Students may not be permitted to participate in graduation, extracurricular activities, or end-of-year activities if their student account is not current.

If a parent does not make satisfactory arrangements to resolve a past due balance, the student may be required to withdraw.

Returning students with an overdue balance from the previous school year will not be permitted to re-enroll until satisfactory arrangements for payment have been made with the Business Office.

Students transferring to RA must settle all outstanding accounts at other schools before being admitted to RA.

ACADEMICS

Diploma Requirements

Academic excellence is one of the cornerstones of Richmond Academy and Adventist Education. As a college prep program, RA seeks the path that best equips students to succeed as they move on to higher education. We encourage students to reach high and challenge themselves. For that reason, most students are placed on Virginia's Advanced Studies Diploma track. Depending on a student's post high school goals, there are some circumstances where a Standard Diploma might be appropriate, but this is not a common practice. Following is a summary of the credit requirements for both diploma tracks:

College Preparatory Diploma Requirements		
Subject Area	**Advanced Studies Track**	**Standard Track**
English English 9, English 10, American Lit., British Lit.	4	4
Religion One credit for each year in an Adventist school	4	4
Mathematics Algebra I and higher	4	3
Laboratory Science Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics	4	3
History and Social Sciences Geography, World History, American History, US Government	4	3
World Language Three years of one language or two years of two languages	3	2
Health and Physical Education	2	2
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1.5	2
Personal Finance	1	1
Total Credits	**27.5**	**24**

Additional Graduation Requirements

In addition to the credit requirements above, the following are required of each student to qualify for graduation:

- **Advanced Level Course:** All students shall successfully complete either an Advanced Placement (AP), dual credit, Honors, or International Baccalaureate course. *(applies to graduates in 2023 and later)*
- **Virtual (online) Course:** Successfully complete one approved virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.
- **First Aid/CPR/AED Training:** Students are required to be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform CPR.
- **Community Service:** Students will serve a minimum of 20 hours of community service each year they are enrolled at RA as a high school student.

Participation in Graduation Exercises

Participation in graduation exercises is a privilege granted to those students who have met the academic requirements as well as demonstrated integrity and citizenship at school and in the community.

The administration expects outstanding financial accounts to be cared for before the student participates in graduation or receives their diploma.

Class Eligibility

High school class membership is determined by the core course completions and number of transcript credits the student has earned. Official transcripts from schools previously attended must be submitted to the registrar's office prior to enrolling in classes. Students will be assigned to high school classes based on completion of core courses appropriate for the grade as well as the following minimum credit requirements:

Class Membership	**Minimum Credits on Transcript**	**Recommended Min. Credits on Transcript for Advanced Studies track***
Freshman class (grade 9)	Successful completion of 8th grade	n/a
Sophomore class (grade 10)	6 credits (4 core credits)	6 credits (5 core credits)
Junior class (grade 11)	12 credits (9 core credits)	13 credits (10 core credits)
Senior class (grade 12)	18 credits (15 core credits)	20 credits (15 core credits)

**Students with fewer than 20 credits completed when they enter their senior year may have difficulty completing the requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma.*

Accelerated Graduation

It is generally in a student's best interest to complete four years of high school. In certain circumstances a student may be allowed to complete their academic program in three years if they meet the following requirements:

- Have and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher;
- Be an enrolled RA student at least one year prior to graduation;
- Demonstrate exemplary citizenship;
- Be in pursuit of an Advanced Studies diploma;
- Complete one year of Bible for each year at an Adventist school plus one;
- Submit a written request from parent/guardian;
- Receive approval of the RA Academic Committee.

Requests for accelerated graduation may be submitted no earlier than the first semester of the student's sophomore (10th grade) year and no later than the first week of their junior (11th grade) year. If the request is approved, the student will be on probationary status during the first quarter. At the end of the quarter the Academic Committee will determine whether the student will remain in the accelerated program.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is critical to the educational process, where students demonstrate their abilities as measured by their own efforts. Cheating only serves to derail the student's potential for success in life. Dishonesty undermines the learning process and compromises the moral and academic integrity of the individual and the institution.

Cheating is a breach of academic integrity and takes many forms, including:

- Using, copying or turning in another person's work, in whole or in part, as if it were your own.
- Copying information from another person's test, report, term paper.
- Googling or otherwise seeking answers online for tests, quizzes or assignments.
- Using the ideas and/or writings of another person, without giving credit to the original author.
- Possessing a teacher's edition in any format.
- Preparing to cheat by:
    - Having in your possession a copy of a test given by a teacher.
    - Using notes during a test or exam if not permitted by the teacher.
    - Communicating in any way with another student during a test.
- Assisting another student to cheat.

Submitting empty or nearly empty assignments in the learning management system is also a violation of our standard of integrity.

Any student who violates the academic integrity standard will receive a zero on the assignment, test or exam in question and will be referred to the administration and/or the Discipline Committee to determine the appropriate action. Repeated violations may result in dismissal.

Add or Drop a Class

A student wishing to add a class to his/her schedule must do so within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course. A student may drop a class any time during the first 4 weeks of the course. An add/drop form must be completed and submitted to the registrar. Until the request is approved the student should continue his/her existing schedule.

Classes may be dropped after the four-week window only if recommended by the instructor and approved by the Academic Committee. Students dropping a class after the four-week window will receive a grade of WP (withdrawn passing) or WF (withdrawn failing) on his/her transcript.

Summer School or Online Courses

Students seeking to take summer school or online classes that are offered in RA's curriculum must submit a request to the Academic Committee prior to enrolling in the class. These requests are only approved under certain circumstances. If approved, the courses must be completed and a transcript received before classes begin in the fall.

Seniors taking an online course for graduation requirements must complete the course and present the transcript to the school registrar's office by May 15.

Dual Enrollment Courses

RA, in cooperation with a SDA University, provides the opportunity to earn college credits to qualifying sophomore, junior and senior students. The dual credit courses offered are typically general education courses required by most colleges and universities. Andrews University is a regionally accredited university and therefore most credits will be accepted at other regionally accredited universities across the nation. Students receive a discounted tuition, which is paid at the time of enrollment.

Qualifying students will:

- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher,
- Have no grade lower than a C (74%), and
- Demonstrate diligence in their studies.

