Dear Parents:

The Virginia Code requires parents to work with school administrators in managing their children’s conduct while at school. It also requires that we send parents information about their responsibility, a copy of Albemarle County's Standards of Student Conduct, and a copy of the law and School Board policy excerpts regarding compulsory attendance. These items are included in this packet.

Further, the Virginia Code requires that we send parents a form to sign and return to school acknowledging their responsibility. Please use the form entitled “Permission & Authorization and Document Receipt Checklist” to indicate that you have received this packet.

Every student has the right to a quality education in an environment that is free of disruption, and no student may deny that right to others. I ask that students, parents, and school personnel work together to create the best possible learning environment for all.

Dr. Matthew S. Haas
Superintendent of Schools
Albemarle County Public Schools

STANDARDS OF STUDENT CONDUCT
(Excerpted from School Board Policy JFC, Student Conduct; last amended October 12, 2017)

NOTE: To view Policy JFC in full, please visit http://esb.k12albemarle.org and click on “Policies & Regs” in the right-hand navigation bar. If you would prefer a printed copy of the full policy, please contact the School Board Office at (434) 296-5893.

The following section constitutes the Standards of Student Conduct for the Albemarle County Public Schools. The following acts by students in the Albemarle County Public Schools are not acceptable. Students found violating the Standards of Student Conduct will be subject to reasonable and appropriate consequences as outlined in the section on corrective measures.

1. Theft: A student shall not intentionally take or attempt to take the personal property of another person by force, fear or other means.

2. Possession or Use of Weapons or Other Dangerous Articles: Students shall not have in their possession any type of unauthorized firearm or other dangerous weapon or device (see Policy JFCD, Weapons in Schools).
   - any pistol, shotgun, rifle or other firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, operative or inoperative, or any object similar in appearance to a firearm, whether capable of being fired or not;
   - any pneumatic gun, which includes pellet guns, BB guns, and CO2 air pistols; or
   - any knife, razor, slingshot, brass or metal knuckles, blackjacks, explosives, or other dangerous articles.

A student further shall not misuse an acceptable object (such as a pencil, baseball bat, etc.) in a manner which endangers a person's safety or health. Possession includes storage in a vehicle, locker, or other receptacle. Any weapon possessed in violation of this policy shall be forfeited to the Commonwealth. The provisions of this section shall not apply to persons who carry such weapon or weapons as part of the curriculum or other programs sponsored by the school or any organization permitted by the school to use its premises.

3. Profane, Obscene, or Abusive Language or Conduct: Students shall not use vulgar, profane or obscene language or gestures or engage in conduct that is vulgar, profane, and obscene or disrupts the teaching and learning environment.

4. Assault and Battery: A student shall not assault or commit battery upon another person on school property, on school buses or during school activities on or off school property. An assault is a threat of bodily injury. A battery is any bodily hurt, however slight, done to another in an angry, rude or vengeful manner.

5. Vandalism: Students shall not willfully or maliciously damage or deface any school building or other property owned or under the control of the School Board. In addition, students shall not willfully or maliciously damage or deface property belonging to or under the control of any other person at school, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored events. (See JN-R.)

6. Trespassing: No student shall enter upon any school property at night without authorized consent. Any student directed to leave or refrain from entering school property and who fails to do so shall be subject to disciplinary action. The student shall not trespass on school property or use school facilities without proper authority or permission, or during a period of suspension or expulsion.

7. Cheating: Students are expected to perform honestly on schoolwork and tests. The following actions are prohibited:
   - Cheating on a test or assigned work by giving, receiving, offering and/or soliciting information
   - Plagiarizing by copying the language, structure, idea and/or thoughts of another
   - Falsifying statements on any assigned schoolwork, tests or other school documents.

8. Student Dress: Students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory or obscene, or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia or clothing that contains threats such as gang symbols is prohibited. Additionally, disciplinary action will be taken against any student taking part in gang-related activities that are disruptive to the school environment, which include the display of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, tattoo or manner of grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang that advocates illegal or disruptive behavior.

