

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: F.

Date: January 14, 2010

Topic: First Review of a Request for Approval of an Innovative Program Opening Prior to Labor Day from Charlotte County Public Schools

Presenter: Ms. Anne Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications
Ms. Melody Hackney, Superintendent, Charlotte County Public Schools

Telephone Number: (804) 225-2403 E-Mail Address: Anne.Wescott@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by
 State or federal law or regulation
 Board of Education regulation
 Other: _____

Action requested at this meeting

Action requested at future meeting: _____

Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action

Date _____

Action _____

Background Information: Section [22.1-79.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia* prohibits local school boards from adopting school calendars that require schools to open prior to Labor Day unless a waiver is granted by the Board for "good cause." The conditions under which the Board may grant such waivers are outlined in the *Code*. Part 3 of § 22.1-79.1.B permits the Board to approve a waiver for an experimental or innovative program as follows:

§ [22.1-79.1](#). Opening of the school year; approvals for certain alternative schedules.

A. Each local school board shall set the school calendar so that the first day students are required to attend school shall be after Labor Day. The Board of Education may waive this requirement on a showing of good cause.

B. For purposes of this section, "good cause" means:

...3. A school division is providing its students, in the school year for which the waiver is sought, with an experimental or innovative program which requires an earlier opening date than that established in subsection A of this section and which has been approved by the Department of Education pursuant to the regulations of the Board of Education establishing standards for accrediting public schools. However, any waiver or extension of the school year granted by the Board of Education pursuant to this subdivision or its standards for accrediting public schools for such an experimental or innovative program shall only apply to the opening date for those schools where such experimental or innovative programs are offered generally to the student body of the school. For the purposes of this subdivision, experimental or innovative programs shall include instructional programs that are offered on a year-round basis by the school division in one or more of its elementary or middle or high schools....

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, at [8 VAC 20-131-290.D](#), permit local school boards to seek approval to implement experimental or innovative programs under the following conditions:

D. With the approval of the local school board, local schools seeking to implement experimental or innovative programs, or both, that are not consistent with these standards shall submit a waiver request, on forms provided, to the board for evaluation and approval prior to implementation. The request must include the following:

1. Purpose and objectives of the experimental/innovative programs;
2. Description and duration of the programs;
3. Anticipated outcomes;
4. Number of students affected;
5. Evaluation procedures; and
6. Mechanisms for measuring goals, objectives, and student academic achievement....

The following school divisions with year-round, innovative, or experimental programs were approved for the 2009-2010 school year: Alexandria (two schools), Arlington (one), Covington (two), Danville (five), Fairfax County (seven), and Harrisonburg (two).

Summary of Major Elements: The Charlotte County School Board is requesting approval of innovative programs for Randolph Henry High School, Central Middle School, Eureka Elementary School, Bacon District Elementary School, Phenix Elementary School, and J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School. Approval of this request would permit all of these schools to open prior to Labor

Day. In order to provide the maximum educational benefit for students and to maximize transportation cost savings, it is important that all of these schools operate on the same calendar.

Charlotte County Public Schools (CCPS) is a rural school division which includes Randolph Henry High School, Central Middle School, Eureka Elementary School, Bacon District Elementary School, Phenix Elementary School, and J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School. The school division includes 2,164 school-age children in grades K-12 and 100 students in PreK. Fifty-two percent of the students receive free or reduced price meals. Approximately 45 percent of the county's adults over age 25 do not have high school diplomas. Moreover, only 7 percent of those persons over age 25 have a baccalaureate degree or higher.

In the summer of 2008 the school division convened a focus group of administrators and teachers to look at how to increase the number of graduating high school students who will pursue postsecondary education. This group identified the following concerns:

- Charlotte County is the 9th poorest county in Virginia. Twenty percent of its residents live in poverty.
- Economic development is extremely limited, the tax base is extremely low, and it is difficult to support community recreational activities, medical services, or transportation. The school division has implemented many programs to support the community, including daycare, summer lunch programs, mentoring programs, support for adult education, structured recreational activities for youth, and emergency shelters.
- Charlotte County youth and their families often lack personal or community exposure to varying career opportunities and exposure to the college environment, and lack the knowledge as to what kind of education is required to be successful in these careers.
- Because this community's culture has not historically reinforced the relevance of postsecondary education, CASHE (Connecting All Students to Higher Education) was developed and implemented last school year. The school division hopes that this program will result in 100 percent of its graduates attending postsecondary education.