Advanced Placement® Courses

AP® offers courses for students who are motivated and have shown academic promise to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. AP can help a student:

1. Stand out in college admissions—taking AP is a sign students are ready for college
2. Earn college credits—colleges nationwide offer credit, advanced placement or both for qualifying exam scores, which can save time and money

3. Skip introductory college classes—students can move directly to upper-level and major-specific courses
4. Build college skills and confidence—from problem solving to time management and more
5. Pursue interests—students can dig deeper into subjects they want to learn about

Richmond Academy encourages our students to challenge themselves academically and explore the area(s) where they may pursue careers through the AP program. Students interested in taking an AP course and who have taken the PSAT/NMSQT® or the SAT® may visit studentscores.collegeboard.org to see which classes may be a good fit for them. They should also speak with the principal or registrar for guidance.

Grade Reports

Richmond Academy issues grade reports for high school students four times a year (twice per semester). The reports are typically provided by email and show the student's progress for each quarterly reporting period. Only semester grades become part of the high school student's permanent record (transcript).

Grading Scales and Calculations

Grades are calculated using percentage points and are then converted into letter grades for the quarterly grade reports. Each letter grade is assigned Quality Points which are used to determine a student's academic standing expressed as Grade Point Average (GPA). The GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points attained by the total number of credits attempted.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Quality Points
A	94-100	4.00
A-	90-93	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	84-86	3.00
B-	80-83	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	74-76	2.00
C-	70-73	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	64-66	1.00
D-	60-63	0.67

F	59 and below	0.00

A passing grade for the purposes of meeting graduation requirements is a C- (70%), starting with students entering high school as a freshman in the 2019-2020 school year. For students entering high school prior to 2019-2020, the passing grade is a D- (60%).

Incompletes

Teachers may assign an incomplete (I) when a student has experienced an illness or other extenuating circumstances, which have disrupted the student's ability to complete enough class work. Students have two weeks from the date the report card or interim grade is issued to complete their missing work. No late work will be accepted after the two-week grace period. Remaining work not submitted during the grace period will be recorded as a zero and the grade will be calculated.

Academic Honors

Honor Roll

Students who achieve a GPA between 3.5 and 3.74 each quarter, without receiving any grade lower than a C in their subjects, will be included on the Honor Roll list. Students on the Honor Roll at the end of the first semester will be invited to a special activity.

Principal's List

Those students who have earned a GPA of 3.75 to 4.0 without any grade below a C in their subjects will be eligible for the Principal's List. Students on the Principal's List at the end of the first semester will be invited to a special activity.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society was formed to give the students an incentive to excel in their classes on an academic level. In order to be eligible for application to the Honor Society, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or more and be recommended by the faculty based on leadership, academics, character and service. Inductions are held in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades. To continue in the Honor Society, a student must maintain this average (or better), have no grade below C (74%) in any subjects, and must have no disciplinary action. A letter of warning will be issued for those who are at risk of being removed from the Honor Society.

Academic Probation

Any student whose work does not consistently achieve a minimum of 70 percent will be placed on academic probation and assigned an Independent Study Plan (ISP). Parents will meet with the teacher to sign-off on the plan. Teachers, facilitators and administration will monitor the student's progress on a 7-10 day interval. If the student's work remains below the minimum of 70 percent, it may be determined that the student requires additional support for success.

Extra Credit Work

RA does not provide or accept extra credit work at any grade level.

Failing a Course

Each course throughout high school lays the foundation students need as they proceed toward graduation and beyond. Students whose semester grades fall below 70 percent in any class will find themselves struggling in future coursework. Developing critical thinking skills and achieving mastery of key curriculum concepts is essential for each student's academic success. For this reason, RA has established a minimum semester average of 70 percent for a course to count towards high school diploma requirements, starting with the 2019-20 school year.

When the semester average is below 70 percent, the student will be required to repeat the course. The course should be completed at Richmond Academy if the student's schedule permits. Otherwise, there are approved online credit recovery options at the families expense. The student should make an appointment with the school registrar to review his/her options.

Transcripts for completed online credit recovery courses required for graduation should be forwarded to the school registrar no later than May 15.

Monitoring Student Progress

Assignments and other coursework in high school are posted, submitted, commented on, and graded within Schoology. Parents have access to monitor their child's progress for each class and may opt to receive email digests of their child's activity. While daily/weekly progress can be monitored in Schoology, quarter and semester grades are posted in FACTS SIS and are accessible to parents through Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb). Parents who have not yet set up their Schoology account should request an access code to link to their student's Schoology account.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

There are two parent-teacher conferences scheduled on the school calendar each year: at the end of the first and third grading periods. Parents will receive a reminder when a conference date is approaching. Parents are requested to attend both scheduled dates and will receive sign up instructions through Bloomz (parents must accept the invitation to join RA's community on Bloomz to use the conference scheduling feature). Parents or teachers may request additional conferences as needed throughout the school year.

Semester Exams

The days set aside for exams are published on RA's calendar prior to the end of the previous school year. All students must be present to take semester exams. Families should not schedule trips or other appointments for students during exam week.

Standardized Testing

RA administers the PSAT test to students in grades 9-11 each fall during the PSAT test window. These tests help to measure students' progress towards college readiness. Juniors and Seniors are encouraged to take the SAT and ACT tests on designated school-day testing dates.

STUDENT HEALTH

Illness or Injury

In case of accident or sickness while at school, minimal first aid will be given while a parent and/or EMS is contacted. School officials cannot dispense any medication without the prior written permission of a licensed physician on the appropriate school forms. All medication is to be dispensed by designated school personnel**.**

Students who have been ill at home may not return to school until they have been **Symptom Free** (e.g. fever free, no vomiting, no runny nose) for 24 hours without the aid of medication.

Medications

Students are not permitted to keep any medications, prescription or over the counter, with them, in their backpacks, lockers, or classroom. This includes ibuprofen, acetaminophen, vitamins, cough medicine/drops, etc. The only exception is inhaler medication for asthma, which may be carried by the student once the proper documentation is submitted and reviewed by the school nurse.

Necessary medications may be locked in the office and administered to students by school staff during the school day only under the following conditions:

- Physician must provide written orders stating the name of the drug, the dosage and the time to be given with the recommended intervals between doses, and the possible side effects.
- A Medication form must be signed by the physician and parent, with a separate form being required for each medication. The form will include:
    - Request for medication to be given
    - Student's name and date of birth
    - Name of medication (matching the package label)
    - Dosage
    - Time to be given, including recommended interval
    - Purpose of the medication (indication)
    - Physician's name and phone number
- The medication will be in its original container, and the label will include the student's name, current date, the name of the drug, dosage and frequency. Drugs will not be combined in a single container.
- Parents shall be responsible for transporting medication to and from school, not the student.

- No more than a 45-day supply of medication will be kept in the school office.
- Any medication left in the school office for more than 10 days after physician's order has expired, or 10 days after the last day of school will be disposed of by school staff.

