# VSBA Special Edition Newsletter

Spring 2018

# SHOWCASES FOR SUCCESS

As a means of encouraging awareness and recognition of public schools, the Virginia School Boards Association invited Virginia's school divisions to recommend programs that would serve as "Showcases for Success" in public education. The VSBA has created an online database of these successful programs and will feature them on the VSBA web site for the entire year. In addition, this directory will be shared with journalists, school board members, superintendents, legislators, and top state officials.

The focus of the 2018 VSBA Showcases for Success is School Choice in Public Schools, highlighting unique program offerings in Virginia's public schools.

Readers are invited to visit the directory of programs, which is now available on the VSBA web site. We also would like to encourage an exchange of ideas and initiatives. The directory highlights division-wide programs, as well as those at elementary, middle, and high school levels. The quality and range of initiatives is vast and remarkable, and divisions are encouraged to use these "Showcases for Success" as a starting point to develop similar programs in their school division.

**SHOWCASE DIRECTORY**

www.vsba.org/showcases

**With an open exchange of ideas and implementation of best practices, together we can work toward the ultimate goal of graduation and success for all students.**

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Albemarle County
Alexandria City
Amherst County
Arlington County
Augusta County
Caroline County
Chesterfield County
Covington City
Cumberland County
Fairfax City
Fredericksburg City
Goochland County
Halifax County
Hampton City
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Henry County
Hopewell City
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Mathews County
Middlesex County
Newport News City
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Rockbridge County
Rockingham County
Russell County
Smyth County
Spotsylvania County
Suffolk City
Williamsburg-James City County

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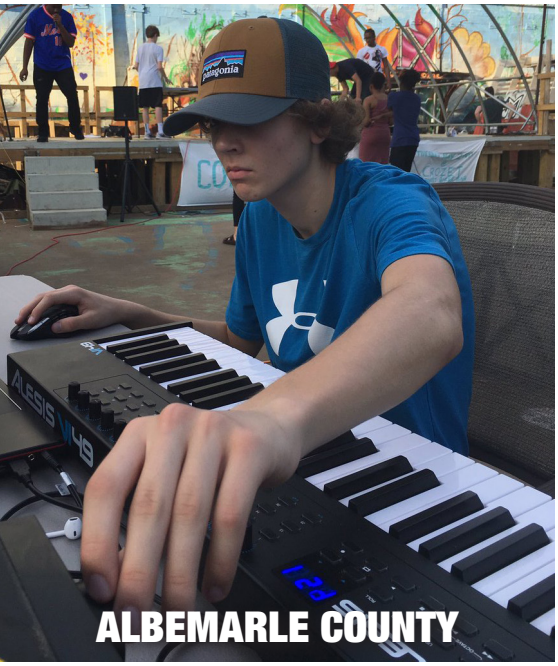


**DIVISION:**
Albemarle County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## A3 House, an Alternative Arts Pathway

Students in Albemarle County's largest high school are learning what it takes to climb to the top of the music world. A state-of-the-art music studio is the perfect key to unlocking the creative talents of budding young artists who never realized learning could be so personal. At the school, students, some of whom struggled to find relevance in their studies, are able to write, perform and produce music that carries messages connected to their deepest passions. The creativity does not stop there. These artists are learning entrepreneurial principles that turn their creations into vehicles to share what matters to them with a broader audience and to make a few dollars in the process.

**CONTACT:** Chance Dickerson, Classroom Facilitator, Albemarle High School, 434-975-9300

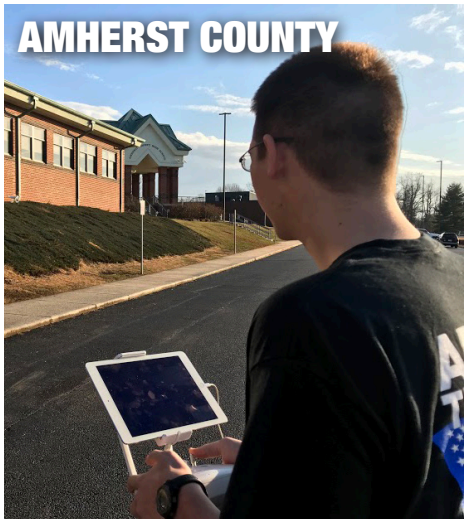
**DIVISION:**
Amherst County Public Schools

