

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



NES



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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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April 12, 2021 - Heathsville, VA The Northumberland County Public Schools' School Board met in-person for a regular meeting. The meeting was open to the public in-person and through Zoom audio conference calling as a result of COVID-19 guidelines.

Closed Meeting Action Items

The School Board

- Approved the hiring of **D. Lee Ambrose as the Maintenance & Facilities Specialist** for NCPS. Ambrose is certified in the water and wastewater sector and is knowledgeable of electrical and mechanical systems as well as safety, firefighting, disinfection, and sterilization methods.
- Approved the hiring of **Kelsey Carlton as a teacher at NES**. Carlton is a licensed teacher and graduated from Ferrum College (2007) with a Bachelor of Science degree in Liberal Arts.
- Approved the retirement as of June 30, 2021, of **Mathematics Specialist Jill Murray**. Thank you, Mrs. Murray for your dedicated service!
- Approved the retirement as of December 31, 2021, of **Director of Finance and Clerk of the Board Ms. Donna Booth**. Thank you, Ms. Booth, for your dedicated service!
- Approved **Wendy Morecock** and **Sandra Ward** as **substitute teachers**.
- Approved the supplemental contract of **Ms. Rebecca Jones** for **additional duties**.

Financial Reports

Ms. Donna Booth, Director of Finance, informed the Board that the next budget meeting is **April 14, 2021**, at 5:30 p.m. at the Courthouse, Heathsville, VA, for the Superintendent's Presentation of the 2021-2022 School Board Budget to the Northumberland County Board of Supervisors

Presentations/Reports

Mrs. Stacey Lee, NMS English & Language Arts teacher, announced *Restart*, by Gordon Korman, as the selection for One School, One Book Reading program at NMS. Throughout the month of April NMS will participate in discussion questions and academic vocabulary as they enjoy a schoolwide reading selection. **Mrs. Shauna McCranie, Gifted Coordinator**, is providing electronic Hyper Deck Curriculum for the novel that supports a virtual learning model.

School Board Chair Mrs. Betty Christopher recognized **Director of School Nutrition Mrs. Saunee Hamlett** for her tireless efforts during the school year. Christopher stated, "Virginia's school nutrition directors and their teams are true heroes and have been on the frontlines since day one." Mrs. Hamlett

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received recognition as “School Meal Hero” from the No Kids Hungry Program and was presented with a trophy, lapel pin, and letter of appreciation. The Board presented Mrs. Hamlett with a hanging plant in honor of her recognition. Mrs. Hamlett recognized that this honor could not have been achieved without the entire school nutrition team at NES, NMS, and NHS.

Junior BETA Celebration by School Counselor & Junior Beta Sponsor Ms. Krista Sisk: A few of our Northumberland Middle School Jr. Beta members competed virtually in this year's State Convention! We are excited to announce the following members placed in competition and have been invited to compete at the national level in Orlando, Florida in June!

Chloe Brann - 2nd place in Painting

Seriyah Nickens - 3rd place in 8th Grade Science

Madahsyn Thomas - 2nd place in Apparel Design for creating this year's t-shirt!

Senior Beta Celebration by English teacher & Senior Beta Sponsor Mrs. Karen Baker:

Jay Bea, Bay Wiggins, James Baker, Abby Jennings, and Corrie Minor participated in the Beta Leadership Summit which took place in early November. **Jay Bea, Bay Wiggins, and James Baker** competed and placed in the Rapid Response Challenge of the Leadership Summit. **Corrie Minor and Abby Jennings** competed and placed in the Lead Out of the Box Challenge.

Those who participated in the State Beta Convention were **James Baker, Jay Bea, Nora Bowles, Casey Dawson, Abby Jennings, Malik Hickman, and Rachel Rice.**

James Baker- 1st in Math and 1st in Science

Nora Bowles- 2nd in Social Studies

Casey Dawson- 2nd in Color Photography

Abby Jennings- 2nd in Language Arts and 2nd in Painting

Rachel Rice- 2nd in Black and White Photography

These students, as well Robotics team members, qualified to attend the National Convention in Orlando, Florida, in June.

Superintendent's Report

School Reopening Update

Dr. Wargo provided the Board the Hybrid and Virtual attendance numbers: Northumberland Elementary School 174 (32%) virtual students, 375 (68%) hybrid students; Northumberland Middle School 118 (43%) virtual students, 154 (57%) hybrid students; and Northumberland High School 184 (45%) virtual students, 222 (55%) hybrid students. Division totals are 476 (39%) virtual students and 751 (61%) hybrid students.

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Overview of Six-Year Planning Process

Dr. Wargo provided the Board with the Strategic Plan Interest Survey results. The survey offered comments on three areas of interest: 1) Which subcommittees interest you the most?; 2) What day of the week works best for you to meet?; and 3) What time of day works best for you to meet? Sixteen responses were recorded. Areas of interest included Equity, Access & Opportunity, Education Excellence & Academic Achievement, Division Resources, and Social & Emotional Well Being. The top best day and time was Wednesday afternoon. Dr. Wargo reminded the Board that this plan will continue to be designed in partnership with students, parents, school personnel and community members.