Based on inclement weather, Charlotte County Public Schools has opened prior to Labor Day for the past five years. The changes in school programming due to CASHE now require that all schools in the division continue to open prior to Labor Day to ensure that the school calendar and the calendars of participating colleges comport so that students can fully participate in dual enrollment, GED (middle college), Pre-Engineering, the Governor's School of Southside Virginia, and other activities.

In addition, CCPS has a large number of students participating in dual enrollment with courses taught at the high school, online, and at the Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC). (During the fall of 2009, 294 students were enrolled in 28 dual enrollment classes. Because CCPS has difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers with graduate degrees, SVCC often must provide staffing for many of the dual enrollment programs.) Further, Charlotte County's Associate Degree Program was the first high school associate degree program established in Virginia. At each grade level from PK through grade 12 activities have been planned to expose all students to various types of higher education and career options. These activities are documented on the CASHE Student Record which is placed in each student's scholastic record, used in career planning discussions, and incorporated into instructional activities.

The CASHE program was first implemented during the 2008-2009 school year. Four years ago less than 50 percent of this school division's graduates pursued postsecondary education. As a result of CASHE activities, this has increased to 80 percent. The CASHE activities include on-site visits in mid-August to SVCC and Longwood University, as well as other structured activities within the community and region. Students also participate in career and college fairs. In addition, the program ensures parental involvement.

The school division is confident that this program will be successful in facilitating the success of its graduates and its goal is to reach 100 percent of its students. In order to achieve this, it is imperative that students at every grade level are provided with ongoing age appropriate educational enrichment targeting higher education and career options. CCPS ask that these schools be allowed to open prior to Labor Day so that the school division's calendar will comport with the calendars of the participating colleges and school transportation will be cost effective.

A copy of the complete package submitted by the Charlotte County School Board is attached.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education waive first review and approve this request.

Impact on Resources: The impact on resources is not expected to be significant.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: Upon approval by the Board of Education, Department of Education staff will notify the Superintendent of Charlotte County Public Schools that Randolph Henry High School, Central Middle School, Eureka Elementary School, Bacon District Elementary School, Phenix Elementary School, and J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School are authorized to open prior to Labor Day in the 2010-2011 school year.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
P. O. BOX 2120
RICHMOND, VA 23218-2120

**REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CERTAIN ACCREDITING STANDARDS
AND/OR APPROVAL
OF AN INNOVATIVE OR EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM**

The Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, (8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.) Set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (§§ 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30.

This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of education for review and recommendation to the board at least 90 days prior to the beginning of an accrediting cycle or the proposed implementation of the program or activity that precipitates the request for the waiver. The types of waivers available and the corresponding section of the standards are indicated below. Please attach additional sheets or information deemed appropriate. [The board will consider this request in its monthly meeting and school divisions may be requested to appear before the board to explain a waiver request.]

SCHOOL DIVISION Charlotte County Public Schools (020)

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY CA\$HE (Connecting All Students to Higher Education)

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:

- Approval of an Alternative to the Standard School Year and School Day (8 VAC 20-131-150)
- Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan (8 VAC 20-131-280.D)
- Approval of an Experimental Program (8 VAC 20-131-290.D)
- Approval of an Innovative Program (8 VAC 20-131-290.D)
- Approval of a Waiver of Other Provision(s) of the Standards (8 VAC 20-131-330)
(Complete Pages 1 and 3 of the application only.)

SCHOOL(S) INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED PROGRAM/ACTIVITY Randolph Henry High School (0460), Central Middle School (0210), Eureka Elementary School (0100), Bacon District Elementary School (0470), Phenix Elementary School (0110), and J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School (0450).

Date Approved
by the Local School Board

Signature
Chairman of the School Board

Submission Date

Signature
Division Superintendent

SCHOOL DIVISION _____ Charlotte County Public Schools (020) _____

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY CASHE (Connecting All Students to Higher Education)

IF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL OR INNOVATIVE, EXPLAIN HOW THIS IS SO AND PROVIDE A PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING THE TYPE OF PROGRAM, ITS PURPOSE, THE GRADES SERVED, DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION DESCRIBING THE STUDENTS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING, THE RATIONALE FOR THE PROGRAM, THE PROGRAMS GOALS, EVALUATION PROCEDURES, AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION.