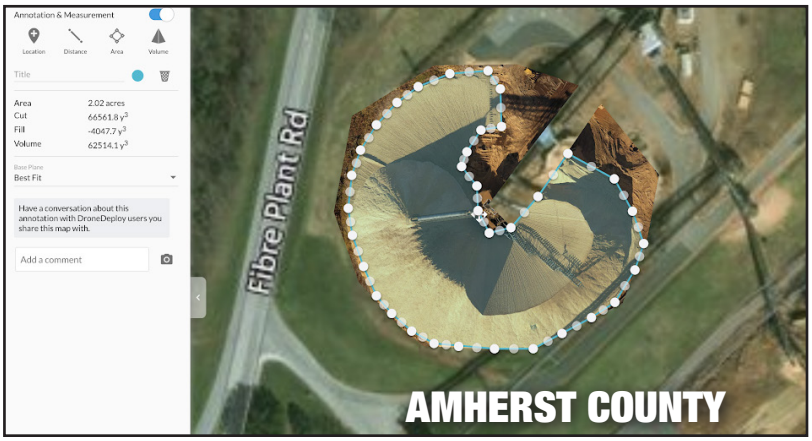
**PROGRAM:**

## Drone Mapping Project: Amherst Lancers Tech Club

The Drone Mapping Project began in 2018 with a unique learning experience partnering with Greif Rivervill Mill in Gladstone, VA. Students learn the use of drones for aerial mapping of the company's inventory in order to create 2D maps, 3D models, and volume information. The course will allow students to become eligible to take the FAA Part 107 Aeronautical Knowledge Test.

**CONTACT:** Mike Cargill, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher, 434-946-2898





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**DIVISION:**
Augusta County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**
## Summer Enrichment

Students spend a week immersed in learning experiences designed to encourage critical and creative thinking while triggering curiosity. A variety of seminars across disciplines offer students the opportunity to engage in authentic learning experiences that go beyond the core curriculum to include technology, robotics, art, photography, health and nutrition, drama, music, etc. Seminars are designed to nurture student passions and talents and to foster curiosity and a love for learning. All seminars are fun, educational, interactive, and hands on. All seminars are project based, most with “make and take” activities. Each student participates in 2 of the over 30 seminars offered for students K-8. On the last day of the week, parents are invited to watch the performances and view the projects and presentations developed by the students over the course of the week.

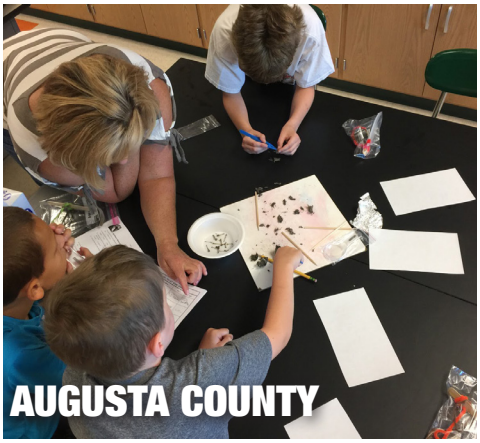
**CONTACT:** Angela Deitz, Instructional Supervisor: K-12 Gifted Education, Secondary STEM, Math, & Science, 540-245-5117

