Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item

Agenda Item: D **Date:** February 27, 2014

Title	Final Review of Request for Approval of an Innovative Program Opening Prior to Labor Day from Nottoway County Public Schools		
Presenter	Ms. Anne D. Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications Dr. Daniel J. Grounard, Nottoway County Public Schools		
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Purpose of Presentation:
Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Previous Review or Action:
Previous review and action. Specify date and action taken below:
Date: January 16, 2014
Action: First review

Action Requested:
Final review: Action requested at this meeting.

Alignment with Board of Education Goals: Please indicate (X) all that apply:

	Goal 1: Accountability for Student Learning
	Goal 2: Rigorous Standards to Promote College and Career Readiness
	Goal 3: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
	Goal 4: Nurturing Young Learners
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Educators
X	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

Goal 6: The review of the request to waive the requirement that the school year would begin prior to Labor Day, pursuant to § 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* relates to the goal that the Board will provide leadership in the development and implementation of state and federal laws and regulations in ways that provide sound policies for student success.

Background Information and Statutory Authority:
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*. The provision that permits the Board to approve a waiver for an experimental or innovative program may be found in § 22.1-79.1 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 based on a school board certifying that it meets one of the good cause requirements of subsection B.

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

1. A school division has been closed an average of eight days per year during any five of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations;
2. A school division is providing, in the school year for which the waiver is sought, an instructional program or programs in one or more of its elementary or middle or high schools, excluding Virtual Virginia, which are dependent on and provided in one or more elementary or middle or high schools of another school division that qualifies for such waiver. However, any waiver granted by the Board of Education pursuant to this subdivision shall only apply to the opening date for those schools where such dependent programs are provided;
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; or
4. A school division is entirely surrounded by a school division that has an opening date prior to Labor Day in the school year for which the waiver is sought. Such school division may open schools on the same opening date as the surrounding school division….

For the 2013-2014 school year, 57 school divisions have a waiver for weather-related reasons; six have dependent programs; ten are entirely surrounded by a school division that has an opening date prior to Labor Day; three school divisions have one or more schools with waivers because they are year-round schools; and two school divisions have waivers for innovative or experimental programs that are not year-round schools. Nottoway County Public Schools (NCPS) has had a weather-related waiver for many years.

However, some of the school divisions that have a weather-related waiver, including Nottoway County, are in jeopardy of losing their waivers because Virginia hasn't had much snow or other severe weather conditions recently. The 2012 General Assembly added language to the Appropriation Act to maintain current waivers, and the 2013 General Assembly extended the waiver through the 2013-2014 school year. The Governor's 2014-2016 Budget Bill would extend the waiver for two additional years. Item 136.A.17

of HB 30 and SB 30 says:

> To provide additional flexibility, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-79.1 of the Code of Virginia, any school division that was granted a waiver regarding the opening date of the school year for the 2011-12 school year under the good cause requirements shall continue to be granted a waiver for the 2014-15 school year and the 2015-2016 school year.

Summary of Important Issues:
Nottoway County Public Schools is committed to increasing the number of students who graduate from high school and pursue postsecondary education. Approximately 37 percent of the county's adults over age 25 do not have high school diplomas, and only 8 percent of those persons over age 25 have a baccalaureate degree or higher. To achieve this goal, Nottoway County Public Schools proposes an innovative program titled PACE, **P**artnerships to **A**chieve **C**ontinuing **E**ducation. At each grade level (PK-12), activities have been planned to expose all students to higher education and career options. These activities will be documented on a student record card placed in each student's scholastic record. This record will be used in career planning discussions, and incorporated into instructional activities with the students, individually and in groups.

The school division plans to use project-based learning so that students will develop interests in different career opportunities as they work on real life problem-solving situations. The program will focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as well as 21st century skills to prepare students for college and career opportunities.

Elementary Schools (Burkeville Elementary School, Crewe Primary School, and Blackstone Primary School) and Nottoway Middle School
In its waiver request, Nottoway County Public Schools (NCPS) notes that two of its elementary schools, Crewe Primary School and Burkeville Elementary School, participate in the Longwood Partnership Program for teacher preparation. In this collaborative program, the Longwood University students attend class at Crewe Primary School in the morning and observe the NCPS students and teachers in the classroom in the afternoon. The partnership program provides hands-on learning beginning on the first day of classes for both Longwood and NCPS. NCPS plans to expand this program to Blackstone Primary School and Nottoway Intermediate School, as the program is found to be beneficial to both the Longwood students and the NCPS students. For school year 2014-2015, Longwood University begins classes on August 25, and the day after Labor Day is September 2, the following week.

Nottoway Middle School students are involved in the Drop-Out Prevention/College Readiness program with support from Virginia State University and Longwood University. Students from these universities will participate in the Orientation to Middle School (grades 7-8) program on the first day of school. Their participation would be a panel discussion program focusing on staying in school, entering a college program, and possible career opportunities that they are seeking with a college degree. The program is held on the first day of middle school so that the college students can participate in the orientation program without missing any of their own classes. For school year 2014-2015, Longwood begins school on August 25, with freshmen arriving on campus on August 21. Virginia State University students begin classes on August 22, with freshmen arriving on August 17. NCPS notes that scheduling this program would be a challenge once the college students begin their classes.

In addition, NCPS makes arrangements for students from Nottoway Intermediate School and Nottoway Middle School students to visit nearby colleges in August, and a pre-Labor Day opening of school

facilitates those visits.

High School (Nottoway High School)
Nottoway High School students participate in the Governor's School of Southside Virginia and the Superintendents' Region 8 Governor's Health Sciences Academy. Section 22.1-26 (D) of the *Code of Virginia* says: "Joint or regional schools, such as academic year Governor's Schools, may set the school calendar so that the first day students are required to attend school shall comport with the calendar of any of the participating school divisions, including those granted a waiver, as prescribed in § 22.1-79.1. Such calendar must be approved by the governing board of the joint or regional school." As participating school divisions have pre-Labor Day waivers, for the 2013-2014 school year, the Governor's School of Southside Virginia began on August 15.