Rationale for CASHE

Charlotte County Public Schools (CCPS) is a rural school division consisting of Randolph Henry High School (Grades 9-12), Central Middle School (Grades 6-8), Eureka Elementary School (Grades K-5), Bacon District Elementary School (Grades PK-5), Phenix Elementary School (Grades K-2), J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School (Grades 3-5) and the Early Learning Center (PK).

Of the 2,164 school-age children, 52% or 1,125 receive free or reduced price meals. Approximately 45% of the county's adults over age 25 do not have high school diplomas. Of those who graduated, only 49.7% pursued higher education; the state average is 71.9%. Only 7% of the population over age 25 have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher. (Population Reference Bureau, 2005)

CCPS is committed to increasing the number of graduating high school students who pursue post-secondary education. Based upon this concern and commitment, a focus group of administrators and teachers was established in the summer of 2008. This group identified the following areas of concern:

- Charlotte County is the 9th poorest county in Virginia; the poverty statistics for this region indicate 20% of the people live in poverty. In the age 5-17 group, 22.4% live in poverty. (Population Reference Bureau, 2005)
- Economic development is extremely limited. The tax base is extremely low and unable to support community recreational activities, medical services, or public transportation. The primary economic base has been tobacco, textiles, and timber production. The largest textile plant closed four years ago and tobacco and timber industries have declined. Therefore, in addition to educational mandates and needs, CCPS has, through necessity, implemented many programs to support the community, including daycare (before and after school and during the summer), summer lunch programs, mentoring programs, support for adult education, structured recreational activities for youth, and emergency shelters.
- Due to the lack of economic development and job opportunities, Charlotte County youth and their parents often do not have personal or community exposure to varying career opportunities or knowledge of the level of education required. As recent as four years ago, less than 50% of CCPS graduates pursued post-secondary education. Given a community culture that has not historically reinforced the relevance of post-secondary education, it is imperative that the school division expose all students, especially at the elementary and middle school level, to the college environment. CCPS

must fill this void by providing a formal, structured program providing all students (and their parents) with information and enrichment activities specific to career awareness and post-secondary educational opportunities as it relates to attaining 21st Century readiness skills and competing in the global economy. Over the past five years, more emphasis has been given to filling this void. As a result, in the 2008-09 school year, 80% of CCPS graduates pursued post-secondary education.

Program Goals

Due to Charlotte County's commitment to providing an early introduction to post-secondary academic and career opportunities, the CA\$HE (Connecting All Students to Higher Education) Program was developed and implemented in the 2008-09 school year. The desired outcome of CASHE is to provide informational and motivational programs and activities at all grade levels (Pre-K through 12) that will result in 100% of Randolph-Henry High School graduates entering post-secondary education. This includes traditional collegiate degree programs as well as vocational and occupational training.

At each grade level (PK-12), activities have been planned to expose all students to various types of higher education and career options. These activities are documented on the CA\$HE Student Record card which is placed in each student's scholastic record. This record is used in career planning discussions, and incorporated into instructional activities with the students, individually and in groups.

Current tracking of graduates (as required in state reporting) will provide evaluation information for the CA\$HE Program. In 2008-09, 79.8 % of Randolph-Henry High School students enrolled in post-secondary programs. This data will serve as a baseline for annual evaluation of the effectiveness of CA\$HE.

The CA\$HE activities include onsite visits in mid-August to the local community college (Southside Virginia Community College campuses) and Longwood University, as well as structured activities within the community and region throughout the school year. Prior to each visit, elementary teachers correlate age appropriate instructional activities with the agenda of the campus visit. The tentative schedule for August 2010 is as follows:

August 16-20: PK through Grade 4 from all elementary schools and the Early Learning Center

August 23: Grade 5 from all elementary schools

August 24-26: Grades 6-8 from Central Middle School

Each grade level (PK-5) will participate in age appropriate "CA\$HE College for a Day" activities which include touring the facilities, including labs (academic and vocational), participating in simulated classes, interviewing college staff, and having lunch in the college cafe. At the middle school level, more specific tours and classroom experiences are provided based upon career assessment inventories. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are grouped according to career interests and the tours and activities are scheduled accordingly. For example, students interested in the health services will participate in classrooms settings of sciences, research health careers in the college library, and prepare a list of interview questions for professors and counselors. In addition, a tour of Longwood University is added at the 7th grade level. Students tour the campus of this four year university, participate in a presentation on student life with a follow-up question/answer session, and eat lunch in the college dining facility.

