

Participant & Parent/Guardian Handbook



VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
September 2026

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WELCOME

From VHCC Upward Bound Staff

We can't wait to start a new year in Upward Bound!

We have developed this handbook as a tool and reference for both students and parents/guardians. It contains answers to frequently asked questions, and student's success in the program is dependent upon adherence to these policies. While not all-inclusive, it may be updated throughout the year as we continue to make Upward Bound even better. Should there be changes to this handbook, they will be published in the online version available on the [VHCC Upward Bound website](#). Families will receive an email requesting that the changes be reviewed.

Both students and parents/guardians should review the handbook and reach out with any questions about program services or requirements. **Both students and parents should also sign an acknowledgment verifying that you have read and understand the handbook.** The acknowledgement will also be available on the [VHCC Upward Bound website](#), and it must be signed no later than [September 15, 2026](#).

It is our hope that students will take advantage of every opportunity offered. We can't wait to spend the year with Upward Bound students! We are honored to work alongside each of them, to provide guidance and support toward the achievement of their goals. As you review this handbook, we sincerely hope that our commitment to the success of students is evident to you.

With sincere gratitude,

Traci Mitchell

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Meet our Staff



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SUMMER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

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Vision, Mission Statement, Goals

VISION

The vision of the Virginia Highlands Upward Bound program is to enrich the lives of students by helping them overcome the obstacles they face in their quest for an education and a purpose-filled life. We will create a contagious enthusiasm for learning that will extend beyond our own participants and on to other students in the schools served by our program.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Virginia Highlands Upward Bound program provides students with the academic, cultural and interpersonal skills needed to overcome obstacles so that they can experience success in secondary and post-secondary academics and, most importantly, in life. The program assists students in achieving academic success in an environment that promotes the development of positive self-esteem, integrity, and a commitment to life-long learning.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the Virginia Highlands Upward Bound Program are:

- Provide students with the skills necessary to be successful in their pursuit of secondary and post-secondary education.
- Raise educational aspirations of student participants and their families.
- Increase college-knowledge among student participants and their families.
- Create a commitment to life-long learning among participants.
- Create a contagious enthusiasm for education among student participants and their peers.

What is Upward Bound?

Upward Bound is one of eight TRIO programs, all of which are funded by the US Department of Education. The purpose of Upward Bound is to “provide fundamental support to participants in

their preparation for college entrance.” You can visit the [U.S. Department of Education Upward Bound Program](#) website to learn more.

Virginia Highlands Upward Bound, located on the campus of Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon, Virginia, is one of over 700 programs nation-wide. The VHCC Upward Bound project is authorized to serve 65 students in the target high schools listed below:

City of Bristol, VA	Virginia High School
Smyth County, VA	Chilhowie High School and Northwood High School
Washington County, VA	Holston High School and Patrick Henry High School

It is important that students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) understand that once admitted into the program, a student’s academic progress is documented for a total of 10 years (four years of high school and up to six years following high school graduation). The Upward Bound program staff track and record this academic progress in accordance with federal regulations, and this data is utilized in reports that determine the future funding of the Virginia Highlands Upward Bound program. The US Department of Education has determined that the following data will be collected:

1. **GPA:** How many students have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher?
2. **Performance on Standardized Tests (SOLs):** How many students score above a 500 (Pass Advance) on their Algebra I and English 11 SOL tests?
3. **Retention and Graduation Rates:** How many students progress from one grade to the next and then graduate from high school?
4. **Rigorous Program of Study Rates:** How many students graduate with an Advanced Studies diploma?
5. **Post-Secondary Enrollment:** How many students enroll in college (community college or a four-year institution) immediately following high school graduation?
6. **Post-Secondary Completion:** How many students graduate with an associate’s or bachelor’s degree within six years of graduation from high school?

The key to success in Upward Bound (AND in life), is taking personal responsibility. Failure to be responsible for your actions can lead to missed opportunities, lower grades, and even dismissal from the Upward Bound program. It is important that when you sign up and commit to an Upward Bound activity, you **fulfill that commitment by attending**. Once you commit, you are EXPECTED to participate.

