

Frequently Asked Questions

Rockbridge County Public Schools 2021-2022

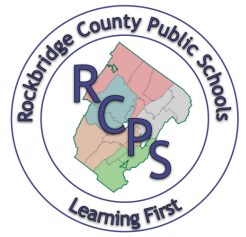
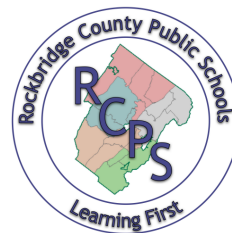


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Student Learning

QUESTION: When is the first day of school for RCPS students?

ANSWER: The first day of school is Tuesday August 17.

QUESTION: What is the current schedule for PreK - 12th grade RCPS students to report to school buildings?

ANSWER: RCPS will now offer in-person school for PreK - 12th grade students across the school division five days a week. Students who applied for (June 4, 2021 deadline) and were accepted into the fully virtual school (RCPS Digital Academy) attend virtual school five days a week with our virtual school provider [Virtual Virginia](#).

QUESTION: What does instruction look like for each of the Governor's phases?

ANSWER: Information on the state requirements for the 2021-2022 school year is available at the [Virginia Department of Education](#) website.

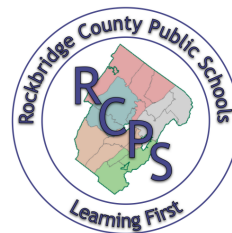
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QUESTION: When/how can I contact my teacher if remote learning is in place due to a quarantine protocol or illness?

ANSWER: This will be set up with teachers of the home school. RCPS recommended communications include via E-mail, Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Remind.

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QUESTION: What are options for RCPS students who prefer virtual learning?

ANSWER: RCPS provides fully virtual school options for students in grades 9-12. An overview of the 2021-2022. [RCPS Remote Academy](#) is linked. The deadline for application to this program was June 4, 2021.

QUESTION: Will students have opportunities to interact with peers (virtually) in the Rockbridge Digital Academy model?

ANSWER: It is strongly encouraged to plan for virtual collaborations between peers by the remote teacher to promote authentic, innovative, and collaborative team work.

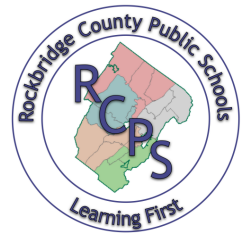
QUESTION: If I applied to and was accepted into the Rockbridge Digital Academy, am I allowed on the campus of my school?

ANSWER: For health and safety concerns, staying off campus is recommended for RDA students. However, if there is a need to be on campus, contact your RDA online teacher/building administrator who will facilitate your campus visit. Additionally, students will be able to participate in extracurricular activities, those activities that take place after school hours. Students will not be allowed to participate in co-curricular activities, those activities that take place during the school day or require a class on campus to participate in after school activities. Some of our Career and Technical (CTE) courses may require co-curricular activities.

QUESTION: How will students in the Rockbridge Digital Academy take SOL assessments this year?

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ANSWER: We have not received any guidance from the Virginia Department of Education regarding how students working remotely will take SOL assessments. As more information becomes available, we will update this answer.

QUESTION: What classes at RCHS will be offered virtually?

ANSWER: Our virtual school provider offers [the following courses for virtual students](#).

QUESTION: Are the students taking Rockbridge Digital Academy classes going to be issued printed text such as textbooks?

ANSWER: RCPS provides the necessary teaching and learning materials and resources for students.

QUESTION: Where can I find school supply lists?

ANSWER: Click below to access supply lists:

[Central Elementary List](#)

[Fairfield Elementary List](#)

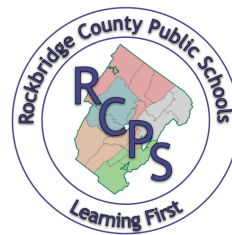
[Mountain View Elementary](#)

[Natural Bridge Elementary List](#)

[Maury River Middle List](#)

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Special Education

QUESTION: What learning model options are available to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP)?