Parents of students requiring accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other good causes should contact the principal.

Students not complying with this policy will be asked to cover the noncomplying clothing, change clothes or go home.
9. **Bus-Related Offenses:** Students shall not behave in a disruptive manner or otherwise violate these Standards of Conduct while waiting for a school bus, while on a school bus or after being discharged from a school bus.

10. **Disruptive Conduct & Defiance of School Personnel:** Students are entitled to a learning environment free of unnecessary disruption. Any physical or verbal disturbance which interrupts or interferes with teaching and orderly conduct of school activities is prohibited.

   Students shall comply with any oral or written instructions made by school personnel within the scope of their authority as provided by Board policies and regulations. A student shall not interfere with the orderly process of instruction. A student shall comply with the directions of a teacher or other school employee.

11. **Leaving Without Permission:** A student is prohibited from leaving the school campus during the school day without authorization of designated school authorities.

12. **Accessory to a Violation:** A student who acts as an accessory or accomplice to another in violation of any provision of the Standards of Student Conduct will be subject to corrective action as outlined in the Standards of Student Conduct.

13. **Distribution or Sale of Illegal Drugs or Possession or Distribution with Intent to Sell:** Students shall not manufacture, give, sell, distribute or possess with intent to give, sell, or distribute marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, or other controlled substance as defined in the Drug Control Act, Chapter 15.1 of Title 54 of the Code of Virginia.

14. **Use and/or Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco, Anabolic Steroids, and Other Drugs:** A student shall not possess, use, and/or distribute any of the restricted substances listed below on school property, on school buses, or during school activities, on or off school property.

   A student shall not attempt to possess, use, consume, procure, and/or purchase, any of the restricted substances listed below or what is represented by or to the student to be any of the restricted substances listed below or what the student believes is any of the restricted substances listed below.

   Restricted Substances include but are not limited to alcohol, tobacco and inhalant products, and other controlled substances defined in the Drug Control Act, Chapter 15.1 of Title 54 of the Code of Virginia, such as anabolic steroids, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, marijuana, imitation and look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, and any prescription or non-prescription drug possessed in violation of School Board policy.

   The School Board may require any student who has been found in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol in violation of School Board policy to undergo evaluation for drug or alcohol abuse, or both, and, if recommended by the evaluator and with the consent of the student’s parent, to participate in a treatment program.

   In addition to any other consequences which may result, a student who is a member of a school athletic team will be ineligible for two school years to compete interscholastic athletic competition if the school principal and the division superintendent determine that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic training team, unless such steroid was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

15. **Electronic Cigarettes:** Students shall not possess electronic cigarettes on school premises, on school buses, or at school sponsored activities.

16. **Bullying:** A student, either individually or as a part of a group, shall not bully others either in person or by the use of any communication technology including computer systems, telephones, pagers, or instant messaging systems. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, physical, verbal, or written intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults and any combination of prohibited activities.

   “Bullying” means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. “Bullying” includes cyber bullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument or peer conflict.

   The principal notifies the parent of any student involved in an alleged incident of bullying of the student of any investigation within five school days of the allegation of bullying.

17. **Hazing:** Students shall not engage in hazing: Hazing means to recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or students or to inflict bodily harm on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority, or student body regardless of whether the student or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant activity.
The principal of any school at which hazing which causes bodily injury occurs shall report the hazing to the local Commonwealth Attorney.

18. Harassment: A student shall not sexually harass another student or any school employee, volunteer, student teacher or any other person present in school facilities or at school functions (See Policy JFHA/GBA, Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation). Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advances regardless of sexual orientation*, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

19. Attendance; Truancy: Students shall attend school on a regular and punctual basis unless otherwise excused in accordance with School Board policy or regulation. (See Policy JED Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals.)

