

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



NES



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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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June 14, 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 prioritized and gave direction to the Superintendent in reference to spending of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) fund for the following projects:

- Emergency replacement of the NES Metal and TPO Roof;
- Emergency replacement of the NES Fire Pump & Controller;
- Emergency replacement of the HVAC, Security, and Lighting controllers at NMS & NHS.

The School Board also gave direction on other ARP & ESSER III funding requests from the county administrator. Specifically, the Board

- will not fund the replacement of the bank roof as this is a temporary space for the School Board and the facility remains the property of the county;
- will not fund the upgrade of the county's sewage facility located behind the NMS & NHS facility;
- will post a Request for Proposal for new construction of a JROTC & Athletic Auxiliary Building;
- will schedule additional work sessions to review new construction of a School Board Office & Early Childhood Educational Center on Academic Lane.

The School Board unanimously appointed **Ms. Martha Williams** on being named NES Principal for the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Williams is a graduate of NHS. She attended Mary Washington University where she earned a Bachelor's degree in education, and she attended Grand Canyon University where she earned a Master's degree.

Williams stated, "I have dedicated my career to students, families and educators, ensuring we remain up to date on what an elementary school needs to become and remain successful. It is my honor to join the administrative team at NCPS. I look forward to working with all staff, students, and parents at NES. My goal as we navigate together will be to continue building our



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strong NES family and strengthening our community even more. I believe that education is our most effective tool to reduce poverty, address racism and sustain economic advantages for all. It is my plan to ensure that all Northumberland Elementary school students receive a quality education tailored to their individual needs. We are all learners, no matter where we begin.”

The School Board approved the following personnel appointments:

- Mrs. Whitney Shelton, NES Computer Literacy & Keyboarding teacher
- Mr. Willard Felton II, NMS History & Social Studies Teacher
- Ms. Teresa Rock, NMS & NHS Athletic Director & Events Coordinator

The School Board approved the following summer school appointments:

- Mrs. Gladys Richardson, NHS Summer School
- Mr. William Clark, Summer School Driver
- Mr. Merton Green, Summer School Driver
- Ms. Gail Crabbe, Summer School Driver
- Ms. Barbara Newton, Summer School Driver

Presentations/Reports

The School Board recognized Mrs. Pamela Woolard as the NCPS Division Teacher of the Year. Board Chair Mrs. Betty Christopher presented Woolard with a personalized crystal recognition keepsake. Mrs. Woolard will move on to compete in the Region III Teacher of the Year competition.

NHS Virginia High School League (VHSL) Robotics Submission. John Myers VanLandingham was awarded a “2nd Class” VHSL Award Level. NHS was one of nine schools that submitted, and the only small school (Class 1). John participated against students from larger schools such as Maggie Walker Governor's School (Class 3), Fairfax High School (Class 6), LC Bird High School (Class 5) and Tabb High School (Class 3). ***Mr. Dickens, Robotics Coach***, informed the Board that Northumberland plans on sending three teams to compete in 2021-2022.

Mrs. Tracey Harding, NMS Administrative Assistant presented Many Hearts, One Community Project. As part of her Student Ambassador Servant Leadership Program for Eastern Gateway Community College, Mrs. Harding's community project was to honor the tireless efforts of the staff of Food Lion in Heathsville, VA. She celebrated the Food Lion Staff with thank you cards, music, dance and gifts. Mrs. Harding thanked the many community partners that included **Northumberland County Public Schools ▪ Dr. Holly Wargo ▪ Ms. Madeline Lee & Mrs. Molly Frazier ▪ Dr. Travis Burns ▪ Mr. Patrick Simmons ▪ NMS & NHS Staff & Students ▪ Mrs. Pauline Brann & NES Class ▪ Eastern Gateway Community College & Advisor Abbie Twyford Wilson ▪ Encore Crafts: Owner, Latasha Lee ▪ Quarles Petroleum ▪ Dairy Queen ▪ VANNAC Delta Sigma Theta, Incorporated ▪ Chesapeake Accounting ▪ Waterfield Tax Service ▪ Ma Margaret's House B&B: Owner, Alva**

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Jackson ▪ MACorp & Rev. Dr. Linwood Blizzard, II ▪ Allison's Ace Hardware ▪ Rev. Dr. Carolyn Crockett & H.R.F.G.M.I. ▪ Cuddleville Daycare ▪ Abilities Abound Physical Therapy ▪ YMCA ▪ Northumberland County Administrator Mr. Luttrell Tadlock.

Virtual Learning Pilot Program for the 2021-2022 Academic Year was presented by Director of Educational Technology Mrs. Javornda Ashton, Director of Special Education and Student Support Services Dr. Jamie Sears, & Director of Testing, Data, & Accountability Mrs. Virginia Booth. The division will resume a traditional five days per week, in-person schedule for the 2021-2022 school year as NCPS believes students' educational and social/emotional needs are best met in the classroom with their teachers and peers.

While a recent survey of NCPS families and students indicated an overwhelming interest in returning to school full time, some families have circumstances that make virtual learning the best option for their student's needs. In these cases, NCPS is proposing a virtual learning option pilot for students in grades 6-12 through Virtual Virginia (VVA) Complementary Program that meets the criteria stated in the eligibility/enrollment procedures.