ANSWER: This year, all students in grades PK - 8 are required to attend school in-person five days a week. Students in grades 9 - 12 are provided the option to work virtually through the Virtual Virginia platform. An application process is required for students who wish to pursue this avenue.

QUESTION: How will my student who has an IEP get the help he/she is required to have should schools be closed due to COVID related matters?

ANSWER: Each student has/will have a Distance Learning Plan on file that fully outlines services that will be provided during school closures. If you have not met with your child's case manager to complete this document, please contact your child's school.

QUESTION: How will IEP related services be provided?

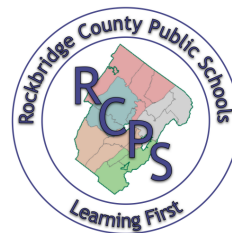
ANSWER: All services are provided in-person, unless otherwise arranged through the student's IEP.

QUESTION: How will IEP meetings and parent-teacher conferences be held?

ANSWER: At this time, IEP teams are meeting virtually or by phone. In the event that an on-campus meeting is needed, participants must agree to socially distance, wear a cloth face covering, and participate in a health screening.

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Safety

QUESTION: What is the general RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings?

ANSWER: Students and employees will wear a cloth face covering while in a school building. The only exceptions are the cafeteria and during strenuous activities in physical education classes. *RCPS Administration and the School Board will continue to collaborate with the Virginia Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Virginia Department of Education throughout this pandemic. As information regarding COVID-19 becomes available, this policy may be updated accordingly. Note - Refer to specific guidelines for students, staff and visitors below.

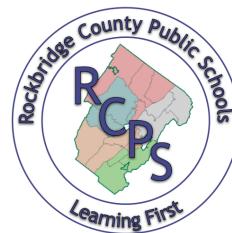
QUESTION: What is the RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings for students?

ANSWER: Until further action by the School Board, all students in pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade shall be required to wear a cloth face covering: (a) while attending school or a school function in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus, including at the time of school entry and exit; (b) on an approved trip at any location and, in the case of athletic events, at any home or away athletic site; and (c) when riding in school-provided transportation. All cloth face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the student. This policy applies to students waiting outside school buildings before and after school and to students waiting at bus stops. Students shall wear cloth face coverings at all times, except for the following:

- Students may remove cloth face coverings for eating or drinking; six (6') feet of social distancing to be maintained;

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- Students participating in sporting events and practices do not need to wear a cloth face covering; however, cloth face coverings are required for participants not actively engaged in a game or practice, such as when standing on the sidelines, in a dugout, and off the field of play any time six (6') feet of social distancing measure is not possible.
- When students are participating in classroom activities outside of the school; six (6') feet of social distancing to be maintained;
- Students may be exempted from this policy by the school principal due to a documented medical condition or disability of the student;
- Students may be exempted from this policy due to special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the Director of Special Education.

QUESTION: Can students remove their face covering for a “mask break”?

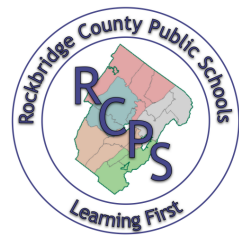
ANSWER: Classroom teachers have the option to allow students to take a “mask break” for a limited amount of time (shall not exceed five (5) minutes each 50 minute period). Mask breaks can be offered in the classroom at the teacher’s discretion if students are seated, working quietly, and six (6') feet of social distancing is maintained.

QUESTION: What is the RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings for staff?

ANSWER: Until further action of the School Board, all employees of the RCPS shall be required to wear a cloth face covering while working or attending a school function in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus. All cloth face coverings must cover the nose and mouth of the employee. Employees shall wear a cloth face covering at all times, except for the following:

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- Employees may remove cloth face coverings for eating or drinking; six (6') feet of social distancing to be maintained;
- Employees may be exempted from this policy by the school principal or the Superintendent/Designee due to a documented medical condition or disability of the employee.
- Employees may remove cloth face covering when in their classroom alone.
- Employees may remove cloth face coverings when allowing students to take a mask break in their classroom. Mask breaks can be offered to students in the classroom at the teacher's discretion if students are seated, working quietly, and six (6') feet of social distancing is maintained.

