

# The Freshmen Five

**Five important questions for you to answer to help make your ninth grade year more successful.**

1. The name of my school counselor is: \_\_\_\_\_.

The name of my school administrator is: \_\_\_\_\_.

2. The minimum number of *Carnegie units* of credit that I must earn to receive a Standard Diploma is \_\_\_\_\_, and the minimum number to earn an Advanced Studies Diploma is \_\_\_\_\_.

In addition, the minimum number of *verified credits* that I must earn in order to receive a Standard Diploma is \_\_\_\_\_, and to earn an Advanced Studies Diploma is \_\_\_\_\_.

BONUS: The number of Carnegie units of credit that I need to be promoted to tenth grade is \_\_\_\_\_.

3. True or False: The grades I earn my ninth grade year at James River do NOT show on my high school transcript, and do NOT count in my high school grade point average (GPA).

4. List below three (3) clubs or activities that you can join at James River during your freshman year:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

5. My career goal is \_\_\_\_\_, and I plan to prepare for this career by attending one or more of the following post-secondary educational options (circle all that apply):

- Four-year College or University
- Two-year College or Junior College
- Trade or Technical School
- Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training
- Military

# Making the Most of Your Freshman Year

## I. "It's Not Only Important What You Know, but Whom You Know!"

\*\*Remember, knowing and working with a significant adult at James River over the next four years can improve your ability to succeed academically. As a high school student you will be expected to use these "human resources" to help you achieve in school and have a positive secondary school experience.

### A. Meet Your Counselor—

#### 1. Who?

- Counselor assignments are based on your last name (see the chart on the next page)
- Your counselor will work with you over the next four years to help you develop a plan for success

#### 2. What?

\*The following is a *partial list* of services that your school counselor is able and willing to provide:

- *Academic Guidance and Counseling*—How to earn your best grades, take the most appropriate classes, and find the resources to make good decisions.
- *Personal/Social Guidance and Counseling*—Are there personal or social problems in your life that are preventing you from doing your best? Do you feel unsafe at home or school? If the answer is "yes," your counselor can help.
- *Career Guidance and Counseling*—What kind of career do you want after high school? Or are you undecided? How do you get training or more education to learn the techniques and skills of your chosen career?

#### 3. When?

- Your counselor is available to meet with you from 7:10 a.m. until 2:25 p.m., or outside of these hours by special appointment.

#### 4. Where?

- The Guidance Suite is located near the main office, right next to the clinic and the attendance office

#### 5. How?

The primary ways to request to see your counselor are:

- Complete a "Counselor Contact" form in the Guidance Office, and your counselor will send a pass to see you during the school day

- Get a pass with permission from your teacher during class time
- Visit before or after school, or during lunch time with a pass

B. Meet some of Your Resources at James River

**\*\*Remember, DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP!\*\***

<u>"Who Are You . . . and could you please help me?"</u>		
<b><u>Administration</u></b>		
<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>STUDENT LAST NAME</u>
John Titus	Principal	
Kathryn Catina	Assistant Principal	
Jennifer Coleman	Assistant Principal	
Amanda Voelker	Assistant Principal	
Jeanine Grabham	Dean of Students	A-G
Michael Fennessey	Dean of Students	H-O
Nytasha Garland	Dean of Students	P-Z
<b><u>Guidance Counselors and Support Staff</u></b>		
<u>NAME</u>	<u>STUDENT LAST NAME</u>	
Erin Gardner	A-Chi	
Bryan Carr	Chj-Dil	
Michele Lawrence	Dim-H	
Amy Cook	I-Mid	
Wallace Deitz	Mie-Schi	
Sarah Cooke	Schj-Z	
Julie O'Bryant	ESL & Leadership Students	
Penny Diegelmann	Registrar	
Cindy Davenport	Records Clerk	
<b><u>Student Support Services Staff</u></b>		
<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	
Lisa Eberling	School Psychologist	
Peggy Staples	School Social Worker	
Liz Klement	School Nurse	

## II. How Do I Get Out of Here and Onto the Important Stuff?

A. Graduation Requirements—Class of 2012

# Diploma Requirements For Graduating Class Of 2012

## *Advanced Studies Diploma Requirements* 24 Credits

Students may earn an Advanced Studies Diploma by meeting the minimum requirement of 24 credits. Students completing the Advanced Studies Program and achieving a cumulative average of "B" or better (at the end of the first semester of their senior year) and successfully completing at least one advanced placement (AP) or college level course will receive a Governor's Seal on their diplomas. The advanced mathematics and technology seal and the career and technology education seal are also available.

