



CHESTERFIELD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Marcus J. Newsome, Ed.D., Superintendent

October 14, 2009

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your role in the best opening month in recent memory. Students quickly settled into daily routines, and classrooms I visited were full of energy with students and faculty members engaged and on task.

Our community has come to expect and appreciate the very best from our schools. In the face of a national recession and significant reductions in state and local revenues, you demonstrate that tough times bring out the best in tough-minded people. We are the largest school division in Virginia to be fully accredited for two straight years, Chesterfield County Public Schools has made AYP for three consecutive years, and our standardized test pass rates reached all-time highs during 2008-09.

State and local revenues continue to decline, resulting in recent reports by county leaders that Chesterfield County's FY2011 budget likely will have to be cut significantly. As work begins on our FY2011 budget (for the 2010-11 school year), Chesterfield County Public Schools faces \$20-30 million in cuts. These budget woes will extend into the foreseeable future. Estimates for FY2012 already include another \$10-15 million in potential cuts. Our most important resources are our human resources. Therefore, we will maintain our efforts to preserve as many jobs as possible.

I am committed to keeping our staff and community informed about budget-related discussions. Last night, the School Board held a pre-budget public hearing that was the starting point for our work with the public. The School Board, administration, staff and Budget Advisory Committee will start detailed budget deliberations soon. The county and school division leadership teams will hold joint community meetings in the coming weeks to inform residents about difficult decisions ahead.

As budget deliberations progress, I will continue to share with you challenges we face and how we plan to overcome them. Thank you again for your service to our school division and your commitment to our students.

Sincerely,

Marcus J. Newsome, Ed.D.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Post Office Box 10 • Chesterfield, Virginia 23832

(804) 748-1405 • fax (804) 796-7178

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