A *Permit for Dispensing Medication to Students by School Personnel* form is available in the school office or available for download in the Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb) Resources area. This completed form must be submitted to the school office with the medication.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Richmond Academy exists to provide a Christ-centered environment where students and staff are challenged to:

- Love and serve their Creator
- Value themselves and others
- Respect diversity
- Think critically
- Take responsibility for their choices

The compass that guides our policies and guidelines for student behavior is based on citizenship and integrity in all things. By attending our school, students agree to accept the moral responsibility associated with education in a Christ-centered school, whether on or off campus. By choosing to enroll their child(ren) at RA, parents agree to support the school's educational philosophy and Bible-based curriculum.

Discipline

General Overview

"If you love learning, you love the discipline that goes with it – how shortsighted to refuse correction!" Proverbs 12:1

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting, for training in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

"And one of them, an expert in the law, asked a question to test him: 'Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest?' Jesus said to him, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.'" Matthew 22:35-40

The purpose of RA's discipline policy is to promote spiritual health among students. Effective discipline in a Christian school promotes 1) an atmosphere that is conducive to learning; 2) quality character in an individual; 3) self-discipline and respect – respect for others, respect for self, and respect for property; and 4) Students who reflect and live out RA's mission of loving, learning and living in Christ. If the purpose of any discipline is to leave an impression, then the purpose of Christian discipline is to leave an eternal impression.

All discipline is based on biblical principles, e.g. prayer, requesting forgiveness (public and private), restitution, swift discipline, restoration of fellowship, no lingering ungodly attitudes, etc. The vast majority of behavioral issues will be dealt with at the classroom level. The specifics and nature of each discipline incident and the individual personality of the student involved will be considered in the administration of discipline.

It is vital for parents and students to realize that maintaining an orderly atmosphere in the school and the classroom is critical to the learning process. Mercy and forgiveness will be an integral part of the discipline of a child. It is because we love that we discipline.

There are some basic behaviors that automatically necessitate discipline. These behaviors include, but are not limited to: disrespect, dishonesty, cheating, stealing, rebelling, fighting, foul language, damage to property, tampering with school systems, and bullying. Individual student behavior will be dealt with appropriately based on the offense.

Student disciplinary matters should not be discussed among parents, teachers, and students in order to protect the dignity of every student at RA. These are confidential matters that cannot be discussed by faculty and administration with other individuals who were not involved in the disciplinary action of a specific case. As a Christian school we earnestly seek and ask for this discretion among all students, parents, and staff.

Students who repeatedly fail to uphold the standards of conduct and behavior expected by the school may be placed on disciplinary probation, may be dismissed from school, or may not be invited back the following year.

Student Conduct

RA recognizes that some issues may not be referenced in the handbook. In cases of differences in interpretation, the school administration will render decisions that take into account the best interest of both the student and the school.

Each student is expected to realize that we are in the very presence of God. Everything is done for His glory, and the more conscious we are of God’s presence among us the more harmony is found in the school.

Expectations and procedures have been thoughtfully and prayerfully developed to promote this goal. The discipline program has been designed to remind students of appropriate behavior and communicate the consequences that result from misbehavior. The program is designed to redirect the student back on the appropriate path and enhance learning in the classroom.

The behavioral expectations below are effective at all times. Richmond Academy reserves the right to take disciplinary action in response to actions occurring off campus or outside of school hours when such incidents hinder the school's ability to accomplish its mission or reflect negatively upon the school.

Infractions listed below identify and categorize types of conduct undesirable and detrimental to the mission of Richmond Academy.

Bullying

Bullying is a repeated pattern of hurtful behavior intended to marginalize, exclude, and maintain an imbalance of power. This may include, but is not limited to threats, intimidation, and causing physical, emotional or psychological harm.

There are several types of bullying:

- Physical bullying: Violent behavior including, but not limited to, hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, destruction of property, knocking books out of one's hands, throwing objects at someone, stealing someone's belongings.
- Verbal bullying: Words or comments with the intent to hurt someone, including name-calling, mocking, teasing, taunting, racial or discriminatory words, and unwanted nicknames.
- Relational bullying: Exclusion from a social group, gossiping, shunning, rumors, or behavior that has the intent to degrade, demean or embarrass another in front of others.
- Cyber bullying: The use of hurtful and defamatory information and communication over the Internet (emails, chats, social media postings), mobile phones, picture phones, blogs, or any other technology with the intent to harm another person.

Bullying is distinct from Immature Behavior and Unkind Behavior.

Immature Behavior:

- No intent to be unkind
- Annoying activity that causes discomfort
- Foolish actions that may cause harm to others and/or their property

Unkind Behavior

- Intent is to be unkind
- Behavior is not frequent
- Behavior intensity level is low
- Behavior may reflect impulsivity and is infrequent
- Behavior duration is short

Reporting Bullying

Students and parents who believe that they or another student have been bullied should report such incidents to a faculty member as soon as possible.

Off-Campus Behavior

Parents and students should be aware that student participation in certain activities, even outside school hours or off school property, might result in loss of school privileges and other disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from RA or non-renewal of one's enrollment for future academic years. Any behavior that has an effect on the discipline or general welfare of

the school or its community, even if such conduct takes place off campus, during non-school hours, or on breaks from school may result in disciplinary action being taken by the school.

Such conduct will be evaluated at the sole discretion of the school. Examples of such outside conduct that may have disciplinary ramifications at school include any violation of law; purchase, use, or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance; threats of harm to self or others; misuse of computers, computer websites, or social networking media.

Use of Drugs or Alcohol

No student shall possess, deliver, use or be under the influence of any of the following substances on any occasion or in any location. The following items are prohibited:

1. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
2. Any lit or unlit cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and any other smokeless tobacco, chew, or snuff in any form. This includes electronic devices, including electronic cigarettes or vaporizers that emit nicotine vapor, cigarette packages, smokeless tobacco containers, lighters, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco.
3. Any controlled substance or drug as defined by state and federal law, without regard to amount, including but not limited to marijuana, narcotic drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, depressants, amphetamines, or barbiturates, and includes any unauthorized prescription medication.
4. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for inhalation.
5. Any other mood changing, mind-altering, or behavior altering drugs.
6. Any and all drug paraphernalia.
7. Any prescription or non-prescription medication, except those prescribed by a physician and controlled by the school nurse.

Harassment

RA prohibits physical or verbal harassment of any student or school employee whether based on a person’s race, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

Displays of Affection

Any display of affection, on or off campus, is inappropriate and subject to disciplinary action. Such displays include, but are not limited to, holding hands, kissing, embracing, or petting.

Sexting

To send or post emails, chats, or social media postings that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal, including those sent outside the school day, if the conduct causes a disruption to the educational mission of the school.

