



ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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PRESS RELEASE



Alisha Vines, Major Mike Lacasse, Gene Kotulka, Nora Coleman, and Sheriff Mark Amos receiving the SAVVY recognition award at the Governor's mansion for Effective Programs to combat substance abuse in Orange County.

Governor Recognizes Orange County Schools and Community Partners for Efforts to Combat Youth Substance Abuse

June 5, 2013

On Monday, June 3, 2013, Orange County Public Schools and its community partners were recognized at the Executive Mansion by Governor Bob McDonnell for their efforts to prevent substance abuse among youth. Orange County was among 14 Virginia jurisdictions recognized as part of the Substance Abuse Awareness is Vital for Virginia Youth (SAVVY) initiative.

The SAVVY initiative identifies four levels of recognition. The levels of recognition are: Model Program; Effective Programs; Promising Programs; and Honorable Mention Programs.

The Orange County program was recognized at the effective level. "We want to highlight substance abuse prevention activities that are informed by science, driven by local partnerships, and tuned to specific needs of the community," said Governor McDonnell. "I applaud these 14 districts for their commitment to students and their community. It is apparent that these school divisions have formed a strong partnership in their communities to take on the task of fighting alcohol and drug abuse."

Attending the awards ceremony from Orange County was Sheriff Mark Amos, Orange County Sheriff's office; Major Mike Lacasse, Orange County Sheriff's office; Mrs. Alisha Vines, Orange County's Office on Youth; Dr. Nora Coleman, Strengthening Families Program and Orange County Public Schools; and Mr. Gene Kotulka, director of student services, Orange County Public Schools

"It was great that the governor recognized Orange County Public Schools and our community partners for our efforts to combat substance abuse among our youth. Being one of the 14 school divisions out of 131 school divisions to be recognized, means we must be doing something right," said Gene Kotulka, Orange County Public Schools, director of student services. "I want to thank all of our community partners for their commitment and dedication to the students and families of Orange County."

Orange County Public Schools has partnered with the Orange County Sheriff's office, Orange Town Police department, Gordonsville Town Police department, Orange County Department of Social Services, Strengthening Families program, Office on Youth, Court Services, Commonwealth Attorney's office, Emergency Services, and the Rapidan Rappahannock Area Community Services Board.

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Further information about the Substance Abuse Awareness is Vital for Virginia Youth (SAVVY) initiative and Orange County Public Schools effort to eliminate substance abuse among the youth of the County may be obtained by contacting Gene Kotulka, Director of Student Services, Orange County Public Schools, at (540) 661-4550.