



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

March 27, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: *Schools To Watch Program*

Since 2003, Virginia has been one of the 19 state members of the *Schools To Watch Program*. Sponsored by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform, the goal of *Schools To Watch* is to identify and recognize outstanding middle schools based on four criteria:

- academic excellence;
- developmental responsiveness;
- social equity; and
- organizational structure.

The Virginia Department of Education is pleased to announce the names of four new and six redesignated Virginia middle schools that have been added to the list of *Schools To Watch*. The new schools are:

- Seneca Ridge Middle School, Loudoun County Public Schools;
- Michael Lunsford Middle School, Loudoun County Public Schools; and
- Hickory Middle School, Chesapeake City Public Schools.

The redesignated schools are:

- Belmont Ridge Middle School, Smart's Mill Middle School, Mercer Middle School, Loudoun County Public Schools;
- Woodbridge Middle School and Saunders Middle School, Prince William County Public Schools;
- Damascus Middle School and Glade Springs Middle School, Washington County Public Schools;
- Short Pump Middle School, Henrico County Public Schools; and
- Hidden Valley Middle School, Roanoke County Public Schools.

These schools join the ranks of nearly 400 middle schools across the country considered to be important resources for other schools to consult in their efforts to continuously improve programs for middle grades students.

All middle schools across the Commonwealth are invited to apply to be a *School To Watch*. Application information and instructions are posted at www.vmsa.org with a due date of September 15, 2015. For questions, please contact Sandra Dutemple, director, Virginia Schools to Watch, by e-mail at MsDu@mac.com or by telephone at (703) 795-0775; or Dr. John W. "Billy" Haun, chief academic officer, Division of Instruction, by e-mail to Billy.Haun@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2034.

SRS/EMR/rt

