

Virginia Beach Juvenile Detention Center Opens

A \$9.3 million, 90-bed juvenile detention facility located on a site within the Municipal Center Complex recently opened its doors. For many years, the city of Virginia Beach has had an agreement with the city of Chesapeake to house its detained juveniles in a regional facility, Tidewater Detention Home. The new facility has been designed to meet the needs of Virginia Beach youth who are at risk and who have entered the court system through the Juvenile Intake Unit.

According to division statistics, more than 3,498 of the approximately 75,758 school age children in Virginia Beach schools will enter the court system and approximately 1,250 of these will be detained. The Juvenile Intake Unit is considered to be the initial step in the Juvenile Justice System. Initially the Juvenile Intake Unit receives referrals on juveniles from various sources such as the police and fire departments, the schools, and parents. An Intake Officer then reviews the referral and determines how each individual case is to be handled. Once reviewed, the matter is either handled out of court or the Intake Officer files a petition with the courts.

It should be noted, however, that not all juveniles that are arrested are placed in secure detention. Rather, it is the judges who control the use of secure detention, and they typically consider various



mitigating factors such as prior records, parental supervision, pending charges, and the like in determining the appropriate form of detention for a juvenile. For example, juveniles can be released in the custody of their parents or guardians or can be placed in alternative, less secure detention programs such as Salem House or Challenge Outreach until their detention hearing occurs and their guilt or innocence is determined.

The city and school division are working together to meet the educational needs of students placed in the Center. The facility is geared to students 13- 17 years of age who are Virginia Beach residents or who commit a violation of law while in the city. Instructional objectives are tailored to meet each individual student's needs in coordination with the Detention Center staff and within the confines of the Center, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The education program works as a seamless system for students transitioning from regular school to the Detention Center and back again to regular school once they are released from the Center.

The mission of the Virginia Beach City Public Schools, in partnership with our entire community, is to ensure that each student is empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of the future. Featuring statewide news and parent resources and highlighting initiatives of the school system. Published bimonthly by the Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Department of Media and Communications Development, 2512 George Mason Drive, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-0038. Alternative formats of this publication which may include taped, braille, or large print materials are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Call or write Sandi Maxwell, Department of Media and Communications Development, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, 2512 George Mason Drive, P.O. Box 6038, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-0038. Telephone: (757) 427-4320 (voice). No part of this publication may be produced or shared in any form without giving specific credit to Virginia Beach City Public Schools.

Timothy R. Jenney, Superintendent
 Kathy O'Hara Phipps, Assistant Superintendent
 Department of Media & Communications
 Development
 Yolanda Jones-Howell, Editor
 Georgia Liquid-Miller, Graphic Designer
 Sarah Aho, Administrative Office Associate

School Administration Building
 2512 George Mason Drive • P.O. Box 6038
 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-0038

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