Suspension and Expulsion Guidelines

If a student is suspended or expelled, the following guidelines will be expected from all participants:

1. **In-school Suspension lasts** the remainder of the day from the time the student is asked to leave the classroom. Students forfeit all the privileges that are part of the rest of the school day and must remain in the location the administration designates.
2. **Conditions of an Out-of-school Suspension**: The student may not be on campus. Suspensions will be for a maximum of three school days. Students are expected to complete all schoolwork during the suspension. No late work will be allowed.
3. **Conditions of Expulsion:** An expelled student may not be on campus under any circumstances. Students must successfully complete a full semester (minimum of five months) at another school before reapplying. There is no guarantee of acceptance.

Richmond Academy operates within the local, state, and federal laws. If a student commits a crime that violates any of these entities, local law enforcement will be contacted and the school will comply with the requests and requirements of the responding officer. The parents of an offending student will be notified immediately of all contacts with law enforcement. Any school discipline is secondary to decisions rendered by law enforcement.

Following Protocols

It is important for students and parents to follow proper protocols when seeking to make known a concern, problem, or appealing any incident. The first person to address is the school staff member immediately involved. If the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, notify that individual that you will be speaking to his/her supervisor. Out of respect and a desire for a good conclusion, never circumvent the person immediately responsible.

SCHOOL LIFE

Daily Schedule

Classes are held Monday through Friday, except for holidays or other breaks as published on the RA school calendar (accessed through our website - rasda.org). Before and after school supervision are available on regular school days. There are some necessary differences between Pre-K to 6, grades 7&8, and high school schedules as you see outlined below. Occasionally, a temporary schedule change may be necessary for a classroom or group of students. When that occurs, parents are given advance notice using RA's communication system so they can make proper arrangements.

Schedule

	Mon-Thu	Friday
Supervision in Gym until classrooms open	7:30 AM	Same
Classrooms are open	8:05 AM	Same
Start of School	8:15 AM	Same
Dismissal - Pre-K to 8th grades	3:00 PM	12:30 PM
After Care begins - Pre-K to 8th grades	3:15 PM	12:45 PM

Dismissal - grades 9-12	3:15 PM	12:30 PM

Beginning and End of Day - Drop-off & Pick-up

Arrival and dismissal of students is carefully managed to ensure their safety, facilitate after school activities, and permit teachers and staff the opportunity to prepare for the school day.

The entire curb along the front sidewalk of the school building is designated as our “drive-up zone” during the 15 minutes before school starts and in the afternoon for 15 minutes after elementary dismissal. Drivers join the orderly line of cars in the drive-up zone when dropping off or picking up students and proceed slowly forward as the line moves. Drivers in this zone should remain in their car. Those who need to enter the school or converse with others should park in one of the marked parking spaces.

Morning Drop-Off

Students being dropped off between 7:30 and 8:00 AM should proceed directly to the gym where supervision is provided until classrooms are open. Arrivals between 8:00 and 8:15 AM should come through the main entrance and proceed to their classroom. Late arrivals should stop in the office to complete a tardy slip.

Parents accompanying their child to the entrance, should park in one of the marked parking spaces. Those whose children can safely get to the entrance on their own may use the drive-up zone.

Afternoon Pick-up

Rides are announced to the high school classrooms and students are monitored by RA staff as they exit the building. Only individuals authorized by parents will be permitted to pick up students from school. If school staff cannot verify the identity of a driver (driver’s license or other ID required) or that they are authorized for pick-up, the student will not be released to them.

Parents using the drive-up zone to pick-up their child should leave the pick-up line as soon as their child is safely in the car.

After School Supervision

High school students not picked up during the 15 minutes following dismissal nor involved in a sponsored after school activity may remain in a high school classroom supervised by a teacher. When the supervising teacher leaves any remaining students must check in with the After Care Coordinator.

High school students are permitted to wait for their rides in one of two designated areas:

- Conference room: for students who are quietly working on school work
- School Entryway: for students who wish to socialize

Attendance

Regular school attendance and promptness are important to a student's academic success and to promote good work habits and self-discipline. RA's attendance policy is designed to promote a responsible attendance pattern and to abide by Virginia attendance laws.

Parents can support their child's success by practicing the following guidelines:

- Enable students to arrive at school early enough to be in their seats ready for morning worship by 8:15 AM.
- Establish a regular bedtime to provide sufficient rest each night.
- Whenever possible, arrange medical appointments for students outside of school hours.
- Notify the school office when it is necessary for a student to be absent, arrive late, or leave early.
- Report unplanned absences to the school office before 9:00 AM on the day of the absence.
- Observe the dates provided in the school calendar for the beginning and ending of school breaks.

Attendance for high school students is taken for each class period throughout the day by the instructor, and recorded in FACTS SIS. At 10:00 AM each school day, FACTS SIS automatically sends notifications to parents if their child is not present and we have not heard from the parent regarding the absence for that day.

Excused absences include those due to illness, a death in the family, or school-approved activities. Other circumstances not described here are determined by the administration on a case-by-case basis.

Intervention may be required for students who accumulate unexcused absences, Unexcused absence has a direct impact on a student's academic success. Students missing 10% of school days at any point in the school year may be withdrawn from school, unless absences are excused as outlined in this policy.

A student displays truant behavior with a single unexcused absence from school, but a student needs to reach or surpass a certain number of unexcused absences to be considered a chronic truant. Virginia law does not define a truant specifically but does define a child who is habitually and without justification absent from school as a "child in need of supervision" when certain other conditions are met.

Chronic absenteeism incorporates all absences: excused, unexcused and suspensions. The focus is on the academic consequences of this lost instructional time and on preventing absences before students miss so much school that they fall behind. It recognizes that students miss school for many understandable issues for which a punitive response is not appropriate, such as illness, unreliable transportation, or sudden changes in the family unit. Richmond Academy's policy is to work with families to share the importance of attendance and to address the underlying problems that lead to absenteeism.

Loss of Credit due to Excessive Absences

High school credits are issued based on a minimum number of minutes in class. A student who accumulates absences for more than 15 percent of class time, excused or unexcused, in any class during a semester may not receive credit for that course. In cases of students with an extended illness documented by a physician, the Academic Committee will review each case to determine whether credit will be granted.

Tardiness

A tardy is defined as any time a student arrives in the classroom after school start time. Once school has started, students still arriving will be directed through the office to receive a tardy slip. Ideally, the parent/driver should accompany the student to the office to complete the tardy slip explaining the reason for the late arrival. The student carries a copy of this slip with them for their classroom teacher. Tardiness for any reason other than professional appointments is considered unexcused.

