

Public Education

Overview

The Poquoson Public School System has an excellent reputation, which enhances property values. The City of Poquoson spends a significant amount of its tax revenues (42%) on education. Students attending Poquoson City Schools consistently score above the national average on standardized tests. The total cost in operations to educate a student in the Poquoson School system in 1993-94 was \$4,257. The City of Poquoson's system ranked 129th of the 134 systems in Virginia. In addition to the adult education programs offered via the Poquoson Public School system, City of Poquoson residents have access to a number of career colleges, universities and graduate schools. Inter-governmental revenue provides considerable funding to the Poquoson School System. For a number of years there has been a downward trend in the amount of intergovernmental revenue the School System has received. School operating expenditure growth in Poquoson has been increasing over the past few years despite thoughtful and deliberate attempts to try and maintain current expenditure levels. School expenditures are expected to increase by 6-10% annually as the school system struggles to keep pace with increased enrollments due to new residential developments and decreases in state and federal aid to schools. The continued rise in the population of school-aged children will result in crowded classrooms unless new classroom space is added to the existing schools. Student drug and alcohol abuse is also a concern particularly in the Middle School and High School. The Poquoson City Schools have developed a Technology Plan. The Technology Plan calls for the implementation of a series of technological improvements in each of the schools. These improvements include a number of network, hardware and software upgrades as well as the implementation of technology programs for the teachers as well as the students.

City of Poquoson Public School System

The Poquoson Public School System is comprised of four schools serving a total of 2449 students and staffed by 182 instructional personnel. The Poquoson Elementary School, with a current enrollment of 546 students in grades 3-5, was constructed in the 1950's with the latest addition being completed in 1980. The Middle School was constructed as a high school in the 30's and now serves 597 in grades 6-8. Additions to the Middle School were made in the 50's and 60's, and an entire new wing was completed in 1970. A new full service cafeteria was completed in 1994 as the first part of a phased in construction project at Poquoson Middle School. The High School was constructed in 1975 with an addition in 1979. The High School has a current enrollment of 792 students in grades 9-12. The newest facility is the Primary School, which opened in 1990 with a current enrollment of 514 students in grades K-2.

City of Poquoson School System Expenditures - The Poquoson Public School System has an excellent reputation, which enhances property values throughout the community. The City of Poquoson also spends a significant amount of its tax revenues (42%) on education. Like



jurisdictions across the nation, expenditures by the Poquoson Public Schools are derived largely from local, state, and federal funding.

Accreditation - Each Poquoson school has attained the standards required for accreditation by the Virginia Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a regional accrediting agency encompassing twelve southern states.

School System Goals and Objectives - The school system goals are identified in the Poquoson City Schools' Six-Year Plan, which is currently under revision and is scheduled for completion in October 1996. Copies of the Plan will be on file in each school library and the Poquoson Public Library for citizen review. This Plan is reviewed and revised semi-annually. Public involvement and input are solicited through the use of a public forum and various advisory committees.

Transportation of Students - Approximately 2100 of the student population of 2449 are provided daily transportation by a fleet of 21 buses. Members of the transportation department who average 22 years of bus driving experience operate these buses. In 1994-95 the fleet traveled 107,000 miles transporting students to and from school at an annual cost of \$124.00 per student.

Talented and Gifted - Poquoson's Talented and Gifted (TAG) Program identifies students with high academic and creative abilities. It serves these students by challenging them to develop their potential through enrichment activities, special classes, and extracurricular events. The Primary Enrichment Program (PEP), for grades K-2, affords an opportunity for early identification and challenge. The TAG Program for grades 3-6 places students together in an academically enriched environment. Special classes are offered in grades 7-12 to challenge specific academic abilities such as science, math, and the humanities.

Special Education and Related Services - The Poquoson City Schools provide a full range of special education and related services within the school division for children ages 2 through 21. The school division participates in regional programs as well as contracting services with neighboring school divisions, private and public agencies. The school conducts a yearly Child Check in association with Child Development Resources in Williamsburg and maintains a continuous Child Find process to identify those children who are suspected of a handicapping condition or learning problem. Services to meet the psychological need of students are available which include confidential evaluations, counseling, and consultation with parents and school personnel.

