



Parent Handbook 2012 - 2013

RAWLS BYRD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This booklet contains important information about policies and procedures at Rawls Byrd. Please use it as a reference throughout the year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Rawls Byrd School Office	229-7597, fax: 229-0237
Rawls Byrd School Cafeteria	220-8468
WJCC Public Schools Central Office	603-6400
Transportation	565-0808
Information Hotline *	259-4154

***Note: Cable Channel 47 (James City County) and Channel 47 (Williamsburg) carry updated information on WJCC Public Schools.**

SCHOOL HOURS

Students:	9:20 AM - 3:50 PM
Teachers:	8:45 AM – 4:15 PM
Office:	8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Please see that your child does **not** arrive at school before 9:10 AM. Teachers are involved in meetings and planning and are not available to supervise children before 9:10 AM. Maintaining a safe school environment is important to us. We need your help in making sure that your child is appropriately supervised at all times.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is critical to a student's success in school. Please make every effort to have your child in school. If possible schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside school hours. It is important that our children learn early in life the importance of attending school regularly and on time.

ABSENCES

The WJCC attendance policy, in support of the Virginia Compulsory Attendance Law, defines an excused absence as one "caused by illness, quarantine, religious holiday, death in one's family, flood, hurricane, or storm." A dated note signed by the parent or guardian stating the specific reason for the absence will be required upon the student's return. A written medical excuse is required for absences in excess of three consecutive school days. Excused absences as defined above will not be granted without written communication.

Taking family trips during school time is strongly discouraged; however, family trips which cannot be taken at any other time will be considered approved absences for a period not to exceed 5 days. Parents must submit a written request to the Principal at least one week prior to the planned absence. Planned absences for family trips

will be approved only if the student's attendance, behavior, and academic record are in good standing. Absences for family trips which have not been prearranged will be documented as "unexcused." In determining whether or not a trip will be excused, the administration will review a student's absences. If the number of absences exceeds an average of one day per month the trip may not be excused.

Excessive or chronic tardiness and absenteeism are monitored by teachers, assistants, the attendance associate, administrators and the school social worker. Excessive absences may result in court action.

WJCC has implemented a division wide calling system that contacts all parents of students who are absent. There is no need to call the office to inform us of your child's absence, but a note is still required upon the student's return to school.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is disruptive to the routine of the school. Acceptable reasons for excused tardiness to school are illness of pupil, medical and dental appointments that cannot be arranged out of school hours, or bus problems. **Any student arriving after 9:30 AM must be accompanied to the office by an adult to sign in and receive a tardy pass. Names are removed from the absentee list by the attendance associate in the office.**

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation will be provided for students who live in the school bus zone. Bus assignments are made by the supervisor of transportation. All bus riders should be at their assigned stop on time and board the assigned bus. No student will be allowed to ride any bus other than his assigned bus without permission from a parent. A parent/adult must be present at the bus stop for kindergarten students unless a letter stating otherwise has been sent to transportation.

A written or printed note must be sent any time there is a change in your child's regular dismissal routine. Since email and faxing are not always a reliable means of communicating time-sensitive information, please do not rely on these alone to inform us of dismissal changes. If an emergency occurs and you need to make a change via phone, all changes must be made by 3:40 to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal for all students. You will be asked to verify your identity via phone by providing your child's birth date and place of birth.

WALKING TO SCHOOL

Students who live within walking distance of the school may walk to school. Children should be instructed to walk on the left side of the street facing traffic. Walkers should not arrive at school before 9:10 AM.

LEAVING SCHOOL BEFORE DISMISSAL

Parents are requested **not** to take children out of school before the school day has ended. Learning continues until the end of the day and significant learning time is lost through early dismissals. Interruptions during this time create inconveniences for teachers and children. Please make every effort to wait until **3:50 PM** to pick up your child.

If for some reason you must pick your child up early, you should send a note with your child notifying the teacher. When picking up your child, please go to the school office, show your photo identification, sign your child out and a secretary will call your child for dismissal.

SCHEDULED EARLY DISMISSALS

A number of days are identified in the school calendar as early dismissal for students in grades K-5. Please check your school calendar for dismissal times. Early dismissal is 1:20 P.M.

