

# Most Commonly Asked Questions by Parents 2008-2009

## Indian River High School

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Chesapeake, Virginia 23325

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Mrs. Cioppa, Asst. Principal – A-G	Heidi Ross, Guidance – E-K	rosshb@cps.k12.va.us
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Mrs. Galloway, ACCESS Counselor	Dee Winslow, Career Counselor	winsldwa@cps.k12.va.us

### 1. Do you have parent/teacher conferences in high school?

Yes. If you are concerned about one or more of your child's classes, you can call the appropriate counselor to set up a meeting that is convenient with you. By making an appointment you can be assured that the counselor and/or the teachers will have time to talk with you. If you show up without an appointment, you may have to wait or you may find that the person you want to talk with is unavailable. Parent/Teacher conferences will usually be held at 8:15 am or 3:40 pm, while meeting with just the counselor can be set for anytime during the school day. The best way to get in touch with a teacher is through the counselor. E-mails are a great way to communicate and make contact with the counselors.

### 2. When do report cards come out and how do I get them?

Report cards will be distributed to the students in school on Oct. 10, Oct. 31, Dec. 17, Feb. 2, March 6 April 6, and May 18. The semester is broken up into four quarters. Each quarter grade is worth 20% of the final grade, and the final exam is worth 20% of the final grade. Only final grades are used to determine students' GPA's (except for students taking alternate day classes and tech center classes - first semester grades are used in determining the GPA).

### 3. How many classes is my child taking this year?

On four by four block, students will take 8 classes and earn 8 credits this year. Each student will take four classes during the first semester (Sept. - Jan. 23) and four classes during the second semester (Jan 27. - June). At the end of each semester, the student will earn 1 credit for every class passed.

### 4. If my child is sick, can the school provide the missed work?

If a student is out of school for more than two days, you can call the counselor and he/she can get the work to you by the next day. If you know your child will be out for this amount of time, the earlier you call us the sooner we can get you the work. **Your best bet is for your child to use the "buddy system"- that is to have a friend in each class that he/she can call when he/she is sick.** This is the best system to use should your child be sick for one or two days.

### 5. When should I be concerned about my child's grades?

Right away. If your child complains (more than normal!) about school, make an appointment to see one of the counselors. **Things usually don't get better, they get worse.** If you haven't seen any grades by late September, something is wrong. Remember report card distribution dates and ask to see those grades.

**6. How do I know if he/she passes from one grade to the next?**

In Virginia, we move students from one grade to the next according to the number of credits he/she has earned. A student needs 4 credits to be considered a sophomore, 10 credits to be considered a junior, and 15 credits to be a senior. Additionally, a student must pass English every year. Ninth graders must pass 1 SOL test to be promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and tenth graders must pass 1 Math SOL, 1 Science SOL, and 1 History SOL to be promoted to 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**7. How important is attendance?**

Very important. A student not only learns from the textbook but from the information discussed in class as well as the activities performed in the classroom. A student who misses more than 9 days in a class will fail the class regardless of his/her grade. Appeals can be made to this school board rule by submitting written documentation (doctors' notes, legal notices, etc.) at the end of the semester. An attendance appeals committee within the school will determine whether extenuating circumstances will be granted.

**8. How does my child obtain a worker's permit?**

Students who are 14 or 15 years old and wish to work must obtain a worker's permit from Mrs. G. Hunt, Ms. N. Hunt, Mrs. Freeman, or Mr. Cohen in guidance. Before the counselor can give the permit, the student must have a job lined up with an employer.

**9. When can my child drive?**

Students who are the proper age can receive their learner's permit from DMV by taking their social security card, birth certificate, and a parent/guardian to DMV. Your child must pass the test. Free booklets are available at DMV so your child can study. Driver's Education is taught through the PE II classes.

**10. My child wants to go to college. What classes should he/she take? Are there scholarships?**

Students should take at least five core classes each year (English, math, science, history, and usually a foreign language). Honors and Advanced Placement classes are also recommended for some students, but primarily good grades in regular or advanced classes are essential for gaining entrance into college. SAT scores, extra-curricular involvement, leadership positions, and recommendations are also considered. Scholarships are usually awarded to students who excel in one or more of the above areas. Most scholarships that we are aware of are only available to seniors.

