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NEWS

September 25, 2013 – SCS SAT & Advanced Placement (AP) Student Performance

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STAUNTON CITY SCHOOLS SAT & ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Staunton, VA – In Staunton City Schools, over 50% of the 2013 graduating class took college-admissions tests in preparation for their future beyond high school. In total, 90 seniors took the SAT, a benchmark college entrance assessment that provides insight for colleges on how a student thinks, communicates, and solves problems. Results from this assessment are reported in three components: critical reading, mathematics, and writing. Staunton City Schools had an average score of 499 for critical reading, exceeding the national average. Staunton City Schools' 2013 SAT results reflected an average score of 473 in mathematics and 479 in writing.

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program exposes students to rigorous curriculum, teaches essential critical thinking skills, and enables students to pursue college-level studies while in high school. Last year, 63 students at Lee High School participated in AP courses and completed related assessments. In total, 114 tests were given, spanning 15 different subject areas.

Results from the AP assessments indicate that the percentage of Staunton City Schools' students achieving a score of 3 or greater (a benchmark typically used for college credit) exceeded both the state and nation. In Staunton, 67% of students met or exceeded the benchmark, compared with 64% at the state level and 61% at the federal level. The percentage of students meeting and exceeding the benchmark has shown a steady and significant increase in Staunton City Schools over the past five years. In 2009, 40% of students met or exceeded the benchmark, indicating a 27% improvement over the past five years.

The critical thinking and problem-solving skills reflected in college-readiness assessments are becoming more prevalent in other assessments across the nation and the Commonwealth. Two years ago, the mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments across Virginia transitioned to become more challenging and requiring an increased level of thinking. The reading, writing, and science SOL assessments for this past year included similar increased rigor.

"Staunton City Schools' staff is dedicated to the highest level of achievement for all students," states Director of Assessment and School Improvement, Stephanie Haskins. "Administrators and teachers in Staunton City Schools are analyzing the percentage of pass advanced scores on SOL assessments, the participation and performance of students in advanced coursework and assessment, the number of advanced studies diplomas, and the instructional strategies that will stretch all students to high levels of thinking."