PARENT PICK UP

Parents or other authorized persons picking up children from school are required to be at school at dismissal time - **3:50 p.m.** The authorized person should have either a note from the parent/guardian or be listed on the registration sheet. Parents must sign students out in the office, receive a pink slip, and pick up students in the Multipurpose Room (MPR). All students will wait in the MPR. **Parents must show identification when picking up a child.**

If you prefer, you may request a Rawls Byrd car tag number to hang on the rear view mirror of your car. Having a car tag number allows you to simply drive up to the MPR doors to pick up your child.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Due to weather conditions or other unforeseen emergencies, it is sometimes necessary to close school during the school day. In the event of severe weather conditions, listen to radio stations WDCK 96.5 FM and WMBG 740 AM for information regarding early dismissal of schools. The information hotline also provides emergency closing information. Channel 47 in James City County and Williamsburg also carry such information.

Be sure your child knows where to go in the event of an emergency closing, and make sure your child's teacher has on file any special instructions requested by you. Please go over these instructions with your child. If this information changes at any time during the school year, remember to notify the teacher.

TRANSFERS

If it becomes necessary for a child to move out of the Rawls Byrd School attendance zone, you are required to notify the school office of your new address. A transfer will be prepared by the school office. All school property including textbooks, library books, and supplies must be returned to school before the transfer is issued.

TELEPHONE/CELL PHONE REGULATIONS

The telephone is an essential instrument for school operation. Therefore, students will be allowed to use the phone only in the event of unusual circumstances. The student must have permission from a teacher to use the telephone. Only in emergency situations should parents request the delivery of reminders or messages to students. According to the WJCC Student Code of Conduct, student cell phones must be turned off and "stowed away" (preferably in a backpack) at all times unless school personnel has approved its use.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Both breakfast and lunch are served in the school cafeteria. Menus are distributed at the beginning of each month. Snack items such as juice, baked chips and low fat cookies are available for purchase at lunchtime. Children may buy breakfast or lunch on individual days or they may add money to their lunch account in the morning in the cafeteria or at lunchtime. Each child has a lunch code that he/she uses each time a purchase is made in the cafeteria. You can now keep track of the balance on your child's account and add money to the account online. For more information, visit pay4lunch.com.

Children can also bring a lunch from home. Students should not bring canned carbonated soft drinks to school. Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch. Adult lunch prices are a la carte. All lunch and snack prices are determined by Central Office in August. Your child's teacher will provide prices at the beginning of the school year and/or upon request. Please do not bring in restaurant and or take-out food items for lunch, as this can possibly lead to health issues and concerns. We do make an exception for

cupcakes brought in as a birthday celebration. Please contact your child's teacher if you are planning on bringing in cupcakes so arrangements can be made for students with food allergies.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Student photographs are taken twice during the school year, fall and spring. Parents are notified in advance of the specific picture dates. In the fall, an individual student picture is taken. Unless the office staff is notified in writing, all individual fall pictures will be included in the Rawls Byrd yearbook. In the spring, a class photo is taken along with an individual picture.

STUDENT DRESS

Children should dress comfortably so they can take part in physical activities with ease and take part in art activities without fear of ruining clothing. Wearing tennis shoes daily is encouraged. Long dresses, clogs, and flip flops make physical activities difficult and unsafe and should not be worn. Shoes are to be worn at all times. Biker shorts or pants, halter tops, spaghetti straps, very short shorts and short skirts are not permitted. A good rule of thumb for shorts and skirts is the "fingertip rule." Straighten your arm beside your leg. If your shorts or skirt touches your fingertips then they are long enough. Make-up and excessive jewelry are also discouraged. Hats and caps are not worn in the building unless a teacher gives permission. Parents may be contacted to bring a change of clothes to school if dress/clothing worn is inappropriate.

VISITORS

For the safety of every child, all visitors must report to the office to sign in and pick up a visitor's sticker before going to the classroom. Parents are always welcome to visit our classrooms. Please consult your child's teacher regarding an appropriate time for a visit or conference. Parent observations should be scheduled in advance with the teacher.

