



Virtual Academy Student-Parent Handbook 2024-2025 School Year

We are #RockSolid

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A Message from our Director

Director, Rock Hill Virtual Academy, K-12

Heather Andrus

Welcome to the 2024-25 school year! As an educator of 28 years, I believe whole child education is vital to academic success. That means we will support your child socially and emotionally, so they can reach their full potential as a learner. We look forward to meeting your students where they are and watching them grow throughout the 24-25 school year. A few ways we plan to accomplish this is through our proficiency-based model and continuing our *Leader in Me* journey. The proficiency-based model will allow us to personalize the learning to meet better meet students' needs. Leader in Me is an evidence-based model to build leadership and life skills in students by educating the WHOLE child. There are over 5,000 Leader in Me schools in all 50 states and in over 50 countries" (<https://www.leaderinme.org/>).

As a product of Rock Hill Schools, I am thrilled to continue as the Director of RHVA. This is my 27th year in the District and I am proud to call Rock Hill home. I began my career with Rock Hill School District at Northwestern High School as a Social Studies teacher. After serving as a Program Coordinator and Assistant Principal at NHS, I became Principal at Rawlinson Road Middle School. I have learned so much throughout these experiences and I look forward to continuing my professional growth working with the RHVA.

Warm Regards,

Heather Andrus
handrus@rhmail.org
803-324-7478

MISSION: To provide Rock Hill Virtual Academy students with flexible and rigorous online learning opportunities that will assist them in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and characteristics necessary for college, career, and military readiness.

CORE VALUES:

- ★ Student success is the center of each decision.
- ★ Integrity, honesty, and respect are important characteristics of the Rock Hill Virtual Academy.
- ★ As active partners in the educational process, students, parents/guardians, educators and stakeholders are responsible for their role in student success.
- ★ Commit to an environment of professional learning that emphasizes communication and collaboration to best meet the needs of our students.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- ★ Focus on the individual success of each student and tailor instruction to students' educational needs.
- ★ Prepare students for work and life by providing a 21st-century education that encourages lifelong learning in our increasingly knowledge-driven world.
- ★ Provide a safe and nurturing virtual environment that promotes integrity, honesty, and respect while building on students' academic and social needs.
- ★ Facilitate communication between educators, students, and parents/guardians to support students and ensure their success.



Rock Hill Virtual Academy is proud to be part of a *Leader in Me* District. *Leader in Me* is an evidence-based PK-12 model, developed in partnership with educators and designed to build leadership in students, create a high-trust culture, and improve academic achievement.

We focus on developing the whole child by:

- Teaching leadership to every student.
- Creating a culture of student empowerment.
- Aligning systems to drive results in academics.

We use two frameworks in our work as a leadership school:

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People helps us learn and apply leadership skills and gives us a common language for building a supportive school environment.

The 4 Disciplines of Execution helps us to identify, track, and achieve academic and personal Wildly Important Goals (WIGs).

Middle School Virtual Academy Bell Schedule:

Middle School Virtual Schedule (Monday-Thursday):	
8:10-9:10	Block 1: Daily synchronous instruction
9:10-9:30	Advisory
9:35-10:35	Block 2: Daily synchronous instruction
10:40-11:40	Block 3: Daily synchronous instruction
11:45-12:45	Block 4: Daily synchronous instruction
12:45-1:15	Lunch
1:15-2:10	Block 5: Daily synchronous instruction

High School Virtual Academy Bell Schedule:

High School Virtual Schedule (Monday-Thursday):	
8:10-9:10	Block 1: Daily synchronous instruction
9:10-9:30	Advisory
9:35-10:35	Block 2: Daily synchronous instruction
10:40-11:40	Block 3: Daily synchronous instruction
11:45-12:45	Block 4: Daily synchronous instruction

Criteria for FLEX

- Attend class Monday-Thursday
- Complete assignments
- Maintain a minimum class average of 75.

Students who meet the above criteria will be able to work asynchronously on Fridays. Students who need extra support or who **DO NOT** meet the criteria will attend class for live instruction. This will be an opportunity for small-group instruction and reteaching to ensure our learners are successful.

*Attendance will be taken on Fridays (Asynchronous students will be counted as present by completing assigned work).



Synchronous Learning

RHVA will be using a combination of **synchronous and asynchronous learning**. Synchronous learning refers to a method of learning in which a group of participants is engaged in learning at the same time. There is real-time interaction with other people, therefore, the Zoom conference platform makes this possible because students can interact with the instructor and other participants. Our students will begin each day with synchronous learning. Asynchronous learning is where students will work on their own to ensure mastery is taking place. This time will be during our Flex Fridays and after live instruction has ended each day.

