

Roanoke City Public Schools

NOV. 1, 2026

COMMUNITY BUILDERS PROGRAM REPORT



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Community Builders Pilot Leadership Team

- **Coordinator for Site-Based Program Implementation:**
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- **Coordinator for Division-Level Administration of Funds and Technical Assistance:**
Mr. Corey Alder, Director of Community Engagement

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Background Overview and Authority

In 2024, the Virginia General Assembly amended § 22.1-211.1 of the Code of Virginia through the enactment of House Bill 626, patroned by Delegate Sam Rasoul, with companion support from Senator Lashrecse Aird, to establish the Community Builders Pilot Program. The legislation directed funding and support to Roanoke City Public Schools (RCPS) and Petersburg City Public Schools with the primary objectives of reducing youth involvement in behaviors associated with gun violence, strengthening community engagement, increasing students' sense of belonging, and supporting positive educational outcomes.

Between Summer 2024 and Summer 2026, RCPS implemented the Community Builders Pilot Program through a network of school and community partnerships, leveraging existing relationships while expanding opportunities for participating students during the school year, after regular school hours, and during summer months. Throughout the two-year pilot, the division focused on five core goals: reducing juvenile gun violence, promoting workforce development and college readiness, expanding career and technical education awareness, increasing community engagement, and strengthening students' personal growth and sense of belonging.

Data collected during the pilot period demonstrated encouraging outcomes. By June 2026, regular program participants experienced a 54 percent reduction in chronic absenteeism compared with 2023-2024 levels, a 55 percent reduction in out-of-school suspension days, and a 62 percent reduction in marking period course failures. Additionally, local juvenile gun violence data reflected a sustained decline during the pilot period, with the number of juvenile offenders involved in gun violence decreasing from 12 in 2023 to zero reported offenders in 2026. While multiple factors likely contributed to these outcomes, the results provided evidence that the Community Builders strategy merited continued investment and broader examination.

Recognizing the promising outcomes of the pilot program, the 2026 Virginia General Assembly enacted House Bill 1153, patroned by Delegate Sam Rasoul, and Senate Bill 820, patroned by Senator David Suetterlein, establishing Roanoke City Public Schools as the Commonwealth's Community Builders Demonstration Site. This bipartisan legislation, signed into law by Governor Abigail Spanberger, authorizes RCPS to continue implementation of the Community Builders model while serving as a resource for other school divisions interested in adopting similar strategies. Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, RCPS will continue after-school programming across all middle and high schools while preparing to host demonstration site visits for interested Virginia school divisions during Spring and Summer 2027. The division will also continue collecting and reporting program data annually to the Governor, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the House Committee on Education.

Financial Data Analysis

2026-2027 Community Builders Funds

Award amount (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027): **\$224,133.91**

EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS	OBJECT CODE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND TOTAL AMOUNT
Personal Services	1000	\$143,720.00 <i>Supplemental pay for school-based program coordinators and staff</i>
Employee Benefits	2000	\$10,994.58 <i>Benefits for program staff</i>
Purchased Services	3000	\$56,621.63 <i>Purchased services including transportation for field trips related to college/career exploration, community engagement, and related activities.</i> <i>Purchased/contracted services with community partners related to student growth, mental/behavioral health, and engagement in positive self-development activities.</i>
Internal Services	4000	\$1,500.00 <i>Internal services such as printing of program materials and other materials needed for students.</i>
Other Charges	5000	\$0
Materials/Supplies	6000	\$11,297.70 <i>Instructional materials and program supplies</i>
TOTAL		<u>\$224,133.91</u>

Program Participant Data

2026-2027 Participant Data

Number of Community Builders Participants by Grade Level as of October 15, 2026:

- 8th Grade: 86
- 9th Grade: 38

Number of students enrolled in Roanoke City Public Schools as of October 15, 2026:

- 13,158

Number of students that participated in Community Builders 2026 summer programming:

- 132



Baseline Data and Ongoing Progress Monitoring



The 2026–27 Community Builders cohort is being established through the student application and referral process. Students are encouraged to apply, and referrals are solicited from school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other school staff to identify students who may benefit from program participation.

Once enrollment is finalized, each participant's SY 2025–26 school records will be used to establish an individual baseline for absenteeism, disciplinary incidents, academic performance, including failing grades reflected on report cards and the number and rate of reported incidents of gun violence involving participants in the Program, in the City of Roanoke as a whole.

Throughout SY 2026–27, participant data will be monitored and reviewed against established baselines to assess progress in attendance, behavior, and academic performance. Regular reviews will help identify emerging concerns, recognize improvements, and guide targeted interventions and student supports. As the school year progresses, participation and outcome data will be collected to support comparisons between pre-participation and post-participation outcomes.

Because SY 2026–27 programming and data collection are ongoing, final pre- and post-participation comparisons are not yet available. Initial findings will be documented as data become available, with additional analysis conducted as the school year progresses. End-of-year comparisons will be used to evaluate participant outcomes, assess program effectiveness, and inform future program planning. Findings will be reported in accordance with annual reporting requirements.

For data and information related to the two-year pilot program, please refer to the July 1, 2026 Community Builders Pilot Program Final Report.