Tardiness is detrimental not only to the student who is late, but also to the rest of the classroom due to the disruption that occurs. For this reason, students who arrive after the morning start time may not be permitted in their classroom until the first instructional period is complete. They will remain in a supervised area to quietly await access to their classroom.

If a student accumulates greater than ten tardies in a 9-week grading period, a conference will be required with the parents, teacher and administrator in order to establish a plan for arriving to school on time. Failure to correct chronic tardiness may result in dismissal.

Medical Appointments

When medical appointments must occur during school hours, please notify the teacher in advance to minimize disruption to the classroom. Students should be signed in and out at the school office when arriving and/or leaving during school hours.

Absences Due to Illness

Parents should contact the school office by 9:00 AM each day their child is absent. When the child returns to school the parent should fill out an attendance slip specifying the dates of absence and the reason. Illness or injury resulting in two or more consecutive school days missed requires a physician's note.

Absences Due to Family Travel

Parents are encouraged to plan family travel to coincide with scheduled school vacations or holidays. When family plans result in missed school days, parents must complete a request at least three weeks prior to the planned absence, to develop a plan for the student to receive academic credit for classwork missed. The request form (available in the school office) should be filled out by the parent and signed by the appropriate teacher(s). The student's academic standing will be considered when reviewing the request. Parents should not make travel arrangements (for example, purchasing non-refundable tickets) until the request is approved.

Upon approval by the administration, the student will be responsible to complete and submit assignments, projects, and tests according to the arrangements made with the teacher(s).

When a student misses school due to a pre-arranged absence, the parent is responsible for providing instruction in all missed class work. Teacher-directed activities such as presentations, experiments, etc. cannot be made up. Only prearranged and approved absences shall be considered unexcused.

RA-Supported Activities Planned During School Days

Planned absences due to certain events and activities sponsored by associated church/school organizations must be reported at least two weeks prior to the event to allow teachers time to adjust their planning to support the students. Such activities include Pathfinder events, church retreats, mission trips, and Conference/Union events. The school office can provide information on any documentation that may be required for reporting participation in such activities.

Calendar

RA's yearly calendar is based on a minimum of 180 instructional days and is coordinated with the education calendar set by the Potomac Conference Office of Education. The calendar is live on the school website at rasda.org. The calendar contains school breaks and holidays, grading periods, musical performances, standardized testing dates, and special events. Field trips are announced throughout the year and are not generally placed on the public school calendar.

Cell phones

Students' use and possession of personal cell phones and/or other personal devices with internet/texting services or data storage capabilities during the school day creates distractions, facilitates cheating, and can be disruptive to the school network. For these reasons, students who bring these devices to school must power them off upon arrival and check them in at the front office where they will be stored until dismissal. Once school has been dismissed, or if the student is leaving early, he/she may retrieve the device(s) in the office. Devices not retrieved before the school office closes for the day will remain locked up until claimed after dismissal on the next school day.

If a student fails to follow this policy, the device found in their possession during the school day will be taken and kept in the school office until his/her parent claims the phone. If a student is discovered to be in possession of a personal device during a quiz or test, he/she will receive a zero on the assessment. Violation of any aspect of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension.

If a student needs to contact his/her parents, he/she may request permission to use a school phone in the office. Parents may call the school office when it is necessary to leave a message for their child(ren).

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Under the Code of Virginia § 63.2-1509 all Richmond Academy teachers and staff are mandatory reporters if they have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child.

> *"...persons who, in their professional or official capacity, have reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, shall report the matter immediately to the local*

department of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline…."

All Richmond Academy staff have been trained to recognize signs of neglect or abuse and will follow the requirements of Virginia's law.

Communication

In this age of technology, school communications are primarily delivered through electronic means. It's extremely important that parents keep their contact information, as listed in Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb) and Bloomz, up to date. If a parent notices that school communications are not being received, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the school office as soon as possible.

Following are the methods regularly used for school communication:

Family Portal (formerly ParentsWeb)

Family Portal provides parents and students with the appropriate access to RA's school information system. You may view your student's report card grades and attendance record here. Parents come here to update student and family information as necessary, such as changes of address, phone numbers or email. Family Portal also contains a school directory with contact information for staff and other parents.

ParentAlert

ParentAlert is a communications feature of FACTS SIS (formerly RenWeb) that allows the school to send a text message to parents and/or students in the event of an emergency or other need to provide timely information and updates. Some examples of times when ParentAlert might be used include delayed return from a field trip and school delays or closings due to inclement weather conditions.

Bloomz

Richmond Academy teachers use Bloomz to keep in touch with parents regarding the day-to-day activities, performance, and milestones of their student. Teachers can also notify parents of classroom needs and field trip chaperone opportunities.

Email

The school administration uses email to contact families regarding administrative matters, including registration and enrollment, and occasionally other school-wide communications.

Friday News

This is RA's weekly e-newsletter, sent out electronically on Friday afternoon with the latest school news and information.

Facebook

Richmond Academy has a closed Facebook group where news, announcements, upcoming event information and reminders of on-going programs and activities are posted. RA parents may request to join this closed group. If you become a member of the group, this information will become a part of your daily newsfeed.
(https://www.facebook.com/groups/richmondacademyofsda/)

Closings/Delays Due to Inclement Weather

RA's administration determines the need for weather-related delays and closures based on safety as well as several other factors, which differ from the requirements of area public school systems. When RA experiences a delay or closure, it will be communicated in the following ways:

- ParentAlert text message: All parents include their mobile numbers in the student's enrollment packet for receiving ParentAlert messages.
- Richmond Academy will also be listed on the following media websites if we've made a change in our schedule due to inclement weather.
    - NBC12: Visit http://www.nbc12.com/ and then click on their closings and delays link either on their main page or on their menu.
    - CBS6: Visit https://wtvr.com/weather/ and then click on their "Closings" link in the page navigation bar near the top.

Dress Code - Uniforms

RA's philosophy regarding dress is an extension of our "whole child" approach to education. By applying Christian principles to our dress code, we encourage students to develop healthy habits for choosing attractive attire that is appropriate for the occasion. The dress code's emphasis is on maintaining a clean, neat, and modest appearance without adornment.

Richmond Academy requires students to wear school uniforms in order to:

- Simplify clothing choices for parents and students
- Reinforce the school's identity and build a sense of unity among the students
- Provide visibility and recognition of students when on field trips
- Eliminate distractions that can be caused by clothing choices

Uniforms are to be worn each day unless students are notified otherwise by a teacher or administrator.

