Applicant Name: VIRGINIA BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Project Title: Community Connection Centers

Project Type: Public Computer Center

Executive Summary

Virginia Beach City Public Schools hopes to build on the success of the VA STAR project which refurbishes government computers and donates them to needy families, as well as its Parent Connection program that has provided resources, training, and parenting classes to families throughout the school division. Virginia Beach City Public Schools would like to expand that program to include developing and improving job readiness for our community. The Virginia Beach school district includes 18 schools that are schoolwide Title I schools. The community has a significant percentage of parents and caregivers who are unemployed and underemployed due to lack of education, job skills, and computer knowledge. We would like to offer several distinct types of programs in our Community Connection Centers which would be located in portable classrooms outside of each Title I school and in a Parent Bus that would travel the community reaching out to parents and community members. First, we would like to offer course work and skills remediation for those who cannot qualify for GED courses. This would include teenagers who have dropped out of school, transferred to the district with skill deficits, or are about to drop out because of failing courses. Each client would have an individualized program. Assessment and placement would occur when the client entered the facility. Service personnel would monitor progress and make suggestions. Computer programs would diagnose skill deficits and prescribe progressive remediation in key skills of reading and math. Second, clients who are ready for GED courses would be able to pursue them at their own pace through software which is self-directing. Practice tests and assistance in the essay section are provided by staff and the computer programs. Third, job readiness will be provided through assistance in writing resumes using computer programs and job interviewing skills. Clients will be taught how to access computer-based employment sites and how to use the internet as a tool for applying for jobs. Fourth, those clients who have successfully completed GED courses will be encouraged to seek further education through our partnership with the Tidewater Community College. Tidewater Community College will work with the school division to build links to associates degrees and help facilitate the application process. Tidewater will also place students to work with the children of participants attending the center as part of their internship program. Fifth, four computers will be reserved at each community learning site for children of clients using the center. Educational programs such as Destination Reading and Destination math will provide remediation, maintenance, or acceleration in the essential areas of math and science. Parents will also be instructed in using the computer as a tool for assisting children’s learning. Virginia Beach will continue and expand its partnership with VA STAR and give refurbished computers to clients who have successfully completed courses. We are working to identify an internet service provider to offer subscriptions to the internet free or at reduced costs. Virginia Beach hopes to expand its outreach to the community to attract
participants through the PTA, community groups, community college and its annual community fairs. Virginia Beach has an active PTA that has already pledged its assistance in helping to encourage participation in our job training program. Through pursuit of grants and other foundation support Virginia Beach hopes to expand our community computer centers and use them as a role model of jobs training for other districts in the state.