



**For Immediate Release
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SALEM SCHOOL DIVISION EARNS STATEWIDE HONORS FOR TITLE I EFFORTS

**EAST SALEM & G.W. CARVER EARN DISTINGUISHED
TITLE I STATUS FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT YEAR**

The Salem School Division is one of just seven divisions in the entire Commonwealth to receive recognition from the Virginia Board of Education for raising the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students.

This most recent "Distinguished Title I Award" is based on how well students performed on the state's Standards of Learning tests that were administered during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years. Led by the efforts at East Salem and G.W. Carver, Salem exceeded all federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) achievement objectives in reading and mathematics during this period.

"This recognition is a reflection of the commitment, creativity, and energy of Salem's teachers in the Title I schools and across the division to ensure success for every child every day," says Director of Elementary Education, Diane Washenberger. "It also reflects the support of our parents and our community for our schools and, most importantly, the work of our students who respond to learning opportunities with enthusiasm and want to achieve at a high level."

Perhaps no one knows the significance of this accomplishment better than Dr. Joe Coleman. Salem's Director of Assessment and current principal at G.W. Carver has not only analyzed the test scores, but observed first hand on a daily basis why the numbers are so impressive.

"As Division Director of Assessment, I am very proud that the two Title I schools in Salem have earned this honor again," says Coleman. "In fact, when looking at test results for Salem's four elementary schools in terms of measureable academic achievement, the Title I and non-Title I schools are indistinguishable from one another and that, in and of itself speaks highly of East Salem and G. W. Carver."

Trula Byington spent 11 years as the principal at Carver before moving over to West Salem for this current school year and she knows as well as anyone how many working parts there are in the "Carver Community."

"We are very appreciative of this recognition and this acknowledgement is directly tied to the hard working and dedicated faculty and staff at Carver," says Byington. "The students and parents at G.W. Carver take great pride in this exceptional school."

To qualify for the honor, both Carver and East Salem schools had to not only meet federal "No Child Left Behind" benchmarks in reading and math for two consecutive years, but also be fully accredited by the state, and have mean test scores in the 60th percentile or higher for English and mathematics.

"Once again, earning Distinguished Title I School status is a direct reflection of how much of a focus our staff has on the whole child," says East Salem principal Diane Rose. "A part of our success is having the freedom to put the right people in the right place. Our biggest successes aren't necessarily passing test scores, but where we can see we made a positive difference in a child's academic, social and emotional journey."

Title I provides federal assistance to schools with a large student population eligible for free or reduced price meals. The money is used to provide additional education services to students who are most at risk of failing to meet State academic standards.

"All six of our schools were recognized by the Governor's Office and the State Board of Education for excellence in January, but this additional recognition for East Salem and G.W. Carver is significant because both schools serve a proportionally higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students," says Salem Superintendent, Dr. Alan Seibert. "Thanks to the terrific work of the students, the support of their parents, and the heroic efforts of the teachers and staff, children at these schools have every opportunity to shine just as brightly."

Contact:

Dr. Alan Seibert
Salem School Division
Superintendent
(540) 389-0130 - office
aseibert@salem.k12.va.us

Mike Stevens
City of Salem
Communications Director
(540) 375-4112 office
(540) 353-2041 cell
mstevens@salemva.gov