RA uniforms are purchased from our selected vendor, Land's End. All approved uniform components, styles, and colors may be found at the following link:

Land's End School Uniforms (click to visit)

It is recommended that parents create a login with Land's End so they may save the dress code to their profile for easy access. Having a Land's End login will also allow them to receive notifications of discounts and special offers.

Tops

All tops including shirts (polos or uniform blouses), sweaters, fleeces, and jackets worn in the classroom must be embroidered with Richmond Academy's logo and purchased from RA's identified uniform vendor. Polo shirts should be solid navy, yellow, gray, or white. Choices are restricted to those identified in RA's dress code area on the Land's End website.

- Polos should be navy blue, white, yellow, or gray and embroidered with the school logo
- Uniform blouses should be white and embroidered with the school logo
- Sweaters, Fleeces, and Jackets should be navy blue and embroidered with the school logo
- A plain white, tan/khaki, or navy blue, long sleeve shirt, may be worn under a school polo if it is tucked in and doesn't show below the RA-logo'd top.
- All students must have at least one navy blue polo with the school logo. This shirt is to be worn on designated days such as field trips or other occasions to be determined by the teachers or administration.

Bottoms

All items worn from the waist down (pants, skirts, and skorts) may be purchased from Land's End OR the store of your choice if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Must be solid navy blue or tan/khaki in color.
2. May not be made of denim, spandex, fleece (e.g. sweatpants), T-shirt, or other knit fabrics. No cargo pants, joggers, leggings or jeggings.
3. Must not be tight-fitting.
4. Skirts or skorts must be no more than **1 inch** above the top of the knee in the front or back when standing.
5. Shorts are not allowed for high school students.

Shoes

Shoes should be safe and appropriate for the activity in which the student is participating. Generally, closed-toe shoes should be worn. Spike heels, sandals and flip flops are not permitted. Athletic shoes should be worn when participating in PE or other sports-related activities.

It may be necessary to limit participation, when a student wears shoes that are inappropriate for the activity.

General Guidelines

- Regular school uniform is to be worn on all field trips unless announced otherwise.
- Visible adornment of any kind is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to jewelry, body piercings, and tattoos, and they must not be visible while on school property or during school-sponsored events. Ear gauging or stretching is not permitted while enrolled at Richmond Academy. For students with pierced ears, ear studs meeting the following criteria may be worn to maintain holes:
    - One stud per ear in the lobe only, with flat or convex buttons that match the student's natural skin color

    - Posts may not exceed 1.2mm diameter
    - Buttons may not exceed 2mm diameter
- Hair color and style, make-up and nail polish must be natural in appearance.
- Hats, caps, and hoods are not to be worn in the school building.

Used Uniforms

RA has a collection of donated and unclaimed uniform components that are available for families to purchase at a modest price. See the school office for information on purchasing used uniforms. All proceeds from the sale of used uniforms benefit the current Senior Class.

Field Trips

The School's Responsibility

Field trips are an important part of teaching and learning, providing a student concrete knowledge that can launch the more abstract and theoretical principles presented in class. It is for this reason we encourage teachers to plan academically based field trips. So you may understand and support the teacher to provide the best and safest field trips, here is what is required of them:

1. All field trip requests are brought to the joint faculty meeting for presentation to be included in the coming month's calendar. Any two-day trip must have prior approval from Potomac Conference Office of Education.
2. Educational field trips must have stated measurable objectives with a follow-up report to assess the success of those stated objectives.

Permission Slips

A written permission slip for each field trip must be signed and returned to the student's teacher before a student can leave the school. Phone calls are not accepted as permission.

Parent/Volunteer Drivers

Richmond Academy appreciates parents' participation in school activities. To meet insurance requirements, parents who volunteer to drive their own vehicles must show written evidence of required limits on car insurance. In addition, they must sign a waiver indicating they are aware that their insurance (not school insurance) covers any passengers in the event of an accident while driving for a school function. Parents who volunteer to drive must present their motor vehicle record from the DMV annually. Their driving record must meet the standards outlined by Adventist Risk Management to be considered an acceptable driver. See the school office for details.

Payment

Field trips must be paid in advance unless previous arrangements have been made. If a student pays and then is unable to go, the trip will be refunded. No student will be denied due to finances.

Parental Pickup after Trips

Students must be picked up within 30 minutes of the posted arrival time. Parents should not expect aftercare when arrival is after 6 PM. If arrival is delayed, parents are notified of the updated arrival time using RA's Parent Alert.

Safety

School drivers will obey all laws regarding the safe transport of school children. The school will always acquiesce to safety over convenience.

Lockers

Students are issued lockers at the beginning of the year. All lockers are equipped with locks and the combinations are reset each year. Any property, including valuables, left in lockers is the responsibility of the student. Students may put pictures inside the door of their own locker as long as they reflect the Christian principles of RA. Nothing is to be posted on the outside of student lockers. RA staff members have the right to remove any offensive material they discover on or in a locker. Food items brought for lunch should be consumed that day or taken home. Food should not be stored in lockers.

Lockers and their contents, including personal items such as backpacks, are subject to periodic inspections by authorized school staff with or without notice to the student or parent. Sharing lockers is not permitted, and the responsibility of the locker contents falls on the student to which it is assigned.

Lost and Found

RA encourages all parents to label student items with their name, including coats, hats, gloves, sweaters, lunch boxes, backpacks, and school uniform components. Items found without names will be placed in the "Lost and Found" basket located in the administrative area. Items may be claimed with assistance from the school office.

At least twice a year unclaimed items are donated to Goodwill or Hope Thrift, except for uniform components which are washed and placed in used uniform sales.

School Lunches

Students may bring their own lunches from home or order from RA's hot lunch program. Lunches brought from home, as much as practical, should be ready to eat. There is no refrigeration or microwave available for student use, so lunches should be packed accordingly.

Hot lunches and all other school-served meals are vegetarian. Hot lunch menus will be printed in the *Friday News* for the days when hot lunch is to be served. Meal cards for hot lunch may be purchased in the school's front office. Hot lunch ordering will become an online process in the near future. The online ordering procedure will be announced in *Friday News* in advance of its implementation, and meal cards will be phased out.

Food Deliveries

As a matter of practice, students may not order food or beverages for delivery to the school by outside vendors. Food deliveries can be disruptive and often occur while students are in class. Only under special circumstances, with prior approval from the administration, will students be granted the privilege of ordering food for delivery during the school day. Students will not be excused from class for food deliveries. Delivered food will be held in the school office until the student's lunch period, when the student may pick it up.

Snacking

Eating or snacking during class time is not permitted except in circumstances when the teacher may extend the privilege as part of a class project or presentation.

