

Varina
High School
Student
Handbook
2019 – 2020



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Welcome to the 2019-2020 School Year!

Welcome back students! We hope that each of you had a wonderful summer and are ready to start a new year. Our school theme this year is, “Crossing the Line of Average.” The staff here at VHS love to teach you, and it is our hope that you will look for ways to get the most of your high school education.

This handbook is designed to answer the day-to-day questions that you may have regarding your time at Varina High School. Discussing the contents of this handbook with your families will help them to gain a better understanding of what is expected of you while you are in school.

We look forward to an exciting year at Varina High School!

Sincerely,

VHS Admin Staff

Varina's Mission Statement

The mission of Varina High School is to provide an educational experience that develops responsible learners who exhibit quality character and a commitment to their community.

School Hours

9:00 AM – 3:55 PM

Office Hours

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Summer Office Hours

7:30 AM - 5:00 PM- Monday-Thursday

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Calendar of Important Events

September	3	First Day of School
	30	Student Half Day
October	14	Student Holiday
October	28	Student Half Day
November	4	*End of Marking Period 1
	5	Student Holiday/Election Day
	18	Student Half Day
	27 - 29	Thanksgiving Holiday
December	9	Student Half Day
	17 – 20	Student Mid-terms/Early Dismissal
	23 – 31	Winter Break
January	1 -3	Winter Break
	6	Return to School from Winter Break
	20	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday/ Student Holiday
	24	*End of Marking Period 2/Semester 1
	27	Student Holiday
February	17	Student Half Day
March	3	Student Holiday
	30	Student Half Day/ *End of Marking Period 3
April	6 – 13	Spring Break
May	25	Memorial Day Holiday
June	2 – 5	Senior Exam Week
	9 – 12	Student Exam Week/Early Dismissal
	12	Last Day of School

THIS Class Time

Each Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday all on-campus students will attend a “directed study” session that is student-centered. THIS is connected to your first period class.

- **Passes for THIS** – Students must get a pass from the teacher they want to see. They should show that pass to the first period teacher in order to be granted permission to travel.

Attendance

Tardies:

- The following reasons are excusable:
 - Medical appointments with a note (from a medical professional)
 - Students’ illness with note from parent or guardian
 - Illness in the family that necessitates the tardiness of the student (A parent will have to verify this by note, phone call, or in person)
 - Court appointment (With note from court)
 - Other reasons approved by the principal
- The following reasons are **NOT** excusable:
 - Missing the bus... even if it is your parent or guardian’s fault
 - Car problems... even if it is your parent or guardian’s fault
 - Waking up late... even if it is your parent or guardian’s fault
 - Running late... even if it is your parent or guardian’s fault
 - Medical appointment without a note or parent to sign you in
 - Not feeling well without a note or parent to sign you in
 - Family Emergency
 - Parking issues
 - Traffic
 - No reason

If you arrive to school late, even during a class transition, you **MUST** come to the attendance office to sign in.

ALL NOTES MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF TARDY. LATE NOTES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL!

Early Dismissals:

- If you need to leave school early you may...
 - Bring a note from your parent/guardian to the attendance office by 9:00 AM. The note must include; your first and last name, what time you will need to leave, a parent/ guardian’s phone number, and a parent/guardian signature. **LATE NOTES MUST BE APPROVED BY ADMINISTRATION!** You will be given a pass to leave class at the time specified on your note. You will show the pass to your teacher and come to attendance to sign out/turn your pass in.

- Have someone listed on your “Authorization to Pick Up” form come to the attendance office with a Photo ID, and sign you out.
- Parent’s may **NOT** call to give you permission to leave early, they must write a note or physically come to the VHS attendance office.
- **18 YEAR OLDS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SIGN THEMSELVES OUT!**

Absences:

- The following reasons are excusable:
 - Medical appointments with a note from the doctor or parent upon students return (note must be from a medical professional if the student is on professional note status)
 - Students’ illness with phone call or note from parent or guardian
 - Illness in the family that necessitates the absence of the student (A parent will have to verify this by note, phone call, or in person)
 - Court appointment with a note from court or the parent (note must be from court if student is on professional note status)
 - Other reasons approved by the principal
- The following reasons are **NOT** excusable:
 - Missing the bus... even if it is the parent or guardian’s fault
 - Transportation problems... even if it is the parent or guardian’s fault
 - Medical appointment without a note or parent verification via phone or note
 - Not feeling well without verification of such from a parent
 - Family Emergency

College visits, planned vacations, and other absences outside of those listed above must be approved by the principal in order to be excused. In order to have these absences approved, a written note or official documentation is required.