This policy allows the UB staff to manage attendance and be better stewards of our grant funds, and it teaches YOU to be the responsible adult you will need to be to be successful in college, and in life.

We feel that it is one of our greatest responsibilities to teach students the importance of honoring their commitments. **Missing an event that you registered for without letting us know is**

considered a “no-show” and will result in losing the monthly stipend and/or losing the ability to sign up for future events. Repeated cancelations can also affect your eligibility to register for events.

DEADLINES

Many of our Upward Bound events must be planned and paid for well in advance. In an effort to plan efficiently and responsibly, we may ask that students and parents fill out commitment forms and other paperwork by a specified date. Please respect these deadlines, so that we aren't wasteful in our budgeting. Students who submit applications, commitment forms, and permission/assumption of risk forms after the specified deadlines will not be able to attend that particular function.

COMMUNICATION

In order to ensure each student receives all important information (forms, newsletters, etc.), it is important that we have a current mailing address and working email address for each student and parent/guardian.



We also ask that each student and parent download the “Remind” app and sign up to receive texts from Remind. Text your school's code (see below) to 81010 to sign up.

- Chilhowie: @g33zzz
- Holston: @eh47a4
- Northwood: @864b6kg
- Patrick Henry: @64ddd6
- Virginia High: @kg8g462

Students and parents/guardians should access important information (such as our calendar of events, SAT dates, and more) on our [Upward Bound website \(www.vhcc.edu/upwardbound\)](http://www.vhcc.edu/upwardbound).

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

By accepting the invitation to join the Virginia Highlands Upward Bound program, you are accepting the responsibility to adhere to certain rules of behavior and conduct. We expect each

Upward Bound member to act in a mature and responsible way at all times. Following is a list of prohibited behaviors that, if not avoided, could result in removal from the Upward Bound Program. **This list is in no way comprehensive.**

SECTION 1: RULES & REGULATIONS

- Willful violation of any Upward Bound Project behavioral standard;
- Willful violation of security or safety rules or failure to adhere to evening travel curfew;
- Tampering with or misuse of computer technology, web sites or safety equipment;
- Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person;
- Possession of, or being under the influence of, controlled substances; use, possession or sale of controlled substances in any quantity while participating in Virginia Highlands Upward Bound Program functions, or on school property. Medications prescribed by a physician must be registered with the Program Director and be listed on your medical form;
- Possession of firearms, weapons, or explosives;
- Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence; making threats of violence toward anyone when representing Virginia Highlands Upward Bound; fighting; horseplay, or negligent damage of property;
- Refusing to obey instructions properly issued by the Upward Bound Program Director, counselor, or instructors pertaining to your behavior;
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercing fellow students on or off the premises at any time, for any purpose;
- Engaging in an act of sabotage; willfully or with gross negligence causing the destruction or damage of property;
- Theft of property; unauthorized possession or removal of any Virginia Highlands Upward Bound or Virginia Highlands Community College property, including documents, from the premises; unauthorized use of program equipment, software, or property for personal reasons; use of Virginia Highlands Upward Bound property for profit;
- Dishonesty; willful falsification or misrepresentation on your application or other records; untruthfulness about absences from school or Virginia Highlands Upward bound activities; falsifying reasons for absences; any alteration of data in Virginia Highlands Upward Bound program records;
- Malicious gossip and/or spreading rumors; engaging in behavior with intent to create lack of harmony; interfering with others success in the program;
- Participation in any immoral conduct or indecent behavior;
- Any act of harassment; any uttering of sexual, ethnic, or racial jokes or slurs;
- Use of obscene or abusive language; indifference or rudeness, such as failure to remove earbuds/headphones during activities; disorderly/antagonistic conduct;
- Failure to immediately report damage to vehicles or equipment; failure to report an accident involving program staff or students
- Bullying of another person verbally, via text/social media, or any other form will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

- During overnight trips, students should never be in any room other than the student's assigned room. If, upon conducting a room check, it is determined that a student is not in the room he/she is supposed to be in, the director will exercise extreme caution to ensure the safety of students.