Additionally, synchronous learning requires:

- ❖ Students log in each school day to meet with a virtual teacher.
- ❖ Flexible class structures, including but not limited to, small group instruction, individual conferencing, and interventions.
- ❖ Teachers collaborate with parents/guardians primarily through emails, messages within the learning platform (Canvas), virtual conferencing tools, or by phone call if necessary. When needed, teachers are available for virtual support and interaction.

How to Create a Parent Portal Account

How to Create an Observer Account in Canvas for Parents

[Canvas Observer Tutorial \(English\)](#)

[Canvas Observer Tutorial \(Spanish\)](#)

Student Expectations

RHVA students are expected to:

- ❖ Work from a suitable space free from distractions, preferably with a solid wall directly behind the student (**Bed is not a suitable space**). This includes but is not limited to a school appropriate virtual background free of profanity and/or references to drugs, alcohol, political affiliations or any content/material that is a distraction to the learning environment.
- ❖ Log in 2 minutes before the virtual classroom session begins.
- ❖ Sign into all classes on time each day and remain for the duration of class until dismissed.
- ❖ Cameras must be on upon entering the virtual classroom and remain on at all times.
- ❖ Show your entire face (chin and up).
- ❖ Dress appropriately.
- ❖ Actively participate in the virtual community.
- ❖ Complete and submit assignments on time.
- ❖ Work independently and in groups (when assigned).
- ❖ Show respect for everyone.

Virtual Parent/Guardian Expectations

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- ❖ Provide a positive learning space where students can work uninterrupted in a suitable space free from distractions, preferably with a solid wall directly behind the student (Bed is not a suitable space). Ensure students are signing into all classes on time each day and remaining until dismissed.
- ❖ Ensure background noises are minimized. Examples of noises that can disrupt your student's learning are music, television, video games, pets, conversations, other children, etc.
- ❖ Remind your student not to share his/her login information for any virtual class.
- ❖ Remind your student to adhere to the honor code regarding plagiarism.
- ❖ Ensure that your student is dressed properly for participating in virtual classrooms.
- ❖ Monitor their child's grades and assigned work using Canvas.
- ❖ Review and remind your students to adhere to all expectations identified in the district mobile computing guide which can be found on the district's website.
- ❖ Remind your students of the following unacceptable behaviors:
 - Vulgarity (avoid cursing, vulgar language, inappropriate gestures, memes, etc.)
 - Posting negativity or cyberbullying others within class discussions or chats.
 - Smoking, vaping, drinking alcoholic beverages, or using drugs as well as pretending to participate in these activities.
 - Brandishing weapons or look-a-like weapons.
 - Trespassing into and/or disrupting another virtual class session where the student is not a member.

*****All inappropriate behaviors will receive appropriate consequences in accordance with the RHVA Handbook and may result in permanent removal from the RHVA.*****

General Middle School Grading Guidelines for Students and Families

Rock Hill Schools grading guidelines are designed to ensure all students in the district are evaluated using a consistent, fair, and equitable grading system across classrooms and schools. Grading procedures in Rock Hill Schools reflect the following beliefs:

- ❖ Grades should reflect student proficiency on grade level standards and competencies, as well as clear learning targets.
- ❖ Grades should be balanced and reflect quality over quantity.
- ❖ Feedback is critical to student learning and grades alone are not a sufficient form of feedback.

Major assignments and assessments make up 60% of a student's final quarter grade. Minor assignments and assessments make up 40% of a student's final quarter grade.

The purpose of homework is to provide students independent practice on skills or previously taught content. When homework is assigned, teachers should consider students' instructional levels and ensure homework is purposeful. At the middle school level, homework is not graded. Teachers will reward students for homework completion, but not penalize them.

Per district policy, all high school credit-bearing courses in middle school (including Algebra 1, English 1, Spanish 1, and Discovering Computer Science) will give a final exam at the end of the full course which counts 20% of a student's overall grade in the course.

The classroom teacher will provide students with details regarding the number and type of assignments and assessments, as well as how students and families may access information about grades in the course.

Students and families should contact the classroom teacher with any questions or concerns about grades.

Re-teaching/Reassessment

This policy applies to major assessments or assignments only.

