



Virginia Association of Counties ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

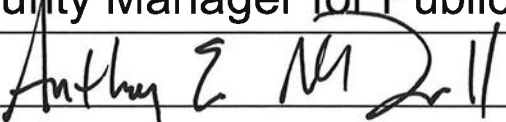
PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: 3-Es of K-12 Education: Enrolled, Enlisted and/or Employed
Program Category: Organizational Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony McDowell
Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
Signature: 

Program Overview

While the purpose of secondary education is to help students learn what is needed to be successful in the future, instruction must encompass more than academics alone. In Henrico County, Virginia, we want our students to graduate as with “triple-E” status. The school division’s goal is to have students graduate from high school **E**nrolled, **E**nlisted and/or **E**mployed. By beginning with the end goal in mind, we have taken the concept of graduating college- and career-ready to the next level. All students should graduate with a plan in place to help them be successful. This plan actually starts in middle school and is monitored to ensure students are receiving the total education that will prepare them for their career goals. The project has helped remove some “education silos” – areas of isolated knowledge and noncommunication – by helping school counselors know what courses will best serve students as they look to their futures. The plan makes a student’s school career – from middle school to high school to postsecondary education – a more seamless process instead of three individual experiences.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

As options and opportunities for students in secondary schools continue to grow, and high-stakes testing continues to influence educational outcomes, Henrico County Public Schools wants to ensure students graduate with a plan. The school division found that many students were graduating from rigorous high school programs with no concrete plan for their future. This can lead to “false starts” as students try to determine what they should do next. This uncertainty can be costly to students, parents and businesses as students search for the opportunity that will help them be successful. Many of these opportunities are already available in high school, including dual-enrollment courses, specialty centers and technical training programs leading to industry certifications and licenses. Planning for a career pathway is different than planning for a job. The goal should be to expose students to career options early in their educational careers, to ensure

that they have a full understanding of the options and training available. This means that just being academically successful is not enough; education needs to be a true partnership between students, parents and guardians, counselors, educators and businesses. Silos must be removed so that all components can work toward a unique goal for each student. This will yield more students who graduate from high school enrolled, enlisted and/or employed.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

Beginning with the end goal in mind is not always the norm for students passing through the educational system. By building in collaboration, planning and “reverse-engineering” of the students’ goals, we have made it easier and more seamless for students to graduate college- and career-ready. This approach could be a model to other school divisions: All students should graduate with a plan in place to help them be successful. The plan starts in middle school and is monitored to ensure students are receiving the total education that will prepare them for their career goals.

How Program Was Carried Out

Having students become triple-E graduates has to start at the elementary level and be seamless throughout the entire education process. Students often ask, “Why do I need to know this?” Having students think about the “why” early and connect it to plans for their futures is essential.

There are several objectives to this program, first launched in fall 2017. The first is to help each student think about his or her future beyond high school. This gives them with a solid foundation to help navigate the educational process, ensuring they are prepared for the next step. We want students to graduate with triple-E status, meaning they have a definite plan after high school and will be enrolled, enlisted and/or employed.

The second objective is to help break down isolated areas of communication and planning – educational silos – in order to make education influential for students and families as they navigate the K-12 process. Students have to make many decisions, including course selection, specialty centers, special interest clubs and work experiences. Having a solid understanding of options and participation requirements is critical. We cannot think of education as three discrete chapters; elementary, middle and high. School counselors need help in ensuring they are guiding students to a career pathway that will bring them pleasure and success. Families need to help students make informed decisions about what they want to do when they enter the world of work.

Businesses often want to be involved and look for opportunities to be involved in the educational process. Thus, the third goal of the triple-E process is to provide opportunities for businesses to interact with students, giving them an understanding of the workplace of today and the future. When students have a more focused approach to their goals, businesses can engage with schools based on student interests, and ensure that the information they provide to students is appropriate for those students' developmental stages.

The last objective of the triple-E program is to capitalize on the many different efforts taking place in the school division and bring them together, so that their focus is ensuring that all students graduate with a plan for the future.

The development of the program started by focusing on the overall objective of education. Simply stated, that means starting with the end in mind. This means more than just focusing on passing a class or learning a concept; it means helping students answer the question “why?” by capitalizing on the many different programs already in place in Henrico County Public Schools and using current efforts.

Starting at the elementary level, students are exposed to careers in a variety of ways. Through career days, visits by the “Careers on Wheels” bus, and the connections that teachers make with content, students are able to begin to understand career pathways and jobs associated with those pathways. As the student enters middle school, a career plan is developed for each student. School counselors meet with all students to talk about their futures and help plan the courses the students will take, not just for the current year, but projected all the way through high school. This plan is shared with parents and revisited each year for updating. There are a number of opportunities for students in middle school to learn about career pathways. Through exploratory classes, students are able to explore their interests and get a better understanding of available options. Eighth-grade students participate in “Mission Tomorrow,” a program where students research careers to determine their interests and then have the opportunity to meet and talk with professionals in the desired fields. After meeting with the professionals, the students complete follow-up activities to help them identify the next steps in their plans. Middle school students also have the opportunity to explore various careers through our Summer Polytech experience. This program gives the students a more in-depth and hands-on experience in a career paths that interest them. We also work closely with other agencies in Henrico County to offer programs like a summer fire academy for middle-schoolers.

As students prepare for high school, they have numerous opportunities to learn about available options, such as specialty centers, advanced education centers, the regional Governor’s school, electives, etc. By aligning all these programs to focus on the students’ futures, school counselors and parents have the opportunity to help them make informed decisions.

While in high school, continually revisiting the career plan is essential to ensure that students are preparing for their futures after high school. Through summer programs such as Summer Building

Trades and Summer Polytech, students can connect academic skills to real-world applications. This provides additional information to help students and parents determine the best educational plan.

Business and community partnerships are essential in this process. There are many ways our business community and Henrico County participate in this program. By providing internship opportunities, participating in mock interviews, establishing apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities, many students are able get an in-depth experience in the career pathways that interest them.

Financing and Staffing

Promotional items: \$1,000/year

Communication flyers and posters: \$500

Staff development is done through current staff development days.

Program Results

The best example of what the program can mean comes from the Academy at Virginia Randolph, the school division's alternative high school. Students attend the school for a variety of reasons, but ultimately it is the school division's obligation to ensure that students are prepared for success. At graduation exercises for the class of 2017, the school's principal was able to identify each student's plan for the following year. He was able to identify which students would be continuing their education in a two- or four-year school; joining the military; or entering the workplace. The students entering the workplace were entering with the appropriate training and certifications to ensure that they would not only be prepared for the job, but be productive employees. Each

student that graduated knew his or her next educational step. They were not only academically prepared; they truly were ready to move beyond their high school careers.

Brief Summary

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