SECTION 2: DATING

While participating in Virginia Highlands Upward Bound activities, you are expected to conduct yourselves in a wholesome, group-oriented manner. Any behavior that excludes others or makes them uncomfortable around you as a couple will result in disciplinary action. Public displays of affection (PDA) are not permitted during Upward Bound activities. This includes, but is not limited to: Kissing, touching, and fondling/caressing one another. Please be respectful of each other and of your peers. In other words, learn on our time and date on your time!

SECTION 3: APPEARANCE

You only have one opportunity to make a good first impression. You are expected to dress and groom yourself in such a way as to represent professionalism and maturity. Please adhere to the following standards of dress:

- Sundresses with bare backs and/or shoulders or tops that show the torso are not acceptable at Upward Bound events.
- All men must wear shirts;
- T-shirts with profane, suggestive language or those that advertise alcohol or tobacco products are not acceptable;
- When traveling and representing VHCC Upward Bound, holes in pants must not be above the thigh; shirts must not have holes;
- Sunglasses and baseball caps must be removed indoors;
- Shirts, shorts, skirts and dresses must be of an appropriate length; fingertips must touch fabric when the arms are hanging at the sides; undergarments should not be showing.
- Earbuds must be removed during activities;
- When job shadowing, employers may require a specific dress code and may also require facial piercings be removed (OSHA requirement);
- Swimming attire for females must be either a one-piece suit or a tankini with a full coverage top; bottoms must be fully covered as well

SECTION 4: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Failure to uphold Upward Bound standards will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will consist of either a verbal or written warning; however, there may be instances in which the violation is such that there is a more severe consequence, such as placement of the student on probation, or even removal from the program. Each incident will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Upward Bound staff. Students who are placed on probation for disciplinary issues will receive a letter detailing the actions they must take to be removed from probation. These actions may include (but are not limited to) performing community service hours, maintaining a specific GPA, and/or increasing Upward Bound meeting/event attendance.

ACADEMIC YEAR COMPONENT

The Upward Bound program is divided into two separate components; the academic year component and the summer component, which we call Summer Academy. Students are encouraged to participate in both the academic year and Summer Academy; however, the Virginia Highlands Upward Bound staff also realize the importance of extracurricular activities in developing a well-rounded student. Virginia Highlands Upward Bound strongly recommends summer participation for at least two (2) summers. We want students to feel like they can participate in other activities during the summer, including sports camps, 4-H camp, church camp, band camp, and even summer employment. As such, a regular component will be made available, and an alternate component will be made available and will allow for more flexibility. Note – a stipend is not available for the alternate component.

Upward Bound is designed to prepare students for enrollment in a two- or four-year college. In order to be adequately prepared for college, students must succeed in their high school courses. Upward Bound provides students who are committed to academic success with the motivation and skills to achieve their goals; however, students must be active participants in their education.

MEETINGS

Students will be held accountable for meeting attendance and activity participation. We encourage students to remember that they will only get out of Upward Bound what they put into it. In order to benefit from all of the resources we have, students must attend and participate.

- **In-School & After-School Meetings:** Upward Bound groups at each school will meet once weekly, weather and testing schedule permitting. Some schools have an activity/club block during which meetings will occur. In other schools, meetings will alternate between before-school, after-school, and during lunch. We do this to limit time students are out of core classes. Students can earn a \$10 stipend per meeting (up to \$40 per month) if they attend, participate, and compete one grade-level based activity per month. Students who do not attend, participate, and complete the activity will not receive their monthly stipend. Students should reach out to Upward Bound staff if there is a scheduling conflict to discuss other arrangements. The curriculum for all students includes:
 - **Academic Success**
 - **College Planning**
 - **Career Planning**
 - **Financial Literacy**
 - **Being Your Best You**
- **Individual Meetings:** Students will be required to meet individually with their Upward Bound counselor. Seniors will need to meet with their UB counselor once per month, with all other students meeting individually with their UB counselor at least once per semester. **Students who have missed three consecutive weekly group meetings without notifying staff may risk program dismissal.**
- **Activity/Event Participation:** Virginia Highlands Upward Bound students are expected to attend the majority of the Upward Bound activities (college visits, cultural activities, workshops, etc.) that are offered to students. Students who are participating in a school-sponsored activity, such as a sporting event, will be excused, but since all events are offered free of charge to students, attendance is **expected**.

