



MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

Attendance and success in middle school are critical in keeping students on track for on-time graduation and preparing them to continue their education after high school or secure a self-sustaining job.

In many ways, middle school represents a period of transition and evolution. It can be difficult for students to remain engaged and persist into high school, especially for students who struggled academically in elementary school, who have experienced trauma or have mental health and/or identity issues. To increase the chances of success, students must have safe school and home environments, positive interactions with adults and peers and feel a sense of empowerment as they mature into young adults.

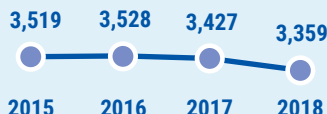
BY THE NUMBERS

KEY INDICATOR

EIGHTH GRADE SOL SCORES (2018)

3,359 (25.9%)

STUDENTS FAILED THE READING SOL IN 2018.



3,274 (25%)

STUDENTS FAILED THE MATH SOL IN 2018.



Source: Virginia Department of Education

RELATED INDICATOR

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM (2016-17)

4,543 (11.1%)

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS MISSED MORE THAN 10% OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN THE UNITED WAY REGION

Children missing more than 10% of the days in a school year are much more likely to struggle to read at grade level by third grade. Chronic absenteeism creates and widens achievement gaps throughout elementary, middle and high school.

Source: Virginia Department of Education

RELATED INDICATOR

SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS (2017-18)

4,411 4,733 4,653 4,848



4,848 (12.4%)

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WERE SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED IN THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

Source: Virginia Department of Education

RELATED INDICATOR

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CARING ADULTS



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO REPORT THEY HAVE A SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH A CARING ADULT ARE MORE LIKELY TO STAY ENGAGED AND SUCCESSFULLY PREPARE FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Source: Child Trends (www.ChildTrends.org)



WHAT WE DO

At United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg, we understand that middle school is a complicated period for all students. There's no silver bullet to strengthen engagement, which is why we work with a variety of programs in the region to tackle the issue from all sides.

- Together with VCU's Mary and Frances Youth Center, we run the **Richmond Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)**, which ensures out-of-school time programs make elementary and middle school-age students feel safe, engaged and empowered.
- We serve as the backbone of the **Petersburg City and Schools Partnership**, which works to create the climate and conditions for every child to succeed by providing a sustainable, coordinated system of supports and access.
- We convene the **RVA Youth Development Network**, which brings together professionals from the out-of-school time, youth development and education fields for networking and shared learning.

SUPPORTED PROGRAMS

United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg is proud to support the following programs:

- **ART 180** - Community Programs
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters** - Mentoring
- **Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond** - MLK Jr. Middle School
- **Communities in Schools of Chesterfield** - Falling Creek Middle School
- **Higher Achievement Program** - Closing the Middle School Opportunity Gap
- **NextUP RVA** - Learning Beyond the Bell
- **Salvation Army** - Boys and Girls Club
- **Side by Side** - Strengthening LGBTQ+ Youth
- **Virginia Mentoring Partnership** - Training and Quality Assurance

HOW YOU CAN HELP



DONATE: Give to UWGRP. Let us know you want your gift to help increase middle school engagement.



VOLUNTEER: Want to lend your time to supporting these efforts? Email Volunteer@YourUnitedWay.org and we will help match you with the right opportunity.



CONNECT: Visit YourUnitedWay.org to learn more about any of our important efforts or to get to know our leadership team.



United Way of Greater
Richmond & Petersburg

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