The goal of retaking tests or assessments in middle school is for students to obtain and demonstrate mastery of course content. Students will be provided an opportunity for reassessments only after re-teaching. Re-teaching occurs when the teacher or student determines that the student is not meeting learning goals. Re-teaching can occur with a teacher's face-to-face instruction, computer-based instruction, or additional practice opportunities at home.

Reassessment opportunities are only available to students who score below a 75. If a student wishes to retake a major assignment, he/she will have five days from when the initial score is posted in Canvas to request the reassessment from his/her teacher. Students who are offered the opportunity to retake an assessment must complete it by a date communicated by the teacher. The following assessments/tasks indicate a final measure of learning and may not be reassessed:

- End of course or semester exam;
- An assessment that ends an instructional period such as cumulative assessment;
- Benchmark or midterm exam;

- Final research paper, report, or essay; or Culminating project or performance.

When reassessment is offered, students scoring below the standard will have one opportunity to retake for a maximum grade of 75. In middle schools, this rule applies to all courses, including those taken for high school credit.

Make-Up Work

No late penalty is assessed if the graded assignment is due to a lawful absence. It is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers about make-up work upon return to school and within three days of return at maximum. The number of days allowed to submit late work is equal to the number of days the student was absent plus one additional day. If the student has prior knowledge of the assignment, he/she is responsible for making up the assignment immediately upon return unless arrangements have been made with the teacher. Parents and students may also access Canvas from the school's home page. Canvas provides access to class work and assignments, as well as due dates via the calendar. Students may ask teachers questions through their inbox.

Academic Honesty

All middle school students are expected to maintain academic honesty in their schoolwork and learning. Grades – in part – are a reflection of academic honesty and learning. When a student becomes involved in cheating (including plagiarism or any behavior which could invalidate a graded assignment) the first time in a given class, the student will be assigned a grade of 50 on that work by the teacher. At the principal's discretion, the student may be allowed to retake/redo the assignment up to a maximum score of 75. A second offense will result in a zero on the assignment and disciplinary action.

Behavior that could invalidate a graded assignment includes giving or receiving help on work that should be individual or completed without assistance from others or the internet. If a student is charged with cheating, the teacher will notify parents of the incident and a referral will be filed with the appropriate assistant principal. In any instance where a student is found to have engaged in academic dishonesty or cheating, the student and parents/legal guardians may appeal to the school administration.

******If the student plagiarizes or cheats on a cumulative assessment such as final course exams, project, and End of Course exam, a score of '0' will be recorded and is ineligible for make up.***

General High School Grading Guidelines for Students and Families

Rock Hill Schools grading guidelines are designed to ensure all students in the district are evaluated using a consistent, fair, and equitable grading system across classrooms and schools. Grading procedures in Rock Hill Schools reflect the following beliefs:

- ❖ Grades should reflect student proficiency on grade level standards and competencies, as well as clear learning targets.
- ❖ Grades should be balanced and reflect quality over quantity.
- ❖ Feedback is critical to student learning and grades alone are not a sufficient form of feedback.

All credit-bearing high school courses will give a final exam which counts 20% of a student's overall grade in the course. This requirement excludes dual credit courses overseen by institutions of higher education.

Major assignments and assessments make up 60% of a student's final quarter grade. Minor assignments and assessments make up 40% of a student's final quarter grade. In Rock Hill Schools, homework is intended to provide students independent practice on skills or previously taught content, and – at the high school level – will be counted as one cumulative minor grade per quarter.

The course teacher will provide students with details regarding the number and type of assignments and assessments, as well as how students and families may access information about grades in the course.

Students and families should contact the course teacher with any questions or concerns about grades.

Re-teaching/Reassessment

This policy applies to major assessments or assignments only. The goal of retaking assessments or assignments in high school is for students to obtain and demonstrate mastery of course content. Students will be provided an opportunity for reassessment only after re-teaching. Re-teaching can occur with a teacher's face-to-face instruction, computer-based instruction, or additional practice opportunities at home.

Reassessment opportunities are only available to students that score below a 75. If a student wishes to engage in reassessment, he/she will have five days from when the initial score is posted in Canvas to request the reassessment from his/her teacher. Students who are offered the opportunity to retake an assessment or assignment must complete it by a date communicated by the teacher. The following assessments/tasks indicate a final measure of learning and may not be reassessed:

- End of course or semester exam;
- An assessment that ends an instructional period such as cumulative assessment;
- Benchmark or midterm exam;
- Final research paper, report, or essay; or
- Culminating project or performance.

