



Please direct inquiries to:

Darrell Gleason, Communication Specialist, Alleghany Highlands Public Schools
(540) 863-1800, darrell.gleason@ahps.k12.va.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 1, 2025

Covington Middle School Update

LOW MOOR, VA (April 1, 2025) – I know there have been several questions about what happened at CMS over the last 24 hours. I wanted to share a brief update on what we currently know.

What happened:

Yesterday morning around 10:30 a.m., an unknown odor was reported on the third floor of Covington Middle School. The descriptions of this odor were consistent with the odor that was detected on January 31, 2025.

After investigating the smell, AHPS staff determined that the third-floor odor did not require a building evacuation. The Covington Police Chief and Emergency Manager also came to the building to assess the situation first-hand and independently determined that there was no immediate cause for action.

Nevertheless, teachers in nearby classrooms were allowed to move their classes to another location in the building if they felt it would help them or their students concentrate on coursework more effectively. A robocall was sent to parents to provide them with an update at approximately 11:20 a.m.

This morning, there were again a few reports of the odor returning, but it disappeared quickly and no further actions were determined necessary at that time.

Attendance Impact:

Yesterday afternoon, many concerned parents came to the school and checked their students out for the day. As a result, attendance was lower than normal for the remainder of the day. That trend continued this morning, with many families choosing to keep their students home. Today's absence figures remain significantly higher than usual.

School Board Meeting:

Last night, the school board met in closed session to seek legal advice from its legal counsel.

Additional Information:

At this time, there are no other reports or informational updates to release.

Request:

As always, your help in ensuring that information is appropriately shared with the community is greatly appreciated.

Alleghany Highlands Public Schools

AHPS was created through the July 2022 merger of Alleghany County Public Schools, Covington City Public Schools, and Jackson River Technical Center. Alleghany County and the City of Covington jointly fund the school division. AHPS serves approximately 2,700 students.

AHPS news and events are regularly updated on Facebook at AHPublicSchools and the division website www.ahps.k12.va.us. School starts for students on Aug. 13 for the school year 2025-2026.

###