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**Isle of Wight County Schools Featured in 23rd Annual
VSBA Showcases for Success Directory**

Isle of Wight Co, VA – April 8, 2019: The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) has released its 23rd annual *VSBA Showcases for Success* directory, highlighting successful K-12 programs in Virginia’s public schools. “In addition to highlighting some of the best practices taking place in Virginia’s schools, the VSBA Showcases for Success directory can serve as a starting point to develop similar programs in other school divisions,” said Gina G. Patterson, VSBA executive director, “It is important to highlight choices that students have at all levels in school divisions, and the VSBA Showcases for Success directory illustrates that there are excellent programs and initiatives taking place in Virginia’s public schools.”

Isle of Wight County Schools (IWCS) is one of 56 school divisions from across the Commonwealth that has programs featured in the directory. Programs included in the directory from IWCS are:

Integration of Mechatronics into Engineering: At Smithfield High School, students are preparing for a bright future in engineering and mechatronics through practical, hands-on learning. Mechatronics equipment has been embedded into the engineering curriculum to provide an integrated approach for understanding the various devices and workflow involved in the automated process of mechatronics. A new lab facility designed for the program contains a full CAD computer lab, a series of Amatrol mechatronics training stations, along with tools to provide students with an authentic experience in the engineering design process, including using 3D printers, basic electronics, motor control systems, and programmable logic controllers (PLCs). Students are grasping more than just theory and concepts related to electronic, mechanical, and computer systems. Those who complete the program are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and certifications to be sought after candidates for high wage, high skill and high demand occupations immediately after high school.

Showcasing Student Work through Curation: Curation is an important part of project based learning. It highlights the learning process and showcases student work for a wider audience. At Georgie Tyler Middle School, a curation committee, composed of administration and staff, reviews final products and brainstorms ways to present projects in a museum quality display. The committee considers norms for curation, including artful intent and the story that must be told to document the learning process. After narrowing down the candidates to several doable PBL units, curation committee members work in small teams to create the exhibits. Gathering input from teachers and students is vital to ensure the display accurately describes and defines their work. Curation is a critical component of project based learning and focuses attention on the learning process as much as the final product. The displays also reinforce a culture of pride and respect among students for their peers, their school, and themselves.



“We realize the benefit each program has to our vision of helping every child discover his or her unique gifts and talents,” said Dr. Jim Thornton, Superintendent of Isle of Wight County Schools. “These exemplar programs are all part of our commitment to preparing our students to be college, career and life ready.”

The full *VSBA Showcases for Success* directory is available at www.vsba.org/showcases. It includes division-wide programs, as well as those at elementary, middle, and high school levels. The focus of the 2019 VSBA Showcases for Success is *Career, College and Life Ready*, highlighting diverse programs in Virginia’s public schools that aim to prepare students for whatever pathway they choose after their K-12 education.

About the Virginia School Boards Association

Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through leadership, advocacy, and services. The Association offers conferences, information, training, and counseling designed to meet the needs of the Commonwealth’s educational leaders.

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