**11. When should my child take the SAT's, ACT's, and the PSAT's?**

All sophomores will take the PSAT for free. Students should definitely take the PSAT in October of their junior year, because those scores may qualify them for National Merit Scholarships. The PSAT will be given on October 15 at Indian River High School. Registration will take place with Mr. Cohen in guidance in October. The cost will be \$15. The SAT's and ACT's are normally taken in the spring of 11th grade and the fall of the senior year. Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) for more info.

**12. If I have moved recently or plan to move, do I need to let you know?**

Yes. Address changes need to be documented with a current utility bill (water, gas, or electric only). Please make sure you update your current phone numbers as well.

**13. Are there any opportunities for career/vocational counseling for students?**

Yes. Dee Winslow, our Career Counselor, works with all students who want to learn more about the world of work. She helps students prepare for life after high school by meeting with them individually and talking with groups of students in the classroom.

**14. If I need to pick up my child from school during the day, what do I need to do?**

You need to come into the school and check out your son/daughter with the attendance secretary, Ms. Estes, in the main office. If you send a note in with your child and he/she gives it to the attendance secretary before school, she will give the student a pass to meet you in the main office at the time of pick up.

**15. What is the bell schedule?**

Bell 1 - 8:40 am - 10:12 am

Bell 3 - 11:56 am – 1:58 pm (30 minute lunch included)

Bell 2 - 10:18 am - 11:50 am

Bell 4 - 2:04 pm - 3:38 pm

**16. What can I do as a parent to help my child succeed in school?**

There are many ways to help students succeed in school, but some suggestions include: set up and consistently enforce house rules; make sure your child has a quiet place to study; ask about their homework and classes and ask to see their grades; be realistic about your expectations; encourage extra-curricular involvement but don't force it; and call the teachers and counselors when you are in doubt.

**17. What are the graduation requirements?**

All students must pass the following for the regular studies (22 credit) diploma: 4 credits of English, 3 credits of history, 3 credits of math (at or above Algebra), 3 credits of science, 2 credits of PE, 1 credit of a fine/practical arts class, and 6 electives. For the advanced studies (24 credit) diploma, students must pass: 4 credits of English, 4 credits of math (through Algebra II), 4 credits of science, 3 credits of one foreign language or 2 of one and 2 of another, 4 credits of history, 2 credits of PE, 1 fine/practical arts credit, and 2 electives.

**18. How will the Standards of Learning (SOL's) affect my child?**

All students will have to pass a certain number of tests to graduate from high school. For the advanced studies diploma, all students must pass 9 SOL tests (2 in English 11, 2 in math, 2 in science, 2 in social studies, and 1 student choice). Students pursuing a standard diploma must pass 2 English SOL's, 1 Math, 1 Science, 1 History, and 1 SOL test of their choice. SOL tests are given in the following classes: Algebra I, Algebra I Part B, Geometry, Geometry Part B, Algebra II, Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, World Studies I and II (Honors Social Studies 9 and 10 and AP European History), US History, and English 11. It is very important that your child is present on the days of SOL testing. These dates will be posted later in the semester. It is expected that if a student passes an SOL class, he/she will continue to take that particular SOL test until he/she passes it.

**19. What is the 2.0 eligibility rule?**

Students must have a 2.0 cumulative high school grade point average or a 2.0 GPA for the previous semester in order to be eligible to play high school sports. Ninth graders need to have a 2.0 for their 8th grade year or a 2.0 for the 2nd semester of their 8th grade year to play sports in the first semester of their 9th grade year. Students must also pass three classes the previous semester and be enrolled in three credit bearing classes the current semester to be eligible for sports. Rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders must have passed 5 classes in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**20. What is the grading scale?**

A - 94-100

B - 86-93

C - 78-85

D - 70-77

E - 0-69

**21. How can my child get in touch with the counselor?**

Students are encouraged to put notes in the counselors' boxes located in guidance. By doing this, the counselor will get back to the student when he/she can give the student 100% of his/her time.

