



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact Carol Badenoch, (804) 529-6134
cbadenoch@nucps.net

March 12, 2018, Heathsville, VA – School Board Chair Mrs. Betty Christopher recognized Northumberland County Public Schools' (NCPS) bus driver Mrs. Stacy Branem for outstanding employee contributions. During the wind storm on Friday, March 2, the NCPS Sheriff's Department requested the need for a school bus to transport citizens in need. Branem responded to the request quickly and provided transportation assistance. The School Board presented Branem with a recognition certificate and a small token of appreciation.

Dr. Cheryl Davis from the Chesapeake Chorale & the Rappahannock Music Study Club presented monetary donations to the music programs at Northumberland Elementary School (NES), Northumberland Middle School (NMS), and Northumberland High School (NHS). NES Principal Mrs. Stephanie Baker, NMS Principal Mrs. Javornda Ashton, and NHS Principal Dr. Travis Burns accepted the donations on behalf of each school's music teacher(s).

School Counselor Mrs. Lynne Haynie briefed the School Board on the Second Annual Career Day held at NES. Haynie shared details about the day including a slideshow. Thank you to all of the professionals and businesses who assisted in making Career Day 2018 a success!

The following retirement was accepted by the School Board effective at the end of the 2017-2018 school year:

- Sandra Sheridan Smith, NHS CTE Teacher

The School Board would like to congratulate Mrs. Sandi Smith on her upcoming retirement. Smith has been a dedicated coworker and an invaluable asset to our schools. Our students, families, and community have greatly benefited from her hard work and diligence.

In other news:

The Local Choice Overview.

Clerk of the Board and Human Resources Specialist Mrs. Carol Badenoch shared 2018-2019 Health Insurance information. The School Board will make the same employer contribution to the cost of health insurance for employees, for whichever plan they choose. In addition to the Key Advantage 250 plan and the Key Advantage 1000 plan, employees will have a third option available which is the Anthem High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). In the case of the HDHP, the Board voted to contribute to the employee's Health Savings Account.

The kick-off to Open Enrollment will take place on Monday, April 9, 2018, 9:30 a.m. in the NHS auditorium. The open enrollment election period will remain May 1-15. Please plan to attend this very informative event. We will have representatives from Anthem and AFLAC on hand to inform us of the new High Deductible Health Plan/Health Savings Account and changes to the KA250 and KA1000 plans that are currently offered. **Incentives for Attendance: We will have drawings -- including a television (must be present to win), and any employee who attends may leave for the day @ 2 pm.** All employees are invited and encouraged to participate in the Health Insurance & Benefit Roadshow! Please try to attend so you can make educated health choices and financial decisions for you and your family. Sunrise Donuts for Hayes, VA and hot coffee will be served. :)

Adoption of Calendar 2018-19.

Director of Instruction Mrs. Amy Lamb presented Calendar Option #3 as the recommendation for the School Board's adoption consideration for the 2018-19 school year. Calendar Option #3 features Spring Break during the first week of April, the Friday before Easter as a holiday, and the Monday following Easter as a holiday. The School Board adopted the 2018-19 Calendar Option #3. (See attached.)

Recap of Approved Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2018-19.

The School Board held a Joint Meeting of the Northumberland County School Board and the Northumberland County Board of Supervisors at 5 pm on Monday, March 5. The School Board approved the proposed budget as presented.

The proposed budget included the following:

- the request for \$17,732,956, an increase of \$481,041 or 2.79% over FY 2017-18;
- an increase (+4%) for employee compensation to offset increased health insurance premiums (+14.1%);
- continuing with The Local Choice/Anthem health insurance plan including: Key Advantage 250, Key Advantage 1000, and the addition of the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP);
- increases in regional program participation: Chesapeake Bay Governor's School (+\$6,180); Northern Neck Technical Center (\$3,976); Northern Neck Regional Special Education Program (\$127,203); and the Northern Neck Alternative Education Program (cost neutral at \$58,000).

