

# APPLE - A - DAY

APRIL 2012

for Parents  
and the  
Community



## Schools Are Not Fully Funded in City Manager's Budget Plan

Virginia Beach City Manager Jim Spore recently presented his FY 2012-13 municipal budget (*which includes school funding*) to City Council. And, although it does provide \$18.8 million above an original funding target for education, it does not fully fund school needs. >>

You will recall that the School Board requested an additional \$36.6 million in order to avoid drastic cuts such as the elimination of transportation for academy and gifted programs, the dismantling of middle school and JV sports, an end to summer school programs, and a mandatory 3-day furlough for employees.

The city manager's budget plan calls for a 4-cent tax increase – half of which would be allocated to the schools – and the use of reserve funds to help cover ongoing budget shortfalls.

“This is certainly a good starting point but without full funding of the School Board's budget request, the quality of our schools will be in peril,” said Superintendent James Merrill. “We can only hope that City Council understands the magnitude of the cuts we are facing and decides to do what is right for our students, teachers, and families,” Merrill added.

The School Board Chairman will formally present the division's Proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to City Council on April 24. In the meantime, it's not too late to make your voice heard about school funding. Parents, students, staff members, and community members can weigh in on budget priorities by attending the upcoming budget hearings and City Council meetings. In addition, you can email the entire City Council at [ctycncl@vbgov.com](mailto:ctycncl@vbgov.com).

City Council is required by law to adopt a municipal budget by May 15. If Council chooses not to fully fund school needs, the School Board will be forced to identify additional cuts in order to reconcile its spending plan with the allocation from the City.

As a reminder, parents and stakeholders can get the most up-to-date information about school funding by visiting *The Lowdown on Your School Dollars* page of [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com).

### Upcoming Budget Hearings and Deliberations

City Council has several workshops, public hearings and meetings scheduled to address the FY 2012-2013 budget. Unless otherwise indicated, all Council meetings and workshops are held at City Hall, Municipal Building 1.

- **April 17** – Budget Workshop
- **April 18** – Public Hearing at Cox High School, 2425 Shorehaven Drive
- **April 24** – Budget Workshop & Public Hearing
- **May 1** – Budget Reconciliation Workshop
- **May 8** – City Council adopts the budget

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## Summer School to Be Offered for Middle and High School Students and Select Elementary Students

Plans are currently under way to offer summer school programs at the middle and high school levels which allow students to “catch up” on credit-bearing courses or “get ahead” academically. For your planning purposes, a list of secondary level summer school dates and locations is provided below.



Parents should note that a reduced number of elementary summer school offerings are available this year due to impending cuts to the 2012-13 fiscal year budget. Two limited enrollment elementary programs, Extended School Year (ESY) and Kindergarten Academy, are available for identified student populations. The **Extended School Year (ESY)** is offered to students who have been identified through their Individual Education Program (IEP) at their home schools. Additional information related to student selection, host sites, dates, and times is available at [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com). **Kindergarten Academy** is provided to selected students who will enter a Title I school kindergarten class in the fall. Additional information related to student selection, host sites, dates, and times is available at [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com).

As a reminder, individual summer school classes are subject to cancellation due to insufficient enrollment. More detailed information can be found at [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com).

### 2012 Summer School

LEVEL	DATES		STUDENT HOURS
Middle	<b>Session 1</b> June 26 – July 19* (Monday – Thursday)	<b>Session 2</b> July 23 – August 9 (Monday – Thursday and Friday, August 3)	9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
High	<b>Session 1</b> June 26 – July 19* (Monday – Thursday)  July 20 – Exams (Adjusted dismissal at 10:15 a.m.)	<b>Session 2</b> July 23 – August 9 (Monday – Thursday and Friday, August 3)  August 10 – Exams (Adjusted dismissal at 10:15 a.m.)	7:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. (all sites)  1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (afternoon session site only)

\*No School on July 4 and July 5

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER SCHOOL SITES	
Host Site	Cluster Schools
Corporate Landing	Great Neck   Lynnhaven   Plaza   Princess Anne   Virginia Beach
Salem	Bayside   Brandon   Independence   Kempsville   Landstown   Larkspur
Renaissance Academy	SECEP-ReEd

HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER SCHOOL SITES	
Host Site	Cluster Schools
Bayside	Cox   First Colonial   Princess Anne
Kellam	Ocean Lakes   Green Run   Afternoon Sessions
Tallwood	Kempsville   Landstown   Salem
Renaissance Academy	Online courses; SECEP-ACP   EBICS – ReED- Day Treatment – Secondary Cross Categorical

## New State Math SOL Tests Include Technology-Enhanced Items; Online Practice Tests Will Help Students Prepare

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has revamped its Standards of Learning Math exams to help better measure students' ability to apply what they have learned, particularly in the area of critical thinking skills. Parents may want to encourage their children to begin practicing now to be fully prepared. The Virginia Department of Education's website has practice exams posted for testing grades in all subjects at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/practice\\_items/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/practice_items/index.shtml). In addition, also posted are practice exams for students with disabilities who take the alternate assessment known as VMAST. The link to those tests is [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/alternative\\_assessments/vmast\\_va\\_mod\\_achievement\\_stds\\_test/practice\\_items/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/alternative_assessments/vmast_va_mod_achievement_stds_test/practice_items/index.shtml).

