

October 6, 2014 – Staunton City Schools Prepares More Students for College and Career

Contact: Mrs. Stephanie Haskins
332-3920 Fax: 332-3924
shaskins@staunton.k12.va.us

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOLS PREPARES MORE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE & CAREER

Staunton, VA, October 6, 2014 – In Staunton City Schools, 62% of the 2014 graduating seniors took college-admissions tests in preparation for their future beyond high school. A total of 98 seniors took a college-readiness assessment, including one or more of the following:

- **SAT:** The SAT is a benchmark college entrance assessment that provides insight for colleges on how a student thinks, communicates, and solves problems. Results on this assessment are reported in three components: Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. Of the 158 seniors at Robert E. Lee High School, 87 (or 55%) took this assessment, with an average score of 493 for Critical Reading, 482 in Mathematics, and 469 in Writing, falling below the state and national average in these content areas. This was the greatest participation in this assessment to date, with an 8% increase over the previous five years.
- **ACT:** The ACT is also a benchmark college entrance assessment. It is similar to the SAT, but provides information on Science, in addition to Reading and Mathematics. Writing is optional on this assessment. While the SAT has typically been the more popular assessment throughout Virginia, Staunton City Schools had a total of 24 students participate in this assessment.
- **Advanced Placement:** 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, 65 students at Lee High School, including 23 seniors, participated in AP courses and completed related assessments. In total, 118 tests were given, spanning 15 different subject areas. In Staunton, about half of the students participating achieved a score of three or greater (a benchmark typically used for college credit). In six subjects, 100% of students met or exceeded the benchmark, including: Calculus BC: AB Subscore, Chemistry, English Language and Composition, European History, Microeconomics, and Physics B.

Staunton City Schools remains focused on increasing participation and preparation for these advanced assessments, and is seeing a rise in participation of advanced coursework, including honors at both Shelburne Middle and Lee High School and an increase in advanced courses at the high school and Governor's School. The chart below shows the increasing enrollment in advanced coursework:

Course	2013-2014	2014-2015
Honors Courses	1045	1078
Advanced Placement/ Dual Enrollment Courses	265	293
Virtual Virginia Courses	27	26
Governor's School Courses	47	60
TOTAL	1384	1457

Additionally, Staunton City Schools is increasing students' preparation for career through work-readiness assessments. Last year, a total of 377 career and workplace credential tests were given, as compared to just 98 tests four years previously. These tests spanned a total of 54 different career areas, with 70% of the tests exceeding the required benchmark. The number of students participating in career/technical coursework has continued to rise, with this year having the highest level of enrollment at Shelburne Middle School, Lee High School, and Valley Career and Technical Center. Almost 1500 students (1498) are participating in career/technical coursework for 2014-2015, an increase of about 250 students from the previous year, as shown in the chart below:

School/Center	2013-2014	2014-2015
Shelburne Middle School	523	722
Lee High School	623	684
Valley Career & Technical Center	70	92
TOTAL	1216	1498

"There are multiple career and college pathways for students to consider, and we are pleased to see an increase in student participation in related coursework and assessments. Staunton City Schools remains focused on stretching all students to high-levels of thinking and equipping them with the skills that will help them be successful for college, career, and life," states Stephanie Haskins, Director of Assessment and School Improvement.