- **College Visits** will be planned for each semester.
- **Workshops** will be planned one to two times per semester. These workshops will focus on group academic advising, the college applications process, financial aid and scholarship application assistance, **SAT preparation**, and career planning. These evening workshops will include a meal for participants and their families.
- **Cultural Activities** will be offered during the year, and may include activities such as visiting a museum, exploring nature locally, seeing a play or other live production, and the like. These activities are often scheduled in combination with a college visit. Funding permitting, seniors will have the opportunity to attend a 2-3 night cultural activity.
- **Community Service** activities will be planned for the spring semester and will assist students with opportunities for personal growth and increased social awareness.
- **Tutoring** will be prescribed individually for students as requested or based upon need. Brainfuse is the online platform used for tutoring. Students who have a cumulative GPA that falls below at 2.5 will be required to receive tutoring through Brainfuse. Students who earn below a C for a class, may also be required to attend tutoring for that class. Students who do not attend the required tutoring, may be removed from the program.
- **SAT Preparation (Sophomores, Juniors & Seniors):** In-person and/or virtual SAT preparation workshops will be available during the fall semester. Supplemental SAT preparation resources, such as Khan Academy, may also be used. Upon registering for the SAT/ACT, Upward Bound students are eligible for two fee-waivers that allow them to sit for the SAT for free.

Attendance is so important that we tie it to our fun activities

- Students must attend 50% of the total academic year Upward Bound events (including meetings, workshops, college visits, etc.) to be eligible for the Summer Academy trip.
- In the event that a student must miss more than 50% of the total Upward Bound events (schedule conflicts, illness, etc.), he or she **MAY** be able to substitute other activities for missed dates. The Upward Bound staff and the student will deal with these cases individually and students must have valid reasons for the missed dates.

RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

Advanced Studies Diploma & Dual Enrollment: Upward Bound is a program designed to promote college readiness. Upward Bound students are highly encouraged to be enrolled in a rigorous plan of study throughout high school, meaning that they should be working toward the Advanced Studies Diploma. Students should also enroll in Dual Enrollment courses if possible. As an upperclassman, students who are recommended by their school counselors, or their VHCC College Navigator, will have the opportunity to enroll in college level Dual Enrollment classes for their junior and/or senior year.

GRIT

Upward Bound strives to instill grit and determination in our students. Angela Duckworth, author of “Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance,” says that “grit is about working on something that you care about so much that you’re willing to stay loyal to it.” Students will

complete a GRIT scale when they are admitted into the Upward Bound program, at the end of each academic year, and again at time of graduation. It is our goal to increase our students' grittiness by helping them to discover their passion and to develop a perseverance to achieve their goals related to that passion.

JOB SHADOWING & CAREER ASSESSMENTS

It is important that students begin thinking about their future careers. To help students learn more about specific careers, they will be completing career assessments through The College Board's Big Future program, or other available assessments. This will prepare underclassmen students for the SCORE program offered to seniors, during which they will do in-person job shadowing. Please see the SCORE section below.

JUNIOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

All Upward Bound students are encouraged each year to become involved in school activities, and to take a leadership role in those activities. Juniors in Upward Bound will be given the opportunity to take a leadership role in Upward Bound. Interested students will be given an opportunity to:

- Option 1: Propose and implement a project that will foster their leadership abilities. Proposals will be accepted in Spring of their sophomore year and students will implement their projects either during Summer Academy leading into their Junior year, or during the academic component of their Junior year.
- Option 2: Attend a leadership conference through the Virginia Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (VAEOPP).

To be selected to participate in the Junior Leadership Program, students will complete an application describing the project they would like to implement, or an essay explaining why they are a good candidate to attend the leadership conference.