Throughout the school year, PK-8 students with specific career interests will be partnered with SVCC personnel and college students as career mentors/tutors/buddies. Many of these activities will be scheduled at the CCPS schools and may be done through a distance learning approach.

During high school, students are provided many opportunities to visit SVCC through dual enrollment as well as activities coordinated through high school clubs, classes, and the Gear Up Program (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs). Career and college fairs are scheduled at the middle and high school level, as well as visits to area colleges. Faculty and representatives from colleges schedule school visits to review career options and incorporate enrichment activities.

The CA\$HE student record is used to document academic and career interests of the students at all grade levels. It provides additional information for the at-risk population, including anecdotal records at each grade level of career aspirations and corresponding educational requirements. The CA\$HE information is used for IEP (Individualized Education Program) planning and preparation for all special education students. At the secondary level, it provides specific career goals for the Transition Plan for special education students.

This information is also valuable when developing Individual Student Alternative Education Plans (ISAEP) for students. Due to the current correlation of the SVCC and CCPS academic calendars, our alternative education students under ISAEP, participate in SVCC classes, including Orientation to College, Child Care, Auto Mechanics, Truck Driving, C.N.A certification, and Early Childhood Development. Internships are also scheduled with SVCC when appropriate.

Necessity of Opening Prior to Labor Day

CCPS has been opening prior to Labor Day for the past 5 years, qualifying under 22.1-79.1.B.1 (severe weather). During this time, the CCPS schedule has been closely aligned with that of Southside Virginia Community College, allowing our secondary students to fully participate in the following collaborative programs including: dual enrollment, GED (middle college), Pre-Engineering, and the Governor's School of Southside Virginia. CCPS has a large dual enrollment participation (42 %) with courses taught at our high school, online, and on the SVCC campuses. Virtual Virginia courses, as well as all the online courses offered by SVCC, are available to students as well. Charlotte County's Associate Degree Program was the first high school associates degree program established in the state of Virginia. This enables high school students to complete high school and associate degree requirements by the end of the senior year. We also currently have 67 Early College Scholars. Close alignment of the secondary schedule with the SVCC schedule is crucial to continuing multiple opportunities for Charlotte County students.

The high school CA\$HE program also stipulates that all 9th grade students will meet with college representatives and/or the Career Coach (a position filled through SVCC). Multiple trips to SVCC are coordinated at the secondary level through the Randolph-Henry Guidance Department, as well as specific grant or instructional programs, such as Gear Up and club activities.

At the middle and elementary levels (including PK), this alignment of schedules is also crucial for continuation of the CA\$HE program. CA\$HE activities need to be scheduled prior to the Southside Virginia Community College and Longwood personnel beginning classes in late August and must be

completed prior to the end of the college calendars. Therefore, the CA\$HE activities must be scheduled in mid-August, with follow-up site visits to college campuses scheduled later in the school year, no later than May 31st. Since we designate the first testing window for SOL testing at the elementary/middle school levels, scheduling of CA\$HE visits and activities after early May but prior to May 31st is optimal for instruction. Aligning Charlotte County Public Schools' instructional calendar with college schedules provides maximal opportunities for CA\$HE activities.

At all grade levels, including PreK, in all schools, we have many students from Longwood University, Liberty University, Old Dominion University (Distance Learning), and Southside Virginia Community College who are completing practicum experiences and/or student teaching. In addition, the Teacher Education Program at Longwood University maintains a Longwood Partnership site at Eureka Elementary School. During the fall semester, four days each week, Longwood students are at Eureka, half a day devoted to methodological preparation and half to working in classrooms with Charlotte County students. Having additional trained educators available is an invaluable resource. In all schools, student teachers and practicum students from the universities enhance CCPS student learning by incorporating the newest instructional strategies and research based methods and decreasing the student-teacher ratio. Eureka Elementary has outstanding SOL and NAEP scores and is currently a Blue Ribbon School nominee. The other elementary schools in Charlotte County scored above the state averages on SOL tests in Reading, Math, Science, and History. The middle and high schools scored above the state averages in all areas of the state assessment system.

Opening prior to Labor Day more closely coordinates with college schedules, making student teacher assignments easier and more meaningful for both the college and CCPS students. Being a poor, rural division, recruitment and retention of teachers is difficult. Having these programs onsite provides CCPS with a strong pool of candidates for teaching positions. During the past four years, 40% of teaching positions filled were former student teachers and/or practicum students. 92% remain employed. This retention is much higher than normal. The overall retention of teachers hired is 66%.