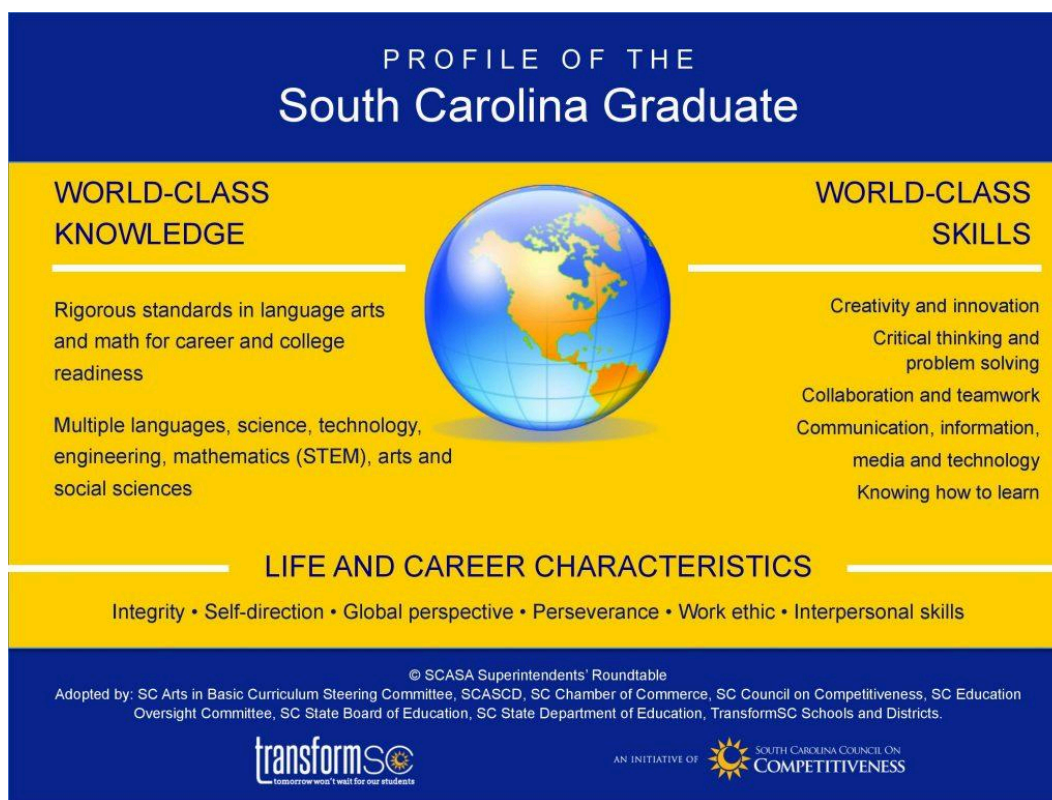
When reassessment is offered, students scoring below the standard will have one opportunity to retake for a maximum grade of 75.

Make-Up Work

No late penalty is assessed if the graded assignment is due to a lawful absence. It is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers about make-up work upon return to school and within three days of return at maximum. The number of days allowed to submit late work is equal to the number of days the student was absent plus one additional day. If the student has prior knowledge of the assignment, he/she is responsible for making up the assignment immediately upon return unless arrangements have been made with the teacher. Parents and students may also access Canvas from the school's home page. Canvas provides access to class work and assignments, as well as due dates via the calendar. Students may ask teachers questions through their inbox.

Content and Instruction

RHVA is committed to adhering to the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate as seen below:



Promotion and Retention for High School Students

High school promotion is governed by Rock Hill School Board of Trustees Policy IKE and IKE-R (Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of Students). This policy was revised and approved by the Board at the June 11, 2024, business meeting. Revisions were made to update high school courses needs for high school promotion to be in alignment with state requirements.

To comply with state law and ensure continuous and appropriate progress in grades nine through 12, the district will follow these guidelines for the promotion of students beginning in 2024-25 for placement in 2025-26:

- ❖ To be eligible for promotion to tenth grade, a student must have earned a minimum of six units including one unit of English/language arts and one unit of mathematics.
- ❖ To be eligible for promotion to the eleventh grade, a student must have earned a minimum of 12 units including two units of English, two units of mathematics, one unit of science, and one unit of social studies.
- ❖ To be eligible for promotion to the twelfth grade, a student must have earned a minimum of 18 units including three units of English, three units of mathematics, two units of science, and two units of social studies.