Children visiting from out of town are not allowed to attend school with your child.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEACHER

In the interest of your child, good communication between parents and teachers is essential. If you need to telephone your child's teacher, please do so before 9:20 AM. Voice mail is available if you need to leave a message for a teacher.

A variety of printed materials are sent home periodically informing parents of events at the school. Please be sure to check our school website regularly for updated information as well.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Immunizations and Physical Examinations - Virginia law requires that each student entering kindergarten or any public elementary school for the first time must have a comprehensive physical examination by a qualified licensed physician. The child must have received the examination within twelve months prior to the date he first enters school. TB testing performed for students entering school from Asia, Latin America, Haiti, India, Pacific Islands, Africa, and/or Eastern Europe is at a medical advisors discretion.

Every student shall furnish certification from a licensed physician that the student has completed the Virginia state-mandated immunization series against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, hepatitis B measles, mumps, rubella and varicella. The 2006 Virginia General Assembly passed a law which requires

all students to have a tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap) booster shot **prior** to entry into 6th grade, if at least five years have passed since the last shot.

The above physical and immunization information **must** be recorded on a State of Virginia Health Form. Forms are available from your physician or the school office.

These physical examinations and immunizations shall not be required of any child whose parent or guardian objects on religious grounds. The parent or guardian must submit a notarized statement of objection for religious reasons. Any exemptions due to medical reasons must be listed on the State of Virginia Health Form and signed by the physician.

A certified birth certificate or the legal equivalent shall be required of all students enrolling for the first time.

Emergencies - All health emergencies (severe injuries or serious illness) will be evaluated by the school nurse. Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Standing Medical Orders for WJCC Public Schools and accepted First Aid Protocol. At the nurse's direction the JCC rescue squad may be called to transport the child to the Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center Emergency Room. The nurse or other appropriate school personnel will stay with the student until the parent can be reached and can join the child.

Illnesses - Should your child become ill during the school day, or if he or she needs to be excused early, it will be necessary for you to come to school or send an authorized adult. Each child must be signed out by an adult in the school office. It is the parents' responsibility to keep the school office and school nurse informed of any changes in contact information.

Health Care - Children with complaints or symptoms of illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, rash, severe cough or sore throat should remain at home. If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or more or diarrhea he/she should remain at home for 24 hours after the end of the symptoms without the use of medicine to control these symptoms. This is important for your child's health and the health of others.

Restricted Activity

Students with injuries or illnesses that necessitate missing the regular physical education class require a doctor's note. In most cases, doctors will prescribe a modified activities. A parent note will be accepted for only one class period. After that a doctor's note is required. Students not allowed to participate in physical education will also be excused from recess.

Medications - If possible, parents are advised to give medication at home and on a schedule other than during school hours. However, if a medication must be given during school hours, the following rules must be followed:

- * All medication requires a written authorization by the physician, including over the counter medication (i.e. cough drops).
- * Medication must be brought to school by the parent/guardian in the original container with the label intact.
- * In addition to a physician's written authorization, a parent/guardian (not the child) must sign the Medication Administration Consent form granting the school nurse permission to administer medication and to contact the Health Care Provider.

Playgrounds - Playgrounds are always supervised. We encourage your child to observe rules of safety and respect the rights of others. **All injuries** are reported to the school nurse or school office.

Student Insurance - Accident and Dental Health Plans are available for those who wish to participate. These plans are optional. Insurance information is sent home the first week of school.

SCHOOL RULES

The Williamsburg-James City County Schools' discipline code is sent home with every child the first week of school. Please read and review the discipline rules with your child. These rules apply to all students during school, on the bus, at school activities, and on all school property. The teachers working with the Principal and Assistant Principal will use an appropriate combination of interventions and consequences to maintain a safe, positive learning environment for the students and adults in the school.