English . . . . .	4 credits
*Mathematics . . . . .	4 credits
**Laboratory Science . . . . .	4 credits
History and Social Science. . . . .	4 credits
World History/World Geography (2) United States & Virginia History (1) United States & Virginia Government (1)	
Foreign Language . . . . .	3 credits
(3 years of one language or 2 years each of 2 languages)	
Health and Physical Education . . . . .	2 credits
***Fine Arts or Practical Arts . . . . .	1 credit
Electives. . . . .	2 credits
<b>Total = 24 credits</b>	

\*Courses completed to satisfy mathematics requirements shall be at or above the level of Algebra and shall include at least three different course selections from among the following: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra 2.

\*\*Courses completed to satisfy science requirements shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among the following: Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

\*\*\*Fine Arts courses are offered in grades 9 through 12 in art, music, theatre, and creative writing. Practical Arts courses are offered in grades 9 through 12 through the Career Development department course offerings. In addition, speech, journalism and all computer-programming courses are considered practical arts.

Students who complete the IB (International Baccalaureate) Diploma requirements will also receive an IB Diploma (as well as an Advanced Studies Diploma). The IB Diploma is recognized within the United States and internationally as meeting the requirements of a strong college preparatory program of study. Only students within the schools with approved programs may receive this diploma. See page 8 for details on the IB Program.

<b>SOL Testing Requirements for Class of 2012</b>	
<b>Advanced Diploma</b>	
Students must pass 9 SOL tests	
2 English	
2 Math	
2 Laboratory Science	
2 History and Social Science	
1 Student selected test	

NOTE: Students are required to take all SOL tests in the core courses. The Virginia Board of Education has identified substitute SOL tests in Language Arts, Math, Science, and History and Social Science. Students may choose to substitute alternate test scores such as International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, SAT II, or Test of English for Literacy

to meet graduation-testing requirements. In addition, the Board has identified industry certifications and state licenses in the career and technical education fields, which may be used to meet the student-selected verified credit.

## Diploma Requirements For Graduating Class Of 2012 Standard Studies Diploma Requirements 22 Credits

Students may earn a Standard Diploma by meeting the minimum requirement of 22 credits. Students earning a Standard Diploma and achieving a cumulative average of "B" or better at the end of the first semester of their senior year will receive a Board of Education Seal on their diplomas. The grade average changes to an "A" for the graduating class of 2004 and beyond. The advanced mathematics and technology seal and the career and technology education seal are also available.

English . . . . .	4 credits
* Mathematics . . . . .	.3 credits
**Laboratory Science . . . . .	.3 credits
History and Social Science. . . . .	3 credits
World History/World Geography (1)	
United States & Virginia History (1)	
United States & Virginia Government (1)	
Health and Physical Education . . . . .	.2 credits
***Fine Arts or Practical Arts . . . . .	.1 credit
****Electives . . . . .	6 credits
Total = 22 credits	

\*Courses completed to satisfy mathematics requirements shall be at or above the level of Algebra and shall include at least two course selections from among the following: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra and Geometry.

\*\* Courses completed to satisfy science requirements shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines from among the following: Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry or Physics.

\*\*\*Fine Arts courses are offered in grades 9 through 12 in art, music, theatre, and creative writing. Practical Arts courses are offered in grades 9 through 12 through the Career Development department course offerings. In addition, speech, journalism and all computer-programming courses are considered practical arts.

\*\*\*\* At least two electives classes must be sequential.

NOTE: Students are required to take all SOL tests in the core courses.

<b>SOL Testing Requirements for Class of 2012: Standard Diploma</b>
Students must pass 6 SOL tests 2 English at grade 11 1 Math 1 Science 1 History and Social Science 1 Student Choice

NOTE: Students are required to take all SOL tests in the core courses.

The Virginia Board of Education has identified substitute SOL tests in Language Arts, Math, Science, and History and Social Science. Students may choose to substitute alternate test scores such as International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, SAT II or Test of English for Literacy to meet graduation testing requirements. In addition, the Board has identified industry certifications and state licenses in the career and technical education fields which may be used to meet the student-selected verified credit.