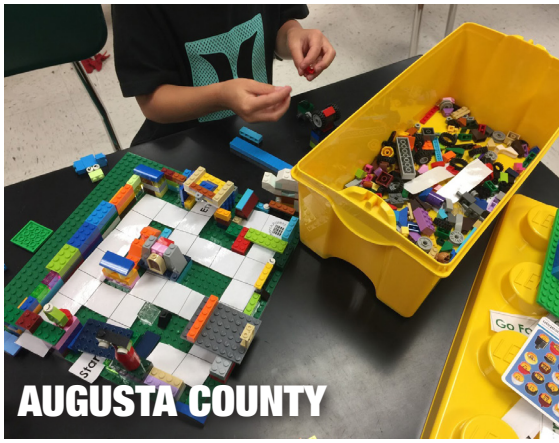
**DIVISION:**
Cumberland County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**
## IT Interns--Techies to the Rescue

Approximately ten years ago, Cumberland County Public Schools began an IT Intern program at the high school, which has now expanded to include middle school students. This program provides an option for students who prefer hands-on learning. The goals of the programs are to encourage STEM learning, provide opportunities for students to pursue their interests in computers, and assist students in developing valuable career skills. Under the direction of the IT staff, the Interns receive hands-on instruction so that they can perform numerous IT tasks, including deploying devices, troubleshooting, maintaining the IT inventory, repairing laptops and other technology devices, loading software, and re-imaging computers. The program is in line with new Profile of a Virginia Graduate guidelines, which stress the importance of career learning. The program also integrates technology SOLs and computer science standards. Many former IT Interns have entered the technology field.

**CONTACT:** Jeff Dingeldein, IT Technician/ITRT, 804-492-4212





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**DIVISION:**
Fairfax City Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Choice for Advanced Academic Programing

The City of Fairfax Schools is proud to offer Advanced Academic Programs (AAP) for students at the elementary, middle and high school level. Students and families have the choice to stay in their neighborhood-based school for elementary and middle school and receive the same challenging curriculum instead of attending AAP center-based schools outside their high school pyramid. Our two elementary schools offer Local Level IV programming and AAP trained teachers so students can choose to stay within their school from K-6. Lanier Middle School's honors and AAP course selections were so strong the City of Fairfax worked with Fairfax County Public Schools to open its own AAP center. Now students are able to advance throughout the high school pyramid and choose to take the most challenging courses available while remaining in school with neighbors and friends.

**CONTACT:** Dr. Phyllis Pajardo, Superintendent, 703-385-7911

**DIVISION:**
King & Queen County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Agriculture

Central High School in King and Queen County began a brand-new agriculture program for the 2018-2019 school year. This has been a program of the past, but for many reasons came and went. With the county being very rural and boasting acres of row crop, vegetable, and forestry land it was important to bring an opportunity for agriculture education back to the county. Career and technical education can bring a whole new world of experience for students across the world, but especially in a county like King and Queen where many agricultural resources are accessible. Supervised agricultural experience (SAE) projects are a way of helping our students to make connections with their community. These projects that are required to do when taking an agriculture course at Central are allowing the students to gain hands on experience where they are making connections from class material. Through these projects students are able to gain skillsets that will be required of careers within agriculture or other industries after graduating.

**CONTACT:** Mackenzie Moore, Teacher, 804-785-6102

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**DIVISION:**
Radford City Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Tinker Tank

Classes at McHarg Elementary visit the Tinker Tank, our STEAM Studio, weekly. During this time students learn foundational skills for 21st Century Learning (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Citizenship). Students participate in challenges that require them to use these skills as they work together in a problem-based environment to plan, solve, create and share. Students learn vocabulary involved in types of engineering, such as civil, software, mechanical, and electrical and how these can be applied to their own lives. Tinker Tank time gives students the opportunity to experiment and learn from both successes and failures. Students experiment with these concepts and skills, then apply them to quarterly challenges in which academic standards of learning are integrated into collaboratively created lessons. Students have shown improvement in their ability to handle frustration, communicate with peers, persevere in a task, use kind words, and communicate their creative process.

