



school days

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CITY SCHOOLS AND TCC: PAIRING THAT'S PERFECT

Superintendent David Stuckwisch says the school division is on target to double student participation in a program held at Tidewater Community College that lets them earn high school and college credits.

Within four years, he expects enrollment in the program, called First College, to rise from some 100 to about 200 Portsmouth schools seniors.

That's because of the spiking scholastic achievements of the division's kids, he says. He specifically points to the improved performance of middle schoolers – the group that will be ready for First College in the next several years – on the state's standardized tests.

Stuckwisch says many First College participants are the first in their families to attend college because of the program.

About a third of those enrolled are eligible for free or reduced lunches. Portsmouth schools and the Beazley Foundation cover the students' tuition, which is about \$1,500.

Seniors attend the program in the last semester of high school. It's a launching pad into future years of higher education.

Mike Taylor, senior vice president of human resources for Sentara, has toured the city's new TCC campus where First College is held and says he believes the division's and TCC's partnership "makes perfect sense."

"It's a good connection to keep them in the education system," Taylor says of students enrolled in the program.

I second that.

BOARD TO CONSIDER NAMING WILSON FOOTBALL STADIUM

On March 18, School Board members will consider what to name the new Wilson High School football stadium or whether to accept a committee's

recommendation to table the naming decision.

Board members discussed the pros and cons of whether to move forward with the naming at last week's meeting.

Member Keith Nance Sr. said the board "would be derelict" if it didn't proceed, because he believes members of the community expect the stadium to be named.

Members Ned McCabe and Elizabeth Daniels said they don't think the board is obligated to vote on a name now.

Member Jean Shackelford said she'd like to see the board consider naming the stadium and Wilson's entire outdoor athletic complex.

She noted that the latter was requested last fall by the Portsmouth Sports Club, which sent Chairman James Bridgeford a letter asking that the complex be named for sports legend and Wilson alum Clarence "Ace" Parker.

McCabe said he came away from the last public hearing on the issue believing there was a sentiment that the stadium be named for Parker and that the entire complex be named for the late Jimmie Williford, the division's longtime supervisor of health, physical education and athletics.

Board member Costella Williams noted others had requested different names, including Manor and Woodrow Wilson.