If a student who is under 18 years of age has 10 or more unexcused absences from school on consecutive school days, the principal may notify the juvenile and domestic relations court, which may take action to suspend the student’s driver’s license.

20. Threats or Intimidation: Students shall not make any verbal, written, or physical threat of bodily injury or use of force directed toward another person. Students shall not use electronic technology or communication devices, such as the internet or cell phones, to intimidate or threaten for any reason.

21. Gambling: A student shall not bet money or other things of value, or knowingly play or participate in any game involving such a bet, on school property, on school buses or during any school related activity.

22. Gang Activity: Gang-related activity is not tolerated. Symbols of gang membership are expressly prohibited (i.e., clothing that symbolized association, rituals associated with, or activities by an identified group of students). (See Policy JFCE Gang Activity or Association.)

23. Communication Devices: Students may possess a beeper, cellular telephone, smart phone, tablet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or other communications device on school property, including school buses, provided that the device remain off and out of sight during instructional time unless it is being used for instruction purposes at the direction of the student’s teacher. Additionally, the student must cease use of the device if a school bus driver directs the student to discontinue use of the device if it distracts or creates an unsafe environment while the student is on the school bus.

At no time may any device be used with an unfiltered connection to the Internet.

The division is not liable for devices brought to school or school activities.

If a student possesses or uses such a device other than as permitted in this policy, in addition to other disciplinary sanctions which may be imposed, the device may be confiscated from the student and returned only to the student’s parent.

24. Reports of Conviction or Adjudication of Delinquency: Any student for whom the superintendent has received a report pursuant to Va. Code §16.1-305.1 of an adjudication of delinquency or a conviction for an offense listed in subsection G of Va. Code §16.1-260 may be suspended or expelled.

25. Acceptable Use of the Internet: Students shall abide by the Albemarle County Public School Division’s Acceptable Computer Use Policy and Regulation. (See Policy IIBE Acceptable Use of Technology.)

26. Felony Charges: A student charged with any offense, wherever committed, that would be a felony if committed by an adult may be disciplined and/or required to participate in prevention/intervention activities.

27. Bomb Threats: Students shall not engage in any illegal conduct involving firebombs, explosive or incendiary materials or devices or hoax explosive devices or chemical bombs as defined in the Code of Virginia. Moreover, students shall not make any threats or false threats to bomb school personnel or school property.

28. Extortion: No student may obtain or attempt to obtain anything of value from another by using a threat of any kind.

29. Fighting: Exchanging mutual physical contact between two or more persons by pushing, shoving or hitting with or without injury is prohibited.

30. Stalking: Students shall not engage in a pattern of behavior that places another person in fear of serious harm.

31. Other Conduct: In addition to these specific standards, students shall not engage in any conduct which materially and substantially disrupts the ongoing educational process or which is otherwise a violation of federal, state or local law.
*Definition of Sexual Orientation: One’s attraction to the same sex, opposite sex or both sexes, real or perceived. This definition is intended to describe the status of persons and does not render lawful any conduct prohibited by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE:**
*(School Board Policy JEA; last amended September 18, 2018)*

Every parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday shall cause such child to attend a public school or otherwise provide the child with an education in accordance with state law unless the child is exempt from the state’s compulsory attendance requirement.

**STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS**
*(School Board Policy JED; last amended September 18, 2018)*

School attendance is directly related to academic achievement and the development of good habits, which are important in the world of work. Optimum student attendance is a cooperative effort, and the School Board involved parents and students in accepting the responsibility for good attendance.

A. Each parent/guardian having charge of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for such child’s regular and punctual attendance at school as required under provisions of the law.

B. Parents of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for absence no later than upon the student’s return to school.

Absences are excused for the following reasons:

- Funeral
- Illness
- Injury
- Legal obligations
- Medical procedure
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Religious observances
- Military obligations
- Other reasons approved by the principal or principal’s designee.

