

WHRO Annual Impact Statement

2023-2024

Suffolk Public Schools

Regional Leadership

HRETA Educational Advisory Committee

Kimberly Slingsluff
Tyron Riddick

HRETA Superintendents Advisory Council

Dr. John B. Gordon, III

HRETA Technology Advisory Committee

John Littlefield

Consortium for Interactive Instruction

Sabrina Hayes, IT Summit Planning Committee
Christine Lafferty

Online Learning System Administrators

Sarah Michalczak

Please see the “Notes” section on page 15 for complete descriptions of these groups.



eMediaVASM (www.emediava.org)

eMediaVA is a service of WHRO and is supported by the Virginia General Assembly through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and many other prominent national and Virginia-based educational content providers. It is a one-stop shop for high-quality digital content for Virginia's Pre-K through twelfth grade teachers and students. Featuring the best purpose-built content from leading educational, cultural, and scientific organizations – such as PBS, Colonial Williamsburg, NASA, the Smithsonian Museums, the National Archives, Virginia's public media stations, Old Dominion University, the VDOE, Norfolk Public Library, NPR, the Science Museum of Virginia, the Valentine Richmond History Center, and many, many others – eMediaVA currently offers tens of thousands of digital learning resources, with more being added daily. All of these resources are correlated to the Virginia Standards of Learning and are available at no cost to every teacher and student across the Commonwealth. As of June 30, 2024, there were more than 475,000 user accounts (60,000 more than the previous year).



eMediaVA 4.0, has an attractive, modern look and feel, with a device-responsive design. This online platform is packed with many great features including curated collections, highlighted resources, multiple language filters, and a news and events section. These features streamline content

publishing and curation while providing relevant and engaging content to eMediaVA users in a visually appealing and simplified presentation. The search engine has a “fuzzy” search functionality that finds relevant results even when search terms are misspelled or mistyped. To make it easier for elementary students to find the most appropriate content, a filter automatically brings up only elementary-grade content when those students conduct a search. In addition, another filter allows school divisions to control what content is available to their users.

eMediaVA also offers a number of division-wide connections designed to streamline access and account maintenance, including Single Sign-On options through Clever and ClassLink and Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) integrations with Canvas. In total, 84 school divisions statewide, including 18 of the 21 HRETA divisions (Accomack, Chesapeake, Franklin, Gloucester, Hampton, Isle of Wight, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Southampton, Suffolk, Surry, Sussex, Virginia Beach, West Point, Williamsburg-James City County, and York) have established Single Sign-On with eMediaVA.

Regional Savings/Value: \$1,004,985.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^A: \$51,135.00

*“Lots of great content that's free and easy to share, embed, etc. in platforms”
– Teacher, Newport News Public Schools*

Families and Early Learners

The Ready To Learn initiative is an innovative partnership between Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), PBS, and local public media stations – including WHRO – and many community-based partners. Targeted toward America's most at-risk kids, but made available to all families and children across the country, Ready To Learn's high-quality transmedia content is unparalleled in its impact, value, and necessity. The STEM and literacy-based educational programming created by Ready To Learn provides families with effective, non-commercial content that helps prepare children for success in school. Stimulating online games, skill tracker websites, and other learning resources for children, parents, caregivers, and teachers are also provided.



Combined, WHRO delivered more than 12,000 hours of the best high-quality Educational Early Childhood Programming last year on WHRO KIDS 15.3 and on WHRO 15.1 free of charge to every household in greater Hampton Roads. WHRO KIDS also provides a 24/7 streaming service that can be used on any mobile device.



The **WHRO STEM Van** has 20 iPads, 12 Chromebooks, and two touchscreen monitors – all purchased with CPB funding – that are available for onsite visits for students while having fun. On-site visits were conducted by WHRO staff members as they shared STEM-related activities aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning. WHRO staff used curriculum materials developed by PBS KIDS using the engineering model. The van made 58 school/community visits during the 2023-2024 school year. STEM Van operation was funded in part through foundation donations and corporate underwriting.