The latest math tests will include four "technology-enhanced" methods:

- **Drag and drop:** Students will have multiple optional answers to choose from and will be expected to click on the item they believe to be correct and drag it into a "drop zone" using a computer mouse.

- **Hot spot:** Students choose the correct answer by clicking the cursor on answer options called "hot spots." In these cases, hot spot questions could have more than one correct answer. A student who clicks on only one of the right answers instead of all the right answers will not get credit.
- **Graphs:** Students create or finish a graph.
- **Fill in the blank:** Students respond to the question by typing in the answer in the space provided.

The math SOL includes tool-bar icons and functions, such as a protractor, eraser, highlighter, pencil, ruler, eliminator, and straight edge. "The school district has provided training for teachers that takes into account the new approach to the math Standards of Learning tests, and we have encouraged them to have practice sessions in class. However, it would also be very helpful if parents encouraged the same kind of practice at home. The VDOE's online practice tests will be very help in that regard," says Donald Robertson, assistant superintendent of research, evaluation and testing.

## Optional Second Bus Run Available for High School Students During SOL Testing

Spring Standards of Learning (SOL) testing is scheduled for high school students beginning May 15 through May 24. During that time, students will attend classes in a modified block schedule. As a courtesy to high school students who are not required to participate in SOL testing, a second morning bus run is scheduled for all regular transportation buses. A list of pick-up times will be sent home from each high school in early May. There will be no second bus run for academy or special needs buses.

2012 Spring SOL Testing Modified High School Schedule May 15 - May 24	
Testing	7:25 a.m.-9:40 a.m.*
Break	9:40 a.m.-9:50 a.m.
Block 1	9:50 a.m.-10:45 a.m.
Block 2	10:50 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
Block 3	11:55 a.m.-12:55 p.m.
Block 4	1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

\*second bus run arrives at school

Use of the second bus run is optional. A study hall will be provided for students who arrive on the first bus run but are not participating in SOL testing.

### TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES THAT MAKE THE GRADE

Students throughout the school division are preparing for spring testing. For many, the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests are just weeks away. The key to success on the SOLs and course assessments is preparation. By implementing simple study habits and test-taking strategies, many students are able to reduce anxiety and improve performance.

#### Tips for Students

1. Start reviewing several days before the test.
2. Get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast.
3. Be on time and have all necessary materials (pens, pencils, paper, calculators, etc.).
4. Read instructions and questions carefully.
5. Pace yourself and check over your answers.

#### Tips for Parents

1. Encourage your child to complete homework and begin studying in a timely manner.
2. Provide a quiet, well-lighted area with limited distractions for studying.
3. Talk about upcoming tests to increase understanding and reduce stress.
4. Review material with your child.
5. Ensure your child gets enough rest and eats a healthy breakfast.
6. Keep a positive attitude.

## The 14th Annual VBCPS School Report Cards Available at [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com)!

Every teacher, principal, and staff member of Virginia Beach City Public Schools is committed to providing students a safe learning environment where they can gain the skills they need to thrive as 21st century learners, workers, and citizens. Two resources are now available for parents to evaluate our progress over time: The *Annual School Report Card* and the *Key Indicators of Student Success*.



The 14th Annual School Report Cards are available now on [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com). The report card – developed for each school – contains valuable information pertaining to student and staff characteristics, school performance, and progress toward meeting state and federal accountability standards. The report card also includes measures of student performance that are aligned to the 21st century student outcomes identified in our strategic plan, *Compass to 2015*.

The second resource, referred to as the *Key Indicators of Student Success*, provides division-level information representing our progress on our strategic plan, *Compass to 2015*. Parents are encouraged to review our plan and progress to date by visiting [vbschools.com/compass](http://vbschools.com/compass).

If you would like a printed copy of the *Annual School Report Card* for your child's school, the school division's strategic plan, or the *Key Indicators of Student Success*, please contact the school division's Department of Educational Leadership and Assessment at (757) 263-1199.

## Kindergarten is the beginning of a lifetime of learning!

Will your child be **five years old** on or before September 30, 2012? If so, plan on attending our kindergarten **Open House and Registration** on **Tuesday, April 24**. Parents are encouraged to bring their future kindergartener to participate in a variety of activities planned at each school. Information will also be available on student health insurance.



### Please bring the following to registration:

- two proofs of residence/home address  
(lease agreement and/current gas, electric, or water bills)
- certified birth certificate
- your child's Social Security number
- physical examination report
- current immunization report
- two emergency contact phone numbers

Find out your child's school assignment by using the *School Locator/Map Center* on [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com) or call your neighborhood school. Detailed information about the kindergarten program is also available at [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com). Have a question about kindergarten? Contact your neighborhood school.