C. The superintendent, by regulation, established procedures for appropriate interventions when a student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were a full day absence, would not be an excused absence.

D. Students shall attend school for a full day unless excused by the principal or principal designee. Students working off the school site in established and approved community- or work-based learning experiences are considered present at school. Attendance tracking procedures for such an experience shall be established prior to its commencement.

E. The superintendent’s regulations will include procedures for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such regulations will ensure that a student is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for an award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in an acceptable manner.

F. Students who miss a partial or full day of school while participating in High School to Work Partnership Programs are not counted as absent for the purpose of calculating average daily membership. The regulations include procedures by which students may make-up work missed while participating in a High School to Work Partnership.

G. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to see immediate compliance with the compulsory attendance law.

**Dismissal Precautions**

Principals do not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized by the student’s parent/guardian to assume responsibility for the pupil. Students are released only on the request and authorization of a parent or guardian. The superintendent
establishes procedures for release of pupils who are not residing with or under the supervision of a parent/guardian. The burden of proof on the authority of the person to receive the student is on the requesting party. A formal check-out system is maintained in each school.

**STUDENT ABSENCES/EXCUSES/DISMISSALS**
*(School Board Policy JED-AP; last amended September 18, 2018)*

**Absences**

A. A student will be expected to make up work for all classes missed within five (5) days of return to school. Extenuating circumstances may be considered in extending the time limit.

B. The principal has the discretion to deny promotion to a student who misses more than sixteen (16) days during the school year.

C. The principal has the discretion to deny credit for a course to a student who misses more than eight (8) single class days during a semester.

D. Any decision to deny credit or promotion may be appealed to the Superintendent or his/her Designee for final disposition.

**General Provisions**

Each principal will ensure that teachers are accountable for the following:

A. offering engaging and relevant instruction each day which necessitates and encourages student attendance;

B. checking the roll each day in every class;

C. communicating with a student's parents if poor attendance is affecting the student's progress and keeping a log of those contacts; and

D. including participation in their student evaluation procedures.

**Dismissal**

A. A student will not be released in the custody of anyone other than the student's legal parent or guardian unless the school has received permission from the student's legal parent or guardian for such a release. In cases where recognition is not certain, definite identification shall be established.

B. Any student who needs to be released during the school day prior to dismissal shall bring a written request for such dismissal. This request must be signed by the student's legal parent or guardian and should be presented to the principal's office at least one day in advance of the dismissal if possible. By exception, the principal can grant this type of request without a formal written request. In cases where the validity of the request is questionable, verification shall be obtained.

C. Agencies that take students from the school during the school day, such as the public health department, shall present the school with a statement signed by the student's legal parent or guardian granting permission for the student to be released to the agency periodically during the school year. This statement shall be presented to the school prior to the agency's initial request to take the student from school. Exceptions to this requirement will be in accordance with policies of the School Board and state law.

D. Each school shall maintain a log that shows the name of the student signing out; the name of the person signing the student out; and the date, time, and reason for sign-out.

**EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**
*(School Board Policy JEG; last amended December 6, 2018)*

The School Board shall excuse from attendance at school:

1. Any student who, together with his/her parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school.

2. On the recommendation of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of the city or county in which the student resides, and for such period of time as the court determines appropriate, any student who, together with his/her parents, is opposed to attendance
The School Board may excuse from attendance at school:

1. On recommendation of the principal and the Division Superintendent and with the written consent of the parent of guardian, any student who the School Board determines, in accordance with regulations of the Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at school; and

2. On recommendation of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court of the city or county in which the student resides, any student who, in the judgment of the court, cannot benefit from education at school.

Any request for exemption from attendance shall be presented annually in writing to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The compulsory education requirements do not apply to:

1. Children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases as established by the certificate of a reputable practicing physician in accordance with regulations adopted by the Board of Education.