Students on an active IEP may choose to meet the Modified Standard Diploma.

**III. "What 14 year-old Decided I Wasn't Going to Harvard?"**

**(or, "YES, your freshmen grades DO COUNT!")**

A. The High School Transcript—(see the example attached)

- Your High School Transcript consists of four parts:
  1. A comprehensive listing of all of your courses, the ability level of the courses, and semester grades you earned for high school credit, including courses in middle school that are considered high school classes.
  2. A "Test Data Card" listing all of the standardized assessments you took in high school, such as the Stanford 9, SAT, ACT, and SOL tests.
  3. A "School Profile" describing the James River and Chesterfield County school community in both academic and demographic terms.
  4. The "Student Activities Record" listing all of your extracurricular activities, positions, and service, both IN and OUT of school—Try to keep this list updated each year

B. Grade Point Average (GPA)—

- Calculated by assigning point values to the SEMESTER grades of credit courses you take
- Each letter grade is given a grade point value:  
A = 4 pts.      C = 2 pts.      F = 0 pts.  
B = 3 pts.      D = 1 pt.

***Additions: "+" (e.g., "B+") = +0.5 pt. & Honors level courses = +1 pt.***

- Formula to determine GPA: Add the grade points of the semester grades for each credit course and divide by the number of total semester grades—***See Example Below:***

COURSE	SEM 1	SEM 2	FIN	CREDIT
English 9 Z-level	B = 3 pts	C = 2 pts.	C+	1.0
Geometry H-level	B = 4 pts.	C = 3 pts.	B	1.0
WH/WG I Z-level	B = 3 pts.	B+ = 3.5 pts.	B+	1.0
Earth Sci H-level	C = 3 pts.	C+ = 3.5 pts.	C+	1.0
H-PE 9 O-level	C = 2 pts.	B = 3 pts.	B	1.0
Art I O-level	C+ = 2.5 pts.	B+ = 3.5 pts.	B	1.0

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Total Grade Points = 36.0, *divided by the*

Total Number of Sem. Grades = 12 **Equals: 3.0 GPA**

C. Class Rank—

- Once your GPA is calculated, it is placed on a scale from top to bottom with your same grade (freshmen) classmates
- Your rank is the position number where your GPA stands from the top of the class
- Example: If you have a rank of 50/450, this simply means that you have the 50<sup>th</sup> highest grade point average in a freshmen class of 450 students.

IV. **“Putting the ‘Extra’ into Curricular Activities**

A. What? . . . is an “Extracurricular Activity?”

- Athletic Teams
- School Clubs
- Curriculum-sponsored Activities (e.g., Peer Facilitators, Theatre, etc.)

B. How? . . . do I join or participate?

- Contact the coach or sponsor of the activity (reference pp. 144-146 of your student planner). If you need help in finding the contact, please see your counselor, teacher, or administrator for help.
- Review the JRHS Club Handbook for a description of ALL of the activities, clubs, and sports available

C. Why? . . . should I join an extracurricular activity?

**FACT**—*Students who participate in extracurricular activities in high school are more likely to enjoy their high school experience, meet more people, and have the opportunity to explore career interests than those who do not!*

- Your Challenge—To join at least ONE extracurricular activity during your freshman year . . . you'll be glad you did.

V. **“Life After High School:” What are My Options?**

Earning a high school diploma is a **BEGINNING**, not an **END!**

A. Why am I here?

1. The “Main” Thing—

- Your main goal at James River High School should NOT be to earn a high school diploma; rather, you should set your sights on acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve your goal AFTER high school. If you accomplish this mission, then earning your high school diploma will take care of itself.

## 2. Learning a Marketable Skill—

- In order for you to eventually take care of yourself as an adult both financially and responsibly, you will need to learn a *marketable skill*.
- A marketable skill is a talent, ability, and/or knowledge set that makes you different from everyone else, AND allows you to earn more than minimum wage in the economy.

