



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** 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: Improving Literacy for All Students  
Program Category: Health and Human Services

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Brandon Hinton  
Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration  
Signature: 

### **Program Overview**

Henrico County Public Schools' (HCPS) workforce and career development courses are offered to students at Henrico County, Virginia's Jail East, to provide inmates with the tools to better themselves after incarceration, so that inmates will have the tools to better themselves after incarceration. In order to qualify for course enrollment, students must receive a grade-equivalent score of 8.0 or higher on the Test of Adult Basic Education, an assessment of adult basic and secondary education knowledge. HCPS' workforce development instructor at the jail began offering a reading class to diploma-holding adult students who were unable to achieve a passing score on the test.

### **Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality**

Shortly after arriving at the Henrico Adult Education Center located within Henrico County Jail East, the workforce development instructor noticed that some students interested in workforce and career development courses could not participate because of their lower-level literacy skills. Many of these students already possessed a high school diploma or GED certificate; consequently, the GED-prep program was not the best fit for them. She saw an opportunity to assist such adult students in this unique situation.

### **How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria**

As the data shows, our literacy program continues to improve the reading skills of participating students at the Henrico County Jail East. As students took the reading course, they gained more confidence in their abilities. Enrolled students better understood reading, enabling them to learn more about workplace skills and career opportunities. Such programs have an immeasurable value on self-efficacy and hope for future success.

### **How Program Was Carried Out**

The reading class, which is unique to Henrico County Sheriff's Office Vocational Program, aims to increase the literacy level of class participants while simultaneously opening the pathway to workforce and career development opportunities. Participant criteria is as follows:

- Inmate requests to participate in the vocational education program
- Inmate fails to qualify for program after two attempts of an adult literacy assessment
- Inmate possesses a diploma or high school equivalency (GED) certificate
- The administrator of the literacy assessment refers students to the reading class.

Within the reading class, instruction focuses on reading skills in comprehension, speed and vocabulary. It is offered alongside other adult education courses. Following the instruction and practice, students are reassessed. If a student qualifies with a reading grade equivalency of 8.0 or greater, they are eligible for the vocational class of their choice. If a student does not attain the required reading level, they will remain in the reading class for additional instructor-led practice, until a mutually agreed upon time to retest is determined.

Class participants are inmates housed within Henrico County Jail East. As this program is offered within the jail facility, cooperation with the Henrico County Sheriff's Office is essential for the continued operation of the program. Fortunately, such collaboration occurred to assist in helping the inmates the program continues to be a success. The reading class was not a part of the required course offerings; rather it was started voluntarily by the workforce development instructor. The formal program, combined with data tracking, began in 2019.

### **Financing and Staffing**

The workforce development instructor started the reading class voluntarily, with materials from the HCPS Adult Education Center. Therefore, there are no costs associated with implementation.

### **Program Results**

Based on the data accumulated between 2019 and 2022, 13 students increased their literacy levels enough to gain admission into career and workforce development courses.

#### 2019

- Eight enrolled students
  - Three moved, were released or quit and were never given a final test.
    - All participants are pre-tested. However, inmates may be relocated or released prior to post testing. Inmate movement and release is a decision of the jail or the courts; the Education department does not influence this decision. For security reasons, inmates' movements or releases are not disclosed prior to the event. Instructors learn of inmate relocation afterwards.
  - Five students qualified with a grade equivalent of 8.0 or better.

#### 2020\*

\*Jail restricted movement – no classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 2021\*

- Five enrolled students
  - Three were released, never given a final test.
  - Two qualified with grade equivalents of 8.0 or better.

\*Education participants were limited due to COVID-19 precautions.

#### 2022

- Eleven enrolled students
  - Five moved, were released or quit and were never given a final test.
  - Six qualified with a grade equivalent of 8.0 or better.

#### 2023 (year-to-date)

- One enrolled student
  - Three additional students qualified but were either relocated or declined.

#### **Brief Summary**

The literacy program from the Henrico Adult Education Center at the local jail has been able to put inmates on the pathway to success and further development in the realm of career development and training. Since 2019, 13 inmates who previously were unable to meet the standards of an adult education program were able to improve their literacy to the level that they can now pursue the vocational classes offered by Henrico County Public Schools and its workforce development departments. The program is a collaborative effort between the school division and county government, and it is vital to the process of helping these inmates with the rest of their lives. The work of this program and the instructor who launched it has made a dramatic impact on the well-being of people who need this type of assistance as much as anyone.