

# Rachel Carson Middle School's

## NEW STUDENT

## SURVIVAL GUIDE

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Rachel Carson Middle School! You are probably experiencing mixed feelings of excitement and nervousness as you think about becoming a new student. Beginnings aren't easy - you're not alone! Your fellow students from the different feeder elementary schools are sharing those same emotions. Our guarantee is that you will survive that first day and week of school, which will be the start of a great two years at Rachel Carson! In this article we hope to answer some of the questions most commonly asked by seventh graders.

**Q: Who are some of the people all students should get to know?**

**A:** Some people you can always seek for help include (from left to right):

Mr. Barrows, After School Coordinator  
Mrs. Miley, Director of Student Services  
Mrs. Archible-Ehivue, Assistant Principal  
Mr. Washington, Principal  
Mr. Powell, Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Cosgrove, Assistant Principal  
*and (not pictured)*  
Ms. Chustz, Counselor  
Ms. Ghafori, Counselor  
Ms. Copeland, Counselor  
Ms. Ryder, Counselor  
Ms. Schires, Counselor



or any teacher, administrative assistant, or adult. We'll do our best to make your experience at Rachel Carson enjoyable and productive.

**Q: If I'm a bus rider, how do I know where and when to catch the bus?**

**A:** You will receive electronic information in August which will include the bus number, stop, and approximate pick up times. Be at your bus stop about fifteen minutes early, at least until your driver establishes a pattern. When you arrive at school that first morning, be sure to write down your bus run number. You'll need to remember it to find your bus in the parking lot in the afternoon.

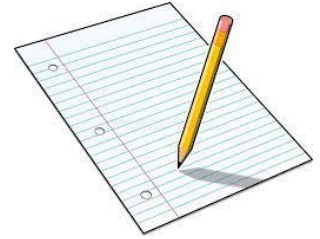
**Q: If I'm a bus rider, how do I catch a bus at the end of the school day?**

**A: THIS IS IMPORTANT!** That first morning when you arrive at school be sure to write down your bus run number, which will be posted in the side window next to the door of the bus. When you go to the parking lot at 2:15pm you'll need to know that number because there will be approximately 30 buses in no particular order. Check our bus boards out front to locate your bus. Bus numbers are located in the side window of the bus. Usually, you'll have just five minutes to catch your bus, but the first couple of days we'll give you a little extra time. If you are having a problem, ask one of the staff members in the parking area for assistance. If you do miss your bus, don't panic! In some way, we will help you get home.



**Q: What should I bring with me that first day of school?**

**A:** Bring a pencil or pen and a small notebook so you can write down information given by your teachers. They will tell you what additional supplies you need to purchase for their class. Also, **bring a lunch or lunch money** - or you may bring a check to cover a week or month of lunches. **A parent may also load money onto your lunch account through [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com).**



**Q: Once I arrive at school, where do I go that first morning?**

**A:** You will go to your 1st period class. There will be adults in the hallway in case you can't remember what that class is!

**Q: What if I get lost?**

**A:** Don't panic! Just ask any staff member for assistance. It will help if you can show them your schedule. If you are a little late to a class the first few days, your teacher will understand. Just do the best you can.

**Q: When can I use the restroom?**

**A:** Students will use an electronic hall pass system to ask teachers during an appropriate time of class to use the restroom. Students may also use the restroom between classes and during lunch.



**Q: When do I eat lunch?**

**A:** You will eat lunch during any one of four lunch shifts. The first few days your teacher will explain in which lunch section you will eat and will take you to the cafeteria. Sometimes lunch lines are a little slow for the first few days. If that happens, we will give students extra time to finish eating.

**Q: When do after-school activities begin?**

**A:** Once school begins, listen for announcements in the morning and at lunch. Information will also be posted on the school website and Schoology. Late buses usually begin the last week of September and so will activities. Information about late bus routes will be given out once the school has them. Remember – you may only remain after school if you are in a club or activity supervised by a teacher or staying with a teacher for extra help. You may not stay after school to just “hang around.” If you have any interesting club ideas, be sure to share them with Mr. Barrows, the After-School Program Specialist.

**Q: May I bring an iPad, computer, or other type of personal electronic device to school?**

**A:** We are a one-to-one school. You will be issued an FCPS laptop to use every day. You will not need a personal computer.

**Q: Can I bring my phone to school?**

**A:** We are an “Away for the Day” school. Your phone must stay off and in your locker during the day.

**Q: What is OK to wear to school?**

**A:** All students must follow the FCPS Students' Rights and Responsibilities guidelines for dress code. We do not allow students to wear clothing that would reasonably be considered offensive by others. For example, T-shirts that advocate the use of drugs or alcohol, have sexually suggestive pictures or statements (including double meanings), or demean another person's characteristics. You may not wear clothing commonly considered to be “sleep wear” or “outer wear” or pants that hang below the waist or show a bare midriff. Our reasoning is that for most of the school day students are in an environment similar to an office setting – not the street. Different clothing is suitable under different circumstances. Learning to make appropriate decisions is part of becoming a young adult.



**Q: Can I use a backpack at Rachel Carson?**

**A:** We encourage you to use a backpack in order to bring your books and notebooks to and from school. Your backpack should then be placed in your locker during the day.

**Q: With seven different classes, how do I keep organized?**

**A:** Your teachers will give you lots of good suggestions. You will have a calendar in Schoology and a daily planner that you can use to keep track of your assignments.

**Q: When will I find out about all the different school rules?**

**A:** Teachers will tell you about their classroom rules the first week. During September, school administrators will talk to your team about Students' Rights and Responsibilities.

**Q: I'm on a team. What does that mean?**

**A:** Every student is a member of a core team. That means that all students on that team have the same English, science and social studies teachers. The teachers meet several times a week to plan school and team activities.

**Q: How do I find out about the Student Services Department and my assigned counselor?**

**A:** Counselors will be coming to one of your classes to explain the role of the Student Services Department. Your counselor's name will appear on your schedule.

**Q: What should I do if I'm still worried or nervous after the first few days of school, or if things just aren't going well?**

**A:** Plan to come to our orientation for new students the Friday before the first week of school. We will send out information through email. During the year, stop by the Student Services Office and make an appointment to see your counselor. They're often the best problem solvers in the school!

**Q: What if my question wasn't answered here?**

**A:** Once you come to Rachel Carson you can talk to one of the people listed at the beginning of this survival guide. If necessary, you can have your parents call the school with important questions. The school number is 703-925-3600.

# Welcome to Rachel Carson Middle School!