## 3. Education—

- To master a marketable skill means that you will need to continue your education beyond high school.
- The four most popular pathways to learn or improve upon a marketable skill are:
  1. Attending college or university
  2. Attending a "professional school," such as a trade, technical, business, or nursing school
  3. Enlisting in the military
  4. "Learning while earning" through an apprenticeship program or a similar on-the-job training program

## 4. Career Decision-Making--

- Career vs. job—A career is "life work," whereas a job is more of a task or activity. *In fact, there are often many jobs individuals perform in a chosen career.* Thus careers tend to pay more money, allow for advancement, and be more stable than jobs.
- Choosing a Career—The three major questions:
  1. What are my interests?
    - what do I like to do with my time?
    - what are my hobbies and activities?
  2. What are my abilities?
    - what am I good at doing?
  3. What are my experiences?
    - what jobs have I enjoyed in the past that may relate to a career?
- Resources—finding the information to make good choices:
  1. The James River College and Career Center—(see attached resource listing at the back of this booklet)
  2. Parents/Guardians and Other Adults already in chosen careers
  3. Summer externships or volunteer experiences

**Remember** . . . there is no “right” or “wrong” pathway to your chosen career. The decision as to which path you will take is a personal and family choice, made with input from many resources and trusted people. There are possible advantages and disadvantages to each option. Be a wise decision-maker and investigate each pathway on your route to a successful career.

**B. The Major Pathways After High School—**

1. College or University:

a. The Facts—

- The most popular choice for high school graduates
- Over 2500 two- and four-year institutions throughout the United States
- Admission to four-year colleges/universities is based on four major factors:
  1. High School Grades (GPA and Class Rank)
  2. Strength of Courses Taken (Curriculum)
  3. Standardized Test Scores (SAT, ACT, TOEFL)
  4. Quality Participation in Extracurricular Activities

b. Advantages—

- College graduates tend to earn more income than graduates in other post-secondary programs of study
- College graduates tend to have an advantage in getting hired over non-graduates, and tend to have greater job security and retention than non-graduates

c. Challenges—

- Can be costly to attend, even with financial aid
- Only about 50% of college freshmen ever graduate

2. Professional Schools:

a. Facts—

- Thousands of mostly private post-secondary schools throughout the country dedicated to teaching adults specific marketable skills
- Schools include career and technical schools offering program training in areas such as computer skills, auto body repair, legal secretarial work, surveying, nursing, air conditioning/ventilation/heating, and truck driving

- Admission usually requires at least a high school diploma or a GED
  - b. Advantages—
    - Students can learn marketable skills in a relatively short amount of time
    - Financial aid is available for many career and technical schools
  - c. Challenges—
    - Buyer Beware: many schools are not accredited and/or licensed; check out the credentials of each institution
    - Costs and quality of programs vary widely—do your research before committing to a school
3. The Military:
- a. Facts—
    - Branches of the military include: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the Reserves of each branch
    - Enlistment usually requires a high school diploma
    - Students must take a qualification and placement test called the ASVAB, as well as a physical exam and a background check
  - b. Advantages—
    - Learn while you earn—thousands of job skills and positions available for qualified individuals to choose from, while getting paid
    - Assistance with post-secondary educational funding possible
  - c. Challenges—
    - Basic Training—6-8 weeks of intense physical and mental preparation
    - Job placements in both position desired and geographic location requested are not often guaranteed
4. Learning While Earning—Apprenticeships and other On-the-job Training Programs:
- a. Facts—
    - Apprenticeships are usually four-year on-the-job training programs in over 800 different fields or trades, including

auto mechanics, carpentry, electricity, plumbing, cooking, and firefighting

- Program participants learn a skilled trade through a combination of classroom instruction and field experiences

b. Advantages—

- You can earn wages while you learn and train in a trade
- Demand is high in the job market for students who complete a full apprenticeship program

c. Challenges—

- Securing an apprenticeship or other quality on-the-job training program is very competitive and program completion is rigorous
- Applicants often need to be a minimum of 18 years of age, healthy, physically fit, and have a high school diploma or a GED

***In conclusion*** . . . Please remember that regardless of your pathway choice after high school, one fact remains certain: **YOUR EDUCATION DOES NOT END WHEN YOU GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL!**

- Choose your path of continuing education carefully and thoughtfully
- The goal of your learning is simple, but important: using a combination of your interests, abilities, and experiences identify the marketable skill that you want to develop and pursue your dream
- Whether your plan is to go to college, technical school, nursing school, the army, or an apprenticeship the choice is with you and your family . . . and the Guidance Department is here to assist you in making your dreams come true!