QUESTION: What is the RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings for visitors?

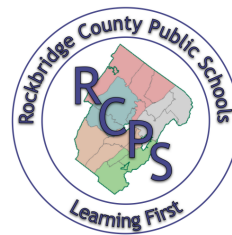
ANSWER: Until further action of the School Board, all visitors and vendors to the RCPS shall be required to wear a cloth face covering while present in any school building, facility, or other area of a school campus.

QUESTION: What is the RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings for Children and Staff in Child Care Programs?

ANSWER: The requirement to wear a cloth face covering in accordance with the terms of this policy shall also apply to all children age two (2) and above and child care providers in child

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care programs located in RCPS schools, on an RCPS school campus, or other facility in which the RCPS is operating a child care program for the benefit of its employees.

QUESTION: How will refusal to wear a cloth face covering be handled?

ANSWER: For students who refuse to or, otherwise, do not wear a cloth face covering at school, on school transportation, or at a school function under this policy, every attempt will be made to ensure that the students and the students' parents understand the importance of wearing a cloth face covering. The RCPS will, then, work with families to identify the more appropriate learning path, including virtual learning, if students fail to comply with the requirement to wear cloth face coverings as detailed above.

QUESTION: What is the rationale behind the RCPS School Board Policy regarding cloth face coverings?

ANSWER: The RCPS cloth face covering policy is intended to limit the spread of COVID-19 and preserve effective in-person learning as much as possible.

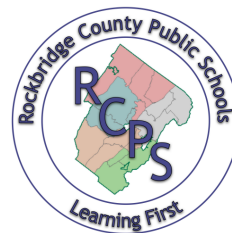
QUESTION: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

ANSWER: As of July 2021, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control lists the following as possible symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue

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- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

For more information, [click here for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control website](#).

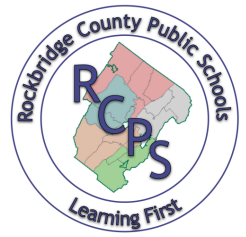
QUESTION: When will a student / staff member exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms be allowed to return to school?

ANSWER: The return of those with COVID-19 symptoms will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Rockbridge County Public Schools will consult with the Central Shenandoah District Health Department and follow CDC guidelines to safely return students to the school. This includes following the guidance that the student not return to school for at least three days (72 hours) since recovery of symptoms without fever reducing medication. If symptoms increase, the student/staff member would stay home until at least ten days have passed since the symptoms first appeared and must have been fever free for 24 hours without any fever-reducing medications. School nurses may request a note from a student's physician to facilitate transition back to school and monitor the student's well-being upon his or her return.

The Virginia Department of Health has created a useful tool for returning to school. [This infographic provides an overview for return to school/work with or without formal COVID testing; and when quarantine can end for those exposed.](#)

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QUESTION: Will RCPS be providing additional hand sanitizer and hand-washing stations?

ANSWER: Yes. Hand sanitizer and sinks with soap for frequent hand washing will be readily available.

QUESTION: Can students carry hand sanitizer?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Will water fountains be open?

ANSWER: Bottle-filling stations will be available for use on existing water fountains to avoid use of the water spout. Traditional classroom water fountains and any hallway water fountains will not be available for use (only bottle-filling stations are available).

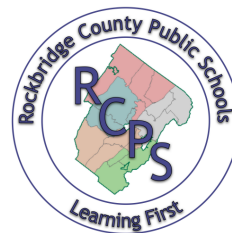
QUESTION: With library books being passed from home-to-home/student-to-student, what are the plans for cleaning?

ANSWER: RCPS will follow guidelines provided by the CDC and the American Library Association. As it stands now, they are recommending different lengths of isolation time depending on the book cover material (plastic, cardboard, etc) and we have disinfectant to clean books as they get returned. The isolation time for books will be 48 hours.