### Summer Kindergarten Academy

Your child could be eligible to attend our Title I Summer Kindergarten Academy program available at selected schools. Find out if your child is eligible upon kindergarten registration. The program begins on Tuesday, June 26, 2012.

**Tuesday,  
April 24, 2012  
9:00 a.m.**

Registration will be conducted at all elementary schools (except Newtown, Bettie F. Williams, and Old Donation Center).

## What Parents Need to Know About School Lockdowns and School Emergencies

Providing a safe environment for students, staff, and visitors is a top priority for Virginia Beach City Public Schools. The district works closely with police, fire, and other safety officials to ensure that our schools are well prepared for an emergency. Our *Emergency Response Plan*, developed in tandem with our public safety partners, covers a wide variety of emergencies and provides guidance to help staff and emergency personnel respond efficiently should a crisis take place in a school.



Recognizing that we must be proactive in order to ensure student safety, there are a number of security measures in place at our schools each day. For example, all exterior doors are either locked or under surveillance, there is a manned visitor's desk at the entrance to every school where guests must sign-in and receive a visitor's badge, each school has interior and exterior Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras, all middle

and high schools have a school resource officer (SRO) on staff during the instructional day, and all elementary schools have a security assistant and access to the SRO at a nearby school. In addition, there are intrusion alarms at every school and after-hours security staff to monitor the buildings. Each school has a crisis response team on staff with members who have participated in appropriate training. All schools also conduct safety drills and are subject to a safe school audit by the division's Office of Safety and Loss Control.

If an emergency were to occur at your child's school, parents would be notified by phone, email, and text message via *Alert Now*. As new information became available, updates would also be sent out. To ensure that you are able to receive these important messages, parents should be sure to keep contact information up to date in the main office of their child's school.

School safety is everyone's responsibility. All staff, students, parents, and community members must work together to ensure that safety guidelines are followed and that safety concerns are reported to the school principal and proper authorities. Parents and students are encouraged to review the *Code of Student Conduct* and supporting School Board policies and regulations related to school safety. Additional information about safety measures in place at our schools and the *Alert Now* notification system can be found on the school division website, [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com).

### What is a School Lockdown?

An **internal lockdown** is used when there is a threat or possible threat inside a school building. All school interior doors are locked and students are confined to their classrooms. No entry or exit of the building is allowed. Exterior doors are also locked and a sign is posted at the main entrance. In addition to *Alert Now* messages, parents are referred to the division's Emergency Hotline, (757) 263-1000, and the division website, [vbschools.com](http://vbschools.com), for information.

In the event of an actual emergency, it is critical that parents wait to receive information and direction from school officials before going to the school. Once the emergency situation is resolved, parents will be instructed when and where to reunite with their child. As a reminder, a student will only be released to an adult who is documented as an emergency contact. Even a non-custodial parent must be listed as an emergency contact and provide proper identification in order to pick up a student.

An **external lockdown** most often occurs as a precaution at the request of police when there is an incident in a neighborhood adjacent to the school. All exterior doors are locked and a sign is posted at the main entrance. If the situation allows, parents will be admitted to the school after showing proper identification. An *Alert Now* message is not sent to parents during an external lockdown, unless the lockdown results in a change to school arrival/dismissal procedures or causes a significant disruption to the instructional day.

## Looking for a Summer Camp for Rising 9th Grade Students?

Interested in a camp dedicated to fun with technology, people skills, and opportunities to experience hands-on activities? Then the Advanced Technology Center Summer Camp for Rising 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students is for your teenager!

Explore: Computer Repair, Cisco, Telecommunications, Marketing Management, Web Design, Networking, 3-D Modeling, Digital Design, Engineering Design, Marine Engineering and Design, Robotics and Engineering, Teambuilding, a Planetarium, NASA Engineering and more.

The camp will take place August 13-17 for Virginia Beach students with a fee of \$125. Registration forms will be available in guidance offices in early spring or call the ATC at 648-5800.



**The Advanced Technology Center is now accepting applications for 2012-2013.**

Ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-grade students can apply.

Call (757) 648-5800 for more information or visit

[www.imagineinnovatecreate.com](http://www.imagineinnovatecreate.com) or [www.facebook.com/vbatc.com](http://www.facebook.com/vbatc.com).

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy and childbirth, or marital status. School Board policies and supporting regulation (Policies 2-33, 4-4, 5-7, and 6-7 and Regulation 5-44.1) provide equal access to courses, programs, counseling services, physical education and athletics, vocational education, instructional materials, and extracurricular activities. Violations of these policies should be reported to the Director of Student Leadership at 263-2020 or the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at 263-1133.

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools, in partnership with the entire community, will empower every student to become a life-long learner who is a responsible, productive and engaged citizen within the global community. Featuring systemwide 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, (757) 263-1949 (voice); (757) 263-1010 (fax); (757) 263-1240 (TDD) or e-mail her at [sandi.maxwell@vbschools.com](mailto:sandi.maxwell@vbschools.com).

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