Please see the Upward Bound At-a-Glance document at the end of this handbook for criteria to participate in Junior Leadership.

SCORE – Senior Career Observation & Research Experience

SCORE is a program offered to seniors that will focus on career exploration and research. Students who are interested in participating in SCORE must be in good standing with Upward Bound and will be required to complete a short application in the spring of their junior year. Participation in SCORE is a requirement of the Senior Reward (Please see Senior Reward Section below). SCORE is offered to students either during the Summer Academy leading into their Senior year, **OR** during the fall of their Senior year. Students who participate in SCORE during the academic year must be able to secure their own transportation to their career observation site. Students who elect to participate in SCORE during Summer Academy will have transportation provided. As a part of SCORE, students may have the opportunity to participate in mock interviews and a career readiness class. Applications are due April 1 of each year.

Please see the Upward Bound At-a-Glance document at the end of this handbook for criteria to participate in SCORE.

SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Senior students are eligible to work toward a Senior Achievement. Participating seniors will be honored at their school's awards ceremony, and may be eligible for an educational trip (funding permitting). The requirements are as follows:

Please see the Upward Bound At-a-Glance document at the end of this handbook for criteria to earn Senior Achievement.

Students will be notified of their status for Senior Reward by May 1st of each year.

ACADEMIC NOTICE

The Virginia Highlands Upward Bound staff expects students to demonstrate a commitment to academic growth and success. Students are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (unweighted GPA). Students who do not maintain a 2.5 GPA will be put on notice. During the notice period, students will be required to utilize Brainfuse for tutoring sessions. Students on academic probation may also be required to meet with their Upward Bound advisor on a more frequent basis for academic advising. Students who are on academic notice who do not attend the required tutoring, **may be removed from the program.**

STIPENDS

Students can earn a stipend of **up to \$40 per month** for attending and participating in weekly meetings (or other pre-approved events - \$10 per meeting) and completing one additional activity that focuses on college readiness. When a calendar week spans across two different months, for purposes of processing stipends, staff will use the first day of the week, i.e. *Monday*, to determine which month a week falls within. Stipend amounts are submitted to a State of VA central processing facility where they process and mail your checks. This process can be lengthy, so although we try to submit amounts within 5 days of the end of each month, checks may not get to you for 4-6 weeks (it usually does NOT take that long). Stipend checks are processed three times per year, typically during the months of December, May, and August. We encourage you to set up an account at your local bank to make it easier to cash or deposit your check. If you do not receive your check, please let us know ASAP. Also, please be aware that UB is not responsible for lost/stolen checks or for checks sent to an address that has not been updated by the student. **Please note that we MUST have your social security number and correct mailing address for the state of VA to be able to process your stipend payments.**

Students who violate the standards of conduct and/or the travel rules and regulations will forfeit their stipend. **Additionally, students who register for an event and do not attend without advance notice will also forfeit their stipend for the month during which that event was scheduled.**

Summer Component

SUMMER ACADEMY

Each summer, Upward Bound offers an on-campus, six (6) week academic academy, and an alternate program will now also be offered. All students are encouraged to participate in at least two (2) Summer Academy experiences during their time in Upward Bound. Rising freshman may be required to participate in either the regular or alternate component, as it immerses them in the Upward Bound culture immediately. Students who meet the following criteria will be **eligible** for the Summer Academy trip:

- Good academic standing with Upward Bound: GPA of 2.5 or higher
- Good behavioral standing with Upward Bound: no behavioral issues during Upward Bound events, no out-of-school suspensions from school
- Good attendance: attendance at 50% or more of Upward Bound activities (including meetings, cultural events, workshops and college visits) and **no more than 10 unexcused absences during the school year. Students who meet this criteria will be given preference for summer academy.**
- Commitment to attend: students will sign a commitment form stating they commit to attend Summer Academy each day for the 6-week period. Students who can commit to coming each day and to going on the trip will be given preference.
- Attend 80% of Summer Academy; Students who do not meet the 80% attendance requirement will only be permitted to attend the trip upon approval by program director. Student will be required to complete additional requirements, per the program director's instructions.
- Uphold all Upward Bound standards of conduct during Summer Academy.