WHRO staff members “made sure that the events were tailored to our event and were engaging for the wide range of students who came. We would love to have them back for ALL our events.” – Teacher, Norfolk Public Schools

WHRO's Literacy Van is a cheerful, brightly colored vehicle that tours throughout our broadcast region. Its mission is to bring awareness of the importance of practicing reading skills daily. The program, which includes storytelling and expressive literacy activities covering a variety of Pre-K Comprehensive Standards and Virginia Standards of Learning, is presented to students in Pre-K through second grade to motivate them to become lifelong readers. After the presentation, children take a reader's pledge – a commitment that they will start practicing their reading every day. Once they have taken the pledge, they are eligible to tour the inside of the van, which is stocked with books that are given directly to children in high-need situations and/or given to each classroom library the van visits. The van regularly delivered First Books and other resources to Title I schools for kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms, making 81 school/community visits during the 2023-2024 school year.

The **Batten Environmental Education Van** program provides classroom teachers with pre and post-visit lesson plans and interactive learning objects related to the GreenBeatsSM video series. WHRO and the Virginia Stage Company have also partnered to offer an optional environmental musical assembly. The van is equipped with 30 Surface Pro tablets and four large-screen computers, all loaded with interactives created by WHRO's digital learning team. These interactives, based on WHRO's GreenBeats animated video series, are a part of SOL-aligned lessons designed to encourage young learners throughout the region to protect and preserve the environment. During the 2023-2024 school year, the van made 28 school/community visits.

“I loved how it (the Environmental Van) was a mixture of learning experiences for the kids...” - Teacher, Virginia Beach Public Schools

Super WHY! Reading Camps are multi-day, interactive learning adventures that show campers ages 4-5 the power of reading, and motivate them to play with letters, sounds, and words through a comprehensive curriculum developed by noted literacy experts. Twenty-seven camps reaching nearly 500 children have

been conducted since the initiative began in 2008 when WHRO conducted its first Super WHY! Reading Camp at Fort Story Army Base Child Development Center and participated in a study by Florida State University's Center for Reading Research. Campers showed gains in all of the literacy skills presented in the program, including an 84% gain in phonics skills and a 139% gain in word recognition skills.

PBS KIDS ScratchJr Coding Camps are one-, three-, or five-day afterschool programs, in which first, second, and third grade students are introduced to creative coding through digital and physical activities and given the opportunity to create their own stories, games, and collages with the PBS KIDS ScratchJr tablet app.

STEM Camps are one-, three-, or five-day programs, in which kindergarten through third-grade students are introduced to various fun, curriculum-based activities focused on segments from PBS KIDS programming. Students are engaged in hands-on, collaborative, and playful learning, using both digital and tangible tools to support the development of their STEM skills in investigation and problem-solving.

WHRO Library Corners are decorated with PBS KIDS décor and provide a wealth of fun educational resources and literacy activities for children to use when visiting the library. Our first corner was established at the Dr. Clarence Cuffee Library in Chesapeake. During the 2023-24 school year, WHRO established new library corners at the following locations:

- Hampton Public Library, Main Library
- Portsmouth Public Library, Main Library and Craddock Branch Library
- Poquoson Public Library, Poquoson
- Suffolk Public Library, Morgan Memorial Library
- Virginia Beach Public Library, Windsor Woods Area Library

Anytime Is Learning Time Training helps parents identify everyday teachable moments. Parents attending these trainings receive helpful PBS parent resources, tip sheets, and free books for their children. WHRO works with parent liaisons to set up trainings for parents in Title I schools, Head Start Centers, and childcare providers.

In the spring of 2024, WHRO, in partnership with **Bright by Text**, established a service to deliver free parenting tips by text to parents of children age 8 and younger. After signing up, parents receive weekly messages customized to the child's age. These messages touch on ways that parents can promote healthy social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. Content comes from trusted national providers such as PBS KIDS, No Kid Hungry, Sesame Street in Communities, and Center for Early Learning + Public Health.

