



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2024.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Building Tomorrow's Teacher Pipeline
Program Category: Community & Economic Development

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Signature: *MS Callahan*

Program Overview

Teacher Apprenticeship is a two-year program offered at the Advanced Career Education Center at Hermitage, in Henrico County, Virginia. Teacher Apprenticeship is designed for high school juniors interested in pursuing a career in education. Teacher Apprenticeship is a dual-enrollment program that allows high school students to learn teaching fundamentals and explore the education profession while earning college credit.

This program was new to our course offerings for the 2023-24 school year. The students are enrolled in Teachers for Tomorrow and two more dual-enrollment courses each semester of their studies. By providing teacher training experience and college courses to high school students, the program aims to yield a more prepared and passionate pool of future teachers for Henrico County Public Schools. The Teacher Apprentice program is designed to reduce the time and cost required for HCPS students to obtain a degree in education, which could expedite their entry to the profession.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

There continues to be a national teacher shortage. Nearly 940 teaching positions went unfilled in Virginia at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, reflecting a [teacher staffing crisis](#) that has beset classrooms nationally, according to the Washington Post.

According to data from the Virginia Department of Education, the commonwealth's teacher vacancy rate grew by 0.8% from 2021-22 to 2022-23, to 3.9%. The teacher vacancy rate was 4.8% at the start of the 2023-24 school year. In response, Virginia schools have begun relying more on provisionally licensed educators. Within our school division we have many long-term substitutes or board substitutes in place. Many new initiatives have been implemented to make sure that an adult is in the classroom.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The program is worthy of a VACo award because it is a highly innovative approach to addressing a national, state and county teacher shortage problem. The program enhances the classroom experience of future educators and provides varied learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom setting for these high school students.

The program addresses the teacher shortage in a unique way. Each day the program helps answer the question "Why teach?" through our program and partnership with Harvie Elementary School. Here are some of our high school students' answers to the question "Why teach?":

- You get a chance to make a difference every single day.
- To save the world in my own way.
- Teachers are the backbone of the world.
- To change lives.
- To make a positive impact on the future.
- To be for someone else what a teacher was to me.
- To leave a legacy.

The students' reflection on the reasons to continue in education is wise and demonstrates the program's worthiness of recognition. To have 17- and 18-year-old students wanting to make an impact on the future is a positive sign for HCPS and the education profession.

How Program Was Carried Out

Henrico County Public Schools has a unique opportunity to offer the Teachers for Tomorrow class to high school students who are interested in becoming teachers. In addition, the new Teacher

Apprentice program offers dual-enrollment opportunities, shadowing and hands-on opportunities. These will help develop future educators.

The Teacher Apprentice program is designed with the belief that it is necessary to engage Teacher Apprentice students in real-world classroom experiences early and often, as early engagement activities help students confirm that this is the right career choice for them, as well as helps them feel more committed to the profession from the beginning of their studies.

The Teacher Apprentice program is working with HCPS' Harvie Elementary School to help Teacher Apprentice students get these early real-world classroom experiences.

Each Monday, program participants travel to Harvie elementary to work with fourth and fifth grade students. At Harvie the fourth and fifth grades rotate with their homeroom classes to other teachers for each subject. Each Teacher Apprentice program student follows a class throughout their day. The student goes to lunch, resources and even recess with the class. Through this experience the aspiring teachers become mentors for the students, gain shadowing experiences of many different teaching styles and content areas and build relationships with the teachers and administrators at Harvie Elementary School.

The program helps address the teacher shortage by exposing high school students to the profession. The early experiences at Harvie Elementary School help the high school students confirm that teaching is what they want to do as a career. Elementary students benefit by getting a mentor, and elementary teachers have an extra set of helping hands.

Financing and Staffing

The Teacher Apprentice program at the ACE Center at Hermitage is a Henrico County Public Schools initiative. The school division offers the opportunity for students in various programs to enroll in a dual-enrollment program with the local community college. The school division also

offers school bus transportation for field trips to the local elementary school, just as they do for all classes. Students pay class fees as approved by the Henrico School Board.

Program Results

The immediate results or the success of the program can be measured in three ways: the high school student experience, the elementary student experience and the elementary school and teacher experience.

The high school student's experiences of the class can be measured by the immediate feedback provided by participating students. Responses from the high school students have been positive. They enjoy the mentoring, the "little brothers and sisters" relationships they have come to know and love. The students share that it is a great feeling to have someone depending on you to help them and engage in conversation with them. The high school students build relationships with the elementary students and learn about their interests outside of school. High school teachers often report that they see more confidence in their students as the year progresses.

Participating high school students take the initiative and become more vigilant and aware of the needs of students and addressing them in appropriate ways. High school students also cultivate their love for education and validate their initial thoughts of wanting to become educators. Future measurement of success will also include the number of students that continue in the field when they enter college and the number of students who receive their first teaching contract. In tracking past teachers who have taught the Teachers for Tomorrow curriculum, many have said they have former students who are current teachers in Henrico County or elsewhere in Virginia.