QUESTION: What is our plan for addressing trauma resulting from COVID-19 and mental health?

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ANSWER: Student support services (school psychologists, counselors, and social workers) will be meeting monthly to determine mental health supports and services for students. Resources have been provided on school websites since school closure and school counselors continue to be in contact with students determined to be at-risk for trauma. School employees are being trained on recognizing and responding to students who have and/or are experiencing trauma through a partnership with the Rockbridge Area Community Services Board (RACSB) during August this year. Classroom teachers and administrators will continue to provide intervention through reports received verbally and/or through our B.R.A.V.E. Bullying Prevention Reporting System.

Technology

QUESTION: Is RCPS providing students with technology for the 2021-2022 school year?

ANSWER: Yes, RCPS will be providing all students with technological learning devices for the 2021-2022 school year. Students in grades 6th through 12th grade are one to one. All kindergarten through 5th grade students have a device within the classroom but devices can also be sent home for virtual learning if needed.

QUESTION: How will students obtain their RCPS-issued Chromebooks?

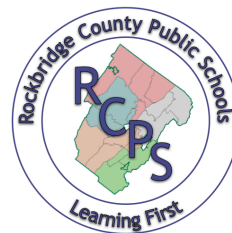
ANSWER: Grades 6-12 have been issued devices. Elementary Schools will share a distribution plan if it becomes necessary to have them at home.

QUESTION: Where can I find free internet access to complete assignments?

ANSWER: RCPS provides internet access to the parking lots at all school campuses and the Central Office (formerly Effinger Elementary). Local public libraries and some local businesses offer free Wi-Fi as well. [You can view a list of free Wi-Fi locations by clicking here.](#)

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QUESTION: What type of technology and programs will be used for students?

ANSWER: Teachers will utilize various educational programs to work with students, such as Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Virtual Virginia, Google Meet, Edgenuity, and other resources designed to support student learning and success. Lessons may include, but are not limited to, videos (instructional and informational), web-based activities, collaborative activities, virtual face-to-face sessions, or downloadable activities.

QUESTION: Will student devices (Chromebooks) work without internet service?

ANSWER: Although internet access is optimal, Chromebooks can be used without Internet access. However, students need to download assignments while connected to the Internet to be able to work offline.

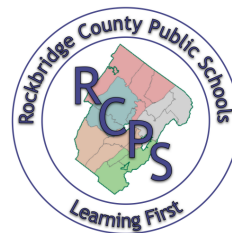
QUESTION: What do I do if tech support is needed during virtual learning or what if my child loses or breaks a RCPS electronic device?

ANSWER: Students/Parents can submit a helpdesk ticket through an online form on the district website, each school website and/or the student homepage on each student device. Upon completion, this form will generate an online help ticket that gets emailed to our helpdesk experts. Each help ticket will be handled in the order it was received. If unable to access the form, please call your child's school to report the issue.

The RCPS helpdesk will provide email and/or phone support to solve the problem, such as making arrangements to provide the student with a loaner device. Students will keep the loaner device until their original device is returned or replaced. If the problem cannot be resolved over

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email/phone, a location and meeting time will be provided for in-person support and to potentially exchange the device while the student device is being repaired. RCPS will not provide support services in the student's home.

QUESTION: Can my child use a home computer/iPad to do their virtual schoolwork?

ANSWER: Students may use a personal device. However, they may not have access to RCPS programs which could potentially limit learning effectiveness. Additionally, personal device users may need to use Google Chrome as their web browser in order to have access to some school-provided programs.

Transportation

QUESTION: When will I receive information about my child's bus and route?

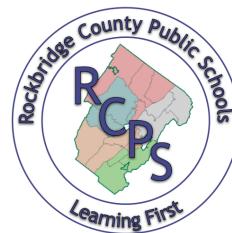
ANSWER: RCPS Transportation routes and bus information will be provided prior to the school year. Once routes and bus information are finalized, information will be sent to each school. Each school includes bus information in their back to school information mailed to each family.