PBS KIDS content, including the WHRO KIDS 24/7 stream, games, and apps, among other services, are located on the Kids & Family page of WHRO's main website, where there is a wealth of articles and education tips for parents. This page also provides information about our WHRO KIDS 24/7 channel and media player.



The **PBS KIDS Website** (www.pbskids.org) is an engaging multimedia destination specifically created for kids ages 2-8. With fun, quirky settings full of surprises, this site empowers kids to discover themselves, define the diverse world around them, explore new relationships, and embrace a love of learning. The website features popular age-appropriate PBS series. Video clips, activities, apps, augmented reality games, and behind-the-scenes features are also available.

Title I School Resources – Superintendents and school representatives are kept up-to-date on Children's Services initiatives and activities through regular Educational Advisory Committee HRETA reports. These literacy and STEM resources and materials are regularly provided to Title I schools in all of WHRO's owner-member school divisions as requested.

Every year, WHRO distributes thousands of books to students. These efforts, funded through grants, local foundations, and WHRO's Hunter B. Andrews Society book drives, provide support to allow children

in challenging circumstances to start their own libraries. Books are distributed after parent and provider trainings, after WHRO van visits, and at other community events. During the 2023-24 school year, WHRO distributed more than 14,000 books to area students.

Each year, WHRO is a major sponsor of the **Virginia Children's Festival** and has brought major headline acts such as Maria and Elmo from Sesame Street, Mr. Steve of SteveSongs (a PBS personality), and Shock from The Electric Company. In addition, WHRO also secures PBS Costume Characters such as Super WHY!, Curious George, Word Girl, Nature Cat, SID The Science Kid, and Daniel Tiger. At this event, WHRO distributes hundreds of free books and provides hands-on experiences utilizing iPads and touch screens, allowing children to experience all of the interactive, engaging, educational content now available online.

During the 2023-2024 school year, WHRO continued its weekly Facebook streaming service to address literacy skills for young learners. **Ms. Martha Reads** features children's services manager, Martha Razor, reading select student-written stories from past Young Storytellers contests. This award-winning program strengthens literacy skills while highlighting student drawing and writing. Averaging 6,000 page views per week, this program continues to be very popular.

Overall, in 2023-2024, WHRO Children's Services reached more than 22,000 families, 1,300 caregivers/teachers, and 23,000 children. In addition, we distributed over 6,000 First Books and 7,000 activity Fun Books to children most in need.

Suffolk Participants:

A new WHRO Library Corner was established at the Morgan Memorial Library. The library received First Books, Fun Books, and two PBS Tablets as part of its inception. The WHRO Literacy Van visited Northern Shores Elementary, where a WHRO Children's Service staff member provided literacy lessons to almost 300 pre-K through first grade students. WHRO Children's Services staff also provided an Odd Squad lesson on symmetry to 150 Northern Shores Elementary second graders. The staff members also visited Southwestern Elementary and Elephant's Fork Elementary for their Family Engagement and STEM nights. The WHRO Literacy Van visited Southwestern Elementary where a WHRO Children's Service staff member provided a literacy lesson for 118 pre-K and Kindergarten students. Each student received a First Book. As part of Suffolk's Library2Go program, WHRO Children's Services staff members visited Hoffer Apartments and Colander Bishop Apartments to deliver Environmental and STEM Van experiences, and to drop off activity bags and parent resources.

In total, WHRO Children's Services reached more than 900 Suffolk students and provided two PBS KIDS Playtime Tablets, over 400 First Books, and more than 3000 Fun Books to them and their families.

Total Regional Savings/Value: \$252,119.00 (For all items above)

Total Suffolk Savings/Value^B: \$15,840.00 (For all items above)

WHRO Education Professional Development

WHRO Education staff members offer a wide variety of in-person and online training at no cost to HRETA Member divisions throughout the year. In 2023-2024, 20 trainings were conducted on topics such as:

- AI in Education
- Steal This Idea
- New eMediaVA Resources and Tech Tools

In addition, we offered a six-week online course based on WHRO's Leveraging the Power of Virtual Learning. These lessons were designed and provided to give teachers the skills to be effective in an online setting.