Summer Enrichment Program - Poquoson offers a summer enrichment program for all students, grades K-12. This provides students an opportunity for investigating and expanding fields of knowledge and interest, and developing new skills. Typical summer offerings include personal typing, computer programming, arts and crafts, creative dramatics, marine science, and photography. Review classes are also provided for math and reading students who would benefit from reinforcement of skills work.

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Adult Education - Adult education programs provided via the Poquoson City Schools include General Educational Development (GED), General Basic Education, and High School completion. The GED program consists of processing applications for the GED test and providing preparatory classes to anyone desiring these services. Basic Adult Education classes are held to assist those persons who elected to suspend their educational efforts and are also for the foreign born who desire to become proficient in the adopted language. High School completion courses are available to allow those persons desiring a high school diploma an alternative method of obtaining their diploma. Fees are charged to defray the administrative and instructional costs of these programs. Additional adult education opportunities are available via the Hampton, Poquoson, and York Adult Education Consortium.

Vocational Education - Poquoson Middle and Poquoson High Schools offer a variety of vocational education classes for students in grades 7-12. These courses range from Teen Living and Exploring Technology at the middle school to specialized courses and work-study programs at the high school level. The school division offers on-campus courses and participation in off-campus programs at the New Horizons Technical Center and Thomas Nelson Community College.

Extra Curricular Activities - The Poquoson Public School System offers a number of extra-curricular activities for its students including the following:

Athletic Offerings		
FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Girl's Basketball	Boy's Basketball	Boy's Baseball
Girl's & Boy's Cross Country	Girl's Volleyball	Girl's Softball
Girl's Field Hockey	Boy's Wrestling	Boy's Soccer
Boy's Football	Boy's & Girl's Swimming	Boy's & Girl's Tennis
Boy's Golf	Cheerleaders	Boy's & Girl's Track
Cheerleaders		
Non-Athletic Offerings		
Band	Chorus	Academic Bowl
Drama	Debate	French Club
Newspaper	Forensics	SCA
Health Careers Club	Yearbook	VICA
FHA	FBLA	Varsity Club
National Honor Society	Science Club	Chess Club
Presidential Classroom	Key Club	Art Club
DECA		



Pupil Standardized Test Scores - Students attending Poquoson City Schools consistently score above the national average on standardized tests. State tests are administered to fourth, eighth and eleventh grade students each spring.

Grade 4	Reading	Math	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science	Workstudy
Poquoson	72	78	78	77	78	77

Grade 8	Reading	Math	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science	Workstudy
Poquoson	75	78	77	75	84	79

Grade 11	Reading	Math	Written Expression	Social Studies	Science	Sources of Information
Poquoson	68	74	69	72	78	75

The national median score on all the above listed assessments is 50.

College Board Examinations (SAT's, ACT's etc.) are administered on a scheduled basis to those 11th and 12th grade students who anticipate pursuing a postgraduate education program. Eighty-six percent of the graduates continued their educational experiences at the postgraduate level in either two or four year institutions or vocational training programs.

1994-95 SAT Scores		
	Math	Verbal
Poquoson	482	433
State	468	428
National	482	428

Poquoson Public School System Budget and Revenue Sources - The 1995-96 operating budget for the Poquoson Public School system was \$11,393,431. The *major* categories comprising the budget include the following:

Category	Amount	Percent of Total
Instruction (including salaries)	\$8,722,575	79.6%
Operating/Maintenance School Plants	\$1,031,055	9.5%
Administration & Health Services	\$794,596	7.2%
Transportation	\$423,986	3.7%

The revenue of the budget is obtained from the following sources:



<i>Revenue Source</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
State	\$6,459,397	56.7%
Local	\$4,623,393	40.6%
Federal (Categorical)	\$1,031,055	9.5%

Comparative Operational Cost - The total cost in operations to educate a student in the Poquoson School system in 1993-94 was \$4,257. The City of Poquoson ranked 129th of the 134 systems in Virginia. The state average cost per pupil was \$6,465 compared with \$5,152 for the schools on the Peninsula (excluding Poquoson).

Adult Education

In addition to the educational programs offered via the Hampton, Poquoson, York Adult Education Consortium, City of Poquoson residents have access to a number of career colleges, universities and graduate schools.

Christopher Newport University - This four-year, state-supported college in Newport News was founded in 1960 and offers over 50 different majors and concentrations in eight baccalaureate and one graduate degree programs.

