

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

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## **SCHEV OPENS ONLINE FORUM TO DISCUSS NEW COLLEGE IN SOUTHSIDE**

MARTINSVILLE, October 14 – The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has opened an online forum on its website to invite discussion about the desirability of a college or university in Southside Virginia. The forum can be accessed at <http://research.schev.edu/comments/>.

Recognizing that constraints on the education budget of the commonwealth rendered unlikely the possibility that the state would locate a new, traditional, and publicly-funded institution of higher education in Martinsville or Henry County, a planning group led by Dr. Ronald E. Carrier has developed a new college model that would deliver education in a more accessible and efficient manner.

Allowing students to complete their baccalaureate degree programs in twenty-eight months, the New College of Virginia will facilitate a rigorous, residential program for 1000 students attending classes from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, ten months per year. Additionally, the school will offer more flexible web-enriched classes and “weekend colleges” for students who seek a baccalaureate-level education, but cannot commit to the structure of the full-time program.

SCHEV will hold a town hall meeting at Patrick Henry Community College on Wednesday, October 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. as part of its effort to study the feasibility of developing a new institution of higher education in the region. Members of the general public are encouraged to attend and offer brief testimony in accordance with their preferences and perceived needs.

The New College of Virginia staff will hold a public meeting in their office building at the West Piedmont Business Development Center on Thursday, October 21 to provide a brief overview of the proposed program and address any questions or concerns raised in the forum. Proponents are strongly urged both to express their views in the online forum and attend the public hearing on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, or to schedule an individual appointment or larger group presentation, please call the New College offices at (276) 634-0151, or visit their offices in the West Piedmont Business Development Center.

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