ALL NOTES MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ABSENCE. LATE NOTES MUST BE APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL!

Sick Days:

- Each student is permitted ten (10) sick days per school year. These days must be verified by a parent/ guardian via phone call or note.
- If a student reaches their ten-day limit, they will be placed on professional note status. This means the student will not be excused from school for illness or medical appointments without dated and signed documentation from a medical professional. A note will be mailed home when the student has been placed on Professional Note Status.

Compulsory Attendance:

- Unexcused absences are taken very seriously. Each day a student is absent Unexcused from school, an automated call will go home.
- When a student reaches certain numbers of unexcused absences, there are steps that must be taken.
 - At 3 unexcused absences - the student will meet with a school based truancy officer, and parent contact will be made

- At 5 unexcused absences - The student will be reported to the school social worker.
- At 6 unexcused absences - the student will be reported to the county social worker, and a letter will be sent home.

AM Tardy/Clean Sweep Process

AM Tardy

- The bell rings at 8:55.
- Doors to breakfast lines close at 8:55.
- No admission to breakfast line after 8:55 without a “late bus” pass.
- AM Tardy before 9:15 - report to 602 for a red pass.
- After 9:15 report to the Attendance Office
- Nobody admitted to first block of the day without pass.
- School Messenger notices will be sent to parents for students who were late prior to 9:15

Clean Sweep

- When a clean sweep is called, students will not be permitted into class without a red pass.
- The student must locate an administrator on campus to receive a pass.
- The administrator will log the tardy in the appropriate Google Doc.
- The admin aide who oversees the process will regularly review the google doc and issue consequences.
- The admin aide will send School Messenger notices home after each clean sweep.
- Consequences
 - 1st offense - warning and School Messenger call home
 - 2nd offense - warning and School Messenger call home
 - 3rd offense - 1 day FOCUS
 - 4th offense - 2 days FOCUS
 - 5th offense - OSS and hearing with student’s administrator

Reminders

- If a Clean Sweep has not been called, the student will likely not have a red pass unless it is the first block of the day. If admin catches tardy students on the sidewalk, they can use the red pass to document the tardy.
- This process is not replacing the teacher’s responsibility to monitor class attendance and hold students accountable for it.
- The Attendance secretary will be emailing teachers when students who are having attendance issues sign in to the main office late. Too many students are taking too long to get to class once they sign in.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

HCPS recognizes that student access to cell phones and other electronic devices is common in 21st Century society; however, it is imperative that students and parents understand that there are appropriate and inappropriate times for the use of such devices.

Students using cell phones or other electronic devices to record anything or anyone without authorization on school property or at school events is strictly prohibited. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a minimum consequence of the device being confiscated and used as evidence. Other consequences may apply pending the investigation as to the intent and reason for the willful disregard of the *Code of Student Conduct*.

By administrative discretion, cell phones or electronic devices may be retained until the following school day prior to the retrieval by parents/guardians. Teachers who confiscate devices must send the device to the front office to be stored in a safe place. Devices can be retrieved during normal school office hours by a parent or guardian the next school day.

Use of Cellular Phones or other Electronic Devices during Assessments

Test administration procedures are developed in order to help reduce measurement error and to increase the likelihood of fair, valid, and reliable assessments. Procedures that protect the security of the assessment help to maintain the meaning and integrity of the score scale for all students; therefore:

- Any student using an unauthorized device during testing shall be deemed to have violated the Test Administration Procedures. For the purpose of this handbook, “use” shall be defined as having any electronic device out and/or in sight, whether on or off (including sleep mode), without direct authorization from the classroom instructor.
- Any student found in breach of the Test Administration Procedures, by using an unauthorized electronic device, shall receive a zero on the assessment. Furthermore, the device in use shall be confiscated and turned in to the student’s administrator with a written referral, in accordance with the *Code of Student Conduct*.