In June, WHRO held the first annual Instructional Technology Summit. This day-long event, which was held at Poquoson Middle School, offered sessions in cutting-edge educational technology use.



More than 1,200 educators from across the Commonwealth registered for these trainings, including approximately 625 from HRETA owner schools and 30 from Suffolk.

Regional Savings/Value: \$93,750.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^C: \$4,500.00

“I would rate the Tech Summit as exceptional, with well-organized sessions, diverse and engaging speakers, practical insights, and valuable networking opportunities.” - Teacher, Hampton City Schools

Cultural Competency Training Hosting

In March 2022, the VDOE requested that WHRO design and host an online cultural competency module as part of the eMediaVA contract. This content allows all Virginia educators to meet the licensure requirements outlined by the General Assembly in HB 1904 and SB 1196. WHRO continues to host the completed module on the eMediaVA server.

Regional Savings/Value: \$15,887.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^P: \$885.00

Virginia State and Local Civic Education Hosting

At the request of the VDOE and as part of the eMediaVA contract, WHRO hosts the Virginia State and Local Civic Education Module. This online content satisfies license renewal requirements for any Virginia educator endorsed to teach middle school civics or economics, or high school government or history.

Regional Savings/Value: \$9,367.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^F: \$520.00



WHRO Education Online Courses

WHRO's Digital Learning Team crafts innovative WHRO Education Online Courses, harnessing cutting-edge 21st-century technologies. These courses transcend traditional textbooks, embracing a dynamic blend of media-rich, interactive elements that captivate and engage. Meticulously aligned with Virginia Standards of Learning for specific subjects, these courses are tailor-made for instructor-led facilitation and are available in multiple learning management systems.

Moreover, the online content prioritizes inclusivity, adhering to accessibility standards that cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. Our commitment to a robust and intellectually stimulating online learning journey is underscored by a repertoire of diverse content delivery methods. These courses not only foster authentic experiences but also integrate the 5 C's, enabling self-assessment, reflective exploration, and profound subject matter investigation.

In our pursuit of excellence, each lesson is carefully structured to provide students with immediate corrective feedback, coupled with personal review opportunities before assessment. Our Digital Learning Team passionately upholds principles of inclusion, equity, justice, and diversity, as demonstrated through thoughtfully crafted content.

Drawing upon expertise from across the region, all course material is curated and thoroughly reviewed. Once finalized, these courses become valuable resources for participating school divisions, offering customization options to suit their unique educational needs.

Since 2007, the following courses have been developed:

- Algebra I
- Algebra II
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Digital Citizenship
- Earth Science
- Economics and Personal Finance
- English 9
- English 10
- English 11
- English 12
- Environmental Science
- French I
- Geometry
- Health and PE 9
- Health and PE 10
- Mathematical Analysis
- Middle School Career Investigations
- Oceanography
- Online Teaching Methodology
- Physics
- Psychology
- VA and US Government
- VA and US History
- World Geography
- World History and Geography to 1500 A.D. (C.E.)
- World History and Geography: 1500 A.D. (C.E.) to the Present

In 2023-2024, the Digital Learning Team updated and delivered three courses in multiple learning management systems: Leveraging the Power of Virtual Learning; Environmental Science; and Middle School Career Investigations. This past year, the team also coordinated three regional Online Learning System Administrator meetings.



Regional Savings/Value: \$7,297,500.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^F: \$347,500.00

Environmental Science Online Course

In 2023-2024, the Digital Learning Team delivered the new Environmental Science Online Course in multiple learning management systems: This full-year, high school credit course is completely aligned to the Virginia Department of Education’s Environmental Science Guidelines. With interactivities, videos, animations, scientific investigations, discussion forums, and authentic assessments, this course contains all of the material necessary to meet Virginia’s requirements in this subject. Environmental Science is a valuable option for school divisions, as it can be utilized as an alternative to Earth Science for high school verified credit.