College of William and Mary - Founded in 1693, this Williamsburg college is the country's second oldest institution of higher education. Although it is state-supported, William and Mary maintains a reputation as a public Ivy League college. It offers undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees in 24 fields, many of them related to liberal arts.

Hampton University - This University grew out of a historically black institution founded in 1868 in Hampton. It is Virginia's only coeducational, non-denominational, four-year private college. It offers baccalaureate degrees in 46 fields and master's degrees in 26 areas.

Old Dominion University - This public university offers 145 undergraduate and graduate programs and has nationally recognized computer science and engineering departments. Old Dominion University maintains a graduate center offering classes from several major universities including Old Dominion and Virginia Tech University. This center is less than 10 minutes from Poquoson.

Thomas Nelson Community - This two year, state-supported college offers associate degrees, certificates and diplomas in more than 60 areas.

In addition, about 20 other colleges and universities including George Washington University, Johnson and Wales University, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech grant degrees



through extension programs. There are also a number of career schools in the area, including Commonwealth College, ECPI Computer Institute and ITT Technical Institute that all specialize in computer training and other technology programs.

Public School System Revenue and Expenditure Trends

As noted above, intergovernmental revenue provides some funding to the City and considerable funding to the School System. For a number of years there has been a negative downward trend in the amount of intergovernmental revenue the School System has received. The chart below shows the drop in revenue coming to Poquoson from the state.

Sources of Revenue

<i>Year</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Federal</i>
1987	48.5%	47.5%	4.0%
1988	48.6%	47.9%	3.5%
1989	51.3%	45.4%	3.3%
1990	50.6%	46.2%	3.2%
1991	52.6%	44.5%	2.9%
1992	52.8%	43.9%	3.3%
1993	54.0%	42.9%	3.1%
1994	55.1%	41.8%	3.1%
% Change '87-'94	+6.6%	-5.7%	-0.9%

This is a serious issue as the Schools are very dependent on intergovernmental revenues, mainly State funding. The federal and state governments have struggled with their own budgetary problems over the past decade, and have withdrawn and reduced payments to local governments as one of their cutback measures. Since the reduction of intergovernmental funds has come at a time when school enrollment is expanding, this has meant that the loss of funding must be made up with general fund revenues. The downward negative trend in intergovernmental revenue should be expected to continue as the federal and state governments try to balance their budgets, creating more of a burden on the localities.

School operating expenditure growth in Poquoson has been increasing over the past few years despite thoughtful and deliberate attempts to try and maintain current expenditure levels. The table below depicts the growth in operating expenditures on a per-household basis and after adjustment for inflation.



<i>Year</i>	<i>Education Operating Expenditure</i>
1987	1,919
1988	1,999
1989	1,875
1990	2,001
1991	2,053
1992	1,948
1993	1,976
1994	2,008
1995	1,982
'87-'95 % Change	+3.3%

School expenditures are expected to increase by *6-10% annually* as the school system struggles to keep pace with increased enrollments due to new residential developments and decreases in state aid to schools. Considering the above noted factors, it is expected that the City will continue to fund a larger percentage of School expenditures well into the foreseeable future.

Public Comment

The citizens of Poquoson have always strongly supported its school system. Public comments generated as part of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan Update are no different. Outlined below is a summary of public comments offered by citizens during the public input sessions and those citizens who responded to the Citizen Opinion Survey.

- The City of Poquoson should maintain its excellent schools. Citizens cited maintaining a quality school system as their highest priority for Poquoson's future.
- The vast majority of citizens are satisfied with the quality of education currently provided by the Poquoson School System.
- Poquoson needs to expand and improve facilities throughout school system. Specific improvements mentioned include larger auditoriums, cafeteria/common areas, and additional classrooms.
- Citizens also stressed the need to improve and upgrade school technological abilities, particularly related to computer networking.
- Citizens felt there was excellent parental involvement with school related activities and continued parental participation was critical.



- Most citizens were very pleased with the good, safe school environment.
- Several citizens also thought it was important to ensure that adequate land is available for future school expansions.
- Most people felt that the current classroom size was about right.
- Several citizens suggested adding additional foreign language, computer, and college prep courses to the curriculum.
- Generally, the citizens of Poquoson are willing to spend additional tax dollars on education.