[July 1, 2026 Final Community Builders Pilot Report](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1789570332/rcpsinfo/yrteoic1esmzry5v04ca/July12026FinalCommunityBuildersPilotReport.pdf)

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SMART Goals

SMART Goal #1

By June 2027, improve attendance among Community Builders participants in grades 8 and 9, compared to the 2025-2026 school year:

- Participants who were not chronically absent will remain below the chronic absenteeism threshold.
- Participants who missed 18-27 days during the 2025-2026 school year will miss fewer than 18 days.
- Participants who missed more than 27 days will reduce their total absences by an average of 15% or more.

SMART Goal #2

By June 2027, reduce out-of-school suspension (OSS) days among Community Builders participants in grades 8 and 9 by 15% as compared to the 2025-2026 school year.

- Participants with no OSS days during the 2025-2026 school year will maintain zero OSS days.
- Participants with 1-5 OSS days will reduce those days by at least one day, and participants with more than 5 OSS days will reduce their OSS days by an average of 20% or more.

SMART Goal #3

By June 2027, reduce the number of report card failing grades among Community Builders participants in grades 8 and 9 by 15% as compared to the 2025-2026 school year. Participants with no failing grades during the 2025-2026 school year will maintain passing grades in all courses.

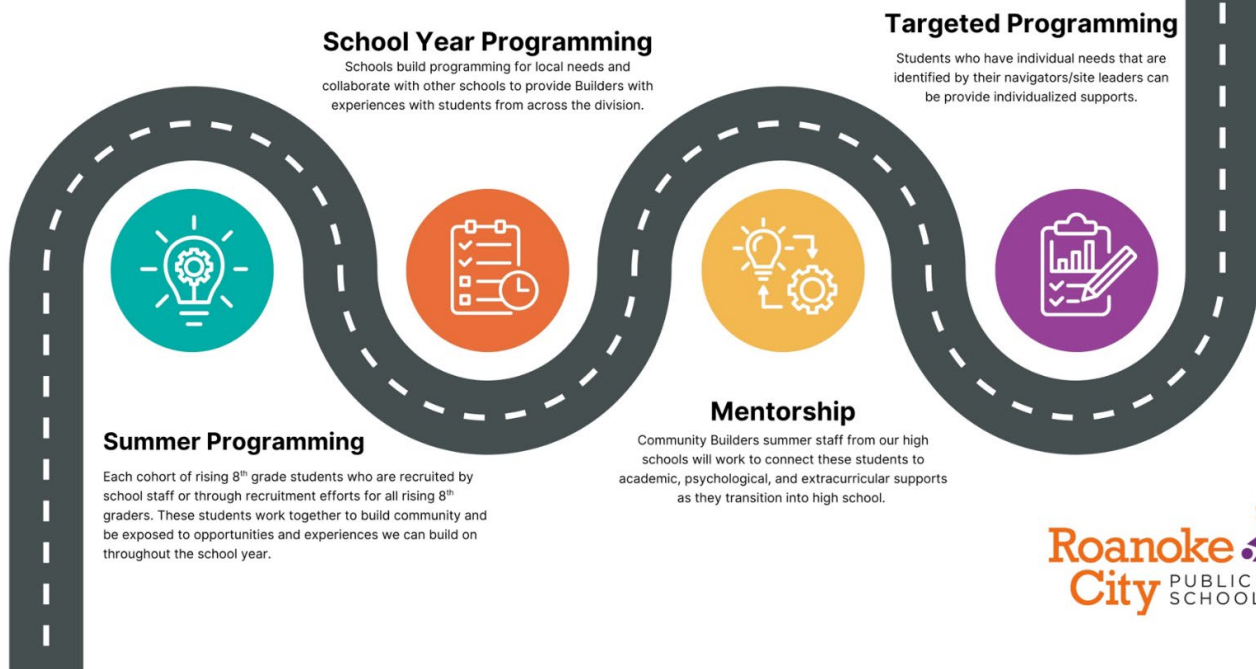
- Participants with one report card failure will reduce the number of failures to zero.
- Participants with two or more report card failures will reduce the number of failures by at least one course.

SMART Goal #4

By June 2027, maintain zero incidents of gun violence involving Community Builders participants in grades 8 and 9 as either offenders, victims, or individuals charged with firearm-related offenses. Additionally, at least 90% of participants will actively engage in one or more violence prevention, mentorship, restorative practices, leadership development, or community engagement activities designed to strengthen protective factors and reduce involvement in gun-violence-related behaviors.



Building Success in Community Builders



Demonstration Site Information

Virginia's Community Builders Demonstration Site

Following the success of the pilot program, Roanoke City Public Schools was designated by the Virginia General Assembly as the statewide Community Builders Demonstration Site. Through this role, RCPS serves as a learning partner for school divisions interested in implementing similar programs focused on student belonging, community engagement, workforce readiness, and violence prevention.

Learn more at rcps.info/communitybuilders.

For Visiting School Divisions

The demonstration site experience provides opportunities to:

- Observe Community Builders programming in action
- Learn about program development and implementation
- Explore student engagement and support strategies
- Review data collection, evaluation, and continuous improvement practices

- Learn how schools, community partners, and local government work together to support students
- Discuss sustainability, funding, staffing, partnerships, and scaling strategies with program leaders
- Visitors will gain practical tools, resources, and lessons learned from the development and implementation of Community Builders across RCPS' five middle schools and two high schools.

RCPS Community Builders Contact Information:

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