**22. What is the difference between an excused absence and an unexcused absence?**

An unexcused absence is an absence where the student has cut or skipped the class. Unexcused and excused absences both count in the 9 day limit that a student can miss. Work missed from an unexcused absence can't be made up. School field trips do not count toward the 9 day limit. Teachers should send home absence notification when a student has missed more than 3 days. These teacher notifications will include excused and unexcused absences. Students who miss more than 9 days in a semester and have legitimate reasons and documentation to support the reasons may appeal for extenuating circumstances at the end of the semester as long as they are passing the class academically.

**23. What sports are available at IRHS?**

Boys - Fall Season (Cross Country, Football, Golf, Volleyball, Cheerleading); Winter Season (Basketball, Wrestling, Swimming, Winter Track); Spring Season (Baseball, Soccer, Track, Tennis)

Girls - Fall Season (Cross Country, Field Hockey, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Golf); Winter Season (Basketball, Gymnastics, Swimming, Winter Track); Spring Season (Tennis, Softball, Soccer, Track)

Typically, the Winter Season starts around November 1, and the Spring Season starts around the middle of February. Athletes need to get a physical prior to the starting times.

**24. What lunch will my son/daughter eat?**

Lunch assignments are based on the student's third bell class. The schedule was sent home with schedules. Schedule changes will not be made for lunch bell requests (unless there is medical documentation).

**25. Who is the ACCESS counselor?**

The ACCESS counselor is Mrs. Galloway and she will be at IRHS every Monday and Tuesday. Along with the guidance counselors, she can assist seniors with the Financial Aid Form, scholarships, and with the college application process. She is also available to all parents and underclassmen who would like to talk about college and financial aid. Her office is located in Guidance. Her phone number is 578-3758.

**26. Where does my child report at the very beginning of the first day of school?**

To First Block

**27. What should my child bring on the first day of school?**

Students should bring a pen or pencil, a notebook, and lunch or lunch money. Be advised that the lunch lines are sometimes longer the first week of school, so you may want to brown bag it the first couple of days.

**28. Are the office phones available for my child to use?**

Unfortunately, we can't accommodate students using the office/guidance phones. Students should bring 50 cents with them in case they need to use the pay phones located in the main hallway.

**29. Is there a dress code at IRHS?**

The following should not be seen in school from 8:40 am – 3:40 pm: hats, bandanas, headphones, and cell phones. If these items are seen, they will be confiscated and returned to parents only. Students' undergarments should not be seen, and their clothes should appropriately cover their stomachs, shoulders, and legs. Parents will be called if the students' attire is not appropriate. Cell phones should be turned off and kept in lockers or locked cars.

**30. If my child is sick, do I need to call the school that day?**

No. If your child is sick, just send a note in with him/her the following day.

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**Indian River High School  
New Student Orientation  
August 26, 2008 - 7:00 pm**

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- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Varsity and JV Cheerleader Demonstration
- III. Remarks  
James Frye, Principal
- IV. Expectations of the School Year  
Scott Cohen, Guidance Director
- V. PTSA Information
- VI. SCA Information
- VII. Freshman Class Information  
Freshman Class Sponsor
- VIII. Question/Answer Period

During this time, students will be released to go explore the school and find their classes. Parents are welcome to stay in the auditorium and hear answers to general questions. Parents are reminded that questions specific to their own children should be addressed to the individual guidance counselors at a later time. Parents can call Guidance to make an appointment to discuss specific concerns. A guidance counselor will be available on Wednesday, August 27 from 4-6pm in Guidance to deal with schedule changes – first come – first served.

- IX. New Families to Chesapeake Reception – there will be a reception for any new students and their parents new to Chesapeake this year. The reception will take place in the Media Center.

**Tonight's orientation is presented by the Indian River High School Guidance Department:**

**Scott Cohen, Guidance Director**  
**Julie Freeman, A-D**  
**Heidi Ross, E-K**  
**Gail Hunt, L-R**  
**Katrina Peterson, S-Z**

**Karla Galloway, ACCESS Counselor**  
**Dee Winslow, Career Counselor**  
**Shirley Bouldin, Student Assistance Counselor**  
**Dorian Kellihan, SOL Clerk**  
**Nicole Hunt, Guidance Secretary/Registrar**