2. Children whose immunizations against communicable diseases have not been completed;

3. Children under 10 years of age who live more than two miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within one mile of the place where such children live; and

4. Children between the ages of 10 and 17, inclusive, who live more than 2.5 miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within 1.5 miles of the place where such children live.

The distances specified in subdivisions 3 and 4 above shall be measured or determined from the child’s residence to the entrance to the school grounds or to the school bus stop nearest the entrance to the residence of such children by the nearest practical routes which are usable for walking or riding.

In addition, any child who will not have reached his/her fifth birthday on or before September 30 of each school year whose parent or guardian notifies the School Board that he/she does not wish the child to attend school until the following year because the child, in the opinion of the parent or guardian, is not mentally, physically, or emotionally prepared to attend school, may delay the child’s attendance.

Any request for exemption from attendance shall be presented annually in writing to the Superintendent/Designee.
PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS.
(Code of Virginia § 22.1-279.3)

A. Each parent of a student enrolled in a public school has a duty to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights.

B. A school board shall provide opportunities for parental and community involvement in every school in the school division.

C. Within one calendar month of the opening of school, each school board shall, simultaneously with any other materials customarily distributed at that time, send to the parents of each enrolled student (i) a notice of the requirements of this section; (ii) a copy of the school board's standards of student conduct; and (iii) a copy of the compulsory school attendance law. These materials shall include a notice to the parents that by signing the statement of receipt, parents shall not be deemed to waive, but to expressly reserve, their rights protected by the constitutions or laws of the United States or the Commonwealth and that a parent shall have the right to express disagreement with a school's or school division's policies or decisions.

Each parent of a student shall sign and return to the school in which the student is enrolled a statement acknowledging the receipt of the school board's standards of student conduct, the notice of the requirements of this section, and the compulsory school attendance law. Each school shall maintain records of such signed statements.

D. The school principal may request the student's parent or parents, if both parents have legal and physical custody of such student, to meet with the principal or his designee to review the school board's standards of student conduct and the parent's or parents' responsibility to participate with the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, to ensure the student's compliance with compulsory school attendance law, and to discuss improvement of the child's behavior, school attendance, and educational progress.

E. In accordance with the due process procedures set forth in this article and the guidelines required by § 22.1-279.6, the school principal may notify the parents of any student who violates a school board policy or the compulsory school attendance requirements when such violation could result in the student's suspension or the filing of a court petition, whether or not the school administration has imposed such disciplinary action or filed a petition. The notice shall state (i) the date and particulars of the violation; (ii) the obligation of the parent to take actions to assist the school in improving the student's behavior and ensuring compulsory school attendance compliance; (iii) that, if the student is suspended, the parent may be required to accompany the student to meet with school officials; and (iv) that a petition with the juvenile and domestic relations court may be filed under certain circumstances to declare the student a child in need of supervision.

F. No suspended student shall be admitted to the regular school program until such student and his parent have met with school officials to discuss improvement of the student's behavior, unless the school principal or his designee determines that readmission, without parent conference, is appropriate for the student.

G. Upon the failure of a parent to comply with the provisions of this section, the school board may, by petition to the juvenile and domestic relations court, proceed against such parent for willful and unreasonable refusal to participate in efforts to improve the student's behavior or school attendance, as follows:

1. If the court finds that the parent has willfully and unreasonably failed to meet, pursuant to a request of the principal as set forth in subsection D of this section, to review the school board's standards of student conduct and the parent's responsibility to assist the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, and to discuss improvement of the child's behavior and educational progress, it may order the parent to so meet; or

2. If the court finds that a parent has willfully and unreasonably failed to accompany a suspended student to meet with school officials pursuant to subsection F, or upon the student's receiving a second suspension or being expelled, it may order the student or his parent, or both, to participate in such programs or such treatment, including, but not limited to, extended day programs, summer school, other educational programs and counseling, as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior or school attendance. The order may also require participation in a parenting, counseling or a mentoring program, as appropriate or that the student or his parent, or both, shall be subject to such conditions and limitations as the court deems appropriate for the supervision, care, and rehabilitation of the student or his parent. In addition, the court may order the parent to pay a civil penalty not to exceed $500.