**CONTACT:** Blenna Patterson, Educational Technology and STEAM specialist, 540-731-3652

**DIVISION:**
Rappahannock County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Brain STAR Action Based Learning Lab

Rappahannock County Public Schools recently opened the door of the Brain STAR (Strengthening through Action Repetition) Action Based Learning Lab for students. The lab is based on current brain research showing a strong link between movement and learning. The lab is structured in a series of ten stations. Each station focuses on a specific movement patterns, or foundations, that have been shown to benefit the brain. Students, grades Pre-K- 5th, visit the lab in a regular exploratory rotation. Grades 6-7 have access to the lab by appointment. The Brain STAR lab is used to fill developmental movement gaps with the purpose of enhancing learning. In addition, it can be used to integrate movement with classroom curriculum to further anchor information. Furthermore, the Commit to Be Fit team organized a database of Brain STAR brain breaks that are listed by foundations for each teacher to easily access in their classrooms.

**CONTACT:** Hollyann Jenkins, Wellness Integration Specialist and Public Relations, 540-227-0023

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**DIVISION:**
Richmond Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Turnaround Arts: Richmond Public Schools

RPS is the first school district in Virginia to have three schools (Woodville Elementary, Binford Middle and Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle) in the partnership network of Turnaround Arts. Turnaround Arts is an arts integration initiative of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and the John. F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. Each Turnaround Arts school receives an array of arts education services designed to increase their chances of success, engage their community and raise the visibility of their achievements. Key to these efforts is building arts education programming that is rigorous, effective and integrated holistically into the school, as well as strategically targeted to addressing larger school challenges. Teachers have participated in Visual Thinking Strategies professional development to enhance their practice and students have been exposed to and participated in a variety of presentations and workshops in the areas of music, theater, dance and visual art.

**CONTACT:** Christie-Jo Adams, Fine Arts Instructional Specialist, 804-780-7751

**DIVISION:**
Roanoke City Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## EMT Training Program

There is a national shortage of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). The chief of Roanoke Fire-EMS approached Roanoke City Public Schools with a unique partnership idea. Through our Career and Technical Education Program, our students are participating in an EMT Training Program. The classes are held at the fire station in downtown Roanoke and twelve students were part of the inaugural class. The students are even riding in ambulances and assisting with actual medical calls. The program has been so successful, there are already plans to expand it for next year.

**CONTACT:** Justin McLeod, Community Relations Coordinator, 540-853-2905

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**DIVISION:**
Smyth County Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## VT Peers (VT Partnering with Educators and Engineers in Rural Schools)

Northwood Middle School and Chilhowie Middle School students are enjoying a partnership made possible through a National Science Foundation grant in their science classes. Virginia Tech's Engineering Education Department, local engineers, and science teachers are using a collaborative process to bring hands-on science education to 6th grade students this year, 6th-7th next year, and 6th-8th in the third year. Science teachers at the two schools identify science SOLs; the team then proposes a rough draft of a hands-on activity aimed at that learning outcome for approval. The final lessons are delivered one time per month by the Virginia Tech team and local engineers, and incorporate real-world applications in a cooperative learning setting. Our students love the high energy of the lessons, while learning how science applies in very practical settings. The lessons are well executed, the hands-on materials are wonderful, and our students are using critical thinking skills!

**CONTACT:** Mariann Berry Blevins, Principal, mariannblevins@scsb.org

**DIVISION:**
Suffolk City Public Schools

**PROGRAM:**

## Hampton Roads Public Works Academy

This two-year, hands-on program is geared toward high school students participating in The College & Career Academy at Pruden's Career and Technical Education Center programs. The Hampton Roads Public Works Academy (HRPWA) Cadet Program consists of courses teaching the basics of 32 major areas of work within the Department of Public Works and Utilities. Each class is taught by a subject matter expert from that particular area of work. The classes and field trips last approximately two and a half hours and meet once a month. Students are required to complete a paid summer internship program with Public Works or Utilities, or a member organization of the Public Works Academy. Upon successful completion, students receive their certificate, which among other benefits, will highlight them as first priority for public works and utilities positions. In most cases, positions will be available immediately after program completion. Additionally, seniors have an opportunity to receive an HRPWA scholarship towards college.

**CONTACT:** LaToya Harrison, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction, 757-925-6760

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training and services.

## VISION STATEMENT

VSBA is recognized and respected as an innovative leader in public education.

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