Middle School Career Investigations

During the 2023-24 school year, WHRO’s Digital Learning team made major revisions to the Middle School Career Investigations online modules. This online content, designed to allow students to explore a wide range of career pathways, was made available statewide in multiple learning management systems.

Leveraging the Power of Virtual Learning

WHRO created Leveraging the Power of Virtual Learning, a teacher-facilitated online course designed to prepare educators to teach in K-12 virtual environments. This online course was delivered to the HRETA school divisions for use in preparing their teachers for teaching utilizing virtual tools. The value of the creation and delivery of this professional development online course is more than \$167,000.

WHRO Education Learning Objects

The Digital Learning Team consistently delivers exceptional online content. Notably, these resources are not only integrated within online courses but are also accessible as stand-alone learning objects on eMediaVA. This versatile approach empowers teachers and students to utilize the content independently for diverse instructional and learning purposes.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 190 individual learning objects were seamlessly incorporated into eMediaVA, stemming from our newly developed online course content. This demonstrates our unwavering commitment to enhancing educational opportunities through accessible and resourceful content.

Regional Savings/Value: \$50,000.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^G: \$250.00

Student Advisory Board

The Digital Learning Team has maintained its collaboration with the Student Advisory Board (SAB), a dynamic group established in 2022 composed of high school students in grades 9 through 12. This remarkable forum lends students' distinct voices and insights, enhancing the engagement and pertinence of our online learning experiences and resources.



Throughout 2023-2024, the SAB was actively involved in generating content, a significant contribution that will enrich our online courses. Over four productive meetings, 22 students hailing from six HRETA school divisions participated. While this endeavor is not quantified in monetary terms, its immeasurable value to WHRO's Digital Learning Team is undeniable. This partnership continually fuels our commitment to crafting content that resonates with and represents the diversity of youth.



ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, TRAINING, AND SERVICES

The Right to Read Screening and Panel Discussion

In response to the Virginia General Assembly's 2022 passage of the Virginia Literacy Act, WHRO showcased its leadership in education by spearheading a crucial initiative to enlighten local leaders and the community about this landmark legislation.

WHRO, in partnership with the E3 School (Elevate Early Education), hosted a screening and panel discussion of "The Right to Read" (Executive Producer LeVar Burton). This impactful documentary expertly highlights the limitations of popular reading programs and showcases the efforts of dedicated individuals striving to implement science-based reading instruction. The goal of this event was to help local leaders understand the Virginia Literacy Act's focus on the science of reading, and why his shift is so essential.

The event, held on August 8, 2023 at the WHRO studio, brought together an impressive array of state and local leaders, as well as members of the public. The distinguished panel featured:

- Dr. Emily Solari, Edmund H. Henderson Professor of Education at the University of Virginia
- Dr. Lisa Coons, Superintendent of Public Instruction for Virginia
- Lisa Howard, President, CEO & Co-Founder of E3: Elevate Early Education and The New E3 School
- Dr. John B. Gordon III, Division Superintendent of Suffolk Public Schools

Batten Environmental Education Initiative

In March 2017, the Batten Environmental Education Initiative was officially launched with a \$3 million gift from Jane Batten. In 2023-2024, WHRO:

- Wrapped up work on the new environmental science online course
- Completed filming of the new environmental science video series, Spotlight Earth
- Collaborated with the Virginia Stage Company to coordinate Environmental Van visits and GreenBeats Live! performances, offered free of charge for schools and other community organizations

PBS KIDS Writers Contest

The PBS KIDS Writers Contest, which is aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning, encourages children to write and illustrate their own stories and is open to K-5 students. In 2018, in connection with the Batten Environmental Education Initiative, we added a separate Environmental Story category. Local winners receive cash awards and are honored during an awards ceremony. It is difficult to determine the value/savings this activity represents, but the participation of area students demonstrates its worth. In total, nearly 300 entries were received this past year. [Three Suffolk students submitted entries in the 2024 contest, including one student from Florence Bowser Elementary, and two students from Oakland Elementary School.](#)



Regional Spelling Bee

The Regional Spelling Bee is an annual event featuring sixth- to eighth-grade school Spelling Bee winners from Hampton Roads, Northeast North Carolina, and the Eastern Shore in a head-to-head competition that is broadcast on WHRO TV. Students representing 54 area schools as local Spelling Bee Champions, including John F. Kennedy, John Yeates, and King's Fork Middle Schools, competed. WHRO's production of the Spelling Bee won a bronze Telly Award in the General Television – Live category in 2018.