H. The civil penalties established pursuant to this section shall be enforceable in the juvenile and domestic relations court in which the student's school is located and shall be paid into a fund maintained by the appropriate local governing body to support programs or treatments designed to improve the behavior of students as described in subdivision G 2. Upon the failure to pay the civil penalties imposed by this section, the attorney for the appropriate county, city, or town shall enforce the collection of such civil penalties.

I. All references in this section to the juvenile and domestic relations court shall be also deemed to mean any successor in interest of such court.
COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIRED; EXCUSES AND WAIVERS; ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM ATTENDANCE; EXEMPTIONS FROM ARTICLE.
(Code of Virginia § 22.1-254)

A. As used in this subsection, “attend” includes participation in educational programs and courses at a site remote from the school with permission of the school and in conformity with applicable requirements.

Except as otherwise provided in this article, every parent, guardian, or other person in the Commonwealth having control or charge of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday shall, during the period of each year the public schools are in session and for the same number of days and hours per day as the public schools, cause such child to attend a public school or to a private, denominational, or parochial school or have such child taught by a tutor or teacher of qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education and approved by the division superintendent, or provide for home instruction of such child as described in § 22.1-254.1.

As prescribed in the regulations of the Board of Education, the requirements of this section may also be satisfied by causing a child to attend an alternative program of study or work/study offered by a public, private, denominational, or parochial school or by a public or private degree-granting institution of higher education. Further, in the case of any five-year-old child who is subject to the provisions of this subsection, the requirements of this section may be alternatively satisfied by causing the child to attend any public educational pre-kindergarten program, including a Head Start program, or in a private, denominational, or parochial educational pre-kindergarten program.

Instruction in the home of a child or children by the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such child or children shall not be classified or defined as a private, denominational or parochial school.

The requirements of this section shall apply to (i) any child in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Corrections who has not passed his eighteenth birthday and (ii) any child whom the division superintendent has required to take a special program of prevention, intervention, or remediation as provided in subsection C of § 22.1-253.13:1 and in § 22.1-254.01. The requirements of this section shall not apply to (a) any person 16 through 18 years of age who is housed in an adult correctional facility when such person is actively pursuing the achievement of a passing score on a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education but is not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan pursuant to subsection E, and (b) any child who has obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent, a certificate of completion, or has achieved a passing score on a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, or who has otherwise complied with compulsory school attendance requirements as set forth in this article.

B. A school board shall excuse from attendance at school:

1. Any pupil who, together with his parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school. For purposes of this subdivision, "bona fide religious training or belief" does not include essentially political, sociological or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code; and

2. On the recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides and for such period of time as the court deems appropriate, any pupil who, together with his parents, is opposed to attendance at a school by reason of concern for such pupil's health, as verified by competent medical evidence, or by reason of such pupil's reasonable apprehension for personal safety when such concern or apprehension in that pupil's specific case is determined by the court, upon consideration of the recommendation of the principal and division superintendent, to be justified.

C. Each local school board shall develop policies for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such policies shall ensure that a student shall not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, for any which he missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in a manner acceptable to the school board.

D. A school board may excuse from attendance at school:

1. On recommendation of the principal and the division superintendent and with the written consent of the parent or guardian, any pupil who the school board determines, in accordance with regulations of the Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at such school; or

2. On recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides, any pupil who, in the judgment of such court, cannot benefit from education at such school.

