MORE NEWPORT NEWS STUDENTS ARE EARNINg DIPLOMAs

By keeping the focus on college and career readiness, NNPS’ graduation rate increased to 86% in 2014, from 72.9% six years ago. During the same time, the dropout rate decreased to 2.4%. Newport News Public Schools’ dropout prevention and recovery program provides an array of services to help students graduate on time (in four years).

STEM IN NNPS

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education is key to a prosperous community and quality careers for upcoming generations. Newport News Public Schools has embarked on an aggressive STEM education initiative that prepares students to take full advantage of STEM opportunities in higher education and career fields.

NNPS is uniquely designed to benefit from the high concentration of STEM-related careers in the region. Newport News Shipbuilding alone estimates that it will hire 10,000 people in the next several years to fill new jobs and replace retiring employees. NASA Langley, Jefferson Lab, Canon-Virginia, area military facilities and numerous government contractors in this region offer a wealth of STEM career opportunities for qualified job-seekers.

Construction of the Magruder STEM Academy is Underway

The groundbreaking ceremony for Magruder Elementary Discovery STEM Academy was held in August. The new, $27 million school is scheduled to open in the fall of 2016 as one of the few elementary schools in the country designed from the ground up as a STEM learning facility.

With the Magruder Elementary Discovery STEM Academy, nine other STEM-focused schools and numerous STEM school-based programs and activities, NNPS is building a comprehensive STEM culture in our school district and community.

NNPS STUDENTS ARE MAKING PROGRESS ON SOL TESTS

Newport News students scored higher than the state benchmarks on several Standards of Learning (SOL) tests during the 2013-2014 school year: third-grade history and science, fourth-grade Virginia studies, civics and economics; middle school Algebra I and geometry; and high school reading, world geography, U.S. history I and II, and world history. In addition, the school district is making notable progress in third through fifth-grade mathematics, fifth-grade reading, seventh-grade reading, high school geometry, Algebra II and chemistry.

Eight elementary schools saw mathematics test scores rise by 15 to 24 percentage points. In addition, 18 schools improved performance in two or three SOL test subjects.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES. The school division offers more Advanced Placement (AP) courses than any other school district or private school on the Peninsula. AP courses are open to all; students with qualifying grades may earn college credit. Nearly 2,000 high school students took 3,330 AP courses during the 2013-2014 school year.

INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are designed around industry standards to ensure high-quality instruction for high-wage, high-demand and high-skill areas. In 2014, CTE courses prepare NNPS students to earn more than a dozen industry certifications. In 2014, NNPS students earned 1,552 industry certifications, 489 more than the previous year, accelerating access to technical, high-skilled careers.

EARLY COLLEGE. High school seniors may earn up to 19 semester hours of college credit prior to high school graduation in this unique partnership with Thomas Nelson Community College. During their senior year, students complete their high school course work during the first semester and attend TNCC during the second semester. Through Early College and other dual enrollment opportunities, nearly 400 high school students were enrolled in college coursework last school year.

ACHIEVEMENT. An integrated approach to literacy and math instruction is preparing students for success. The number of second-graders reading on grade level increased to 80% and more students (65%) are completing Algebra by eighth-grade.

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