Great Computer Challenges

Great Computer Challenges – Junior and Senior – are joint projects of WHRO and Old Dominion University, and are competitive opportunities for students in grades K-12 to demonstrate their skills in various computer applications. Students compete in categories such as CAD, Desktop Publishing, Graphic Design, Music Composition, and Visual Programming. One hundred and thirty-two teams participated in the Challenges this year.

Regional Savings/Value: \$5,280.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^H: \$0.00

WHRO Education Staff Member Presentations

WHRO Education staff members presented or exhibited at the following Local, Regional, Statewide, or National Events: Digital Learning Annual Conference; EdTechRVA; HRVA Conference; Virginia Art Education Association (VAEA) Conference; Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum (VASCD) Annual Conference; Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children (VAAEYC) Conference; Virginia Association of School Librarians (VAASL) Regional Conference; Virginia Association of Science Teachers (VAST) Conference; Virginia Council for Social Studies (VCSS) Conference; Virginia Library Association Conference; Virginia School Board Association (VSBA); Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE) Annual Conference; Virtual Virginia Blended Learning Conference; and Region 2 Assistant Superintendents of Instruction meetings.

In addition, WHRO Education staff conducted training for Norfolk Public Schools, Henrico County Public Schools, and Portsmouth Public Schools.

WHRO KIDS

WHRO KIDS is WHRO's 24/7 digital children's channel, airing on WHRO TV 15-3, Cox 108, FIOS 462, and Charter 120. In early 2017, this service was expanded to include a 24/7 streaming option that can be used on any mobile device. Featuring newer, award-winning early childhood programs such as Donkey Hodie, Work It Out Wombats, Rosie's Rules, Alma's Way, Nature Cat, Ready Jet Go!, Odd Squad, Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum, The Jim Henson Company's Dinosaur Train, Wild Kratts, Pinkalicious, Molly of Denali, Elinor Wonders Why, Let's Go Luna!, Hero Elementary, and perennial favorites Sesame Street, Curious George, Arthur, and Clifford The Big Red Dog, to name a few, WHRO delivered more than 160 hours of the best high-quality educational television programming each and every week, free of charge. WHRO also delivered more than 65 hours of children's programming each week on our main channel WHRO 15.1.

In total, WHRO delivered more than 12,000 hours of televised instruction last year. Every household in the WHRO service area can access this proven educational programming that helps parents prepare their children to enter school ready to learn, free of charge. Consequently, the true value is significantly more than the operational costs reported here.

Regional Savings/Value: \$275,000.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^L: \$15,315.00

General PBS Programming

General PBS programming with full educational rights, such as American Experience, Nova, Nature, etc., is delivered each week on our main channel WHRO 15.1, and can be recorded and used in the classroom. Detailed local usage figures are unavailable, but according to national statistics, 30% of teachers use PBS programs in their classrooms.

Regional Savings/Value: \$199,590.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^J: \$11,115.00

Local Educational Productions

New to WHRO this past year was the quarterly call-in radio show, Education Matters. School division superintendents from around the region appeared on the show and fielded questions from listeners regarding timely issues in education. In addition, several new Education Now video segments featuring successful school practices were produced for Isle of Wight, joining the existing Education Now segments for Chesapeake, Gloucester, Hampton, Mathews, Middlesex, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, and York. All of these were aired throughout the year on WHRO TV15, WHRO WORLD, and WHRO CREATE. Other local educational video productions included the WHRO Public Media Spelling Bee, the 2024 streaming of the Young Storytellers Awards Ceremony, 48 Ms. Martha Reads weekly literacy streaming programs, and Community Conversations: School Safety. The GreenBeats and HealthBeats series also aired throughout the year. In addition, WHRO continued to work with the VSBA to stream their Legislative Advocacy Conference, Annual Convention, and School Law Conference to allow school board members to view these events from remote locations. We also once again worked with the Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE) to stream their annual conference for virtual attendees.

