



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the 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: Safety Around the Water: Learn2Swim Program
Program Category: Health and Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Program Overview

Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) implemented a new program during the 2021-22 school year, Safety around the Water - Learn2Swim Program. The Learn2Swim program has been made possible through a partnership between Henrico County Public Schools, YMCA of Greater Richmond, and NOVA of Virginia Aquatics and through the fundraising efforts of our aquatic facilities and local communities.

The goal of the program is saving lives through water safety education and swimming instruction. Drowning poses a considerable risk for youth and adults, especially in areas where access to swim instruction is limited. Many accidental deaths by drowning are preventable. These lessons are designed to help all HCPS second graders learn water safety skills such as asking permission to enter the water, “swim-float-swim,” and “jump-push-turn-grab.” Our aim is to build confidence and character while achieving fundamental swimming and water safety skills in a safe and friendly environment.

The Learn2Swim program has resulted in 98% of our students demonstrating improvement in benchmark psychomotor skills and water safety learning outcomes.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

Water is all around us — in rivers, lakes, drainage ditches, bathtubs and even large puddles. With such frequent exposure to water, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children under fourteen. Developing water safety knowledge and swimming skills significantly reduces the risk of drowning. One of our second grade Virginia Standards of Learning requirements is to explain the importance of assuming responsibility for personal safety. This program directly aligns with the objectives of this SOL standard and provides an inclusive opportunity for all second grade students to participate in swim lessons and water safety

instruction to help ensure a lifetime of fun, fitness and water safety awareness. HCPS serves a diverse population of students having varying degrees of exposure to aquatic opportunities. Students who may be unable to access such opportunities have increased risks of water-induced injury. This program is part of a multifaceted approach to student personal safety and well-being taught by HCPS and is no less important than instruction regarding fire drills, interactions with strangers or the development of healthy living habits.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The HCPS Learn2Swim program is part of a multifaceted approach by the school division to increase students' health, well-being and personal safety awareness. As such, access to the program and the subsequent measured success should be inclusive and equitable across the entire participating student population. By offering this integral health curriculum program to every second grade student in HCPS during the school day and by providing transportation, access and instruction to all, the program meets the high level of expectations that our HCPS families and community have for inclusive and equitable education and provides a model for other localities. In addition, the program represents a significant collaboration between public and private partners including the school division, Henrico Department of Recreation and Parks, the YMCA of Greater Richmond, NOVA Aquatics and community fundraising efforts.

How Program Was Carried Out

The HCPS Learn2Swim program consists of a series of swimming lessons supported by the YMCA of Greater Richmond, NOVA Aquatics and the donations of the surrounding communities. Through this program, which began with the 2021-22 school year, each second grade student receives seven 40-minute lessons. The overall goal of the program is to educate students about water safety and swimming instruction. The specific objectives are to:

- Learn swimming fundamentals for personal safety.

- Provide aquatic activities to improve range of motion, endurance, muscular strength, gross motor skills, perceptual motor skills and general physical fitness.
- Provide the basics for a lifetime fitness activity.
- Provide character development and social and emotional skills needed to build self-confidence.
- Develop and strengthen confidence around water.

Taking place during the school day, the Learn2Swim program removes economic, logistical or geographic barriers to aquatic instruction. Aspects embedded in the program designed to advance equity and inclusion include:

- Each child receives a HCPS swim cap to wear during lessons. (Our second graders wear swim caps just like the swimmers in the Olympics.)
- Swimsuit drives have been initiated to ensure all students have a swimsuit while participating in the program. During these drives, volunteers play an important role in the program's ability to promote community outreach and unity.
- Transportation is provided for all students.

Additionally, we recognize that each child differs in life experiences as well as in their progress in all activities, including swimming. With our progressive swim stages, we want to celebrate each child's achievements both big and small. Some of those progressions may include:

- Lessening or eliminating fear of the water.
- Increasing comfort level and confidence in the water.
- Increasing focusing ability.
- Learning of or discussing a friend or family member's (especially an adult's) fear of the water.

These progressions are not a formal part of the Learn2Swim rubric but are equally vital in cultivating an inclusive program and positive experience for our students.

The timeframe to develop the Learn2Swim program has been a yearlong process. Developmental activities have included:

- Meetings with the aquatic directors from each facility to set scope and goals for the program.
- Coordinating the scheduling requirements between the specific aquatic centers and each individual elementary school.
- Transportation, logistics, scheduling and application process.
- Informational meetings with school administrators and second grade educators.
- Designing and delivering program overview and organizational process.
- Coordinating HCPS representation and guidance at the aquatic centers during the lessons.
- Collection and summary of the rubrics.

This school year, we are in phase one of our Learn2Swim program, with 20 schools participating.

Next year, during the 2022-23 school year, we will have all 46 elementary schools taking part in the program.

<p>Phase 1 2021-22</p>	<p>Six schools at NOVA pools (Regency and Gayton Road) Chamberlayne, Holladay, Lakeside, Longdale, Johnson and Ridge</p> <p>14 Schools at YMCA pools (Tuckahoe, Shady Grove and Frank Thornton Aquatic Center locations) Adam, Ashe, Baker, Donahoe, Dumbarton, Fair Oaks, Glen Lea, Harvie, Highland Springs, Laburnum, Montrose, Ratcliffe, Sandston and Ward</p>
<p>Phase 2 2022-23</p>	<p>All 46 Elementary Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NOVA pools: TBD ● YMCA pools: TBD

The Learn2Swim program in Henrico County Public Schools is a collaborative effort between HCPS, Henrico Department of Recreation and Parks, NOVA Aquatics and the YMCA of Greater Richmond. The table below provides an overview of what each partner will contribute to the program.