Student Support Services (Special Education, 504)

The RHVA is committed to providing free and appropriate educational opportunities for students with disabilities. We will follow the District Policy with regard to scheduling meetings and delivery of related services.

South Carolina State Testing

Virtual Academy students will be expected to take all state assessments associated with their grade level or chosen coursework. All state assessments will be taken on campus at times scheduled by the school within the required testing windows.

Attendance Policy

RHVA will adhere to the South Carolina Attendance laws. Please refer to the links below for specifics on Middle, and High School attendance <http://bit.ly/Attend23-24>. Email excuse notes to interim attendance clerk Ms. Debra Harrison at DHarrison@rhmail.org or call her office at (803) 981-1398.

****If an absence is due to technology issues, a tech support ticket must be entered immediately on the day the issue takes place.***

****Students who accumulate 5 absences along with a parent or guardian will be required to meet with school personnel to develop an attendance intervention plan. Violations of the plan will result in a court referral for truancy. If a student misses 10 consecutive days, he/she/they will be dropped from enrollment. Please see your administrator if an appeal needs to be made.***

****Per district policy, parents/guardians must submit absence notes, medical notes, etc. directly to the RHVA attendance clerk within 3 school days or their return or the absence will be considered unlawful.***

Middle School Attendance

- ❖ Attendance will be taken and recorded at the beginning of each class.
- ❖ Students are considered tardy if they are 5 minutes late to class.
- ❖ Students are considered absent if they miss 20 minutes or more of class.
- ❖ Students are expected to stay in class until the teacher dismisses them.

- ❖ Students are expected to have cameras on and their face (chin and up) visible at all times, during each class.
- ❖ Teachers will report absences and early dismissals from class to the RHVA attendance clerk.

High School Attendance

- ❖ Attendance will be taken and recorded at the beginning of each class.
- ❖ Students are considered tardy if they are 5 minutes late to class.
- ❖ Students are considered absent if they miss 20 minutes of class.
- ❖ Students are expected to stay in class until the teacher dismisses them.
- ❖ Students are expected to have cameras on and their face (chin and up) visible at all times
- ❖ Teachers will report absences and early dismissal from class to the RHVA attendance clerk.

Policies

Dress Code

RHVA is concerned with the health, safety, and well being of students and the avoidance of distractions to learning and must adhere to the following dress protocol:

- ❖ Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that includes profanity or promotes sexual activity, violence or the use of alcohol or drugs is inappropriate.
- ❖ Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that degrades or intimidates another because of race, gender, sexuality, religious persuasions, national origin or disability is inappropriate.
- ❖ Pajamas, plunging necklines, see-through apparel, and other revealing clothing is inappropriate.
- ❖ Students are expected to dress in accordance with the home school dress code policy when attending face-to-face campus activities, including district and state testing.

******If a change is not made immediately, the violation of dress code will lead to removal from class, which will result in an unexcused absence in PowerSchool. If dress code violations continue, administrative disciplinary action will take place consistent with board policy.******

Classroom Camera Policy

- ❖ RHVA students must enter class with their cameras turned on. Cameras must remain turned on until directed otherwise.
- ❖ Student background images must be school appropriate. This includes but is not limited to a school appropriate virtual background free of profanity and/or references to drugs, alcohol, political affiliations or any content/material that is a distraction to the learning environment.

Canvas, Technology, and Device Usage

All users are expected to use the computers and computer networks in a responsible, ethical, and polite manner. RHSD reserves the right to monitor all technology resource activity.

All RHVA students will access Canvas, and Zoom via the LaunchPad app on the laptop.

❖ *Technology Support and Assistance*

- If you need support with your laptop, please have your child complete the below jot form with technology. If you need a laptop repair, you can bring the laptop to Belleview School, 501 Belleview Rd, for repair or replacement between 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Students in RHVA will have the availability to pick up a device from Belleview School. It is the responsibility of the family to pick up the device.

Technology help: <https://rock-hill.jotform.com/233025413660042>

Harassment, Bullying, and Intimidation (JICFAA)

<https://bit.ly/JKE-boardpolicies>

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, verbal harassment, including sexually offensive comments or slurs; physical harassment; physical interference with movement or work; or visual harassment such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings, posters, images, or video. Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes sexual harassment under federal law.