Study Halls

Study halls are a part of high school life, and can help students stay abreast of their coursework, community service planning, and other extracurricular activities. In order to provide appropriate supervision of students as well as minimize disruptions to classes in session, students with a study hall period must be in designated areas according to the following guidelines:

- If a teacher is providing study hall supervision, the students remain in that teacher's classroom, otherwise,
- If all teachers have a class during their study hall period, students should proceed to the Conference Room for the duration of the period where they will be monitored by administrative staff.

Students are expected to work quietly on the appropriate assignments and/or projects throughout the study hall period.

Technology Policy

Richmond Academy offers students access to the school computer network for internet and general use. To gain access to the network, all students and parents must sign the Technology Use Agreement, which is part of the online enrollment packet. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. **Access is a privilege, not a right, and requires responsible conduct.**

Students will be instructed in online safety and the responsible use of electronic equipment. Filters on internet access are applied to all users in order to prevent inappropriate sites from being visited. Filters, however, are not 100% effective and responsible use is still necessary. Students will be taught how to use the internet as a research and educational tool.

Driving Privileges, Transportation, Parking Lot Safety

- All student drivers must submit a completed Student Driver form along with a copy of their *valid driver's license* and proof of insurance to the school office. A learners permit does not qualify for student driver privileges. A student in possession of a valid *Learner's Permit* may drive to and from school, only when in compliance with the provisions of the state in which the learners permit is issued.
- Responsible driving is expected on campus, and violations may result in a student losing driving privileges.
- Vehicles must be locked at all times.
- Students are not allowed in the parking lot or their cars during school hours without permission from a school administrator.
- Students who drive themselves to school must park in the area at the north end of the lot (closest to parking lot entrance).
- Student drivers should arrive no earlier than 8:00 AM, and should enter the school building within five minutes of arrival.
- All vehicles parked on RA property are subject to random searches without cause.
- Student drivers must leave school at dismissal time unless they are under direct supervision of an RA teacher or staff member (i.e. being tutored, working, or volunteering).
- Student drivers are not permitted to socialize in the parking lot, and should leave the parking lot within five minutes after leaving the building following dismissal.
- Student drivers may not transport other students, unless they are members of their immediate family (i.e. siblings).

Horizon Trips

Each school year Richmond Academy sponsors a multi-day higher education tour for high school students who are in good academic and citizenship standing. These annual trips are intended to help expand the career horizons of students preparing to enter the next phase of their lives. Eligible students who desire to opt out of this trip shall make that request to the principal and should plan to be in school under supervised study.

Typically at least two Adventist university campuses are visited. RA students are given private tours of each campus as well as time to explore offerings and opportunities in departments of interest. The visits are meant to inform, inspire and motivate. In addition, connecting Richmond Academy to these Adventist universities increases the opportunity for scholarship awards when students graduate.

Musical Performance Groups

Students have opportunities to participate in several music groups on Richmond campus, which earn credit towards graduation.

- Bell Choir or Concert Bells
- Chamber Ensemble
- Concert Choir

These groups perform for major school concerts two to three times a year, attend special music clinics where scholarships may be awarded, and perform periodically for area church services. Requirements for joining one or more of these groups include the ability to read music as well as a commitment from the student to participate in all performances and from the parent to support the student's participation.

RA Promenade

The Promenade ("Prom") is a high school banquet-style social event that typically takes place during the Spring semester. This is a ticketed event that is planned by the Student Association. All RA students who are in good academic and citizenship standing are eligible to attend. RA students may invite high-school-aged guests who are not enrolled at RA to accompany them. Non-RA guests must submit a completed guest permission slip to obtain approval to attend.

Promenade Attire Guidelines

The guiding philosophy for attire worn for prom and all Richmond Academy events is simplicity and modesty. All attendees will be held to this standard.

For the Young Ladies*:

- Appropriately fitting and modest formal attire.
- The neckline and back is no lower than a parallel line from the top of one armpit to the other nor does it reveal cleavage in the front.
- No bra straps are exposed, either on the shoulder or in the back of the dress.
- No shoulderless or strapless dresses, nor dresses with cutouts that reveal skin below the level of the top of the armpit.
- Dress length is no shorter than 2 inches above the knee when standing/walking or 6 inches above the knee when sitting.
- If the skirt of the dress is designed with a side, back or front slit, then the slit is no deeper than 6 inches above the knee.
- Dress fabric should not be sheer enough to show undergarments nor give the illusion of bare skin in areas that should not be bare.
- Dress shoes only, but these can be flats or with a heel. No athletic shoes or bedroom slippers.
- If you choose to wear heels, be mindful to choose a height that will allow for full mobility and comfort during the event.

- No jewelry of any type other than ear studs as outlined in RA's Dress Code.

***All young ladies must have their dresses approved by the dress committee before the event.**

For the Young Men:

- Modest formal attire worn with a bowtie or a suitable dress coat, pants, and necktie.
- No blue jeans.
- Shirts and pants should fit appropriately and be loose enough to conceal contours of the body.
- Dress shoes only. No open-toed shoes, athletic shoes, slides or slippers.
- No bandannas, baseball caps, non-formal hats or sunglasses.
- No jewelry of any type other than ear studs as outlined in RA's Dress Code.

Failure to abide by all of these guidelines will result in the individual being excused from the event with no refund of the ticket cost. Attendees should ask beforehand if there are any questions.

Red Cross Club

Guided by the fundamental principles of the American Red Cross and its mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors, the members of the Red Cross Club at Richmond Academy learn, practice and exemplify humanitarian values through mission-related service projects.

The club plans and coordinates a minimum of three Red Cross mission-related service projects per school year. The service projects focus on preparedness, blood drives, and fundraising.

Participation in the Red Cross Club provides student members regular opportunities to earn service hours towards graduation.

Students interested in membership must complete an application and sign the American Red Cross Code of Conduct.

Senior Privilege

Richmond Academy has defined an annual privilege for members of the Senior Class that allows them to leave campus during their lunch period to purchase lunch. Following are the guidelines and stipulations for this privilege:

- Seniors driving off campus must be registered to drive by completing the student driver registration form (part of the enrollment packet and available in the school office).
- Senior drivers may transport one Senior passenger as long as permission from both parents is on record with administration. (Use Passenger Registration form)
- Seniors are responsible for returning to campus on time to finish their lunch before their next class period starts.
- Seniors who have mobile phones must keep them on while off campus.
- Seniors leaving campus during the school day must always leave and return through the front office and use the "High School Sign Out/In" sheet.

Students may enjoy Senior Privilege as long as they participate responsibly and demonstrate good citizenship.