Summer Academy will operate from 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Transportation is provided from the students' home high school to VHCC and back. Students will be provided with all academic supplies, lunch, snacks and drinks. We will conclude each Summer Academy with a celebration and showcase of work for all students and their parents.

The following criteria will be used to determine intensive academic class placement:

- Rising freshman who have not passed the ALG I SOL will be given preference for math.
- Rising sophomores will be given preference for science.
- Rising juniors will be given preference for English.

Summer Academy students will participate in a world language & culture class, and one other intensive academic class. **Students will be assigned to academic classes by Upward Bound staff with strong consideration given to student's interests and grade level.** Classes will rotate from year to year to ensure that students are not taking the same classes in consecutive years. The last week of Summer Academy will include a trip that will incorporate college visits, cultural events, and opportunities to learn more about subjects covered in Summer Academy. These trips are three – five days long, and past destinations have included Savannah, Georgia, Charleston, South Carolina, New York City, Florida and Washington DC.

SUMMER ACADEMY BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to abide by the Upward Bound standards of conduct while attending Summer Academy and while traveling. Students are expected to treat Summer Academy as an academic experience, meaning they will come prepared for classes, will participate fully in classes, and will complete any assignments required by Summer Academy faculty. Students who violate the standards of conduct will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- First offense: a phone call will be made to the parents/guardian
- Second offense: parent must pick student up from VHCC
- Third offense: student will be expelled from Summer Academy and will forfeit travel privileges and summer stipend

Students and parents sign a travel rules form. Students that violate any of the rules while on a trip will forfeit any travel privileges for at least one semester, will be placed on behavioral probation, and in cases of a severe infraction, parents may be responsible for arranging travel back home. Some offenses may warrant immediate dismissal from the program.

STIPENDS

Students will also receive a stipend for participation in Summer Academy. Students can earn up to \$90 (\$3.00 per day). Students will receive the maximum stipend if they attend each day of Summer Academy. Three dollars (\$3) will be deducted from the total stipend for each day absent. Absences will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATED SENIORS

SUMMER BRIDGE

Virginia Highlands Upward Bound can provide six (6) hours of transferrable college credit, course selection counseling, and textbooks for selected seniors who have graduated from high school and intend on pursuing a degree at a two (2) or four (4) year college or university. This is intended to help students successfully bridge from high school to college. This is offered during the summer between the students' senior year of high school and their first semester of college. Summer Bridge students can also receive a summer stipend for work/study.

All seniors are encouraged to apply if they meet the following criteria:

- Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3
- Preferred two (2) years of participation in Summer Academy
- A “college-entrance” level score on the SAT or ACT, or VCCS placement test
- Consistent participation in Upward Bound activities
- Fewer than 10 unexcused absences from school during the senior year of high school
- No out-of-school suspensions during the senior year of high school

Enrollment in Summer Bridge is limited to funds available. Being eligible to participate does not guarantee that the student will be selected to participate. Students will be ranked according to GPA, college entrance test scores, school and Upward Bound attendance, and commitment to attend classes during the summer semester.

SUMMER ACADEMY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Graduated seniors can apply to be a Summer Academy volunteer. This opportunity will be based on personnel needs for Summer Academy. Students would be required to complete an application and be in good standing with Upward Bound.

EXCEL SUMMER BRIDGE

Most students who participate in Upward Bound are eligible to participate in the EXCEL program, at Virginia Highlands Community College. EXCEL is a “sister program” to Upward Bound and offers students many great opportunities such as their Summer Bridge program, grant aid (money that is above and beyond federal financial aid or scholarships the students may qualify for), workshops, and individualized advising. Students who know they will be attending VHCC in the fall following high school graduation should apply for the EXCEL program in May of their Senior year. To participate in EXCEL, students must meet income requirements (FAFSA must be submitted) and must intend to transfer to a four-year school after graduating from VHCC. The Summer Bridge program will consist of 4 days of instruction, along with receiving grant aid, a graphing calculator, and a college credit (if this credit wasn't obtained through a Dual Enrollment SDV course).

