



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 4, 2015**  
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### **College Application Week a Part of CHS's Strong College Focus**



Like many schools around the state, Charlotte High School participated in College Application Week activities throughout the week of October 26<sup>th</sup>. Staff discussed their own colleges and universities, students were recognized for wearing clothes emblazoned with their favorite college logos, and seniors created a master list of all of the colleges to which they have applied. Hundreds of applications have been sent to colleges around the country by CHS seniors, and although College Application Week has passed, students will continue to apply all the way through next spring. The other buildings in the district took part in the festivities as well, as staff and students from kindergarten through eighth grade talked about college choices and showed off their school colors.

However, despite the fact that Charlotte High School was one of many schools that participated in College Application Week, CHS has seen growth in its post-secondary education programming that few schools can match. Over the last five years, Charlotte High School has quietly emerged as an area leader in collegiate opportunities. For example, CHS offers 10 different Advanced Placement classes, which is remarkable for a school its size, and enrollment in those courses has more than doubled since 2011, while the percentage of the student body enrolled in those courses has more than doubled as well. CHS is in its second year of a partnership with Ferris State University, through which more than 30 students are enrolled as FSU and CHS students at the same time. In fact, the Woodbridge College Promise Program is only offered at the Big Rapids FSU campus, and in room 312 at Charlotte High School. This partnership allowed the number of dual enrollment courses taken at Charlotte to jump from

just three in the spring of 2014 to 47 in the fall of 2014! The numbers have continued to increase this year as well. In 2014-2015, 568 college credits were earned by Charlotte High School students at little or no cost to families, and CHS students are on pace to exceed that number this year.

In addition to these wonderful opportunities, Charlotte Public Schools launched the Charlotte Early Middle College this fall, and it has taken off. The students enrolled in the program are thriving, spending half of their day at LCC and half of it at CHS, and they are succeeding on both fronts. The students will eventually earn their high school diploma and either associates degrees or technical certificates that will make them immediately employable. CHS is currently in the process of planning the next leg of the program, which will tie into the existing partnership with Ferris State, and the district is preparing to launch the new Bulldog Pathway in the fall of 2016. This pathway will allow students to earn up to 60 college credits along with their high school diplomas, setting them up move seamlessly into a four year college well ahead of their peers.

Perhaps the greatest statistic, though, and the one that truly points to Charlotte High School's commitment to post-secondary education, is the rate of enrollment in two or four year colleges after high school. From 2011 to 2014, the percentage of CHS students who enrolled in a two or four year college increased by 7.1% to 69.5% in 2014. That means that just under seven out of 10 CHS seniors engaged in post high school training and education, which is essential for economic success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. And, with the programs in place at CHS, the continued growth of collegiate opportunities while students are still in high school, and the work of the staff and students at CHS to continually improve the programs available, the sky is the limit for Oriole graduates! For more information about college and career readiness at Charlotte High School, visit its website at <http://www.charlottenet.org/collegecareerreadiness.html>.