In order to qualify as a complaint under Title IX, sexual harassment must be sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it does one of the following:

- ❖ Adversely affects a student's education
- ❖ Creates a hostile or abusive educational environment

Behavior Prohibited of All Employees and All Students

- ❖ No employee or student of this district will create a sexually hostile or offensive school environment for any other student by engaging in any sexual harassment.
- ❖ No employee or student of this district will assist any individual in doing any act which constitutes sexual harassment against any other student.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

- ❖ Any student who feels that he/she has been the object of sexual harassment is encouraged to file a complaint with the student's principal unless the principal is the person the student is accusing of the harassment. In such cases, the student or the student's parent/legal guardian will contact the director of personnel. Sexual harassment complaints may be filed by the student's parent/legal guardian.

Any employee or student who is found to have engaged in sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination in the case of an employee, or expulsion in the case of a student. The district will take appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

The district prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student who has filed a complaint of sexual harassment.

The identity of the complainant and the facts stated in any complaint will remain confidential.

******To file a complaint, please contact your RHVA administrator.***

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying occurs when people use laptops, cell phones or social media to send harassing, threatening, or intimidating messages to others.

- ❖ Students should recognize the responsibility, legal consequences, and emotional effects of cyberbullying.
- ❖ Students will recognize that bullying online is the same as real life bullying and can carry significant legal consequences depending on student age and the offense.
- ❖ Students will refrain from repetitive, unwanted digital communication which can carry legal consequences.
- ❖ Students should understand that digital content can affect college admissions and employment.
- ❖ Students should understand that Internet content can be archived and can exist forever.
- ❖ Students should understand that digital content sent via phone, cameras, and other digital devices can be archived and can exist forever.
- ❖ Students should understand that online communication, including email and text messaging, is never private and may be shared with others without your knowledge.
- ❖ Students should understand that legal consequences are more serious once the age of majority is attained (Prosecution and inclusion on the sexual predator list are possible consequences of taking or sharing inappropriate pictures and videos).

Devices are used for school purposes and can be inspected. Activities completed online are public and permanent. Devices are expected to be taken care of properly and used to increase educational knowledge.

Cyber Safety Quick Tips:

- ❖ Once you hit send, you can't take it back.
- ❖ Once you hit send, you lose control of the information. Even if you send it to a best friend or family member, you no longer have control of the information, it can be altered, shared, and posted with a different intent.
- ❖ Once you hit send, the information (picture, video, etc.) can become known to an entire school, entire community, country, world. Nothing is private.
- ❖ Snapchat photos do not disappear, they can be recovered

- ❖ Students and adults need to think about what is in a text, email, or post before sending. Always think, “What would this email, text, picture, or post look like on the front page of YAHOO, Facebook, or a newspaper?”

Consequences for Violating Expectations

- ❖ In-Zoom conversation
- ❖ Personal reflection time in the waiting room
- ❖ Virtual Student-Teacher Conference
- ❖ Communication with parent/guardian
- ❖ Virtual Parent-Student-Teacher Conference
- ❖ Administrative Conference I
- ❖ Administrative Conference II (Potential removal from RHVA)

Students are expected to attend conferences.

*****Note: Consequences will depend on the severity of the infraction.**

[Important District policies concerning students are below:](#)

Student Records:

https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=york3_rock_hill&s=275796

AR JICDA-R Code of Conduct:

https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=york3_rock_hill&s=275796

***Notification of Rights and Directory Information under FERPA and Opt-out form are located on the RHVA website.

McKinney Vento Rights

The McKinney-Vento Act provides rights and services to children and youth experiencing homelessness, which is defined as children who lack a fixed, regular or adequate nighttime residence. School-age children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act if your family lives in any of the following situations:

- ***a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative adequate accommodations***
- ***a car, park, abandoned building, or a bus or train station***
- ***doubled-up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship***
- ***a shelter***
- ***Please contact your child's school counselor for more information and to determine if you might qualify.***

Miscellaneous

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

RHVA students are entitled to participate in school activities through their zoned school. For additional information, contact the student's zoned school.

Important Dates for RHVA Students

August 8	1st day of school
August 30 September 27 November 1st	Early Release Day
December 20	End of Semester
January 6	1st day of 2nd Semester
January 27 February 28 March 28	Early Release Day
April 21-25	Spring Break
May 22	Early Release Day
May 23	End of semester (half day)

For additional dates important to Rock Hill students, please view the District's 2024-2025 School Calendar at: <https://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/Page/2#calendar1/20210728/month>

Thank you for accessing your Parent/Student Handbook. Please verify in the Parent Portal by completing the eCollect Handbook Verification in Form that you have read and understand student expectations.