Students enrolled in Virtual Virginia courses remain enrolled NCPS students but will participate fully in the VVA experience. This program, offered through the Virginia Department of Education, varies significantly from NCPS's 2020-21 Virtual Learning model. NCPS families who apply and are accepted into virtual learning are enrolled in the VVA program for a semester or full year of online instruction, which includes a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Due to the significant difference in cost for K-5 student virtual programming and feedback from families, teachers, and staff, the division only will pilot offerings for students in grades 6-12 with a limited number of slots available based on the fees provided by the Virtual Virginia program.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Holly Wargo presented a budget update and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER) update. The School Board unanimously approved the presented School Board budget of \$19,731,225. This budget includes the teacher salary realignment that reflects between a 9% to 11% increase across years 0-40 as well as a 3% salary increase for all other employees. The School Board also unanimously approved the reassessment of three (3) positions: an elementary computer literacy and keyboarding teacher; a middle school computer literacy and keyboarding teacher; and a full-time athletic and events director. Further, the Board realigned the employer contribution to The Local Choice health insurance to be commensurate with other Northumberland County employees.

Regarding the ARP & ESSER funds, Dr. Wargo shared information regarding the allowable uses of funds, noting ARP requires 20% of a division's formula funds be reserved to address learning loss.

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Dr. Holly Wargo presented an Overview of Instructional Planning for the 2021-2022 School Year.

She informed the Board that Northumberland County Public Schools will be returning to five days a week of in-person learning in the fall with pre-pandemic, regular school hours. NCPS has been fortunate to keep all schools open during the 2020-2021 pandemic year while keeping in-school COVID-19 transmission rates low.

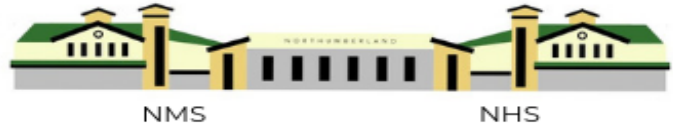
Currently the division leadership team meets weekly to plan for the full reopening of schools. The team is considering virtual learning; online registration; school vaccinations; drafting the Back to School calendar; Pack the Bus events; Open Houses & Orientations at NES, NMS, & NHS; Convocation; and a comprehensive focus on student and employee wellness and support.

Mrs. Stephanie Baker, Principal of NES, shared an instructional report. Mrs. Baker provided a summary of the June 1- July 1, 2021, summer school schedule. Student hours are 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., with bus transportation, breakfast and lunch provided. Currently there are 152 students attending. ***NES Reading Specialist Mrs. Anne Gardiner*** participated in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training during the 2020-2021 school year. Mrs. Gardiner will serve as a LETRS Facilitator to ten NES teachers providing training and support.

Mr. Patrick Simmons, Principal of NMS, provided an instructional report. NMS Summer School offers both in-person and virtual learning instruction in Grades 6-8 subjects of Language Arts, Mathematics, Algebra I Recovery, and Algebra I Boot camp. NMS has 70 students attending. The NMS Yearbook has been completed for the 2020-2021 school year with expected delivery in mid to late July. Mr. Simmons recognized ***Mrs. Sheila King*** for her work on the Yearbook. English & Language Arts teacher ***Mrs. Stacey Lee*** is coordinating the Summer Reading Book Bingo. Students who read over the summer and complete five activities in a row, will earn a gift card from McDonald's and be entered into a drawing for an Echo Dot and other prizes. Information can be found on the NMS Facebook page or by contacting Ms. Stacey Lee at NMS.

Dr. Travis Burns, Principal of NHS, reported on the following NHS activities: The Prom/After Prom at the Point event was held on May 22, 2021. This event was sponsored by the parents of Northumberland High School (NHS). Graduation was held on Saturday, May 22, 2021, at 10 a.m. at the NHS athletic complex/field. The graduating class consisted of 104 seniors. The event was attended by 500 guests. ***Miss Savannah Harris, Class President,*** gave the Welcome Address. ***Miss Lauren Rahn, Salutatorian,*** gave the Salutatorian Address. ***Miss Bay Wiggins, Valedictorian,*** gave the Valedictorian Address. The NHS Summer School Graduation will be held on July 6, 2021, at 6 p.m. The ceremony will take place outdoors in front of NHS. Six students are expected to graduate this summer. Summer school began on June 1st and will conclude on July 1st. Students had the option of attending virtual or in-person. Approximately 100 students are expected to complete courses during the summer school program. ***Mrs. Martha Hicks*** currently serves as the summer school administrator.

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

Director of Technology Mrs. Javornda Ashton provided the following report to the Board. [Click here](#)

Director of Transportation Mrs. Stacy Branem provided the following report to the Board. [Click here.](#)

Mrs. Sophronia Smith Director of Federal Programs & School Improvement provided the following report to the Board. [Click here.](#)

Dr. Jamie Sears Director of Special Education & Student Services provided the following report to the Board. [Click here.](#)

Other Action Items

The School Board approved the NHS Dance Team's overnight field trip to Baltimore Inner Harbor on August 12-14, 2021, to attend Universal Dance Association's Dance Camp.

The School Board rescheduled the Monday, July 12, 2021, Regular School Board Meeting to Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

The School Board approved Monday, July 5, 2021, as a holiday with all schools and all offices closed.

The School Board approved the 2021-2022 Program of Studies as presented by *Mr. Adam Letizia, Director of Instruction & Student Support Services.*