Enrollment

The continued rise in the population of school aged children will result in crowded classrooms unless new classroom space is added to existing schools. The functional capacity of the four City of Poquoson School buildings is outlined below as is the membership history of these facilities.

**Poquoson City Schools
Membership History**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Primary School (500*)</i>	<i>Elementary School (600*)</i>	<i>Middle School (650*)</i>	<i>High School (825*)</i>	<i>School System Totals (2,575*)</i>
1990-91	489	550	576	689	2,304
1991-92	474	542	601	704	2,321
1992-93	496	546	595	753	2,390
1993-94	495	547	599	764	2,405
1994-95	517	542	575	817	2,451

*Functional capacity of facility needed to house desired programs.

The table above indicates that, with the exception of the elementary and middle schools, all the schools are above or very near capacity.

The table on the next page shows the expected enrollment increase. This projection is based on current and expected subdivision growth in Poquoson.



**Poquoson City Schools
Enrollment Projections**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Primary School (500*)</i>	<i>Elementary School (600*)</i>	<i>Middle School (650*)</i>	<i>High School (825*)</i>	<i>School System Totals (2,575*)</i>
1995-96	495	569	569	834	2,467
1996-97	510	575	585	850	2,510
1997-98	520	590	600	875	2,585
1998-99	520	595	608	890	2,613
1999-00	520	600	615	900	2,635

This table shows the critical need to add additional space in the very near future at the high school. The table also shows, with the exception of the Middle School, each school will be above or at its functional capacity within 5 years.

The University of Virginia Center for Public Service provides enrollment projections for the City of Poquoson through the year 2015. The attached chart shows the expected enrollment increases within the school system. Clearly these increasing enrollment projections will necessitate major capital improvements and will increase operating expenditures.

Future Capital Needs

Aging structures and crowded classrooms due to increased enrollment will force Poquoson to make significant capital improvements to school facilities in the near future. In 1995 City Council adopted a five-year capital improvements plan that called for major improvements to the High School and Middle School. Capital needs at the High School include construction of a new dining area, two science rooms, four additional classrooms, renovations of existing space for office use, additional parking areas, construction of an auditorium, air conditioning of the gym, and the conversion of the Forum to an auxiliary gym and/or classrooms. Improvements needed at the Middle School include creating additional classrooms on the second floor, provision of an elevator, replacement of the heating and air conditioning systems in the 1970 wing, complete roof replacement, construction of locker rooms, and the continued renovation of the 1932-50's wing. The combined cost of these improvements to the High School and Middle School is at least 12 million dollars. It is likely that these improvements will be constructed and financed in phases over a number of years.



Technology Plan

Recognizing the continued use and importance of technology as an education tool, the Poquoson City School System developed a Technology Plan. The Plan was created in order for teachers and students to prepare for the opportunities and challenges that our society of high technology will present in the future. The Plan establishes a set of technology initiatives for the Poquoson Public Schools. The Plan's design is in phases to permit adaptive measures to be applied to it as technology changes and as the schools' basic curricula undergo reform.

Three presumptions are basic to the plan:

- First, technology does not teach. Teachers teach.
- Second, need drives the use of technology. Technology does not drive need.
- Third, technology is not a study in itself, but is a tool for learning.

In the last decade computers were viewed as "nice to have" supplements to the educational program. Computers are now viewed as offering a "window on the world of information". Computers and computer-related technology have permeated the work place, making the full integration of technology into education crucial. Thus, computers are not supplemental, but basic to learning and the education process.

The Poquoson City Schools subscribe to the philosophy that computer and other related technologies should be used as educational tools to enhance the achievement of the existing goals identified by the Poquoson Public School Board in accordance with Virginia Department of Education's Standards of Quality. The division will provide opportunities for its students, staff and community members to become familiar with computers and related technologies, and to feel comfortable in applying their uses in daily life. Students will be exposed to as many aspects of technology as are appropriate to their interest and level of development. Throughout their educational program, students should be led to understand the impact that computers and related technologies have upon modern life. They will learn to be responsible in the application of modern technologies.

The Technology Plan calls for the implementation of a series of technological improvements in each of the schools. These improvements include a number of network, hardware and software upgrades as well as the implementation of technology programs for the teachers as well as the students. The capital upgrades will be developed in phases, with each phase appearing in the School Systems' annual financial plan.



