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## NEWS

### January 16, 2015 – SCS Deploys Security Enhancements

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### SCS Deploys Security Enhancements

(STAUNTON, Va. – Jan. 16, 2015) — Staunton City Schools is pleased to announce that security upgrades and enhancements to Shelburne Middle School and Bessie Weller, McSwain and Ware elementary school entrances are now complete, and that a new secure entry system will be deployed in those schools on Friday, January 16. The new system will allow each school’s staff to have greater control over who is able to gain entry into the building.

The security enhancements include a service window now positioned in the vestibule between the first and second set of entryway doors, and a more detailed identification process for school visitors. Visitors will be asked to wait for office staff to allow entry beyond the vestibule, and then report directly to the office to sign in. If a visitor is unrecognized by office staff, they will be required to produce a photo identification before they are granted entry into the school.

These security enhancements were made possible through grant funding, in the amount of approximately \$175,000, from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Over the past two years, Staunton City Schools was awarded two competitive grants as part of the work of the Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force. The first grant funded the purchase of equipment and supplies to increase security at the middle school and all elementary schools.

The receipt of the second grant this fiscal year will allow these security enhancement efforts to expand to Robert E. Lee High School and the Dixon Educational Center. That work is currently underway with completion anticipated for the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

“This is another important step in our efforts to bolster the safety and security of our students,” said Dr. Linda Reviea, Superintendent of Staunton City Schools. “While safety has always been a critical concern for our schools, we also do not want to lose sight of the importance of having our parents involved with our students and staff and want them to continue to feel welcome in our buildings.”

A letter to parents was sent home with students earlier this week, explaining the new system and what parents can expect when they come to the school after the security enhancements have been deployed.

Upon the award of the first grant last fiscal year, school division staff also collaborated with the Staunton Fire Department and the Staunton Police Department to include their perspective and input in school security enhancement plans.

Chief Jim Williams of the Staunton Police Department made the following comments about this collaborative effort: “We continue to work closely with school personnel to increase the safety and security of all of the students, faculty and staff in our City schools. The new security measures will help us protect our most valuable assets.”

Scott Garber, Chief of the Staunton Fire Department added: “The implemented safety and security measures within our schools will provide a much safer environment for our students and school staff. The additional measures also will assist fire personnel in gaining critical access to these schools during emergencies.”

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