Dress Code

All Varina High School boys and girls are expected to be well groomed and safely dressed. We believe that proper dress is as important as proper behavior and that there is a positive correlation between dress, attitude, and achievement in school. In support of the Code of Student Conduct, an individual's appearance that is considered disruptive, distracting, or a hazard to one's own safety or that of others is prohibited. The following will be consistently enforced at Varina High School:

- Hoods, face masks, or head coverings of any kind inside school buildings during regular school hours, unless required for religious or medical reasons.
- The following items on school grounds during regular school hours: bandanas, do-rags, head scarves (with the exception of head garments for religious reasons), hair picks, wave caps, large combs, brushes, and rollers.
- Sunglasses, unless prescribed by a physician.
- Dresses, skirts, shorts, athletic shorts, and other similar clothing that are shorter than thumb length (arms straight with palms flat) even when worn with leggings or tights.
- Messages on clothing, chains, jewelry, and personal belongings that pertain to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, gangs, vulgarity, or that could cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment.
- Spiked jewelry, chains, and items which could cause student injury.
- Beachwear (which includes bathing suits and trunks) and sleepwear.
- Clothing that reveals undergarments.
- Cut-off jeans, cut-off sweat pants, or torn, ripped, or slashed clothing that reveals undergarments or body parts excluded by other parts of this code.
- Bedroom slippers or shoes with wheels, also known as "Heelys."
- Clothing that reveals the midriff while sitting or standing.
- Clothing that is tight, skimpy, or with plunging necklines.
- Clothing that is see-through, revealing, or resembles undergarments.
- Tube tops, halter-tops, halter-top dresses, strapless dresses or tops, or dresses with spaghetti
- School personnel are not responsible for soiled clothing or clothes that may be torn.

Exam Exemption

SENIOR EXAM EXEMPTION:

Grade Criteria:

- 1) The senior must have a cumulative course average of at least 80 when grades and other specified criteria are compiled to determine exam exemption near the close of the fourth nine weeks.
- 2) The senior must maintain a minimum fourth nine-week average of 80 in the course to be exempted.

Attendance Criteria:

3) **R7-08-006 GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS** (Revised October, 2014)- The senior cannot have been absent from the class more than ten times during the school year (semester class - not more than five times). Religious holidays and school-related absences (field trips, SODA, athletics, documented college visits, work release, etc.) do not count within those absences.

*** note this covers all classes including 5th period- there is no differentiation between classes that meet every day and those that meet every other day in the HCPS Policy. If a student misses 11 + days in any classes- they have lost their exemption.**

4) Three unexcused tardies to class equals one absence as related to the exam exemption criteria. Six unexcused tardies to school immediately removes the senior from the eligibility. Six unexcused tardies to an individual class eliminates the student from exam exemption eligibility in that class.

5) The senior must attend at least 75% of a class in order to be counted present in that class as related to exam exemption eligibility.

6) Any integrity violation which results in disciplinary action removes the student from eligibility.

AP Exemption Piece:

AP Exam exemption- If a student takes the AP test then he/she is exempt from the exam regardless of the student's grade level. Of course, seniors can also follow their regular exemption policy if they don't take the AP test. If the student is taking APUSH or English 11 AP they can also be exempt by passing the SOL. The student must have successfully fulfilled the attendance requirement of the Senior Exam Exemption.

As a reminder we cannot make a student pay for and take an AP test if they do not want to take it.

WISE CERTIFICATION:

Passing WISE Certification in Econ and Personal Finance class is an exam exemption.

All students taking the AP course and meeting the requirements of the Senior Exam exemption policy (see below) and taking the AP exam shall be eligible for final exam exemption. That is to say, the Senior Exam exemption guidelines will also apply to non-Senior students taking an AP course who also take the AP exam.

