

EDITORIAL PAGE

Richmond Times-Dispatch

VIRGINIA'S NEWS LEADER

Back to School

Officials in Patrick County know how to lead by example. Most of the county's office-holders are taking classes at Patrick Henry Community College. Their attendance vividly emphasizes the importance of education.

Patrick and other jurisdictions in Southside and Southwest Virginia have not shared in the economic growth enjoyed by the I-95/I-64 crescent. Patrick recognizes that a well-educated workforce is essential to its efforts to attract business and industry. Prospective employers look at educational opportunities — and at a community's determination to take advantage of the assets in its midst.

The Patrick County Education Foundation is sponsoring the program, which has enrolled officials in such courses as Spanish and computers. The county leaders who have returned to school remind all citizens that lifelong learning is not a cliché but a virtue and a necessity.

The news from Patrick also draws attention to Virginia's community colleges. The system is aptly named. The various campuses serve their communities. Classes often resemble cross sections of society. The eagerness in the typical classroom is palpable. Students of all ages and backgrounds share a desire to learn. And in Patrick they might share homework assignments with the sheriff or the clerk.