QUESTION: Will bus and school drop-off and pick-up times be altered?

ANSWER: Pick-up and Drop-off times will be as close as possible to the times printed on the student transportation letters that were mailed home at the beginning of the school year. This year, parents may utilize the E-Link system to access bus information. The E-link system can be found on the Rockbridge County Public Schools website under the Transportation tab. If there is no bus information on the E-Link system for a student, the student is not assigned a bus

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stop. In this case, parents should contact the transportation office, 463-5437, for bus information.

QUESTION: How will the loading/unloading process work on school buses?

ANSWER: This school year there are no particular guidelines for loading and unloading the school bus. When possible, students will be socially distanced on the school bus.

QUESTION: What if a student arrives at the bus stop or school without a cloth face-covering?

ANSWER: Transportation drivers and schools will be provided with a limited number of single-use cloth face coverings that will be available for students in this situation. Students must wear a cloth face-covering to ride RCPS transportation.

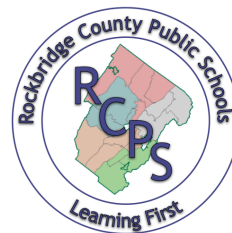
QUESTION: What are the procedures for submitting a bus pass this year?

ANSWER: To get off a school bus at any place other than the regular stop or to ride a different bus home, a student must bring a signed note from home requesting the school to issue a bus pass. The note must state the date, the bus number, and where the student is to get off the bus. Notes should be taken to the Main Office for approval before the start of the school day. Any request for a change in bus must be made no later than 12 p.m. to the Main Office. Whether or not a student can ride on another bus is based on space availability. If space is not available and the request to ride another bus is denied, a member of the school's office staff will call the parent to discuss alternate plans.

QUESTION: Will an activity bus be available for after-school activities?

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ANSWER: Yes, activity buses will run each day Monday - Thursday. Activity buses are not provided on Fridays for athletes. Only students enrolled in a 21st Century Grant program are permitted to ride activity buses on Friday. All students planning to ride an activity bus must sign up each day. Parents and students may access the sign up sheet through the Rockbridge County Public Schools website, under the Transportation tab. Students may also sign up for the activity bus using QR Codes posted throughout the school.

Nutrition

QUESTION: Will students eat in the cafeterias for breakfast or lunch? If so, how will social distancing measures be enforced?

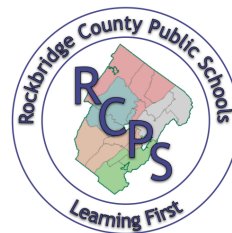
ANSWER: Breakfast and lunch in all schools will be provided in carry-out style containers. Students will eat a grab-n-go breakfast in classrooms. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria. School administration will monitor social distancing protocols.

QUESTION: What hygiene protocols will the school division require to ensure safe food preparation and food handling practices?

ANSWER: All meals will be served in closed containers (no open trays). Cafeteria staff will wear face-coverings / shields while preparing and serving food. All employees will maintain safe hygiene and sanitation practices at all times through additional safety training regarding proper use of safety and sanitation. Kitchens will hang signage to include information on proper use of face coverings / shields and gloves as well as proper handwashing. Cafeteria staff will follow Covid screening guidelines, as well as vendors and delivery drivers entering buildings.

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Question: What is the cost for school meals this year?

ANSWER: All school meals (breakfast and lunch) are free.

QUESTION: Do I have to fill out a free/reduced meal application form for each child that I have in school(s)?

ANSWER: Yes. It will help to determine economic assistance for this year and the beginning of next year. It is not necessary to fill out a meal application for every child attending a school. You will fill out a Family meal application form. Free/Reduced meal application forms are available online at the division website and/or school's main office. It is not necessary to fill out a meal application to receive free meals this year.

QUESTION: If students will be eating their meals in the classroom, how will they be able to choose what they want?