In addition, the School Board's priorities were noted in the budget proposal including the addition of a World Language teacher, a Special Education teacher, an additional Reading Specialist, a full time custodian, and the purchase of a bus and/or vehicle.

Alternative Education Program Proposal 2018-19.

The School Board approved a change for the 2018-19 school year for the Alternative Education Program. The current Alternative Education Program takes place at Northumberland High School, from 4-7 pm, Monday through Thursday. Next year, the school division will participate in the Northern Neck Regional Alternative Education Program offered at the Northern Neck Technical Center, which is a full day program, Monday through Friday.

NES Water Testing.

Director of Maintenance & Facilities Mr. Cris Kallenberger and Master Plumber Mr. Jason Smith presented information regarding recent potable water testing at NES. A letter sent home to NES parents stated the following:

NCPS is committed to protecting student, teacher, and staff health. New guidance from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) requires mandatory lead water testing of potable water in public schools based on Senate Bill 1359 which amended the *Code of Virginia* by adding section 22.1-135.1 (See Superintendent's Memo #171-170). Potable water is distinguished from other water by set standards that ensure it is safe to drink.

At NES, water samples were taken from 136 sites in order to meet guidelines for testing potable water sources. From the 136 water samples taken at the elementary school, fourteen (14) samples showed elevated readings of lead (readings ranged from 16-35 parts per billion (ppb)). Lead levels with less than 15 ppb are considered acceptable for drinking water in schools. NCPS took immediate action by shutting off the water at the fourteen (14) sinks that showed elevated lead readings.

Affected sinks include one (1) hand washing sink, eleven (11) restroom sinks, and two (2) classroom sinks. **It is important to note water sources used for cooking and all water fountains (also known as bubblers) showed normal ranges.**

Beginning March 1, NCPS Maintenance & Operations staff have begun the removal of piping in order to examine solder used during original installation of the fourteen (14) sinks. The building opened in 1996; lead

solder may have been used on some fittings. NCPS will be replacing all affected piping and retesting these sinks.

Northumberland County Public Schools has received guidance from the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Health to address the areas of concern. We have been advised to retest the fourteen (14) sites and will follow *United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Technical Guidelines* for testing. You can find more information re: the EPA guidelines at https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/toolkit_leadschools_guide_3ts_leadschools.pdf.

Please know that we always will take every necessary precaution and action to safeguard the health of your students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Division Superintendent Dr. Holly Wargo or the elementary school principal Mrs. Stephanie Baker.

Bay Rivers Telehealth Alliance: School Based Telehealth Initiative.

Director of Instruction Mrs. Amy Lamb presented on the Bay Rivers Telehealth Alliance (BRTA): School Based Telehealth Initiative and the School Board received materials to read regarding this initiative. The vision of BRTA is for telehealth to contribute to better health and well-being for populations in medically underserved communities. The mission of BRTA is to help serve communities by developing telehealth projects that improve access to health services; engage patients as partners; reduce professional isolation among health service providers; and provide access to training and development of the healthcare workforce. Northumberland is one of three area school divisions participating in the initiative; Westmoreland County Public Schools and Essex County Public Schools are participants as well.

Lamb stated that NCPS will be focused on behavioral telehealth in partnership with Riverside Tappahannock, Riverside Regional, Newport News, and VCU Medical Center. Two (2) local partners include Callao Family Practice and Warsaw Family Practice.

Adoption of *Program of Studies* 2018-19.

Director of Instruction Mrs. Amy Lamb and NHS Principal Dr. Travis Burns presented a summary of revisions for the *Program of Studies*. Revisions included the following items: 1.) Personnel updates; 2.) Messages from principals; 3.) Science Graduation Seal; 4.) Mathematics courses including renaming of courses and the addition of trigonometry; 5.) Addition of Honors Physics; 6.) Addition of prerequisite for United States Constitution Dual Enrollment; 7.) Requirements for Valedictorian & Salutatorian; 8.) Revision of middle school social science/history pathway; 9.) Removal of high school credit for middle school electives. The School Board adopted the *Program of Studies* including the revisions as presented.