In addition, NCPS works closely with Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC) in offering 15 dual enrollment courses offered at the Nottoway High School Campus. NCPS says that Nottoway High School relies on certain SVCC instructors to provide dual enrollment services for students, especially for those courses for which NCPS does not have qualified teachers.

Finally, NCPS notes that it coordinates professional development for the teachers in all of its schools with other school divisions in the region that have a pre-Labor Day opening.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:
The impact on state funds for this request is expected to be minimal.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:
Following the February 27 meeting, Department of Education staff will notify the School Board and the Superintendent of Nottoway County Public Schools of the decision of the Board of Education.

Superintendent's Recommendation:
The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education deny Nottoway County Public Schools' request for its elementary and middle schools to begin school prior to Labor Day, but to approve the request for its high school to begin school before Labor Day. The proposal for the elementary and middle schools do not comport with the provisions of § 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia*.

Guidelines for Considering and Approving Requests
for Pre-Labor Day Openings
Approved by the Board of Education on March 28, 2013

Statutory Authority

Section 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* governs the conditions under which the Board of Education may grant a waiver to a local school board to open school prior to Labor Day.

§ 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 based on a school board certifying that it meets one of the good cause requirements of subsection B.

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

1. A school division has been closed an average of eight days per year during any five of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations;

2. A school division is providing, in the school year for which the waiver is sought, an instructional program or programs in one or more of its elementary or middle or high schools, excluding Virtual Virginia, which are dependent on and provided in one or more elementary or middle or high schools of another school division that qualifies for such waiver. However, any waiver granted by the Board of Education pursuant to this subdivision shall only apply to the opening date for those schools where such dependent programs are provided;

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; or

4. A school division is entirely surrounded by a school division that has an opening date prior to Labor Day in the school year for which the waiver is sought. Such school division may open schools on the same opening date as the surrounding school division….

The Board of Education will consider the following guidelines in approving requests of local school boards to open one or more schools prior to Labor Day.

Waiver by Superintendent on Board's Behalf

The Board of Education delegates to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the authority to approve, on its behalf, a local school board's request for a waiver to open all schools in the division prior to Labor Day if the school division meets one of the following good cause requirements of subsection § 22.1-79.1 B.

- The school division has been closed an average of eight days per year during any five of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations. (§ 22.1-79.1 B. 1)

- The school division is entirely surrounded by a school division that has an opening date prior to Labor Day in the school year for which the waiver is sought. Such school division may open schools on the same opening date as the surrounding school division. (§ 22.1-79.1 B. 4)

Waiver by Board of Education Action

The Board of Education will consider a local school board's request for a waiver to open one or more schools in its division prior to Labor Day if one of the following good cause requirements of subsection § 22.1-79.1.B. are met. The Board will not provide advisory opinions or hypothetical waivers. The local school board must certify that if granted a waiver, the division intends to provide the program in the school year for which the waiver is being sought.

- The school division is providing an instructional program or programs in the schools for which the waiver is requested, excluding *Virtual Virginia*, which are dependent on and provided in one or more schools of another school division that qualifies for a waiver to open prior to Labor Day. Any waiver granted by the Board of Education pursuant to this provision shall *only* apply to the opening date for those schools where such dependent programs are provided. (§ 22.1-79.1 B. 2)

- The school division is providing its students with an experimental or innovative program, which *requires* the school to open prior to Labor Day. Any waiver granted by the Board of Education pursuant to this provision 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. (§ 22.1-79.1 B. 3)

Experimental and Innovative Program Considerations

- In accordance with § 22.1-79.1of the Code of Virginia, experimental or innovative programs shall include instructional programs which are offered on a year-round basis by a school division in one or more of its elementary, middle, or high schools.

- An *experimental program* is defined, for purposes of a waiver, as a program which is operated under controlled circumstances and which is designed to test and to establish, by objective

measures, the positive cognitive effect of an educational theory. The experimental program must be offered generally to the student body of the school.

- An *innovative program* is defined, for purposes of a waiver, as an educational program that implements creative, original, or new ideas or methods and are likely to result in better outcomes for student participants. The innovative program must be offered generally to the student body of the school.

- Any experimental or innovative program must ensure parental and community involvement.

Application for Waiver

1. The initial request for a waiver to approve an experimental or innovative program, including a year-round school program, shall be submitted to the Board of Education for approval. Once the initial approval is granted by the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is hereby delegated authority to continue to approve the waiver in subsequent years, unless the Board places conditions or time limits on its approval, or unless the Superintendent determines that the conditions under which the approval was granted to the local school board are changed.

2. The local school board shall submit annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction certification of eligibility for a waiver of the "good cause" requirements of § 22.1-79.1, *Code of Virginia*. Such certification shall be made in a manner prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. School divisions must maintain evidence that such "good cause" conditions have been met.

3. To request approval of a waiver for weather-related or other emergency conditions, the local school board shall submit information annually indicating that the school division has been closed for an average of eight days per year in any five of the past ten years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency conditions.

4. To request initial approval of a waiver to open before Labor Day by a school division that is completely surrounded by another school division that has been approved for a waiver, the school division shall submit the request to the Superintendent of Public Instruction by letter signed by the superintendent and the chairman of the local school board. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall determine that the school division is completely surrounded by another school division, and that the other school division has been granted a waiver to open before Labor Day. Once the initial waiver is granted, the local school board shall submit information annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction indicating that the conditions under which a waiver was granted have not changed.

5. To request approval of a waiver for a dependent program, the local school board shall submit information annually indicating that each school for which a waiver is requested provides an instructional program, excluding Virtual Virginia, which is dependent upon a school in another division that qualifies for a waiver.