Evaluation Procedures

The following methods will be used to evaluate the CA\$HE Program:

- CCPS will use data available through the Student Record Collection process through the Department of Education, including the Ontime Graduation Rate, AYP graduation data, and the CTE Annual Performance Report.
- Guidance logs and information extracted from the student data system for the 2008-09 school year will be used as a baseline for evaluation. The data for 2008-09 is:

Students attending 4 year colleges/universities:	33.9%
Students attending 2 year colleges:	40.8%
Students attending trade schools/programs:	5.1%
Students joining military:	4.5%
Students seeking employment:	12.1%
Undecided:	3.4%

- In addition, the high school guidance department and the Career Coach from SVCC did a follow up of graduates from 2007-08 and compared the numbers of students reporting enrollment to SVCC for 2008-09 to the actual SVCC enrollment records. 51% of students from the Class of 2008 reported their intent to attend a local, two year college. 64 students actually enrolled at SVCC for the 2008-2009 school year (fall and spring semesters combined). This represents 41.2% of the total graduates for that year. This process will continue as an additional evaluation measure.

A CASHE Student Record card in each student's scholastic record will provide information on the extent of participation and specific interests generated. School personnel (administrators, teachers, and guidance) will review and assist with student career planning with students and parents. CASHE will enhance and supplement the development of Academic and Career Plans as specified in § VAC 20-131-140.

Other Relevant Information

CCPS has opened prior to Labor Day for the past five years and has found it to be optimal instructionally. The first semester concludes prior to Winter Break; the second semester begins after students return. Gains in student achievement at all grade levels have been tied to this calendar option. Fall End of Course SOL testing is concluded prior to the holiday. The need for remediation and review after an extended break is eliminated. CCPS test scores continue to improve, meeting or exceeding NCLB and Accreditation standards consistently. For 2009-10, Charlotte County Public Schools was one of 21 divisions in which all schools and the division made AYP.

Cooperating with SVCC, CCPS has a very successful dual enrollment program. During the Fall 2009 semester, 294 students are enrolled in 28 dual enrollment classes. This is 42% of the student population at Randolph-Henry High School. Because CCPS has difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers with graduate degrees, SVCC often must provide staffing for dual enrollment courses offered on the Randolph-Henry High School campus. During the current year, we have three SVCC professors onsite. These instructors are obligated under the SVCC contract and calendar. Alignment of the college and CCPS instructional calendars (beginning in mid-August) is crucial; it maximizes instructional/classroom time at all grade levels and increases course offerings while reducing staffing costs for CCPS. As stated, the alignment is also critical to scheduling CASHE activities at the elementary and middle school levels. For 2009-2010, SVCC begins its fall session August 17 and concludes its spring session May 10. Longwood University begins its fall session August 21 and concludes its spring session May 3.

The CASHE program supplements the new Standards of Accreditation requirement (§ 8 VAC 20-131-140) for development of a personal Academic and Career Plan for 7th graders beginning 2010-11. The CASHE student record card maintains information on each student, beginning in PK (or upon transfer into CCPS). CASHE provides career planning at ALL grade levels, facilitating the formulation of the formal plan by 7th grade.

With limited funding and resources, in addition to the economic downturn affecting local and state budgets, the dual enrollment option is a great economic benefit to our students and to CCPS. Dual enrollment classes are offered free of charge to students (up to 6-8 credit hours per semester). Additional

credits/classes may be taken at a reduced tuition rate. Clearly, this provides opportunities for post-secondary education to families that otherwise, could not afford it.

CCPS also benefits economically from the alignment of the calendars. More dual enrollment classes may be offered using the SVCC staff, which saves tremendously on CCPS personnel costs. In fact, without this option of using SVCC staff, CCPS could not afford to offer many dual enrollment classes. Moreover, having the Longwood Partnership at Eureka Elementary provides an invaluable resource of additional educators in our elementary classrooms at no cost to the division.

Due to reductions in state and local funding, CCPS (composite index of .2289) is facing another year of challenging budget decisions. The Charlotte County Board of Supervisors barely funded the minimum requirement and has informed CCPS that level funding for the upcoming year is impossible. The locality has no ability to compensate for anticipated state budget cuts. Opening prior to Labor Day is essential in maintaining dual enrollment course offerings and CA\$HE activities at the secondary level and coordinating the CA\$HE Program at the elementary and middle school levels. Moreover, CCPS can only afford to maintain single bus routes transporting students (PK-12) to the Early Learning Center and the elementary, middle, and high schools. Therefore, all schools must adhere to the same school calendar.