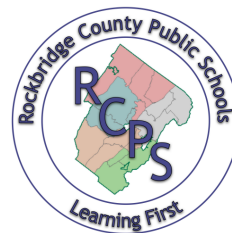
ANSWER: Students will order their breakfast and lunch ahead of time, from their first classroom of the day. Menus will be posted on the school / division websites.

QUESTION: Will students be able to receive school meals on the days their school is remote learning?

ANSWER: Yes. Students will use an electronic order form system to order their breakfast and lunch for the remote learning days. These meals will be distributed to the students' homes using bus routes. These meals will have to be put in the refrigerator/freezer as soon as they arrive home from school. All meals are free.

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QUESTION: Will my child still need to type in their cafe number to receive school meals?

ANSWER: No. Each student meal will be recorded using a contactless point of sale.

Athletics

QUESTION: Will sports seasons happen this year?

Yes, we will have athletic activities in a traditional manner with a full allotment of games.

QUESTION: What will the policies be regarding RCPS Athletics (practices, games, off-season conditioning, etc.)

ANSWER: RCPS Athletics will continue to follow guidelines as they are provided by the VHSL. Please visit the [VHSL website](#) and the [Rockbridge Athletics](#) website for continued updates and additional information.

QUESTION: Will all students and parents need to sign waivers for athletic participation?

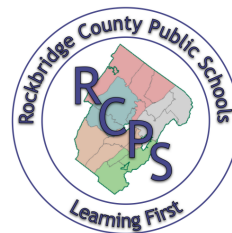
ANSWER: Yes, they will all need to sign a waiver before the student is allowed to participate in athletics.

QUESTION: What additional cleaning and sanitization steps will be taken to protect our student athletes? (Equipment, facilities, locker rooms, etc.)

ANSWER: In addition to the training provided to the coaches/staff by RCPS Athletics, the RCPS Maintenance staff will also provide additional guidance to RCPS coaches and athletics staff on

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how to properly clean and disinfect equipment, spaces, etc.

QUESTION: Will all coaches receive training? What will that training look like?

ANSWER: Yes, all coaches will receive training on how to properly clean and disinfect equipment as well as facilities and also conduct individual screenings of both the coaches and the student-athletes. Every coach will need to certify that they have been properly trained and will adhere to the specifics of these guidelines.

QUESTION: Will all student-athletes receive training on expectations?

ANSWER: Yes. Head coaches will be responsible for going over these expectations with each player and it is the responsibility of all coaches to ensure that all student-athletes adhere to them.

QUESTION: Will parents/fans be allowed to attend conditioning/practices/events?

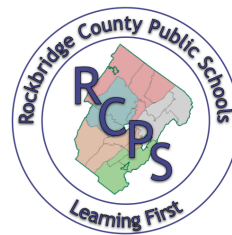
ANSWER: Parents and fans are allowed to attend athletic competitions. Practices and conditioning are limited to athletes and coaches only.

QUESTION: Will student-athletes be required to wear cloth face-coverings? Will cloth face-coverings be provided?

ANSWER: Students participating in sporting events and practices do not need to wear a cloth face covering; however, cloth face coverings are required for participants not actively engaged in a game or practice in indoor facilities.

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QUESTION: What will the academic eligibility requirements be for RCPS student athletes and/or activities participants?

ANSWER: Students participating in RCPS Athletics/Activities will follow the same requirements - having a full academic course-load (5 new courses) during the season/activity and have had to pass 5 out of 7 classes from the previous semester to remain eligible. Early release is not permissible during the season/activity period. 9th grade students entering RCHS in the fall semester are automatically eligible to participate/tryout for a team.

Other

QUESTION: Will before and after-school care be available to families?

ANSWER: Currently, the YMCA offers after school care at Central Elementary School.

QUESTION: Will students take state assessments at the end of the 2021-2022 school year?

ANSWER: At this time, the Virginia Department of Education has indicated that SOL assessments will take place during the 2021-2022 school year. As new information is released to us by the VDOE, we will release notifications to all of our stakeholders.