6. To request initial approval of a waiver for a pre-Labor Day opening for an experimental or innovative program, the local school division shall submit such request to the Board of Education on a form prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction at least 180 calendar days prior to the expected implementation date. Such a request shall set forth a thorough

explanation of the experimental or innovative program as well as the specific reasons that would compel a pre-Labor Day opening. The Department is available throughout the application process to provide technical assistance to the applicant. The following procedures apply to the initial application for experimental or innovative programs:

a. The experimental or innovative program must be approved by the Board pursuant to its *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* at 8 VAC 20-131-290. The request must include:

   1) The names of the participating schools and the school division requesting the waiver.
   2) The purpose and objectives of the experimental/innovative/year-round program: Describe how the school meets the definition of experimental or innovative or year-round school and its goals and objectives. Include the title of the program or activity, a program description, the rationale for the program, the number and names of all schools involved, the names of any other organizations, including colleges, universities, and other postsecondary organizations and community organizations that are involved in the program, the grades served, the names of any other school divisions involved in the program, and other relevant information.
   3) An explanation of the necessity for opening prior to Labor Day, including the proposed school year calendar's opening and closing dates as well as a general description of the school calendar and duration of the waiver. This explanation must show that this request meets the "good cause" requirements of §22.1-79.1. B.3, *Code of Virginia*.
   4) Anticipated outcomes, including an explanation as to why it is believed the program will be a success.
   5) Number of students affected, including demographic information describing the students who will be attending and the community the school serves.
   6) Evaluation procedures including mechanisms for measuring goals and objectives, and analysis of data, to determine how this program will support an expected increase in proficiency in student academic achievement and any achievement gap.
   7) Other anticipated outcomes.
   8) Any other information that will support the request for a Pre-Labor Day waiver.

   Each pre-Labor Day waiver request must be approved by the local school board and signed and dated by the chairman of the school board and the school superintendent and forwarded to Superintendent of Public Instruction.

b. Any waiver or extension of the school year granted by the Board pursuant to the experimental or innovative program provisions contained in § 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, or the Board's *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* shall apply only to the opening date for those schools where such experimental or innovative programs are offered generally to the student body of the school.

c. To request approval of a waiver for a pre-Labor Day opening for an experimental or innovative program subsequent to the Board of Education's initial approval, unless the Board of Education has specified conditions under which the waiver request must go back to the Board for approval, or the Superintendent determines that the conditions under which the initial approval was granted to the local school board have changed, the local school board shall submit information annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction as part of the pre-Labor Day waiver self-certification process for public schools with pre-Labor Day

waivers. The submission shall include evidence of the results achieved throughout the experimental or innovative program in prior years.

Reports to the Board of Education

- The Board of Education may request that the Superintendent of Public Instruction provide a report to the Board regarding the status of certifications submitted and waivers granted under the above-stated policies. Such report shall be provided in a manner and at a time as agreed to by the Superintendent and the President of the Board and shall include information deemed pertinent by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

- Any information required to be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for a pre-Labor Day waiver shall be submitted to the:

Office of Policy
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120
Policy@doe.virginia.gov
804-225-2092

Received by Policy 12/19/13

Attachment A, Supts. Memo 098-11
April 8, 2011

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
P.O. Box 2120
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 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.) sets 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 **are required** to appear before the board **in person or electronically** to explain a waiver request.)

SCHOOL DIVISION: Nottoway County Public Schools

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY: Partnerships to Achieve Continuing Education- PACE

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 (§ 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and 8 VAC 20-131-290.D)
- ☒ Approval of an Innovative Program (§ 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and 8 VAC 20-131-290.D)
- ☐ Approval of a Waiver of Other Provision(s) of the Standards (8 VAC 20-131-350) (Complete Pages 1 and 3 of the application only.)

SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED PROGRAM/ACTIVITY: Burkeville Elementary School, Crewe Primary School, Blackstone Primary School, Nottoway Intermediate School, Nottoway Middle School, Nottoway High School

December 12, 2013
Date Approved by the Local School Board

Helen Simmons
Signature
Chairman of the School Board

December 12, 2013
Submission Date

Signature
Division Superintendent

SCHOOL DIVISION Nottoway County Public Schools

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY Partnerships for Achieving Success-PACE

IF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL OR INNOVATIVE, FOR EACH SCHOOL 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 PROGRAM'S GOALS, EVALUATION PROCEDURES, AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION.

Rationale for PACE

The Nottoway County School Board is requesting approval of innovative programs for Nottoway High School (9-12), Nottoway Middle School (7-8), Nottoway Intermediate School (5-6), Blackstone Primary School (Pre-K-4), Crewe Primary School (1-4), and Burkeville Elementary (Pre-K-K) School. Granting approval of this request would allow these six schools to open prior to Labor Day. In order to provide the ultimate educational benefit for students, to allow students and staff to share in regional services and programming, to continue and established relationship with Longwood University's Partnership Program, to expand on college partnerships with Virginia State University and Southside Virginia Community College, and to take full advantage of transportation cost savings, it is important that all of the schools operate on the same calendar.