Regional Savings/Value: \$268,370.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^K: \$14,950.00

National Public Radio

National Public Radio (NPR) regularly covers educational topics within major shows such as Morning Edition, All Things Considered, Talk of the Nation, etc. In 2023-2024, nearly 400 stories touched on education topics, representing more than 2% of the total number of stories covered.

Regional Savings/Value: \$20,365.00

Suffolk Savings/Value^L: \$1,135.00

Workforce Development

Workforce Development includes **SkillsOnline**TM (www.skillsonline.org), an affordable, digitally accessible career certification and training solution that offers thousands of self-paced and instructor-led online courses in 12 industry sectors, including Teacher Professional Development, Arts and Design, Business, Computer Applications, Computer Science, Construction and Trades, Health and Fitness, Hospitality, Information Technology, World Languages, Legal, and Writing. Additionally, five **Workplace Readiness Modules** developed by WHRO are available to all HRETA school divisions free of charge. There is also a GED preparation program called **Fast Forward**. HRETA schools enjoyed a 10% discount on all SkillsOnline course registrations. Currently, we do not track registration or usage associated with these services to determine division-specific savings.

WHRO Education's Achievements and Recognition

In 2023-2024, WHRO Education enjoyed remarkable success at the 55th Annual Public Media Awards, winning the prestigious Overall Excellence in Education award for the creation and distribution of outstanding digital, educational content.

Suffolk Public Schools
Return on WHRO Investment
2023-2024

WHRO directly impacts:

- 1) Educators by providing ongoing, sustained, high-quality teacher training; innovative, technology-based instructional resources; and regional opportunities for recognition.
- 2) Students by providing online courses, on-demand digital resources, educationally relevant competitions, and regional opportunities for recognition.
- 3) Adult learners by providing a variety of workforce development and GED programs and services.
- 4) Families by providing the highest quality children’s programming 24 hours per day, seven days per week, as well as a variety of online resources and face-to-face, hands-on early childhood workshops.

In summary, WHRO educational efforts directly affect not only the schools’ bottom lines, but also the quality of education for every single educator, student, adult learner, and family in Hampton Roads. Exemplary educators and initiatives are regularly publicized on air, online, and in person.

Suffolk Annual Investment in WHRO **\$50,998.68**

Direct Value/Savings:

eMediaVA Operation and Content Acquisition	\$51,135.00
Families and Early Learners	\$15,840.00
WHRO Education Professional Development	\$4,500.00
Cultural Competency Training Hosting	\$885.00
Virginia State and Local Civic Education Hosting	\$520.00
WHRO Education Online Courses	\$347,500.00
WHRO Education Learning Objects	\$250.00

Total Direct Annual Value/Savings **\$420,630.00**

Suffolk Direct Return on Investment **\$8.25 to \$1.00**

Additional Value/Savings:

Great Computer Challenges (Junior and Senior Divisions)	\$0.00
WHRO KIDS	\$15,315.00
General PBS Programming	\$11,115.00
Local Educational Video Productions	\$14,950.00
General NPR Programming	\$1,135.00

