



P.O. DRAWER 140, 100 CENTRAL CIRCLE
LOW MOOR, VA 24457

February 19, 2025

COVINGTON — Covington Middle School will remain closed the week of Feb. 24-28, and students will continue to receive remote instruction.

The school has been closed to in-person learning since Jan. 31. The extension of virtual learning into next week is consistent with a Covington Middle School Virtual Learning Plan that was developed by AHPS shortly after CMS was closed on Jan. 31. This plan stated that weeklong extensions were possible.

The school was evacuated on Jan. 31 after school officials became aware of a concern over an odor in the building. A thorough investigation by AHPS, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Covington Emergency Services, and local first responders revealed that a gas oven and a ventilation system in the cafeteria kitchen were not working properly, causing carbon monoxide to be released.

The oven and the ventilation system have been removed. The school has remained closed to allow for a thorough inspection of the building. The school board approved the hiring of independent contractors to thoroughly assess the building before students and staff return. “All of those involved are working to be very thorough, and we appreciate the patience and grace of our students, staff, and community,” said AHPS leaders Kim Halterman and Melinda Snead-Johnson.

AHPS continues to update the community about the CMS situation. The AHPS website, www.ahps.k12.va.us, offers several resources to keep the community informed. Under “Important Information” on the main page, AHPS features “CMS January 31 FAQ and other Documents.” Of particular interest is “Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the January 31st Evacuation.” The document is updated regularly as part of AHPS’ efforts to keep the community informed. Questions can be submitted to AHPSinfo@ahps.k12.va.us.

The website also contains information from the Virginia Department of Health to address health questions related to carbon monoxide.

“We thank our community for its support as we continue to move forward with our investigations. We appreciate the support and help,” Halterman and Snead-Johnson said.

AHPS serves approximately 2,700 students. The school division is jointly funded by Alleghany County and the City of Covington. The school division was formed when Alleghany County Public Schools, Covington City Public Schools, and Jackson River Technical Center merged on July 1, 2022.

AHPS news and events are regularly updated on Facebook at [AHPublicSchools](#) and Instagram at [ahpublicschools](#). Information is also available at [ahpublicschools](#).

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