Nottoway County Public School Division (NCPS) is located in rural Southside Virginia. The school division includes six schools which serve 2170 school-age children in Kindergarten through grade 12 and 108 students in Pre-Kindergarten. NCPS serves a large low income population with 65.65% percent of our students qualifying for free and reduced lunches. Approximately 37% of the county's adults over age 25 do not have high school diplomas and only 8% of those persons over age 25 have a baccalaureate degree or higher. Nottoway proposes the innovative program titled **PACE-Partnerships to Achieve Continuing Education.**

NCPS is committed to increasing the number of students in who graduate high school and pursue post-secondary education. The Comprehensive School Planning Committee, a focus group of administrators, parents, community members and staff, researched strategies to increase the graduation rate and encourage students to pursue college. The group identified the following concerns:

- Nottoway County is the 13th poorest county in Virginia; the poverty statistics for this region indicate that 17.3% of the people live below the poverty level (U.S. Census 2010). In the age 5-17 group, 21.7 percent live in poverty (Kids Count, 2005).
- According to the 2011 Bureau of Labor Statistics, Nottoway County had an unemployment rate of 8.1 percent.
- Economic development is extremely limited contributing to the tax base being extremely low. It is difficult to support community recreational activities, medical services, or transportation. The school division has implemented many programs to support the community, including the Amelia Nottoway Technical Center, summer lunch programs, mentoring programs, support for adult education, and structured recreational activities for youth. The schools also serve as the community's emergency shelters.
- Nottoway County youth and their families often lack personal or community exposure to varying career opportunities and exposure to the college environment. The lack of exposure limits the knowledge that our students need to understand what types of education are needed to compete in our global society.

In an effort to prepare students for real-world experiences and post-secondary education, Nottoway County Public Schools has begun to focus on 21st Century Learning--Project Based Learning (PBL). 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. Nottoway will use opportunities provided through PACE to support 21st century learning and PBL activities throughout the school year in all grade levels.

In 2012, Nottoway High School reported 51.5% of its graduating class as having earned college preparatory advanced diplomas, 35.6% earned standard high school diplomas, 3.1% earned modified standard diplomas and 9.5% earned special education diplomas. Six students from the 2012 cohort earned their GED and ten students graduated from Nottoway High School in 2012 having earned an Associate degree from Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC). NCPS works closely with SVCC in offering Governor's School Humanities and Pre-Engineering programs to our students as well as 15 dual enrollment courses offered at the Nottoway High School Campus.

The benefits of Dual Enrollment include:

- Students are enrolled in high school and college concurrently
- College credits are earned at the same time as high school credit
- Students experience the academic rigors of a college level course
- Students can earn enough credits to graduate with an Associate's Degree and/or lessen the time it takes for graduation from a four-year college or university
- College credits can be transferred to numerous four-year colleges and universities in Virginia
- Assists students with the college selection process

NCPS is committed to continuing to work with SVCC and other outside organizations to increase the number of college credit-earning students and associate degree graduates. Through PACE, NCPS will expose students, beginning at a young age, to the college experience, thereby increasing their comfort level with college and motivating them to pursue college after high school graduation.

Program Goals

Due to Nottoway County's commitment to providing an early introduction to post-secondary academic and career opportunities, NCPS will be utilizing much of the Charlotte County Public School model approved by the Virginia Department of Education in 2010. Their program, CA$HE (**C**onnecting **A**ll **S**tudents to **H**igher **E**ducation) is similar to what NCPS is proposing to offer for the 2014-15 school year and beyond. Recently, Charlotte County also began offering PBL in their schools. Nottoway County Public Schools will be combining Project Based Learning (PBL) with the career awareness initiative to provide its students with more opportunities to plan for the future.

Nottoway County's innovative program, PACE, will combine the benefits of early college and career awareness with rigorous real-world connections through PBL and 21st Century Learning. Nottoway has partnered with Charlotte, Cumberland, and Mecklenburg County Public Schools to offer PBL to its students. The desired outcome of combining PBL with our PACE initiative is to provide informational and motivational programs and activities at all grade levels (Pre-K through 12) that will result in 100% of Nottoway High School graduates entering post-secondary education, including 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 (See Table 1 in the appendix). These activities will be documented on a student record card placed in each student's scholastic record. This record will be used in career planning discussions, and incorporated into instructional activities with the students, individually and in groups. This is above and beyond the requirement to work with students beginning in middle school on academic and career planning. Nottoway County has limited resources within the community, resulting in limited exposure to career options. Career exploration at an early age is important to developing students' interests which will make them globally competitive citizens upon graduation from high school.

Nottoway County's PACE program will work in collaboration with the already established Longwood Partnership Program. Since NCPS currently begins school prior to Labor Day, a partnership has been formed with Longwood University's Teacher Preparation Program. Future teachers enrolled in this program begin their day taking classes located in the "Longwood Room" located at Crewe Primary School. After morning coursework, the "Longwood Partnership Students" are dispersed among Burkeville Elementary and Crewe Primary School classrooms for hands-on teacher preparation experiences. There are plans to expand this program into Blackstone Primary and Nottoway Intermediate Schools next year. With this partnership, classroom teachers can implement strategies of 21st Century Learning and PBL at early ages. This allows for the classroom teacher to work with struggling learners while the Longwood Partnership Student works with small groups to help monitor PBL projects as directed by the classroom teacher. This unique opportunity works well as teacher prep students have more hands-on experiences since Nottoway and Longwood are on the same early start schedules.

By incorporating PBL into the PreK-12 curriculum, NCPS will shift from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning. Instruction will lead to discovery and teachers will become facilitators of instruction instead of transmitters of information. Students will develop interests in different career opportunities as PBL ties into real life problem solving situations. With this innovative program, Nottoway County Public Schools can drive improvements in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) while providing a way for students to gain 21st Century skills to be successful in today's dynamic, fast paced, and informative rich world.

Each grade level (PK-4) will participate in age appropriate "College for a Day" activities which include touring the academic and vocational facilities, participating in simulated classes, interviewing college staff, and having lunch in the college café. At the intermediate level, grades 5 and 6 will be involved in more specific campus tours and classroom experiences will be provided based upon career assessment inventories addressing student interests. Students in grades 7 and 8 will be grouped according to career interests so that tours and activities can be 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 the 7th and 8th grade, middle school students will have opportunities to work with former Nottoway High School students who are attending or who have graduated from Longwood University and Virginia State University. Students will tour the campus of these four year universities, will participate in a presentation on student life with a follow-up question/answer session, and will 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. The SVCC students will be former Nottoway High School graduates which will bring relevance to the process. Career and college fairs will be scheduled at the middle and high school level, as well as visits to area colleges.

