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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Charles City High School Named Bronze Medal Award High School by *US News and World Report* Magazine

CHARLES CITY, VIRGINIA -- The 2016-17 school year was an exciting one for Charles City Public Schools. Pending the official release of state Standards of Learning (SOL) data by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), it is anticipated that for the first time in five years, all schools in Charles City County will be fully accredited. This anticipated news comes on the heels of confirmation last school year that Charles City Elementary School missed full accreditation by a single percentage point on their Mathematics SOLs.

"This past academic year, we took a major change in our approach to student achievement data and how it informs instruction at CCES," shared Division Superintendent David Gaston. "Through the use of formative and summative assessments and diagnostic data from a variety of sources, teachers were able to focus on each individual student's learning needs and successfully provide remediation and support to them for academic growth and success." Teachers engaged in weekly student data talks as they collaborated with one another in team meetings. Their conversations focused solely on individual student learning needs in math and reading in an effort to provide instruction in seminar sessions during the school day that would help students grasp the concepts that they had difficulty understanding.

The result this year was an increase of two percentage points in the pass rate for Mathematics and three points in the pass rate for Reading at the elementary school. The most significant gains were found in History and Social Science, which produced pass rate gains of 11 points. Most notable among the grade level pass rate gains at CCES were in grade 5 reading at 10 points, grade 4 math at 10 points and grade 6 reading at 8 points. "Using all of the available data and assessments available to our teachers really paid dividends as our student gains showed," shared Gaston. "The data informed and guided every decision along the way."

Charles City High School was no stranger to SOL and student success in 2016-17 either. Significant student performance in Geography at 92%, VA and US History at 94%, Algebra II at 95% and 100% pass rates in World History II and Chemistry carried the high school to its what will be anticipated to be its fourth straight year of accreditation.

In addition to this distinction, CCHS received some extremely encouraging and exciting news in the early summer, as well.

Each year, US News and World Report Magazine publishes its lists of top colleges, universities and high schools, among others, across the nation and within each state. Within the pages of this past April's edition was a very unanticipated surprise. Charles City High School was honored as being one of the top 118 high schools in the state of Virginia out of almost 700 high school across the state. The school also garnered a national Bronze Medal Award, taking its place within the top 17% of all high schools across the nation.

This distinction was based on four sets of criteria, including the overall performance of students in reading and math as compared to the state's averages, overall performance of economically disadvantaged students on the Virginia's state standardized exams, the graduation rates for the high school and the school's preparation of its students for college-level work.

"We've always known that CCHS is a very effective school with a strong record of success for our students. The recent news of this ranking from US News was for us a validation of all of the hard work and effort on behalf of the entire school, its faculty and staff in producing great graduates," shared Helen Payne-Jones, Chair of the CCPS School Board. She noted that the high school continues to distinguish itself by having the third highest graduation rate in the state of Virginia and a zero percent student dropout rate. Of the 53 total students who graduated from Charles City High School last year, graduates earned \$1.22 million in scholarship money, with every graduate heading toward college or a career, including military service.

As the school division turns its attention to the new 2017-18 school year, there is no resting on any of its laurels. "Our conversations have focused entirely on the idea of continuous improvement and how we can plan and prepare for greater success in the coming academic year," shared Gaston. "Over the coming years, our goal is not to wonder whether we have made accreditation, but rather by how much." With continued focus on assessment, data and individual student performance, Charles City Public Schools stands poised to build on its initial success.

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