



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
*Office of the Governor*

Mark R. Warner  
Governor

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**GOVERNOR WARNER ANNOUNCES VIRGINIA  
VIRTUAL ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHOOL**

*~Expands student opportunities, supports 'Education for a Lifetime' initiative~*

**RICHMOND** – Governor Mark R. Warner today announced the creation of the Virginia Virtual Advanced Placement (AP) School to allow more students to get a head start on college before completing high school through the “Senior Year Plus” program within the Governor’s “Education for a Lifetime” initiative. Beginning in the Fall of 2004, the Virginia Virtual AP School will offer 13 AP courses via satellite and the Internet, allowing qualified high school students anywhere in the state to earn up to a full semester of college credit before the end of their senior year.

“This is a smart move for students and families,” said Governor Warner. “Students in every corner of the Commonwealth will benefit from the challenge of these courses, and their families will benefit by potentially saving as much as a full semester of college tuition and fees.”

The Virginia Virtual AP School was developed to ensure that a wide variety of college-level courses are available to every Virginia public school student, regardless of location. AP course offerings through the school will include English, Government, Calculus, Statistics, U.S. History, Chemistry, Biology, Spanish, Human Geography, Macro Economics, Micro Economics, Psychology, and Physics.

“Students achieve at a higher level when challenged by rigorous courses,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Jo Lynne DeMary. “The Virginia Virtual AP School increases opportunities for students in divisions that have been unable to offer such a wide array of courses.”

"The College Board lauds the state of Virginia for its commitment to expanding AP opportunities for traditionally underserved students by providing AP courses via satellite and the internet," said Lee Fails, vice president for Regions and K-12 Services with the College Board, the not-for-profit organization that administers the AP Program. "Virginia has long been one of the leading states in AP participation and achievement, and this new initiative shows that Virginia is not content to rest on its laurels, but is truly committed to providing equitable opportunities for all motivated students to experience the benefits of the rigorous and stimulating AP curriculum."

The number of Virginia public school students taking at least one AP examination has increased by more than 20 percent since 2000. During the 2002 – 2003 school year, 30,881 Virginia public school students took at least one AP examination, compared with 30,303 during 2001 – 2002, 28,501 in 2000 – 2001, and 25,392 in 1999 – 2000.

The Department of Education will reimburse school divisions for tuition and fees for online virtual AP courses taken by students participating in the Early College Scholars program, which supports the Senior Year Plus component of Governor Warner’s Education for a Lifetime initiative to expand educational opportunities for all Virginians. Students in the Early College Scholars program sign agreements promising to maintain a “B” average or better, pursue an Advanced Studies Diploma, and complete college-level course work. Students enrolled in online AP courses through the virtual school also must agree to take the corresponding AP examinations to qualify for college credit. A student who completes all the terms of the agreement will be recognized as an Early College Scholar and receive a certificate from the Governor.

Virginia Virtual AP School courses transmitted by satellite are tuition-free for all Virginia public school students. All students who take AP courses are encouraged to take the associated examinations to qualify for college credit.

The Governor's Senior Year Plus initiative also encourages those students who are not college bound to continue working towards high school graduation while pursuing technical training for a selected industry certification, such as a certified computer specialist, Licensed Practical Nurse or mechanic. Often, this technical preparation will continue after graduation from high school.

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