During high school, students are provided many opportunities to visit SVCC through dual enrollment as well as activities coordinated through high school clubs, classes, the 21st Century Grant and the One Club. Faculty and representatives from colleges currently schedule school visits to review career options and incorporate enrichment activities for high school students. Last year, Nottoway High School was named by Governor McDonnell as one of 16 Virginia high schools and proclaimed November 26-30, 2012 College Application Week in the Commonwealth. This pilot initiative was designed to encourage graduating high school seniors to apply to any of Virginia's 23 community colleges, 16 public colleges and universities and 33 independent colleges and provide a structured opportunity for all Virginia high school seniors to apply to at least one post-secondary institution. During the week of November 26-30, 2012 Nottoway High School had 11 students accepted for early admission to Longwood University.

Activities for PACE have been planned to include on-site visits in mid-August to Southside Virginia Community College campuses, Virginia State University and Longwood University. Structured activities within the community and region have also been planned to take place throughout the school year. Prior to each college visit, Pre-K through grade 8, teachers will correlate age appropriate instructional activities with the agenda of the campus visit. The activities will build from year to year for all students. The goal is for NCPS students to have post-secondary educational opportunities so that they are better able to plan for their future. Schedules have been planned in accordance with the college calendars which begin operation before Labor Day. Students will need to visit the colleges early in the year as PBL activities will be developed according to what students have learned through their experience.

The tentative schedule for August 2014 is as follows:

August 19-22:	PK - Grade 4 from all elementary and primary schools (BES, BPS, CPS)
August 25:	Grade 5-6 from Nottoway Intermediate School
August 26-28:	Grades 6-8 from Nottoway Middle School

Nottoway High School students already participate in college field visits. Beginning before Labor Day is necessary for NHS students to coordinate with regional programs including Governor's School and Dual Enrollment courses. NHS relies on certain SVCC instructors to provide Dual Enrollment services for students.

Nottoway Middle School will be involved in Drop-Out Prevention/College Readiness with support from Virginia State University and Longwood University. Students from these universities will participate in the Orientation to Middle School (grades 7-8) program on the first day of school. Their participation would be a panel type program focusing on staying in school, entering a college program, and possible career opportunities that they are seeking with a college degree. Longwood begins school on August 25, 2014, with Freshman student coming on campus on August 21, 2014. Virginia State University students begin classes on August 22, 2014 with Freshman entering on August 17, 2014. By having these student come on our first day of school, they can participate in our orientation program without missing their own classes. Scheduling something like this would be more of a challenge once their classes begin.

Career and college planning is valuable when developing Individual Student Alternative Education Plans (ISAEP) for students. Due to the current correlation of the SVCC and NCPS academic calendars, our alternative education students under ISAEP, participate in SVCC classes, including Orientation to College, Auto Body, C.N.A. certification, and Cosmetology. Internships are also scheduled with SVCC when appropriate.

For **all** students, the benefits of Project Based Learning combined with the PACE program would include:

- Increased attendance, growth in self-reliance and improved attitudes toward learning.
- Academic gains equal to or better than those generated by other models, with students involved in projects taking greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Opportunities to increase higher-level thinking skills, complex skills, problem-solving skills, collaboration, and communicating.
- Access to a broader range of learning opportunities in the classroom, providing for engaging culturally diverse learners.
- Providing a bridge to higher education opportunities through hands-on experience and real life application.
- Development of globally competitive citizens.

By implementing this initiative, community support would help to improve the relationship of the parents, students, and teachers within the school division. A positive learning environment directly affects the community. Former students of Nottoway High School who have attended SVCC, Virginia State University and Longwood University would be an important part of this program. This approach would help not only the 2170 students who are enrolled but also the education of the students' families on current educational trainings and advances in the school system. Nottoway County School Board is confident that this approach will be successful and would eventually create a ripple effect to several other divisions across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Other Relevant Information

PBL: A Regional Approach to Professional Development and Student Engagement Strategies

Charlotte, Cumberland, and Mecklenburg County Public Schools located in Region VIII are currently using PBL. They are willing to share time and resources with other school divisions. NCPS is planning to collaborate with these divisions to address the needs of its students. NCPS is mandating that the faculty and staff meet the educational needs of its diverse population to ensure success in an ever-changing world; by maximizing the resources of other professionals to prepare all students for new and emerging learning styles. NCPS faculty and staff are in the first year of developing a PBL community of learning. During 2012-13, faculty and staff are participated in a division-wide book study based on "The Global Achievement Gap" by Tony Wagner. Through professional development, the staff is discussing chapters within the book during planning team meetings, through blogging, using hands-on learning strategies, and through the use of Google Docs. During 2013-14, all faculty and staff are participating in professional development on the four categories of 21st Century Learning Skills: Communication and Collaboration; Creativity and Innovation; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, and Research and Information. Beginning in 2013, classrooms across the county are piloting PBL projects. NCPS has participated in training led by Charlotte and Mecklenburg Counties on how to establish a PBL program in its school division. Additional professional development opportunities on 21st Century Learning are planned through PACE during the summer 2014.

The Region VIII schools taking part in this implementation of PBL are trying to coordinate trainings and observations for sixty-three schools (63). The Region VIII Education Center works with the implementation of professional development in Region VIII and is assisting with PBL training. The costs of shifting to project-based instruction are hard to quantify but will require much staff development. With the cuts that schools in our region have endured (in particular Nottoway), we feel coordinating high quality project-based learning professional development with other schools within the region can lessen the cost. By collaborating with other schools and following relatively the same timeline with school calendars, NCPS should be able to ensure that similar standards are applied from one classroom to the next. Nottoway County Public Schools is confident that PBL will help students develop a deeper level of critical thinking and be able to experience real-world applications. It is Nottoway's goal to have 21st Century Skills-Project-Based Learning implemented in all classrooms by the 2014-15 school-year.