Drug Awareness and Prevention

In 1996 students and teachers at the Poquoson High School and Middle School realized that drug and alcohol abuse at the schools appeared worse than what community members realized. In reaction to this, the schools, along with the Poquoson Police Department, conducted a survey at the schools to assess the use of drugs and alcohol among the students. A summary of the survey results is listed below.

- 50% of Poquoson High School Students and 30% of 8th graders use tobacco products. *
- Over 50% of all students in grades 9-12 drink alcohol.
- Between 30% and 50% of 8th graders drink alcohol.
- About 30% of students in grades 9-12 smoke marijuana. *
- 10-20% of Poquoson students in grades 9-12 use inhalants or crack. *
- Between 10-20% of students in grades 9-12 use LSD. *

*Use higher than national average.

Drug and alcohol availability also appears to be a problem. 50% of Poquoson students reported that it was fairly easy to very easy to get alcohol and marijuana. Between 10-20% of the students also suggested that it was fairly easy to very easy to get cocaine and LSD.

Most of the students suggested that they used the drugs at their homes and at their friends' homes. This suggested that parental supervision was also a problem. With these issues in mind, the Poquoson School System students and teachers, with assistance from the Poquoson Police Department held a "Drug Awareness Forum". The forum was held to share with citizens information about the increased use of alcohol and drugs by school aged youth. As a result of this meeting, a number of concerned parents, students and teachers, created Children & Adults Uniting for Substance Elimination (CAUSE), a committee that is working on a number of strategies to fight drug abuse in the community. The committee has identified a number of focus areas including the following:

- Parental networking.
- Student education about the ramifications of drug abuse.
- Harsh criminal and school administered penalties for drug abusers.
- Community involvement.



Future Challenges For Education

There are a myriad of challenges facing public education as we prepare learners for life in the next century. Our most notable challenge will be defining the vision and then planning for an educational system that can provide both stability for the learners and flexibility in program delivery.

One way to assess challenges for the future is to review what we know about our future high school graduates. When the Class of 2000 graduates:

1. The body of knowledge will have doubled four times since 1988.
2. Graduates will have been exposed that year to more information than their grandparents were in a lifetime.
3. Only about 15 percent of jobs will require a college education, but nearly all will require job-specific training after high school.
4. Ninety percent of the labor force will work for companies employing fewer than 200 people.
5. Children born in 2000 will live to be 81 years old on average, compared to 74.9 years for children born in 1986.
6. Minorities will be the majorities in 57 of the 100 largest United States cities.

The Class of 2000 will need far better education simply to get a decent job. In part, this is because today's fastest growing employment areas are fields such as computer programming, health care and law. They require not only a high school diploma, but also advanced schooling or job specific training.

A decade ago about 77 percent of jobs involved at least some time spent in generating, processing, retrieving, or distributing information. By the year 2000, that figure will be 95 percent and this information processing will be heavily computerized. Approximately 60 percent of today's jobs are open to applicants with a high school diploma. Among new jobs, more than half will require some skill with information processing technology.

In the same manner in which businesses use demographic, economic, and technological trend information for planning purposes, so do school divisions. In addition to the information we already know about the Class of 2000, the following forces will also necessitate changes in the school organizational operating environment. These forces include the following:



The "Baby Bust" Generation Comes of Age - A 25 percent reduction in the number of 16-25 year olds from 1985 to 1995 has driven up entry level wages, and has drawn millions of additional women and minorities into the labor pool. In many cases, these are unskilled workers because of past educational practices, which provided for limited experiences in science and mathematics. These unskilled workers are either requiring substantial remedial training or serving as an incentive for employers to install labor saving production technologies.

The "Baby Boom" Generation Encounters Mid-Career Compaction - A 50 percent increase in the numbers of 35 - 44 year olds will swamp the available opportunities for advancement on the job, substantially reducing the effectiveness of the traditional promotional incentives that employers have used to attract, motivate and retain quality career personnel. New organizational structures will emerge as a result of this phenomenon.

The "Baby Boom Echo" - As the shortfall in entry level workers attracts more women into the workplace, a simultaneous rise in birthrates, frequently referred to as the Baby Boom Echo, is currently expected to produce a 50 percent increase in the number of working parents. This will cause a corresponding growth in the numbers of unattended children in society, and will necessitate the rapid adoption of new workplace arrangements, including flextime, employer provided daycare, job sharing, paid parental leave and flex place (salaried work in the home).