Total Additional Annual Value/Savings **\$42,515.00**

Total Direct and Additional Annual Value/Savings **\$463,145.00**

Total Suffolk Return on Investment **\$9.10 to \$1.00**

Value/Savings Calculations

- A Comparable service value (\$850 per building) multiplied by the number of buildings in each HRETA division plus content licensing fees (\$23,920) and playlist creation (\$2,000) multiplied by the number of WHRO owner school divisions (21) to yield the regional value.
- B Number of training sessions or classroom lessons conducted multiplied by the average cost per session or lesson (\$750 each) plus number of camps conducted multiplied by cost to conduct them (\$1,000-\$5,000 each) plus number of appearances or events multiplied by the cost to conduct them (\$250-\$1,000 each) throughout the region plus the number of PBS characters multiplied by the costs to obtain and employ them (\$1,000 each) plus the cost of presenting GreenBeats Live! (\$700 each presentation) plus the cost of developing new WHRO Library Corners (\$2,300 each) plus the cost of materials distributed.
- C Number of division registrations multiplied by an average session registration cost of \$150.
- D Cultural Competency Training hosting costs allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.
- E Virginia State and Local Civic Education hosting costs allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.
- F 2023-2024 WHRO online course development costs to create or refresh courses and create new learning management system versions of courses (\$347,500) multiplied by the number of WHRO owner school divisions (21) to yield the regional value.
- G WHRO Education learning objects ingestion costs (\$50,000) allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.
- H Number of division teams multiplied by HRETA member entry fee discount.
- I Total annual operational cost (\$275,000) of WHRO KIDS allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.
- J Annual WHRO PBS dues (\$997,881) multiplied by 20% (conservative estimated educational percentage of program usage) allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.
- K 2024 WHRO Public Media Spelling Bee production and broadcast costs (\$101,882) plus 2024 Young Storytellers production costs (\$32,478) plus Ms. Martha Reads production costs (\$23,500) plus VSBA Conference and Convention production costs (\$3,000) plus VSTE Conference production costs (\$6,300) plus Education Now broadcast costs (\$39,550) plus GreenBeats broadcast costs (\$45,030) plus HealthBeat broadcast costs (\$16,630) all allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size. Education Now production costs are allocated to the divisions for which the spots are produced (\$4,400).
- L Annual WHRO NPR dues (\$678,982.00) multiplied by 3% (based on NPR statistics regarding the number of programs directly related to Education) allocated across HRETA owners according to relative size.

Notes

Educational Advisory Committee

The Educational Advisory Committee (EAC) consists of a division-selected School Board member or designee from each HRETA Member division. The EAC receives reports, updates, and other information related to educational issues and priorities. The EAC meets four times each year at WHRO, usually in October, December, March, and May. The EAC is the decision-making body on matters related to the policy, planning, and operation of WHRO public education-related activities.

Superintendents Advisory Council

The Superintendents Advisory Council (SAC) consists of HRETA Member superintendents. Because school divisions are the owners of WHRO, this group of superintendents serves as the body that makes final recommendations to the EAC regarding decisions related to the policy, planning, and operation of WHRO public education-related activities. The SAC meets five times each year at WHRO, usually in October, December, January, March, and May. The SAC chair may schedule additional meetings as needed. The SAC receives reports on various issues pertaining to WHRO, as well as summary reports regarding budgets, grants, instructional-related services, and other business matters associated with educational initiatives supporting public schools.

Technology Advisory Committee

The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) consists of HRETA Member Chief Information Officers or other Superintendent designees from each division. The TAC reviews all aspects of established educational activities (including budgets, grants, new initiatives, etc.) and provides comment on any related issues or concerns. Additionally, the TAC works with WHRO staff to recommend new regional technology-based directives and initiatives and provides written reports to the SAC. The Consortium for Interactive Instruction (C.I.I.) serves as a resource to the TAC, providing detailed information on their area of responsibility and recommendations, if any, relative to their activities. The TAC meets five times a year, usually in September, November, January, March, and May. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the TAC Chair.

Consortium for Interactive Instruction

The Consortium for Interactive Instruction (C.I.I.) consists of HRETA Member representatives who are appointed by the division Superintendent. The C.I.I. serves as a subcommittee for the TAC to facilitate the communication, implementation, forums, and other activities essential to collaboration regarding instructional technologies in the HRETA region. C.I.I. business meetings are held three times a year, usually in September, January, and May, with additional special interest forums scheduled as needed throughout the year.

Online Learning System Administrators Committee

The Online Learning System Administrator Committee is composed of school division representatives and WHRO Education personnel. These individuals serve as learning management system administrators and meet together to support online and blended learning. Online Learning System Administrator meetings are held regularly throughout the year.