Nottoway County is also partnering with other Region VIII school divisions on the Mathematic Standards of Learning Priority for Grades K-8. SVCC will provide on-going professional development for math teachers on the needed strands in the SOLs and also on formative assessment throughout the funding period. The professional development will be provided on-line, on-site and/or on the SVCC campuses. This will be coordinated with the other Region VIII schools starting prior to Labor Day. NCPS is confident that these programs will be successful in facilitating the success of its graduates and the goal of having all graduates pursue either post-secondary education or be workforce ready. It is imperative that students at every grade level are provided with the opportunities to experience project based learning. This will require teachers to coordinate the sharing of regional resources and training to implement PBL. We are confident that our students will benefit from the shared resources within Region 8 and working closely with Southside Virginia Community College. NCPS is requesting that all schools in the division be allowed to open prior to Labor Day. This will ensure the school division's calendar will align with the calendars of participating divisions, colleges, and school transportation will be cost effective.

Necessity of Opening Prior to Labor Day

Based on qualifying under 22.1-79.1.B.1 (severe weather), Nottoway County Public Schools has started school prior to Labor Day since 2000. 2013-14 is the last year in which we qualify for this waiver. Nottoway would like to emphasize the desire to qualify for the innovative program waiver as an opportunity to work with other schools within Region VIII. In order to accommodate its current needs, all Nottoway County Schools have opened prior to Labor Day to ensure that its school calendar and the calendars of surrounding colleges align so that students can fully participate in Dual Enrollment, GED (Middle College from Southside Virginia Community College), Pre-Engineering, the Governor's School of Southside Virginia, the Governor's Health Sciences Academy and other activities. NCPS also has two elementary schools which currently collaborate with Longwood University to offer the Partnership Program to students who will be attaining a degree in Education. This program coordinates with our current pre-Labor Day schedule so that Longwood students can attend class at Crewe Primary School in the morning and observe actual classrooms of students and live teaching at Crewe Primary School and Burkeville Elementary School in the afternoons. We plan to expand this opportunity to two other schools, Blackstone Primary and Nottoway Intermediate. The Longwood Partnership Program has been

successful and we wish to continue offering this program in the same manner in which it has been operating. Longwood students begin hand-on learning on the very first day of classes for both Nottoway and Longwood. This immediate experience prepares the Longwood students with the knowledge of what it really means to be a teacher in the 21st Century.

Longwood University has recently received a planning grant with several schools in Region VIII which ties Project Based Learning into the region. Pre-Labor Day opening has allowed Nottoway to work with other Region VIII schools on staff development and professional training that covers Grades K-12. Nottoway County Public Schools are coordinating with Charlotte, Cumberland, and Mecklenburg County Schools to start school at the same time and follow similar schedules to allow for coordinated PBL training prior to the start of school. By aligning schedules, Nottoway can accommodate students with more access to different courses, share resources, and utilize distance learning, Skype and Blackboard offerings. We feel that by sharing resources we can become a statewide model for 21st Century Learning despite the financial issues our region has been plagued with since 2008. Project Based Learning is the glue to Nottoway's goal of working together regionally and allowing other school systems to follow our model.

The pre-Labor Day opening has benefited Nottoway County Public Schools instructionally. For example, NCPS has seen Fall EOC writing scores improve to over 90% because of the early start and seen improvement in SAT scores since incorporating the early opening. The first semester concludes prior to Winter Break; the second semester begins after students return. Nottoway has seen gains in student achievement at all grade levels due to this calendar option. The fall end-of-course SOL testing is concluded prior to the school division's winter break. The need for remediation and review after the extended break is eliminated. Nottoway County Public Schools has seen an increase in student performance since incorporating the early start. For example, Nottoway Schools have won several awards including outstanding Title I schools and Competence to Excellence.

Nottoway County Public Schools has seen benefits economically from the alignment of the calendars. It has been able to coordinate schedules with other school divisions in Region VIII, SVCC and Longwood University. For example, in Dual Enrollment, NCPS utilizes SVCC staff when we do not have qualified teachers which save on personnel costs. Nottoway can share distance learning opportunities with other schools in the region. Nottoway benefits from the Longwood Partnership. This program offers an additional benefit to Longwood University teacher preparation students who being the first day of their semester making a difference in actual classrooms. During the fall semester, Longwood students spend the first half of the day devoted to methodological preparation and the second half of the day working in classrooms with Nottoway County students. This partnership provides an invaluable resource of additional educators in our elementary classrooms at no cost to the division. At Blackstone Primary, Nottoway has practicum students from Virginia State University working with students. In all schools, the student teachers and practicum students from the universities enhance NCPS student learning by incorporating the newest instructional strategies and research based methods. If Nottoway County Public Schools is allowed to follow the same schedule as the other schools in Region VIII and continues to work closely with Longwood and Virginia State Universities, we are confident that the alignment and fidelity of Project Based Learning will be successful.

While enhanced education is the top priority for NCPS to begin prior to Labor Day, it is important to consider the families who reside in the county and who have children who attend our schools. Nottoway County has limited resources. The school system is one of the top employers in the county. Many community activities revolve around the school division's schedule, including babysitting for young children. Nottoway has only one licensed babysitting facility. Therefore, older siblings and grandparents are often the caregivers for younger children when school is not in session. Therefore, it is imperative that all of our schools follow the same schedule.

In summary, allowing NCPS to begin school prior to Labor Day will allow the following:

- Opportunities for collaboration with SVCC, VSU, and Longwood University for college visits beginning with 1st grade students
- Exposure to career opportunities beyond the rural community setting
- Collaboration with Longwood University's Partnership Program for Teacher Preparation
- Collaboration with regional schools (Charlotte, Cumberland, Mecklenburg) for professional development
- Dual Enrollment and Regional Program opportunities for high school and middle school students
- Enhanced career connection experiences through collaboration with colleges and PBL classroom activities.