Spring SOL Testing Schedule

Dr. Wargo provided the Board with the Spring SOL Testing Schedule for April 28, 2021 to May 19, 2021. [Click here for Testing Calendar.](#)

Calendar Update and Summer Learning Preliminary Plans by Director of Instruction Mr. Adam Letizia. Mr. Letizia requested the Board to make four changes to the 2020-2021 School Calendar: 1. **Students will be released early at 12:00 pm on Thursday, May 20, 2021** - the last day of school. 2. May 25 and May 27, 2021, will be Summer School Teacher Workdays. 3. May 21, 2021, is an optional workday for teachers with supervisor approval. 4. May 20, 2021, is now a ½ teacher workday. The updated 2020-2021 School Calendar is posted on the school website and copies will be mailed to all NCPS students and families.

Mr. Letizia reported on the Summer School Learning Plan. The Summer Learning program will run 5 weeks from June 1, 2021, to July 1, 2021, Monday through Thursday from 8:30 - 12:30 with a focus on math and reading/writing skills recovery for K-8; utilizing iReady online software platform; and, Northumberland High School (9-12) will focus on credit recovery utilizing Edgenuity and iLit curriculum platforms.

Mrs. Stephanie Baker, Principal of NES, provided an instructional report. Mrs. Baker provided a SOL testing calendar as well as student numbers as of March 29, 2021: 382 Hybrid Learning students and 169 virtual learning students.

Mr. Patrick Simmons, Principal of NMS, provided an instructional report. Mr. Simmons provided the SOL testing calendar dates and information on the One School, One Book activities at NMS. He reported that the middle school has an average daily attendance of 110.

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Dr. Travis Burns, Principal of NHS, reported on the following NHS activities:

- **Friday, March 12, 2021**, was Homecoming/Senior Night. The Homecoming King and Queen were crowned during the halftime presentation. ● **King - Bay Wiggins** ● **Queen - Savannah Harris**
- **Wednesday, March 31, 2021**, was PBIS Family Fun Bag Drive Thru. **Mrs. Jennifer Thomas, PBIS Coordinator** provided leadership and led efforts with this project that enhances school spirit while connecting with families.
- **Friday, May 21, 2021, at 10 a.m.** - Graduation practice is scheduled.
- **Saturday, May 22, 2021, at 10 a.m.** at NHS athletic complex/field NHS 2021 Graduation is planned.

Dr. Holly Wargo provided the Board with updates and highlights from various departments:

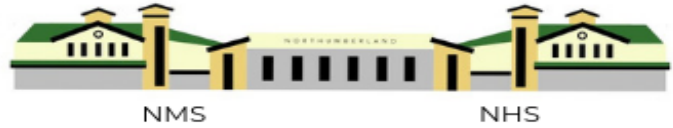
Educational Technology: Director Javornda Ashton provided information that the technology department is currently working with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and Northumberland High School athletics to begin live streaming sports for family and community access. The NFHS Network School Broadcast Program provides schools with the software and tools needed to produce and broadcast professional grade events online. Equipment has been set up for the gym and the football field. Currently, the technology department is working to get the equipment setup at the baseball and softball fields. Mrs. Ashton also reported that NCPS Technology Return Plan dates are May 17-20, 2021. Families will receive further information on the process.

School Nutrition: Director Saunee Hamlett reported that Wednesday meal delivery has resumed after spring break. On April 22nd a taste testing of four recipes will be offered to a select group of 50 students. The taste testing is conducted as part of the USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant project facilitated by the Virginia Department of Education. These taste tests provide the students an opportunity to try a variety of potential new menu items featuring Virginia Harvest of the Month fruits and vegetables. Their feedback is extremely important in helping determine at the VDOE and USDA level, which items should be featured on future school menus across the state and country. We are one of four divisions in the state that have been given this opportunity. Fifty students have been chosen to participate. On Friday, May 7, 2021, we will celebrate the 8th Annual School Lunch Hero Day! School Lunch Hero Day is a chance to showcase the difference school nutrition professionals make for every child who comes through the cafeteria.

Transportation: Director Stacy Branem provided the following report:

- The Transportation Department continues to use the Clorox 360 machine to disinfect buses on a weekly, rotating basis.
- Currently, there are three van routes. These buses/vans are being sanitized/disinfected after each run.

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- There are twenty regular buses and two buses for students with disabilities on the road daily transporting students to and from school.
- Spring sports trips have started back up and are going strong.
- Transportation continues to work closely with food service to deliver meals to students every Wednesday.

Other Action Items

The 2021-2022 Special Education Plan was approved. Dr. Jamie Sears presented the Plan for approval. The Annual Plan assures that the school division provides students, who have met the criteria for a student with a disability, receive specially designed instruction in order to access the general curriculum and a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. This annual plan identifies and establishes how the financial resources will be expended. Part B 611 Funds \$307,047.00 will be used for the salary and benefits to fund four (4) special education teachers: two (2) elementary, one (1) middle, and one (1) high school. Part B 619 Funds \$7,270.00 will be used to partially fund the Early Childhood Special Education at Northumberland Elementary School.

Board Comments

Board Chair, Mrs. Betty Christopher thanked the Girls Scout Troop #308 for the cookies that were presented to the board.

Board Member, Mrs. Dana O'Bier informed the Board that the Northern Neck Technical Center and Alternative Education Program met on Tuesday, March 23, 2021.

Board Member, Mrs., Gayle Sterrett applauded all teachers and staff for their hard work in making it a good year for students, despite the pandemic.