Student Leadership Positions

There are a number of student leadership opportunities at Richmond Academy. Holding a student office is a privilege and honor that comes with great responsibility. Students must meet the following minimum requirements to be eligible to run for student office:

- Be in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher through the most recently completed semester.
- Be a full-time high school student.
- Must possess and maintain exemplary citizenship and a virtuous character.
- Must not hold a concurrent class or Student Association position.
- Have no disciplinary action on their record for at least the previous three semesters.

Students must maintain all areas of eligibility throughout their term of office or risk being recalled by the administration.

Elections are scheduled by the principal and students are invited to submit eligibility applications for the office they are seeking. Once the eligible candidates are determined, they may participate in the annual election process. The group advisors and other RA staff members will facilitate the electoral process and announce the winners.

Student Association

As stated in its constitution, the Richmond Academy Student Association exists to:

- Contribute to the social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the students, faculty, and staff of RA to the extent that is within its power.
- Act as student representatives for the high school student body.
- Act as liaisons for connecting the elementary students to the secondary body of students.
- Advance the mission and vision of Richmond Academy in the school, in the constituent churches, and in the community.
- Nurture students and others to prepare for Christ's soon return through worship, fellowship, discipleship, friendship, leadership, and service.

All part- or full-time secondary students are members of the student association by virtue of their enrollment at RA. Students are elected each school year by the full membership to serve as officers in the following roles:

- President
- Religious Vice President
- Social Vice President
- Elementary Liaison
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Richmond Academy administration appoints a staff advisor to the student association each year to provide guidance and staff oversight to the organization.

Student Workers

Occasionally openings are available for students to work for teachers or other staff members. Student workers must perform their duties after their last class period of the day. Arrangements for student remuneration are made with their supervising staff and the business office.

CONNECTED SCHOOL

Richmond Academy provides a distance education program to Potomac Conference elementary schools (Partner Schools) that desire to make high school available to their constituency. RA's program is synchronous, which means instruction is delivered live and in real time using secured video conference technology. While RA's Richmond campus is where most teaching is hosted, the program is designed to enable delivery (hosting) of instruction from other locations as well.

This section of the handbook addresses those areas that are unique to the Connected School program.

Partner School

Partner Schools are those Potomac Conference elementary schools who "partner" with Richmond Academy to offer remote access to high school classes taught through RA's fully accredited secondary program. Partner Schools provide:

- Classroom space equipped for connecting to RA's high school class delivery.
- Supervision (Facilitator) for students enrolled in the Connected School program.
- Arrangements for necessary transportation when students gather together from all campuses for special instructional days, testing/exams, field trips, and other high-school-wide or school-wide RA events.

Student Status

All students enrolled in the Connected School program are full-time Richmond Academy students and will receive their academic credits through RA. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook apply to every student. As they are hosted on the Partner School campus, they will also follow local policies and procedures as appropriate.

Schedules

Because the Connected School program is a high school program hosted on an elementary school campus, there will be inherent scheduling differences between RA and the local elementary school. High school courses must meet a different level of requirements for class time than elementary classes, and extracurricular activities place further demands on the day-to-day schedule. While RA and the Partner School attempt to align calendars and daily schedules as much as practical, it is not possible for them to mirror each other.

Students in the Connected School program will follow RA's calendar and daily schedule. On days a Partner School is closed while RA has classes, any change in attendance expectations will be communicated to all affected families.

Travel

Due to the nature of the Connected School program, regular travel to the Richmond campus as well as other locations is an essential part of the program. On average, these occur about once a month. Unless stated otherwise, all scheduled visits to Richmond or to field trip destinations are mandatory. Students missing these trips will receive unexcused absences. By enrolling a child in the Connected School program, parents are making a commitment to support their child's attendance during these travel periods.

Finances

Tuition and fees arrangements for Connected School students are generally made with their local campus (Partner School). There are a few exceptions for certain fees, such as class dues, event fees (e.g. Promenade, Horizons Trip), and field trip fees. Instructions for payment of such fees are provided at the time they are announced.

Remote Family Communication

Parents of RA's students in the Connected School program receive the same communications as parents in Richmond. If a parent has a question regarding a communication received, the best way to seek an answer is to respond to the sender.

The Facilitator on the Partner School campus provides additional communications support between Richmond and the Partner campus.

Remote Parent-Teacher Conferences

Face-to-face parent-teacher conferences between Partner campus parents and RA teachers are facilitated by our video conferencing platform, Zoom. Teachers will provide parents with an invitation link to join them in their virtual Zoom Room for their scheduled conference. If parents do not have the necessary Internet capabilities to connect to Zoom, they should let the teacher and their local Facilitator know so that arrangements can be made to connect from a Connected Classroom at the Partner School.

Weather-related Closings and Delays

With enough distance between Richmond Academy and Partner School campuses, there are occasions when inclement weather may cause a closure or delay on one campus, but not the other. When this happens, parents should observe the following guidelines:

- **If RA is closed:** Students have the day off school.
- **If your local campus is closed:** Students will need to stay home and follow RA's schedule for the day by connecting to their classes using Zoom. If a student is unable to connect

due to a power failure or Internet outage this should be communicated to the Facilitator as soon as possible.

Campus-based Services

Certain services mentioned in this handbook are campus-based and, therefore, are not provided by RA on any other campus. Some of these services may be offered by the Partner School on their campus. Please see the Partner School administration for information on local services.

- Before and After Care
- School Lunches - students should bring funds for lunches while on Richmond campus
- Lost and Found
- Lockers

CAMPUS SAFETY & SECURITY

Leaving the Building or Campus

Students should never leave the school building or campus without receiving permission from their teacher and the school office. If a parent is dropping off something for a student, the parent should bring the item inside to the school office. Students should not be called or messaged during the school day to come outside to retrieve the item as this is disruptive to instructional time and could pose a safety risk.

Senior students who have registered their vehicle and are authorized to drive to school may leave during their lunch period (see Senior Privilege), but must leave through the front office and sign out.

Emergency Drills TBP

Staff Identification TBP

Visitors

The school discourages non-family visitors so as not to disrupt the learning environment. All visitors must check in at the school office and abide by all school rules involving behavior. All visitors MUST receive and wear a school identity badge during the school day while on campus or participating in school activities or trips.

VOLUNTEERS

Richmond Academy welcomes volunteers and encourages all parents of RA students to volunteer some time helping at the school each semester. Volunteer opportunities are available during the school day as well as evening and weekend school events. Please call the school office to find out when and how you can help.

Child Protection Screening & Background Checks

Volunteers who will be working with and around students will need to complete child protection screening, which includes an online course and background check. They must present a certificate of course completion to the school office prior to the start of the volunteer activity, including parents who will be attending or driving for field trips.