DOES THE PROGRAM REQUIRE THAT SCHOOLS IN THE DIVISION OPEN PRIOR TO LABOR DAY?

YES NO

IF YES, EXPLAIN WHY.

See “**Necessity of Opening Prior to Labor Day**” and “**Other Relevant Information**” above.

IF THE PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL, INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT EXPLAINS WHY THERE IS REASON TO EXPECT THAT THE PROGRAM WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

Last school year (2008-09) was the first year of implementing the CA\$HE program. Administrators, teachers, students, and parents responded positively to its implementation. We also now have baseline data (from reports detailed above) on which to define success. We are confident that a continued focus on career and post-secondary options at all grade levels will be successful in increasing our post-secondary participation consistently. The CA\$HE Student Record for each student will also assist with successful career and educational planning.

DESCRIBE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM.

As stated above, the outcome for CASHE is to increase the number of high school graduates (with the ultimate goal of 100%) pursuing post-secondary education options, including colleges, universities, vocational and occupational training/licensure. In order to achieve this, it is imperative at every grade level to provide ongoing age appropriate educational enrichment activities targeting higher education and career exploration.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A WAIVER OF A PROVISION OR PORVISIONS OF THE ACCREDITING STANDARDS, STATE THE PROVISION AND THE RATIONALE FOR SEEKING A WAIVER FOR EACH.

Not applicable.

DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WAIVER/PROGRAM/ACTIVITY. (include information that includes measurable goals, objectives, and student academic achievement that will be expected as a result of the implementation of the program/activity.)

See "**Program Goals**" and "**Evaluation Procedures**" in first section.

Number of students involved in the program 2,164 (2,064 in Grades K-12 & 100 in PreK)
What is the anticipated length of the program or duration of the waiver? ongoing

Questions should be directed to the Division of Policy and Communications at (804)225-2092, or by email to policydata@doe.virginia.gov. This application and supporting documentation must be sent to:

Division of Policy and Communications
Department of Education
P. O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120



Southside Virginia Community College

John H. Daniel Campus

200 Daniel Road • Keysville, Virginia 23947 • 434-736-2000 • Fax: 434-736-2082 • TDD: 434-949-1092

December 18, 2009

Dr. Patricia L. Wright
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Virginia Department of Education
P. O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120

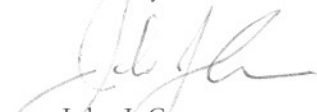
Dear Dr. Wright:

Southside Virginia Community College and Charlotte County Public Schools are community partners who collaborate on many different academic endeavors at all grade levels. During the Fall 2009 semester, Randolph-Henry High School had 294 students enrolled in 28 dual enrollment courses through SVCC, including the Governor's School of Southside Virginia and the Pre-Engineering Program. These dual enrollment classes are taught on the campuses of SVCC, as well as Randolph-Henry High School. Charlotte County Schools provides an opportunity, beginning in 9th grade, for students to enroll in dual enrollment classes and, upon successful completion of the program, receive an Associate Degree in Arts and Sciences from SVCC in addition to a high school diploma from Randolph-Henry High School. At the middle and elementary level, activities have been scheduled for implementation of the Charlotte County Public Schools CASHE (Connecting All Students to Higher Education) Program, which includes onsite activities at the John H. Daniel Campus of SVCC. These activities, scheduled in mid-August, are designed to introduce career and postsecondary educational opportunities. Each grade level has planned enrichment activities centered around college and career exploration and readiness. Students participate in tours of the campus, interviews with college personnel, and exposure to extracurricular opportunities.

Close alignment of the academic calendars of SVCC and Charlotte County Schools is crucial. Dual enrollment professors begin instruction in mid-August and end in mid-December which allows no delay or loss of instructional time in the college courses due to misaligned schedules. At the middle and elementary levels, the CASHE activities must be scheduled for mid-August before SVCC professors and personnel have begun classes and before the college students have arrived on campus. The John H. Daniel campus is presently at capacity and would have difficulty accommodating the Charlotte County students after college classes begin.

Therefore, I would like to convey my full support for Charlotte County Public Schools' request for a pre-Labor Day Opening Waiver.

Sincerely,



John J. Cavan
President