E. Local school boards may allow the requirements of subsection A to be met under the following conditions:
For a student who is at least 16 years of age, there shall be a meeting of the student, the student's parents, and the principal or his designee of the school in which the student is enrolled in which an individual student alternative education plan shall be developed in conformity with guidelines prescribed by the Board, which plan must include:

1. Career guidance counseling;

2. Mandatory enrollment and attendance in a preparatory program for passing a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education or other alternative education program approved by the local school board with attendance requirements that provide for reporting of student attendance by the chief administrator of such preparatory program or approved alternative education program to such principal or his designee;

3. Mandatory enrollment in a program to earn a Board of Education-approved career and technical education credential, such as the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment;

4. Successful completion of the course in economics and personal finance required to earn a Board of Education-approved high school diploma;

5. Counseling on the economic impact of failing to complete high school; and

6. Procedures for reenrollment to comply with the requirements of subsection A.

A student for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted pursuant to this subsection and who fails to comply with the conditions of such plan shall be in violation of the compulsory school attendance law, and the division superintendent or attendance officer of the school division in which such student was last enrolled shall seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law as set forth in this article.

Students enrolled with an individual student alternative education plan shall be counted in the average daily membership of the school division.

F. A school board may, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article 3 (§ 22.1-276.01 et seq.) of Chapter 14 and upon a finding that a school-age child has been (i) charged with an offense relating to the Commonwealth's laws, or with a violation of school board policies, on weapons, alcohol or drugs, or intentional injury to another person; (ii) found guilty or not innocent of a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injury to others, or of an offense that is required to be disclosed to the superintendent of the school division pursuant to subsection G of § 16.1-260; (iii) suspended pursuant to § 22.1-277.05; or (iv) expelled from school attendance pursuant to § 22.1-277.06 or 22.1-277.07 or subsection C of § 22.1-277, require the child to attend an alternative education program as provided in § 22.1-209.1:2 or 22.1-277.2:1.

G. Whenever a court orders any pupil into an alternative education program, including a program preparing students for a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, offered in the public schools, the local school board of the school division in which the program is offered shall determine the appropriate alternative education placement of the pupil, regardless of whether the pupil attends the public schools it supervises or resides within its school division.

The juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which a pupil resides or in which charges are pending against a pupil, or any court in which charges are pending against a pupil, may require the pupil who has been charged with (i) a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injury to others, (ii) a violation of Article 1 (§ 18.2-77 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 18.2, or (iii) any offense related to possession or distribution of any Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances to attend an alternative education program, including, but not limited to, night school, adult education, or any other education program designed to offer instruction to students for whom the regular program of instruction may be inappropriate.

This subsection shall not be construed to limit the authority of school boards to expel, suspend, or exclude students, as provided in §§ 22.1-277.04, 22.1-277.05, 22.1-277.06, 22.1-277.07, and 22.1-277.2. As used in this subsection, the term "charged" means that a petition or warrant has been filed or is pending against a pupil.

H. Within one calendar month of the opening of school, each school board shall send to the parents or guardian of each student enrolled in the division a copy of the compulsory school attendance law and the enforcement procedures and policies established by the school board.

I. The provisions of this article shall not apply to:

1. Children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases while suffering from such diseases;

2. Children whose immunizations against communicable diseases have not been completed as provided in § 22.1-271.2;
3. Children under 10 years of age who live more than two miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within one mile of the place where such children live;

4. Children between the ages of 10 and 17, inclusive, who live more than 2.5 miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within 1.5 miles of the place where such children live; and

5. Children excused pursuant to subsections B and D.

Further, any child who will not have reached his sixth birthday on or before September 30 of each school year whose parent or guardian notifies the appropriate school board that he does not wish the child to attend school until the following year because the child, in the opinion of the parent or guardian, is not mentally, physically, or emotionally prepared to attend school, may delay the child's attendance for one year.

The distances specified in subdivisions 3 and 4 of this subsection shall be measured or determined from the child's residence to the entrance to the school grounds or to the school bus stop nearest the entrance to the residence of such children by the nearest practical routes which are usable for walking or riding. Disease shall be established by the certificate of a reputable practicing physician in accordance with regulations adopted by the Board of Education.