1. The senior must have a cumulative course average of at least 80 when grades and other specified criteria are compiled to determine exam exemption near the close of the fourth nine weeks.
2. The senior must maintain a minimum fourth nine-week average of 80 in the course to be exempted.
3. The senior cannot have been absent from the class more than 10 times during the school year (semester class = not more than 5 times). Religious holidays and school-related absences (field trips, SODA, documented college visits, athletics, etc.) do not count within those absences.
4. Three unexcused tardies to class equals one absence as related to the exam exemption criteria. Six unexcused tardies to school immediately removes the senior from the eligibility. Six unexcused tardies to an individual class eliminates the student from exam exemption eligibility in that class.
5. The senior must attend at least 75% of a class in order to be counted present in that class as related to exam exemption eligibility.
6. Any integrity violation which results in disciplinary action removes the student from eligibility.

Other Guidelines:

1. Regarding attendance for Senior Exam Exemptions, students in RESET (in-school suspension) are not marked as absent. This is considered an alternative education placement. Students who are suspended from school (Out of School Suspensions) are considered absent, and this counts against their exemption.
2. Any student requesting to take exams early for any reason must have that approved by the building principal (students must bring a note from their parents explaining the request). In general, these will be approved if there is a valid reason, but they have to work out the arrangements with each teacher individually.

Here are a few examples to make this easier to understand:

- A. Senior takes AP class, takes exam, meets senior exam exemption requirements – EXEMPT FROM FINAL
- B. Senior takes AP class, doesn't take AP exam, meets senior exam exemption requirements – EXEMPT FROM FINAL
- C. Senior takes AP class, takes AP exam, fails to meet senior exam exemption requirements – MUST TAKE FINAL
- D. Underclassman takes AP class, takes AP exam, meets senior exam exemption requirements – EXEMPT FROM FINAL
- E. Underclassman takes AP class, doesn't take AP exam, meets senior exam exemption requirements – MUST TAKE FINAL (Not eligible for senior exemption)
- F. Underclassman takes AP class, takes AP exam, fails to meet senior exam exemption requirements – MUST TAKE FINAL

Library

Library Website: <http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/VHSLibrary> - please bookmark us!

Hours

- The Library is open Monday - Friday from 8:15 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- No passes are required before or after school.
- During other times of the day, all students must have a signed library pass to come during ABC, study hall or lunch. Students must get their pass from LIBRARY staff by first bell.
- Students will not be admitted to the library without a pass signed by a teacher or administrator.

Electronic Devices

- The Library is primarily a place for quiet study and classes. We ask that all electronic devices including phones and iPods be put away when requested by library staff.
- After the first request, the phone may be confiscated by library staff and turned into the main office. Please see a Library staff member to get permission to use these devices for assignments.

Checkout

- Students do NOT need a library card for checkout. They may check out using their name.
- Up to 5 books may be checked out at any time.
- Books are checked out for a 4-week period. They may be renewed by bringing the book to the circulation desk and requesting to renew the book(s).
- Magazines and reference materials may be checked out overnight only.
- Fines to replace lost or damaged books begin at \$5 and can go as high as the cost of the new book.

Printing –

- Students may use the printer/copier in the library before/after school or during the school day when they have a pass from a teacher.
- Copies are free if they are for school purposes.
- Students need to know their lunch code to print.
- Student computers and library computers must be set to LP2 in order to print to the library printer.

Behavior –

- Appropriate behavior is expected in the library at all times:
 - Respect our property
 - Respect the library staff
 - Respect your peers

Food and Drink –

- Food and drink is allowed only with the permission of the library staff.
- Students are expected to clean up and throw out trash as needed.

Outside Food

No outside food will be permitted on campus during school hours. Students cannot have food dropped off for them, nor be called out of class or lunch to come and get their food. Also, students may NOT have food delivered to the school.