The chart below provides a visual as to why the Pre-Labor Day option is best for NCPS by exploring the benefits to students and instruction when we are more aligned with regional colleges and universities. Everyone wins with this option!

PACE Activity	Pre-Labor Day Calendar Benefit	Post-Labor Day Calendar	Schools Impacted	Benefits to Students
Professional Development provided by local colleges	☑ Teachers will be off work early enough in the summer to sign up for early summer	☒ Teachers will still be in school when college summer classes start	All schools/ teachers	Improves to classroom instruction; ensures highly qualified teachers

	college sessions			
Shared Regional Professional Development Sessions	☑ Many regional schools already start prior to Labor Day; shared PD days save costs to the Region for PD	? Offerings would be limited to a certain group of schools and costs would be more.	All schools/ teachers	Improves classroom instruction; ensure every student has a highly qualified teacher. Sharing training across the region allows for collaboration of teachers from specialized subjects where typically only one teacher teaches the content in small school divisions (i.e. Algebra II, Chemistry) Regional cost savings for professional development
Encourages students to enter college as soon as possible after high school or after obtaining a GED	☑ Students would be able to attend summer college sessions upon high school graduation/GED	☒ Students would have to wait until fall to begin taking college courses	NHS	Students enter college sooner and become acclimated to college expectations during the summer session
College for a Day-College Tours/Interactions with Staff/Career Assessment/Special Interest Tours for older students	☑ Allows students opportunities to visit colleges early in the year so PBL activities can be planned around their experiences	☒ Going later in the year will disrupt the college semester; fewer PBL activities could revolve around the college for a day experience	CPS, BPS, BES, NIS, NMS	Real world experiences tied to learning; annual encouragement to seek post-secondary educational opportunities
Longwood Partnership Program to provide hands-on experiences for teacher education students	☑ Longwood students begin immediately in classrooms with real-world teaching experience/guidance which follows their college experience to maximize on learning and benefit NCPS students	☒Longwood students would miss a month at the beginning of school as well as a month at the end of school	CPS, BES, NIS, BPS	Classroom students benefit from having an extra educator in the classroom to engage in learning opportunities
Dual Enrollment allows student to earn an Associate's Degree	☑ Mirroring SVCC's calendar facilitates students needed to take additional courses not offered at the high school site; SVCC also provides instructors for courses which there is not a qualified teacher located at the high school; students can take college summer school classes if needed for degree completion	? Dual Enrollment students would have to start early to participate in additional college courses and additional transportation would be needed	NHS	Facilitates the attainment of post-secondary degrees; Offers unique opportunities for students who may otherwise not have chosen a college track

Student teacher programs from multiple universities (Longwood, Virginia State)	☑ Mirroring local college calendars increases instructional opportunities and benefits NCPS students	☑ Calendar misalignment would limit these experiences	All schools	Students benefit from having additional educators in the classroom to help with instruction
Career programs such as SVCC Heavy Equipment; SVCC Diesel Mechanic; SVCC Governor's Health Sciences programs	☑ Mirroring SVCC's calendar facilitates NHS students to be able to participate in these programs	? Students would have to start early to participate requiring extra transportation	NHS	Facilitates industry certifications and career skills; allows students opportunities they would not otherwise have had in high school
Pre-engineering and Governor's School Programs	☑ Mirroring SVCC's calendar facilitates the success of these programs so all students are on the same schedule since Governor's School begins when college begins	? Students would have to start early to participate requiring extra transportation	NHS	Allows students to increase academic and career potential in STEM and Humanities
Drop-Out Prevention program with college partnerships speaking to students during orientation to middle school	☑ Mirroring the college calendar allows college students to participate without interrupting their college classes	☑ Calendar misalignment would limit these experiences	NMS	Encourages middle school students to stay in school and set their sights on career paths to suit their interests; Middle school students will like the

Evaluation Procedures

Current tracking of graduates (as required in state reporting) will provide evaluation information for the career planning scholastic record. In 2011-12, 82% of Nottoway students enrolled in post-secondary programs. This data can serve as a baseline for annual evaluation of effectiveness of both project based learning and career planning through PACE.

The PACE program will utilize ongoing student records 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 PACE information included in students' cumulative record folders may be used for IEP (Individualized Education Program) planning. At the secondary level, the information may provide specific career goals for the Transition Plan of students with disabilities.

The following specific methods will be used to evaluate the PACE program.

- Data from the Student Record Collection process available from the Department of Education including: Standards of Learning scores, On-time graduation rates, AMO gap group data, graduation data, and the CTE Annual Performance Report
- School Board reports which include a breakdown of the numbers of advanced and standard diplomas, CTE completers, and associate degrees earned while students are in high school
- Guidance logs and information extracted from the student information data system will provide baseline data for the PACE program. The data for 2011-12 is:
    - Students attending 4 year colleges/universities: 38%
    - Students attending 2 year colleges 36%

- Students attending trade school/programs 8%
- Students joining military 5%
- Students seeking employment 12%
- Undecided 1%

In addition to Nottoway's interest in evaluating the success of PACE, Dr. Shelley Loving-Ryder (VDOE) has expressed an interest in studying the correlation of PBL with SOL scores. Nottoway can do this after next year's implementation of classrooms participating in PBL strategies. Nottoway will be coordinating observations and evaluation teams to assess the PBL lessons. Region VIII school divisions will work closely together at making sure the lessons are authentic assessments which cover the standards of learning. Because Region VIII school divisions Charlotte County, Mecklenburg County and Cumberland County Public Schools are implementing Project Based Learning in their divisions, the Region VIII Education Center will be assisting in the evaluation of lessons and provide resources to the school divisions involved in this project.

DOES THE PROGRAM REQUIRE THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS REFERENCED IN THIS APPLICATION TO OPEN PRIOR TO LABOR DAY?
☒ YES ☐ NO.

