

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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December 13, 2021 - Heathsville, VA The Northumberland County Public Schools' School Board met in-person for a monthly meeting on Monday, December 13, 2021. The meeting was open to the public through Zoom audio conference calling as a result of COVID-19 guidelines and in-person.

Closed Meeting Action Items

- Appointment of **Margaret Harp, Homebound Teacher;**
- Appointment of **substitute Arleigh Wood;**
- Approval of **coaches: Molly Frazier, Performance & Marching Band; Michael Baker, Head Baseball Coach; Darryl Smith, Assistant Boys Basketball Coach; Shaela Gee, Middle School Cheer Coach; Julie White, Middle School Drama; and April Walker, Middle School Drama Co-Sponsor.**
- Permanent Reassignment of **Beverly Follin** to **NES Counselor.**

The School Board Approved the following policy concerning **Metal Detectors:**

USE OF METAL DETECTORS IN SCHOOLS

Weapons or explosives of any kind are prohibited on school property, in school buildings, or at school-related events. Possession of weapons or explosives is a violation of School Board policy and will subject an individual to disciplinary action and possible criminal penalties.

The Superintendent possesses the authority to take all reasonable, necessary and proper measures provided by law and School Board policy and regulations to safeguard the students, employees and property of the School Division, including, but not limited to, the use of stationary or mobile metal detectors.

The purpose of the metal detector scan is to prevent and deter weapons and explosive devices from entering the schools. At all times, the degree and nature of the inspection are not to go beyond what is necessary to maintain safety and security.

The Superintendent shall adopt regulations or procedures necessary to implement this policy.

Public Meeting

Presentations / Recognitions

The NMS Performance Band provided a selection of holiday songs. Performance Band Leader **Madeline Lee** led **Sadie Blake, James Blake, Carly Brewer, Bobby Clarke, Jacob Clarke, and Mark Johnson**. They played three carols: "The First Noel," "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," and "Deck the Halls."

The Board honored **Mr. Carl Perez** for his service on the Board from April 17, 2020 to December 31, 2021 with a Resolution of Appreciation. [Click here](#) for the Resolution.

The Board honored **Ms. Donna Booth** for her service to the Board and Northumberland County Public Schools from March 1983 to December 31, 2021 with a Plaque "In Honor of Dedication and Years of Loyal Service".

Athena Construction Group, Inc. and Connemara Corporation presented summaries of their Request for Proposals for the JROTC/STEM/Athletic Complex. The Architects/Contractors provided two plans that include a stand alone building and a building that will be an addition to Northumberland High School.

Superintendent's Report

Director of Instruction & Student Services Adam Letizia informed the board on the upcoming public comment period for the school division's [Strategic Pathway & Goals for 2028](#), budget recommendations from the Community Advisory Committee for Educational Equity in January 2022, and plans for the development of the 2022-2023 school calendar. Mr. Letizia also shared how the Northumberland Public Library is supporting the schools in purchasing a subscription where virtual performances from the [Bright Star Touring Theatre](#) will be available for teachers to use in their classrooms during February 2022 when celebrating Black History Month.

Dr. Travis Burns provided an update on safety and purchase of metal detectors. Metal detectors will first be used at athletic events. They will be able to detect vapes as well as weapons and metal items.

Superintendent Holly Wargo provided the Board with a copy of the Children's Book "Adelaide the Accountant" written by **NHS Alumni Mrs. Rosalyn Haynie Banks** and donated to the NES Library. Board Chair Betty Christopher read the letter in part that stated "As a parent of two NES students, it is exciting to be back in my hometown and to see so many familiar faces in the classrooms and in

administrative roles. I graduated from Northumberland High School in 2004, as one of the top five students in my class. In middle school, Mrs. Gayle Sterrett played a major role in me considering William & Mary as a choice for college. In high school, Mrs. Betty Christopher's accounting course helped me nail down a college major that would help me support my family farming operations and give me options to experience corporate America in a "big city" with skyscrapers. I'm thankful for all of the educators past and present in our local school system!"

School Instructional Reports

On **NES Principal Mrs. Martha Williams** Instructional Report NES celebrated the coming Winter Break by recognizing how different cultures celebrate the holidays. For NES full report [Click here.](#)

On **NMS Principal Mr. Patrick Simmons** Instructional Report JrBETA inducted five new members at the Induction Ceremony on November 17, 2021. For NMS full report [Click here.](#)

On **NHS Principal Dr. Travis Burns** Instructional Report **NHS student Abby Jennings** participated in the 95th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Parade on Thursday, November 25, 2021 in New York City. For NHS full report [Click here](#)

Director Reports

The following Department provided the Board with monthly reports and updates. To see full reports click on the Department Link.

Dr. Jamie Sears, Director of [Special Education & Student Services](#)
Mrs. Javornda Ashton, Director of [Educational Technology](#)
Mrs. Sophronia Smith, Director of [Federal Programs & School Improvement](#)
Mrs. Virginia Booth, Director of [Data, Accountability & Testing](#)
Mr. Jason Bellows, Director of [Finance](#)
Mr. Jeff Brann, Director of [Operations, Maintenance & Facilities](#)
Mrs. Stacy Branem, Director of [Transportation](#)
Mrs. Saunee Hamlett, Director of [School Nutrition](#)

Board Comments

Student Representative Mytel Cox reported to the Board that the Equity Committee Student Survey

focused on extra curricular activities and humanities.

Board Member Dana O'Bier thanked Board member Carl Perez for his service, "Thank you from All of Us."

Board Member Carl Perez stressed that "parents are the most important" part of student education. Some of his points to success were a safe environment for learning and providing a voice to be heard. Mr. Perez was most proud of the following Board accomplishments: that the school board found its voice by providing modern technology, providing leadership during the pandemic with providing thousands of meals, moved forward with the JROTC/STEM building, replacing the HVACs at Northumberland Elementary, hiring a special education director that provides diversity, a maintenance department that is leading and proactive, and moving forward with providing a safer location for school board office. Mr. Perez encouraged the Board to work with focus in providing leadership to students, teachers, faculty and staff first.

Board member Denise Mazyck also thanked Mr. Perez for his service. She informed as liaison to the Northumberland Education Association she will provide the minutes of meetings to the Board.

Other Action Items

The Board approved the Memorandum of Agreement with the Middle Peninsula Northern Neck Community Services Board.

The Board approved the Request for Special Appropriations and Grant application of \$2,301.07, Title III; \$37,679.09, Title IV; and VTSS of \$36,000.

The Board approved the anonymous donation of Laboratory equipment and materials to the NHS Science Department.

The Board approved Intent to Award and to enter negotiations with Connemara Corporation according to the Request for Proposal 2022-002 JROTC/STEM/Athletic Building.