School Counseling

www.vhsschoolcounseling.weebly.com

- Graduation requirements
- Scholarships/Financial Aid
- Summer Opportunities
- SAT/ACT information
- Counselor contact information
- You can sign up on our website to come to counseling during ABC for workshops and small groups
 - o College/Career research
 - o Organization/time management
 - o Study Skills
 - o On campus college visits (to Varina)
 - o SAT/ACT registration
 - o NCAA eligibility
 - o ASVAB (Military information)
 - o Special Interest Groups

Need to see your counselor? Click on this link to schedule an appointment -

www.tinyurl.com/vhscounselorrequest (also on website)

School Counselor and Administration Pairs per Alphabet:

A-CO - Robinson/Fuse

CR-HE - Turpin/Turnage

HI-ME – English & Calder/Goldberg

MI-SH - Noah/Oliver

SI-Z - Streightiff/Cotman

CFC/CSS – Johnney

Search & Seizure

School authorities reserve the right to search lockers, desks or other storage facilities, as well as individuals and their belongings, when there is reasonable suspicion for believing that an item(s) will be found which violates the law or school policy, rules and regulations, or which may be harmful to the school or pupils.

Schools also have the right to search any individual and their belongings if found off campus and/or in unauthorized areas.

“Blue Devils in Good Standing”

Extra-curricular activities and events are a privilege, not a right. These activities and events can be revoked at any time based on behavior. Activities and events include: sporting events, concerts, plays, Homecoming, Prom, and all events dealing with Graduation.

***Each student is expected to adhere to the Henrico County Code of Student Conduct to ensure the safety and well-being of our students**

Varina High School Parking Rules and Regulations:

- All vehicles that park on campus must be registered with the school and drivers must possess a valid license and proof of insurance.
- Students must adhere to the strict 5 mph speed limit on school grounds.
- Assigned parking tag must be hung from the rear view mirror of the vehicle when parked on campus. Replacement tags will cost \$2.00.
- Parking spaces are assigned by number and vehicles must park in an assigned space.
- If a student's assigned parking space is taken upon their arrival, the student is to park in the closest open space and notify the main office. **DO NOT PARK IN ANOTHER NUMBERED SPACE.**
- Students may not trade, sell or otherwise transfer your assigned spot to another student. Students may not allow other students to use their space on days they are not driving.
- Seniors will be assigned spaces in the parking lot in front of the main office. Once that lot is full, remaining Seniors will be assigned spaces across the street.
- Juniors may be assigned a numbered space in the Driver's Ed. lot or an unnumbered space in the tennis court lot on a first come first served basis.
- Students may not park in a manner that blocks in the HCPS buses parked across the street.
- Students must follow traffic pattern and street signs when exiting the Driver's Ed. Lot. Those speeding across the range may have parking privileges revoked.
- Students cannot park on campus until 8:15 a.m. unless there is a school sponsored activity requiring early attendance and no loitering on any school property after normal hours is permitted.
- Students are expected to leave the parking lot when instructed to do so by school staff.
- Students are not permitted to return to their vehicles during the school day w/out administrative permission.
- Students are required to wear their seatbelts under Virginia Law and must follow state guidelines regarding passenger limits.
- Loud music is strictly prohibited.
- Students are not allowed to park on the grass, on the Driver's Ed. range, in visitor parking, or handicapped spaces, including the lines separating spaces.
- Students are not permitted to park in the area beyond the traffic island separating numbered spaces from faculty spaces closest to the gym or in the parking lot behind Buildings 13 & 14 without permission from administration is also prohibited.
- Those who park illegally and/or do not have a valid sticker will be ticketed, booted or towed.
- Failure to comply with parking regulations, the HCPS Code of Conduct and/or Varina HS T.H.I.S. expectations may result in the LOSS OF PARKING PRIVILEGES and FORFEITURE of fees paid.

- Students who accumulate 10 unexcused tardies to school or habitually skip classes will lose the right to park on campus.
- Students are responsible for **all** items in their vehicles.
- By signing this form, you are consenting to a search, for the safety and security of the school, of a vehicle parked on VHS property.
- Parking tickets must be paid before the end of each school year. Students will not be eligible to receive tickets required for entrance to events such as homecoming, prom and graduation until all overdue fees are paid.
- Tickets are charged as follows:
 - 1st Offense – Warning
 - 2nd Offense - \$5
 - 3rd Offense - \$10
 - 4th Offense - \$20

“A copy of the Policies and Regulations Manual of Henrico County Public Schools is available to students, employees, and the public on the HCPS website, www.henricoschools.us. Any person unable to access the online policy may request a copy of a specific policy by contacting Records Management at 652-3828.”