IF YES, EXPLAIN WHY.

Please see "**Other Relevant Information**" section above which includes 1) **PBL: A Regional Approach to Professional Development and Student Engagement Strategies**, and 2) **Necessity of Opening Prior to Labor Day.**

IF THE PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL, FOR THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS REFERENCED IN THIS APPLICATION INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT EXPLAINS WHY THERE IS REASON TO EXPECT THAT THE PROGRAM WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

Nottoway County Public Schools has been operating on a calendar which opens prior to Labor Day for several years due to the severe weather clause. We have seen a positive impact on our Standards of Learning assessment data. This school year, Nottoway County Public Schools has begun the professional development process of training teachers to use Project Based Learning strategies in the classroom. We anticipate that the PACE program, coupled with PBL learning strategies, will positively impact the number of students who attend post-secondary institutions. We are confident that a valiant effort to focus on career and post-secondary optional at all grade levels will be the reason for increasing our post-secondary participation consistently. Our baseline data has been established and will be used to gauge success of PACE.

DESCRIBE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM FOR EACH SCHOOL.

As state above, the outcome for PACE 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 to provide on-going age appropriate educational opportunities which target higher education and career exploration at every grade level.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A WAIVER OF A PROVISION OR PROVISIONS 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.)

Please see "Program Goals" and "Evaluation Procedures" in the first section.

Number of students involved in the program: 2278

What is the anticipated length of the program or duration of the waiver? On-going

Questions should be directed to the Division of Policy and Communications at (804) 225-2092, or by e-mail 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

Appendix: Planned Activities

Grade Level	Focus	Proposed Activities
Pre-Kindergarten	What do I Want to Be?	• Circle time to share career ideas • Role playing with costumes/props • Picture Books/Read Alouds highlighting career opportunities
Kindergarten	Community Helpers (Firefighters, rescue personnel, police officers, doctors, nurses, teachers, veterinarians)	• Explore roles of community helpers • Share Picture Books/Read Alouds with emphasis on community helpers/friends to the classroom to share their work and necessary education and/or training • Invite community helpers/friends to the classroom to share their work and necessary education and/or training for career success
First Grade	Making Connections—Options, Choices, and Careers	• Field trip to Southside Virginia Community College to expose students to opportunities through higher education • Activities include a tour of the Community College facility and meetings with faculty, staff, and current students to share information and answer questions
Second Grade	Careers and Contributions	• Share with students possible career option through information on career clusters in Virginia • Share ideas on contributions of various careers • Create a class book with each student writing about and illustrating a desired occupation, educational requirements, duties, and contributions/benefits to the community
Third Grade	Exploration and Discovery	• Continue to examine career opportunities through career clusters in Virginia • Explore and discover various professions within the community • Regularly invite community members from various professions to visit the school to share information about his/her career • Students will prepare question with specific emphasis on the educational requirements and/or training and the need/use of skills in the profession, such as math, writing, science, history, art, music, computers, etc.
Fourth Grade	Choosing a Path	• Each student will interview someone to find out about his/her career. Possible questions might include: What skills are needed for this occupation? What type of tools might this person use? What is a typical day on the job like for this person? How is the job similar to a day in school? What education or training is needed for this job? How did you choose this job? • Students will share information from their interview with the class • Students will determine connection to opportunities through career clusters
Fifth Grade	Mapping your Future	• Students will complete an interest inventory to determine a possible career path • Students will continue to examine opportunities through career clusters • Students will participate in a field trip to Southside Virginia Community College where they will explore the many options offered through higher education.
Sixth Grade	It's My Choice	• Students will select a career cluster based on individual interest • Students will research and explore skills and educational requirements for a specific career within the chosen career cluster • Students will create a project illustrating the career • Students will share career projects with class, at the school's career fair, or at a scheduled PTA meeting or PBL Expo

Seventh Grade	Looking Into My Future	• Field trip to Longwood University to experience campus life and educational opportunities • Student Ambassadors will conduct tours of the University campus for the group; the Longwood Admissions office will coordinate informational presentations • Students will have lunch in the dining hall • Each student will begin developing Academic and Career Plan based on student academic and career interests
Eighth Grade	Decisions, Decisions, Decisions!	• Each student will complete a career interest inventory/survey (see www.vawizard.org for possible options) through social studies class • Determine individual talents or activities that are most enjoyed • Determine favorite courses in school • Determine what careers are of interest and why • With guidance from school counselor, teachers and family members, establish goals for the future based on chosen career path • Review and update Academic and Career Plan established in seventh grade to map a course to begin high school • Distribute to all students the free 8th Grade Parent Resource—*Parents: Help Your Child Navigate the Waterways to Their Future* found at http://www.cteresource.org/downloads/4/Parents_Guide2011.pdf
Ninth Grade	The Journey Begins	• Receive *I Am the One* college planner • Students picks three careers and researches each—gather job statistics, places of employment, skills/education required; Share information • Field trip to Virginia State to experience campus life and learn about career opportunities • Review and update Academic and Career Plan
Tenth Grade	Fine Tuning For the Future	• Students pick three colleges and research each—minimum GPA; minimum SAT scores; costs; campus environment, school clubs, etc.; Share information Review and update Academic and Career Plan
Eleventh Grade	Sharpening the Focus	• Attend *College Day* (fall) sponsored by Southside Virginia Community College • Distribute to all students the free resource – *R U "College and Career" Ready?* found on the VDOE website by accessing http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/career_clusters/ru_ready/ru_ready_magazine_2012.pdf. There is a teacher resource companion available. • Review Academic and Career Path to determine those goals that have been accomplished and those goals that remain to be achieved
Twelfth Grade	On My Way!	• Attend *Next Big Step* (fall) and *College Workshop* (spring) sponsored by Southside Virginia Community College • Prepare a resume showcasing academic accomplishments and personal interests through school and community involvement • Attend College Fair