Partner	Main Contact	Cost	Pools Available	Min # of Students	Max # of Students	Format	Notes
<u>NOVA</u>	Executive director and lesson coordinators	No Cost to HCPS	Regency Gayton Road	300	500	2 Experiences (2 Sessions- 1 Fall, 1 Spring)	Transportation - HCPS May seek assistance from Henrico County or HCPS to address staffing needs Confirm that the curriculum will be provided by YMCA
YMCA	Aquatics director	No Cost to HCPS	Tuckahoe Shady Grove <u>Frank Thornton Aquatic Center</u>	500	?	2 Experiences (4 Sessions- 2 Fall, 2 Spring)	Transportation - HCPS The YMCA calculated their costs to be \$6,000 per 100 students The YMCA provides HCPS with a max number of students per session for planning purposes

In addition to the community partners listed above, Learn2Swim represents collaboration among various staff and departments within the school division. The table below provides information about the HCPS internal team and specific roles for the 2021-22 school year.

Team Member	Role
HCPS K-12 health and physical education teacher	Scheduling, paperwork, orientation preparation, lesson support and site supervision
HCPS director of elementary school leadership	Planning and implementation support for elementary, communication with the department of school leadership and elementary principals
HCPS director of teaching, learning and innovation	Planning coordination
HCPS education specialist for health and physical education	Implementation coordination and support, communication with school principals
HCPS chief learning officer	Communication and cooperation of community partners, memorandum of understanding support and redevelopment
HCPS K-12 health and physical education teacher	Scheduling, paperwork, orientation preparation, lesson support and site supervision

This program is supported by dozens of part-time jobs created at the Frank Thornton Aquatics Center (YMCA of Greater Richmond), NOVA Swim facility at Regency Mall, and HCPS' Department of Pupil Transportation. In 2022-23, these job opportunities are anticipated to grow significantly, as the program expands by 280%.

Financing and Staffing

As a part of a memorandum of understanding among Henrico County and our two partner organizations, swim lessons will be provided to second grade students at no cost to schools or students. The school system will provide transportation for all 1,100+ trips in a school calendar year. Additionally, grant and county funds were used to provide support for the construction of two additional aquatic facilities and for a single school pilot program during the 2020-21 school year:

- In 2020, Henrico County delivered the first installment of its \$1.75 million grant to NOVA for the Regency project. In accordance with the county agreement, NOVA provided a NOVASwim lessons pilot program for one school's second grade students in 2020. All second graders from Ruby Carver Elementary School took swim lessons at NOVA during the school day for an eight-week period. The additional facility provided greater community access to swimming and swim instruction.
- The county of Henrico contributed \$8 million to the YMCA of Greater Richmond to fund construction of the Frank Thornton Aquatic Center and other project costs, and finalize a 20-year lease of the property. The nonprofit organization will build, manage and operate the facility, which will be open to the public through means-based memberships as well as daily rates.

Program Results

In order to determine the success and effectiveness of Learn2Swim, the use of a rubric was implemented. The rubric is designed for assessing the skill-progression of each student throughout the seven-week program period. The data is categorized into four areas: water acclimation, water movement, water stamina and stroke introduction.

At the culmination of each session, the rubrics are collected from each aquatic facility. The data is analyzed and a summary of findings is created. When we studied our data from Learn2Swim session one, we concluded that 98% of the students who participated in the seven-week program showed growth from week one to week seven in one or more of the four benchmark skills.

The rubric also identifies the swim level (1-4) the student has achieved. This swim level can be used as a resource if a student wants to move forward with lessons after the HCPS program has concluded.

The students take part in a small celebration of achievement ceremony and are given their rubric to take home and share with their parents/guardians.

Brief Summary

The Learn2Swim program provides an inclusive opportunity for all HCPS second grade students to participate in swim lessons to help ensure a lifetime of fun, fitness and water-safety awareness. Even with the availability of public facilities, ready access to pools and aquatic instruction can be limited by economic circumstances, transportation or other barriers. The Learn2Swim program removes these barriers, providing all of Henrico's 2nd graders access to critical water safety and swim instruction.

Partnering with Henrico Department of Recreation and Parks, YMCA of Greater Richmond and NOVA of Virginia Aquatics, the program was developed and phase one was launched during the 2021-22 school year with 20 schools participating. During the 2022-23 school year, second graders in all 46 elementary schools will take part in the program.

Through the use of the rubric, instructors, students and families can follow and celebrate progress made, as well as develop an awareness of next steps in skill development.

The Learn2Swim program allows all second grade students the opportunity to participate in free swim lessons that will open doors to a lifetime of fun, fitness, and awareness for water safety, while promoting self-development. In addition to skills and experience gained through the lessons, participating in the Learn2Swim program can open the eyes of students to see the endless possibilities for other aquatic opportunities such as summer camps, swim team (recreational or high school); or any outdoor recreation that includes water activities such as fishing, boating and other water sports as well as backyard fun with their families.