



Calendar 2020-2021

FAQ

Why don't students go to school on Election Day?

In order to ensure the safety of our students, Election Day is a student holiday. Seventeen of our schools serve as voting precincts and experience hundreds of visitors on Election Day every November. During the 2020-2021 school year, we are expecting heavy voter turnout due to the presidential election. As a result, we are moving parent/teacher conferences to the day before the election (Monday, November 2, 2020) in order to reduce traffic and increase safety at our schools.

Why don't you combine two early release days and give the students one day off?

The 2020-2021 school year calendar is based on the state requirement that students attend school 180 days per school year. If we combine two early release days, then students would only attend 179 days, and we would need to find another day for the students to attend. Finding an additional day would require removing a holiday, taking a day from a break, or adding a day to the end of the school year.

Why don't students have Veterans Day off?

One of the rights our students have is to have access to a free and public education. Our longstanding tradition is to celebrate this right by providing opportunities for our students to honor our veterans through various activities and assemblies. These efforts have been well-received by our veterans for many years.

Why do we have spring break the first full week of April?

There are many perspectives to consider regarding spring break. Our regional school partners (e.g., Code RVA and Maggie L. Walker Governor's School) and neighboring school divisions have agreed to observe a consistent spring break each year to allow for the planning and organization of sports, music competitions and festivals, and theater arts performances. Second, a consistent spring break supports many of our families and employees who work in one division but live in another. In addition, a consistent spring break supports instruction by typically falling near or at the end of the third quarter as well as supporting the scheduling of AP testing. Finally, a consistent spring break allows for families to make plans well in advance of the calendar being officially approved by our school board.

During an inclement weather event that impacts only one part of the county, why do the other parts of the county not impacted by the weather have to be closed?

The HCPS school corridors (Western, Courthouse, Central and Eastern) do not operate independently from one another. Hanover County Public Schools have many students that travel between schools at the secondary level. For instance, all four comprehensive high schools send students to The Hanover Center for Trades and Technology every day. Additionally, Advance College Academy students also travel from Atlee High School and Hanover High School to Lee-Davis High School and Patrick Henry High School, respectively. Therefore, if one part of the county experiences weather conditions that prohibit safe travel for our students (and a closing is necessary), the entire school division will close.

Why can't we ensure that we always have two full weeks off for winter break (with three weekends)?

Winter break always includes ten school days, but it does not necessarily include three full weekends. It really depends on the day of the week on which holidays fall. For instance, if New Year's Day is on a Sunday or Monday, a mid-week to mid-week break is scheduled. For the 2020-2021 school year, the winter break does include two full weeks and three full weekends because the holidays fall on a Friday.

Why don't we apply unused inclement weather make up days (including bank time) to the end of the school year and shorten the year?

Our school year is based on 180 days of instruction. In the case of inclement weather, the Commonwealth of Virginia allows school divisions to make up lost instructional time in two ways. First, we use "bank time" for days 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10. Bank time results from hours that we accrue over 990 hours of instruction based on the length of our school day, and they do not require makeup days. For days 5, 6, and 7, we recapture lost instructional time by extending early release days to full days or reclaiming a scheduled holiday as a full day of instruction.