



The School Day

What to Expect in Washington Schools

For Afghan Families

School usually starts at the same time each day, though some schools start later or end earlier on certain days.

Students should arrive on time. If a student will be late or stay home, call or message the school office.

Most students attend several classes each day. In older grades, a bell or an announcement tells students when one class ends and the next begins. These students move from one classroom to another. In younger grades, students usually stay with one teacher in the same room for most of the day.

Schools understand that this school day might be new for your child. Don't hesitate to ask school staff for help as you adjust.



What your student is expected to do

Washington public schools do not require uniforms. Your child has the right to wear religious or cultural clothing. Girls and boys learn together in the same classroom or in group activities, and teachers may be men or women.

While every school has its own rules, students are generally expected to:

- **Be ready to learn:** Come to class on time with the materials they need, like notebooks and pencils.
- **Be respectful:** Treat school staff and other students with kindness and take care of school property.
- **Be active:** Work quietly, join in group activities, and ask the teacher questions.
- **Be safe:** Follow the rules in the student handbook, which includes no fighting or bullying.
- **Use technology:** Use computers for classwork or homework as requested by their teacher.
- **Ask for support:** Speak with a trusted adult at school like a teacher or counselor if they need help or feel worried.

For more guidance, look at the school's student handbook, or ask a teacher, school counselor, or principal.



Subjects and Electives

Most students in Washington public schools take two types of classes: required subjects and electives.

Required subjects are classes that all students must take, such as English, math, science and social studies.

Electives are classes students choose based on their interests and what's available, such as music, art, or technology.

To graduate, students must complete a specific number of electives and required classes.





School Meals

Most students have access to breakfast and lunch at school each day.

Your family may qualify for free or low-cost meals based on your income. You can submit an application any time during the school year through the school or district. Students eat in a large room called a cafeteria. Ask the school for a menu to see what food choices are being served each day.

If your family eats halal food, you can ask the school staff if halal-friendly or vegetarian options are available. Families can also bring meals from home.

Where to Get Help

Your school is there to support your student's success and help your family settle in. If you have questions, you can reach out to:

The teacher:

Talk to them about what your child is learning in class.



A school counselor:

Get help with your child's schedule, or if they are feeling worried.



The front office:

Call if your child will be late or if you need to update your contact information.

SCHOOL HOURS
8:30-3:30



The Student Handbook:

Look here for specific rules and guidance for your child's school, including the school dress code.



Resources

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI): [Credit Requirements; Learning Standards and Instructional Materials; Meal Application and Verification Information; Religion in Schools](#)

This resource was supported by the Office of Refugee Resettlement's Afghan Refugee School Impact: Support to Schools Initiative, under an agreement between the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington (OSPI) and School's Out Washington, financed by Washington State Department of Social and Health Services' Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (DSHS/ORIA), but do not necessarily represent the policies or official views of OSPI nor DSHS/ORIA and should not assume endorsement by the State of Washington.