Decline in Median Income - Faced with falling income, consumers will become increasingly selective in their major purchases, and the numbers of 2 income households will rise from 50% to 70% of all families, fostering a growing demand for time-efficient consumer goods and services, including catalog shopping, restaurant dining and home and yard maintenance.

Re-skilling of Employees - Employee training costs alone are expected to rise by 100 to 200 percent within 5 years, mandating rapid massive adoption of new teaching strategies, and making education the largest industry in the nation.

In the framework of the above noted factors, America's school systems today are clearly overburdened, even by the traditional demands placed on them. Numerous changes in the nation's organizational structure and delivery systems for instruction should be discussed in the public arena and its merits determined.

The following areas could serve as a starting point for consideration:

Lengthen the School Year - America's schools average 180 days of 6.5 hours. Our entire system is based on an agrarian model that may no longer be appropriate. We know from research that all children can learn, but they do not learn at the same rate. We may need to provide differing lengths of time for learning for different student learning styles. Current summer school efforts, in many areas, are remedial in nature instead of developmental. Extending the school year, or number of years of instructional time so that pre-kindergarten experiences are available for the



identified at-risk children, can assure common outcomes for all students. Re-teaching for mastery should occur as we teach, not after failure has occurred. The goal must be to educate, not fail students. Obviously, this initiative carries a hefty price tag and implementation will be very difficult in the near future. It must, however, become part of the education dialogue regarding increasing quality.

Increase the Use of Technology - It is not suggested here that computers replace teachers. It is suggested that technology, including computers and interactive cable technologies, be routinely incorporated into the teaching-learning environment to augment and enhance the teacher's role in managing the instruction of students. Computers can be used to provide drill, to learn research skills, to problem solve, to design, to create, and for record keeping and diagnosing. Interactive cable and cable TV can expand the four walls of the classroom to the world. It can be used to make foreign language instruction more relevant to provide efficiently for low enrollment classes being offered in more than one building, and to provide staff development and teacher training. The uses are limited only by our lack of imagination. This proposal also has a price tag, but it is certainly less costly than lengthening the school year.

Tailor Courses to the Needs of Individual Students - Currently, individual education plans are already provided for students with special education needs. It is suggested that individual education plans for all students be developed and include such information as the student's preferred learning style: whether they learn best in small groups or large classes; whether they learn best from reading, lectures, or computer programs; how much supervision they need and so on. In many cases, student learning styles should be matched with teacher learning styles. Non-preferred styles should also be strengthened through exposure to other styles as well.

Consider Promoting Students Based On Performance, Instead of Promotion Based Solely On Time Served In Class - We should specify the educational outcomes we wish to have students achieve, use teaching strategies to meet those outcomes, and test to see if children have learned the outcomes. If learning has not occurred to the standards we set, we then must become involved in the re-teaching process.

Also because of the tremendous knowledge base and the constant growth of that knowledge base, a very strong emphasis on "learning how to learn" must be incorporated into the teaching process. Learning how to learn and cooperative problem solving become as important as reading, writing, and computing.

Innovation - Just as innovations and changing times in the general workplace require employers to retrain millions of workers, so too will changes in public education require most teachers to learn new skills. That training will pose significant costs to school systems, but teacher training will be absolutely essential for the continued effectiveness of public education. One technique to reach this goal, is for corporations to contract with the public schools to provide the retraining they need. The money earned from such services can then go toward the retooling we need all



the way from teacher in-service training in new instructional strategies to the acquisition of needed equipment. It would involve teachers in learning about the business sector and provide needed revenue for school divisions. There may even be places in the business community where it is more appropriate for schools to provide student instruction (because of the expense of certain pieces of equipment).

PUBLIC EDUCATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Goals

1. Provide a quality education that assures lifelong success for all students that attend the Poquoson City School System.
2. Provide a learning environment that is conducive to the education of all present and future school-aged children in the City, while also encouraging adult education.
3. Increase interrelationships between the school system and the business community.
4. Provide alternative teacher compensation, which will maintain a level of excellence among teachers.
5. Expand use of school facilities after hours for alternative recreational and educational purposes.