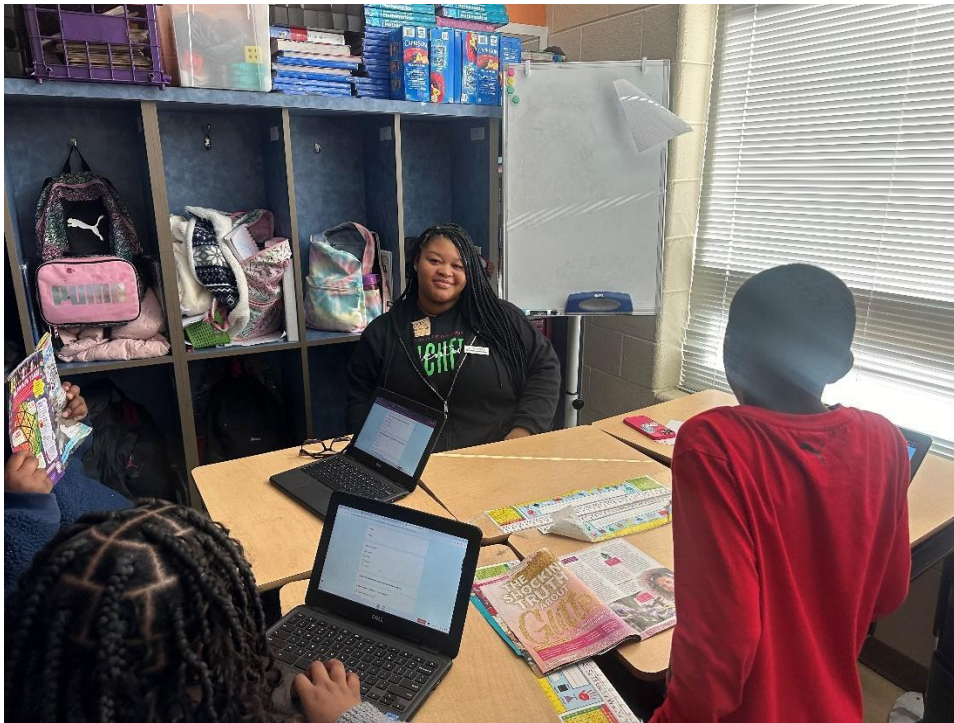
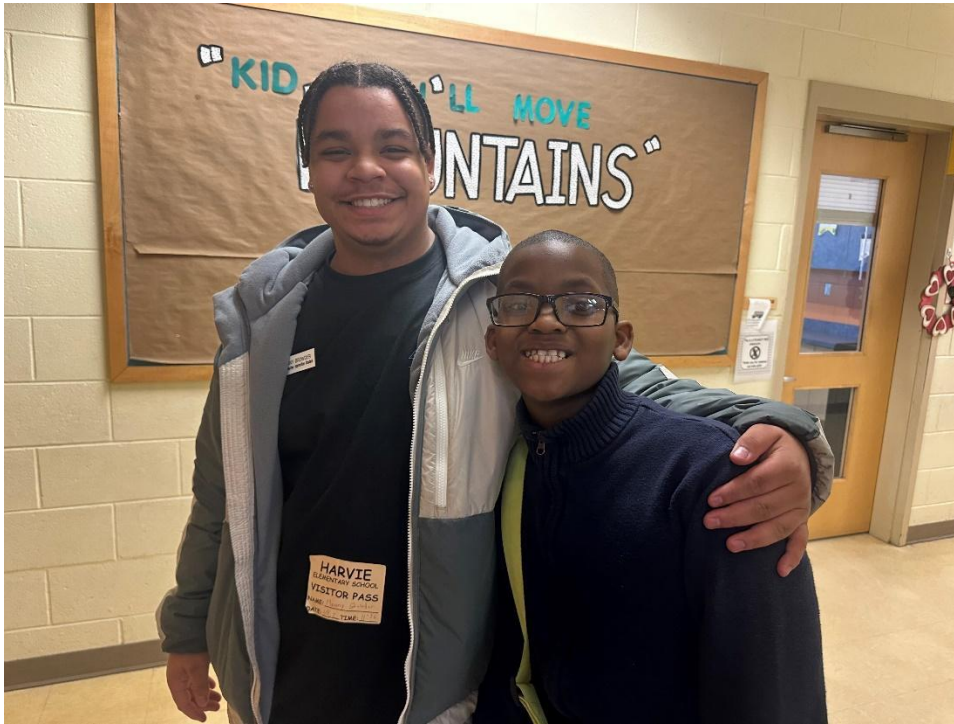
The second success measurement is from the point of view of elementary school students. According to their teachers, they love having the high school students come to their class. It's like having a big brother or sister in the building. This makes the elementary students more confident. The presence of high school students helps deter behavioral and attendance issues. Students who need additional help can get it in real time without burdening the teacher. Future measurement of success can include comparing historical data of academic performance and attendance data before the partnership with the Teacher Apprentice program and at the end of the school year.

The final measure of success concerns elementary school teachers and the elementary school. In the current reality in any public school system, teacher shortages are a real concern and dilemma. This partnership helps support the elementary teacher by having additional eyes, ears and hands on deck in the classroom. It also addresses the teacher shortage by preparing the next generation of educators. It enables the teacher and other educators in the building to serve as mentors for the next generation of teachers.

Brief Summary

In response to national teacher shortages, Henrico County Public Schools created an innovative program that enhances the classroom experience of future educators and provides varied learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom setting. By providing teacher training experience and college courses to high school students, the program aims to yield a more prepared and passionate pool of future teachers for Henrico County Public Schools. The Teacher Apprentice program is designed to reduce the time and cost required for HCPS students to obtain a degree in education, which could expedite their entry to the profession.

**Building Tomorrow's Teacher Pipeline
Supplemental Material**







Manny with his class at P.E.