WALK AND TALK – (Grades 2-5)

This is a time after lunch when the whole class has the opportunity to exercise and socialize with their peers. Students are expected to:

- * walk directly out to walk and talk with no loitering in the cafeteria or around the buildings
- * talk quietly when walking near the classrooms
- * walk at all times during walk and talk
- * avoid any kind of fighting or physical contact with students
- * remain at walk and talk until the teacher arrives

BUS

Good behavior on the bus is essential for students' safety. All students who ride on the bus are expected to:

- * immediately sit down in their assigned seats
- * stay seated when the bus is moving
- * keep their heads, arms and legs inside the bus
- * respect other people and their property
- * talk quietly and use socially acceptable language
- * refrain from throwing things out of the window or on the floor of the bus
- * refrain from eating or drinking on the bus
- * refrain from bringing any glass containers on the bus

- * refrain from bringing any pets or animals on the bus
- * be at the bus stop on time
- * cross in front of the school bus if they must cross the street
- * get off the bus only at their assigned stop (unless they have the parents' written permission to leave the bus at some other stop)
- * follow all instructions given by the bus driver

The bus driver will report to an administrator any behavior problems needing special attention. Continued refusal to follow bus rules will result in the student losing the privilege of riding the bus.

No student will be allowed to ride any bus other than his assigned bus without permission from a parent. A note must be sent to school regarding changes for afternoon dismissal.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

LANGUAGE ARTS

The goals of the English Standards of Learning are to teach students to read and to prepare students to participate in society as literate citizens, equipped with the ability to communicate effectively in their communities, in the work place, and in postsecondary education. As students progress through the school years, they become active and involved listeners and develop a full command of the English language, evidenced by their use of standard English and their rich speaking and writing vocabularies.

Students become competent readers of a variety of print materials and are encouraged to acquire a lifelong love of reading. In kindergarten through third grade, the primary goal is to teach all students to read fluently and to comprehend a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections that relate to all areas of the curriculum. In fourth and fifth grades, students continue to acquire and refine strategies for comprehending and analyzing selections that encompass all literary types, exemplify universal themes and relate to all subjects.

Proficient use of the English language enables students to explore and articulate the complex issues and ideas encountered in public and personal life. Students acquire the ability to make full and effective use of the written language in their future educational, occupational, and personal endeavors.

MATHEMATICS

The Standards of Learning for mathematics identify academic content for essential components of the mathematics curriculum at different grade levels for Virginia's public schools. Throughout a student's mathematics schooling from kindergarten through grade eight, specific content strands or topics are included. These content strands are Number and Number Sense, Computation and Estimation, Measurement, Geometry, Probability and Statistics, and Patterns, Functions, and Algebra. The Standards of Learning for each strand progress in complexity at each grade level. The Standards of Learning are not intended to encompass the entire curriculum for a given grade level or to prescribe how the content should be taught. Teachers are encouraged to go beyond the standards and to select instructional strategies and assessment methods appropriate for their students.

HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE

The study of history and social science is vital in a democratic society. All students need to know and understand our national heritage in order to become informed participants in shaping our nation's future. The History and Social Science Standards of Learning are designed to:

- ❖ Develop the knowledge and skills of history, geography, civics, and economics that enable students to place the people, ideas, and events that have shaped our state and our nation in perspective;
- ❖ Instill in students a thoughtful pride in the history of America through an understanding that what "We the People of the United States" launched more than two centuries ago was not a perfect union, but a continual effort to build a "more perfect" union, one which has become the world's most successful experiment in constitutional self-government;
- ❖ Enable students to understand the basic values, principles, and operation of American constitutional democracy;
- ❖ Prepare students for informed and responsible citizenship;
- ❖ Develop students' skills in debate, discussion, and writing; and
- ❖ Provide students with a framework for continuing education in history and the social sciences.

SCIENCE

The Science Standards of Learning identify academic content for essential components of the science curriculum at different grade levels. Throughout a student's science schooling from kindergarten through grade five specific content strands, or topics, are included. The Standards of Learning in each strand progress in complexity at each grade level. These strands are Scientific Investigation, Reasoning and Logic, Force, Motion and Energy, Matter, Life Processes, Living Systems, Interrelationships in Earth/Space Systems, Earth Patterns, Cycles and Change, and Resources.

FAMILY LIFE AND SEX EDUCATION

In 1988, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia passed legislation that mandated that all public schools implement a comprehensive, sequential Family Life and Sex Education program, by the fall of 1989. A revised Williamsburg-James City County curriculum was developed in response to this legislative mandate. Grade level objectives are sent home at the beginning of each school year.

TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, AND SUPPLIES

The W-JCC School System provides textbooks without charge for each student. Supplemental textbooks, library books, and other instructional materials are also available. All students are encouraged to keep all books clean and in good condition. In the event of lost or badly damaged books, parents must replace the book at fair market value. Students should provide their own writing paper, pencils, crayons, and other school supplies. Supply lists are posted on the WJCC website.

RESOURCE PERSONNEL AND SERVICES

Rawls Byrd provides full-time teachers in art, music, physical education, and technology. These teachers provide large group instruction in regularly scheduled classes. Opportunities for specific skill instruction are also provided.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The physical education program promotes social and emotional development and provides instruction in physical fitness, group games, and sports skills. Group relationships, individual development, and a sense of achievement are particularly emphasized. State physical fitness testing is required for all 4th & 5th grade students.

ART AND MUSIC

These areas of the curricula are designed to include exploratory programs and special interest classes. In each area, emphasis is placed on fundamental concepts and elementary skills.

GUIDANCE

The school guidance counselor teaches guidance lessons on life skills including self esteem, conflict resolution and peer interaction to all classes. The counselor meets with small groups of children for counseling and also offers individual counseling. The counselor consults with teachers and parents to prevent problems and to promote healthy development and learning for our students.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

A full-time library/media specialist and library/media assistant help children in this center. The library/media center is open to all students for checking out books, learning library skills, working on research projects, and for participating in enrichment activities. In addition to library books and children's magazines, the media center is well equipped with a large inventory of audio-visual materials and computers. A professional library is available to staff and parents.

TECHNOLOGY

Students in grades 3-5 visit the computer lab weekly and students in K-2 visit every other week for instruction in the basics of a computer, how it operates, how to access information and its appropriate use.

BAND AND STRINGS

The band and strings teachers spend time weekly at Rawls Byrd. Fifth graders may participate in the band or strings program.

READING SPECIALIST

The reading specialist coordinates the school's reading program. This encompasses the testing of students, monitoring reading progress, teaching selected students, coordinating the use of materials, and assisting teachers with classroom instruction.

MATH SPECIALIST

The math specialist coordinates the school's math program. This includes working with the students through remediation or enrichment activities and working with teachers planning lessons, co-teaching, or modeling lessons in the classroom.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

The special education resource teacher works with children who have been identified as having a disability that impacts their learning. Instruction takes place in small group settings in any needed academic area or in collaboration with the classroom teacher.

SPEECH

The speech/language pathologist provides diagnostic consultation and direct therapy services. Children who are diagnosed as having significant speech or language delays receive therapy in small groups or individually. The speech language/pathologist also consults with classroom teachers to provide developmental language instruction as needed.

VISIONS PROGRAM

This teacher meets regularly with classroom teachers who have cluster students in their classes. In grades K, 1 and 2, an additional part-time Visions resource teacher meets with cluster students approximately one day per week. In grades 3 and 4, services are delivered by the regular classroom teacher in collaboration with the gifted teacher. Demonstration teaching, team teaching and joint planning occur at all grade levels.

The Visions teacher will provide daily instruction in math and/or language arts for grade 5 students who are found eligible for gifted services in “specific intellectual abilities.”

NURSE

A full-time public school nurse works cooperatively with teachers and the administrators in identifying health problems and handling medical emergencies. The school nurse also teaches lessons at the request of the classroom teacher, instructing students in health and safety practices. She also acts as a resource to faculty and staff on health and safety issues.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The school psychologist provides diagnostic services for referred students. Services include the evaluation and interpretation of the student’s intellectual, social and emotional growth and development.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

The school social worker serves as a liaison between school, home, court, and community to assist parents and students with their educational success. Services include referral to community resources, consultation, support and informational groups for parents, students and staff, and evaluation and assessment for special education services.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Williamsburg-James City County School Division is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination based upon race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, and age in the administration of any of its educational programs and activities, or with respect to employment.

Parent/Guardian's Acknowledgement

I have read the Rawls Byrd Parent Handbook. Please return this sheet to your child's teacher.

Parent's/Guardian Signature

Student's Name

Teacher's Name