

Prospective Senate Pages: School Tips

The following information may assist you with completing an application for the Senate Page Program.

The Virginia General Assembly is a bicameral legislature. The House Page Program, administered by the House Clerk's Office, is a separate program that requires completion of a different application. In addition, the selection process, program components and protocols for the House Page Program differ from the Senate.

Understanding Absenteeism from School

Students are *excused* from school for the duration of the General Assembly session in Richmond. Absenteeism for Senate Pages is addressed in sections [8VAC20-110-40](#) and [8VAC20-110-50](#) of the Virginia Administrative Code.

If your school has questions pertaining to the manner in which an extended absence of this magnitude should be documented, please ask administrators to contact the Superintendents of Public Instruction at the Virginia Department of Education.

Superintendent of Public Instruction
James Monroe Building
101 North 14th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 225-2057

Senate Pages only work during a regular legislative session which spans 46 calendar day session in odd-numbered years and 60 calendar days in even-numbered years. Regular legislative sessions convene on the second Wednesday in January of each year. Senate Pages are not retained in the event of an extended regular session or special legislative session.

Balancing School Assignments and Senate Page Service

Prior to applying for admission to the program, families should have a conversation with the appropriate school personnel. We strongly recommend this occur in early fall.

Students who receive admission to the program should have exceptional time management skills and be capable of doing a lot of independent study during their term of service as a Senate Page.

It is the responsibility of the student, parents, and teacher to collectively determine how the student will receive his or her assignments each week. The Senate Page Program recommends that teachers give an all-inclusive packet of assignments directly to the parent or student each Friday. This work should be completed and turned in the following Friday when the next packet

is picked up if possible. The Senate Clerk's Office will only facilitate the transfer of tests, quizzes and exams. The Senate Clerk's Office does not handle the coordination or transfer of other homework assignments.

Nightly Study Hall for Senate Pages

Senate Pages are required to attend a mandatory study hall from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. During this time period, they will have access to tutors who are experienced at teaching in many of the usual middle- and high-school fields of study (i.e. math, science, English, social studies). Please note that these tutors are simply resources for the Pages to utilize, and that no formal classes will be held during the program. In addition to the mandatory two-hour nightly study hall, Senate Pages often have some downtime during the day (usually during breaks, or when they are in-between jobs), and are encouraged to work on assignments during this time as well.

The Senate tutors do not make school/homework assignments. They are available to assist the students with the assignments from their schools.

How to Handle "Daily" School Assignments

Utilizing the recommended "two packets" system is one approach to staying organized throughout the legislative session.

Participants in the Senate Page Program are urged to discuss the professional development track with their instructors, as many of those assignments may serve as a suitable substitute for homework or other class assignments a student is missing at school.

IMPORTANT: Teachers should note that students participating in this program will not have enough time to complete all assignments that students at the school are able to complete. As a result, the program encourages teachers to divide a student's work into two stacks: (1) priority work and (2) everything else (time permitting). Deadlines for completion should be included with all assignments.

Senate Pages are expected to have assignments provided by their school. Parents will be contacted if Senate Pages do not have schoolwork to complete or are unable to use down time in a constructive and enriching manner.

Again, students who receive admission to the program should have exceptional time management skills and be capable of doing a lot of independent study during their term of service.

How to Handle Tests, Quizzes and Exams

There are several options to handle tests, quizzes or exams. Those include the following:

Option 1

At school on Friday afternoon or Monday morning. All pages return to their home districts on Friday afternoon and typically return to their assigned housing on Sunday night. Staff members can work with pages to accommodate work schedule adjustments for Friday afternoon and Monday morning.

Pages are dismissed for the weekend each Friday and have permission to depart early for test taking at the school in which they are enrolled.

Option 2

Electronic transmission. Send tests, exams and quizzes directly to the Senate Clerk's Office by e-mail for distribution to study hall. The contents will be logged by a designated homework coordinator, sent to study hall and administered to the page. The study hall tutors will return the completed tests/exams/quizzes to the homework coordinator who will mail the assignments directly to the teacher at the school's address.

Option 3 (this is not recommended)

Hand delivery. A Senate Page or a parent can hand deliver tests, exams and quizzes directly to the Senate Clerk's Office in a sealed envelope with a signature across the flap. The contents will be logged by a designated homework coordinator, sent to study hall and administered to the page. The study hall tutors will return tests/exams/quizzes to the designated homework coordinator, packaged and sealed with a signature across the flap. The sealed contents will be mailed directly to the teacher at the school's address.

Tests, quizzes or exams transmitted by mail should be sent to the following:

Senate Page Program
C/O Senate Clerk's Office
P.O. Box 396
Richmond, Virginia 23218

**Please include the student's first and last name, all necessary instructions and deadlines to return.

Before a decision is made about the preferred manner in which a student will obtain assignments, please note that we are not equipped to handle high volume printing (for example, lengthy power point presentations, dozens of pages for reading, etc.).

Personal Electronics and School Assignments

Permitted use of any electronic device is a privilege that can be suspended. In addition to a cell phone, a Senate Page is permitted to have **one** additional electronic device during the term of service. We recommend the other device be suitable for homework tasks.

Chromebooks and school-issued laptops are highly discouraged, due to restrictive settings that prohibit connectivity to public or other wireless networks.

The use of a cell phone is only allowed during breakfast, on the way to and from work, and during dinner hours. Senate Pages are not allowed to have a cell phone on their person during work hours. Cell phones are also not permitted during study hall, free time after study hall or during overnight hours. Phones must be turned into staff for secure storage during these blocks of time. Limited use of the one other personal electronic device is permitted during work hours.

For more information, please contact:

Senate Clerk's Office
State Capitol
P.O. Box 396
Richmond, Virginia 23229
(804) 698-7410
pageinfo@senate.virginia.gov

Updated on 05/15/2023