Objectives

1. Provide for sufficient capacity in every school to accommodate reasonable fluctuations in enrollment.
2. Provide opportunities for the use of school facilities by the community at large for non-school activities that do not conflict with school-related activities.
3. Continue to refine implementation of the "school/park" concept to provide for cooperation between the school system and the Poquoson Parks and Recreation Department in the provision of City recreational facilities and programs.
4. Locate and secure dedication or reservation of school land in advance of need through land-use controls or incentives or outright purchase.
5. Identify innovative teaching programs, to improve student achievement, increase the graduation rate, and reduce the dropout rate.



6. Support efforts to enhance adult education throughout the region.
7. Enable teachers to become more autonomous in their teaching style in an effort to try to stimulate all students.
8. Enhance parental involvement in schools through the development of a community information, education and involvement program.
9. Develop a more demanding curriculum that will take advantage of a student's strengths and permit them to receive appropriate diploma recognition.
10. Staff schools with teachers who can effectively teach the demanding curricula proposed and design staff training/development programs consistent with advanced school curriculum.
11. Develop specialized education, internship and apprentice programs to meet projected labor needs.
12. Continue to nurture excellence in teachers by rewarding and recognizing effective teachers and publicizing their accomplishments.
13. Develop policies, procedures and strategies aimed at eliminating student drug and alcohol abuse.
14. Continue to support the joint use of school sites and facilities by recreational and other community service agencies to promote maximum utilization of school facilities and encourage the expansion of community education programs.
15. Obtain adequate land and provide adequate facilities for projected future school needs and ensure that existing facilities are being fully utilized.
16. Increase student achievement.
17. Expand opportunities and encourage students to engage in community service activities.

Strategies

1. Alleviate current and future school overcrowding through the inclusion of major school expansion needs in the City's Capital Improvements Program and construct such improvements in the most economically efficient means possible.
2. Explore and develop programs that address developmental readiness and appropriate placement of students.



3. Continue to encourage the creation of community-based volunteer teams to work with students who need additional help.
4. Measure accountability through the continued use of statewide testing to identify low performing schools. When the assessment shows a lack of progress, undertake a review of the educational program and take specific steps for improvements.
5. Set specific goals for the improvement of standardized test scores and the graduation rate and report the results annually to the public.
6. Continue to support enhancements to adult education facilities and programs in the Tidewater area.
7. Expand programs that prevent low achievement and motivate borderline students through additional funding and corporate involvement.
8. Allow flexible teaching methods to take full advantage of individual teacher strengths and creativity.
9. Encourage diversity in the school's approach to teaching.
10. Discourage mandatory teaching methods.
11. Continue to encourage creativity in the classroom.
12. Ensure availability of adequate teacher support staff or volunteers.
13. Make staff development a priority for all teachers in the Poquoson School System.
14. Develop or enhance ways of communicating with parents, such as scheduling special events, newsletters, items in the local newspaper, cable television and recognizing parents who volunteer or do something special for the school.
15. Provide more opportunities for foreign language, advanced science, computer science and college prep courses.
16. Consider the costs and benefits of lengthening the school days or increasing the school year beyond the state established requirement.
17. Train all teachers to be computer literate.



18. Make staff development a priority.
19. Implement strategies identified in the Poquoson City Schools Technology Plan.
20. Investigate a voluntary, coordinated effort for the development and implementation of programs involving businesses and educational institutions in a cooperative effort to improve education and training.
21. Increase the range of technically oriented businesses participating in business partnerships with the schools to sponsor students in a variety of on-the-job training and learning programs.
22. Support and encourage teachers who assume additional work responsibility.
23. Establish a professional promotional track for teachers who demonstrate competence in teaching, pursue further education, and possess leadership abilities that would enable them to become master teachers.
24. Review teacher evaluation and compensation procedures to ensure the standards are fair and comprehensive.
25. Develop a method by which high school students can provide written feedback on the quality of their education.
26. Implement all available strategies designed to eliminate student drug and alcohol abuse.
27. Encourage all children to participate in extracurricular school activities.
28. Examine instituting additional programs for the expansion of after hours community education programs.
29. Regularly update Poquoson School System Strategic Plan and implement its recommended strategies.
30. Take all necessary steps to ensure that each student passes the Literacy Passport Test.
31. Take all necessary steps to ensure that each student demonstrates mastery of the Standards of Learning.
32. Recognize that state and federal revenue contributions to local schools will continue to diminish and identify alternative revenue sources.