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I find out what is going on?

Communication is very important. We work really hard to get information to students & parents/guardians in several different ways. Information is sent in emails (you need to check & read your email EVERYDAY), it is in the UB Newsletter, it is on the UB website, it is on UB social media (mainly Facebook & Twitter), & we send out REMIND texts. Please follow us on social media, sign up for REMIND, & check your email EVERYDAY!

When are the Weekly Meetings at my school?

Weekly meetings start the first week of September & end around the first week of December. We do not meet the week of Thanksgiving. Meetings start back up in mid January & we meet until the first week of May. Chilhowie & Northwood meet during club block every Wednesday or before school. Patrick Henry & Holston meet every Wednesday at various times. Virginia High meets every Thursday at various times. Check Remind, social media, & your email EVERYDAY to find out about times/locations/changes.

What if I miss a meeting?

It will happen & that's okay, but you should tell us if you must miss! If it happens repeatedly, you could miss out on some opportunities that are listed on the other side of this page. If you miss 2 meetings without notifying Upward Bound staff, it is your responsibility to schedule an individual meeting with us. If you want to make up a missed meeting, you have to let us know so we can give you an alternative. Also, missing meetings will affect your stipend.

What is a stipend and when do I get it?

During the academic year, you can earn up to \$40 a month by participating in weekly meetings (or other pre-approved events) & completing one additional activity that focuses on college readiness that is specific to your grade level. Stipend amounts are submitted by our Program Director to a State of VA central processing facility, where they process & mail checks. This process can be lengthy & checks may not get to you for 4-6 weeks (it usually does NOT take that long). Stipend checks are processed in Dec/Jan, May, & July/Aug. We encourage you to set up an account at your local bank to make it easier to cash or deposit your check. If you do not receive your check please let us know ASAP. Also, please be aware that UB is not responsible for lost/stolen checks or for checks sent to an address that has not been updated by the student.

What if I sign up for an event but can't attend?

Please don't sign up for events that you know you can't attend. We understand that sometimes things happen, but you need to let us know ASAP if your plans change. If you miss an event that you signed up for without letting us know, it is considered a "no-show" & will result in losing your monthly stipend and/or losing the ability to sign up for future events. Repeated cancellations can also affect your ability to sign up for events. Check your calendar and be aware of your

schedule before making commitments! UB usually has to pre-pay for events & therefore we lose money that could be spent on other fun things for you!

Do I have to be working toward an Advanced Studies Diploma?

It is highly encouraged. An Advanced Studies Diploma (ASD) will prepare you for the rigor of college classes better than the Standard Diploma. If you plan to attend a 4-year college after high school, admissions offices favor the ASD. It is also a requirement for UB Junior Leadership, SCORE, & UB Senior Achievement.

What if my GPA drops below a 2.5 or I drop below C in a class?

You will be required to use our online Brainfuse tutoring service. You will have one semester to show progress toward bringing your GPA back to the 2.5 minimum or improving your class grade. If you do not utilize Brainfuse (we can check), or you do not make progress in bringing your GPA back to the 2.5 minimum, you will be placed on probation & will lose the privilege of traveling or participating in Summer Academy (you'll still be expected to attend weekly meetings, & you will still be able to earn your stipend).

What if I have other questions?

If you have questions, it is so important to ASK! Don't let a fear of asking questions hold you up. This is true for UB, high school, college, & life! For any UB related questions, you can always contact us through email, text, phone, social media, or REMIND. Our contact info is in our UB Newsletter and on our website.

What if I change my mind and don't want to be in UB?

You are stuck with us! Just joking - we understand that your circumstances could change. If this is the case, please let us know so that we can look for alternative ways to serve you. Or, fill your spot with a student who is on the waiting list.

How often do I need to check my email?

EVERYDAY! :)

[Visit our VHCC Upward Bound Website to learn more about Upward Bound!](http://www.vhcc.edu/upwardbound)

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