

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: **Donna Booth**, Clerk of the School Board
(804)529-6134

dbooth@nucps.net

November 9, 2020 - Heathsville, VA The Northumberland County Public Schools' School Board met at the Northumberland County Middle/High School Auditorium for a regular meeting. The meeting was open to the public practicing physical distancing and face covering requirements. The public had access through Zoom audio conference calling as a result of COVID-19 guidelines.

Congratulations to **Javornda Ashton**, Director of Educational Technology; and **Patrick Simmons**, Principal, Northumberland Middle School. The School Board authorized the Interim Administrative positions to permanent positions effective immediately.

The School Board approved **LaNeisha Gainey**, Northumberland Elementary School Counselor; **Kevin Rice**, Part-time School Nutrition Worker; **Merton Green**, substitute bus driver; **Rose Stepp**, car driver by timesheet; **William Clarke**, car driver by timesheet; and **Brenda Parrott**, car driver by timesheet.

The following supplements were approved: **Saunee Hamlett**, Summer Meals; **Krista Sisk**, NMS Junior Beta; **Cindy Swift**, NMS Junior Beta Sponsor; **Sheila King**, NMS Yearbook Sponsor; and **Jay Lightfoot**, CTE Coordinator.

The School Board approved the supplement personnel listed with the following contingencies:

- further guidance for school and sport participation due to COVID-19;
- the programs, activities and sports actually taking place;
- final installments will be issued/released after formal evaluation of the sponsor/coach and proper return of equipment/uniforms/property, etc.

Other School Board actions:

The 2021-2022 Budget Calendar and Director of Educational Technology salary scale was approved. Some highlighted dates include December 14, 2020, Public Hearing #1; January 11, 2021, Prioritize Budget Requests; and February 8, 2021, Draft Budget and Public Hearing #2. The 2021-2022 Budget Calendar is posted on the website.

The School Board approved the request for the following special appropriations from the Board of Supervisors: \$2,400.00 from Chesapeake Bay Foundation and \$207,148.00 from Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF).

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Presentations/Reports

Director of Finance **Ms. Donna Booth** updated the Board on the Request for Proposals for the New School Board Office. Five (5) construction companies returned proposals: Athena Construction Group, Inc., Triangle, Virginia; Emerald Construction, Richmond, Virginia; Talon Veteran Services, Inc., Richmond, Virginia; Commemara Corporation, White Stone, Virginia; and Gulf Seaboard General Contractor, Ashland, Virginia. In the next few weeks, the Proposals will be reviewed.

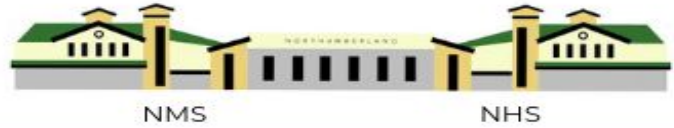
The School Board was recognized by the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) for their participation in the 2019-2020 VSBA Academy. **Mrs. Betty Christopher**, Board Chair, received the Award of Achievement and a bronze pin. **Mrs. Gayle Sterrett**, Vice Chair, received the Award of Achievement and a bronze pin. **Mrs. Dana O'Bier** received the Award of Achievement and a bronze pin. **Ms. Donna Booth**, Clerk of the Board, received the Award of Achievement and a bronze pin. **Dr. Holly Wargo**, Superintendent, received the Award of Excellence and a silver pin.

The School Board heard Instructional Reports & Health, Safety and Mitigation updates by the school principals:

NES Principal Stephanie Baker informed the Board that there are 289 students (52%) in Hybrid Learning Option and 264 students (48%) in the Virtual Learning Option as of November 6, 2020. Currently 26 students have signed up for the next cohort Hybrid date of November 30, 2020. Efforts by teachers and NES staff to address attendance concerns include phone calls, emails to students and parents, counselor support, administration support, individual Google Meets, face-to-face support, and immediate technology assistance. Other Important Information: NES Annual "Modified" Storybook Character Dress Up Days/Parade: Friday, October 30 and Monday, November 2; Virtual enrichment opportunities that began recently: ARROW (2nd - 5th); 5th Grade Choir; Art Talented Virtual tutoring to begin soon for students needing remediation on concepts from first quarter.

NMS Principal Patrick Simmons reported to the Board that there are currently 273 students attending NMS: 94 Hybrid students (34%) and 178 Virtual students (65%). Fourteen students have requested to attend Hybrid classes on the next cohort date of November 30, 2020. Students have been given a first quarter grade extension to November 20, 2020 to allow time to complete incomplete/missing assignments. The middle school has added Pear Deck as a resource to teachers to use to help engage students in learning. Pear Deck allows for formative and interactive questions to be added to virtual presentations and slide shows, actively engaging learning attendance. As of November 6, 2020, currently 6 % of students are chronically absent, missing more than 10% of the school year. The middle school counseling office continues to reach out to parents, and offer assistance to help students improve their attendance. NMS has sent out a mailing regarding attendance to all families. Teachers are offering individual Google Meet sessions, and additional supports to reach the hard-to-reach families. Important Dates: NMS Staff - Pear Deck Training with Mary Alys Foutz on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 is

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



scheduled. NMS teachers will be joining NHS colleagues in participating in a virtual presentation on Equitable Grading Practices, on December 9, 2020. Mr. Simmons thanked his teachers and staff for their hard work, for reaching out students and families and for making his transition to Principal seamless. Mr. Simmons stated, “I appreciate the staff’s feedback and support as we are moving forward to take care of the needs of our NMS students and families.”

NHS Principal Dr. Travis Burns reported that Scott Habeeb, Principal of Salem High School and national speaker on effective grading practices, will present on assessment for and of learning on December 9, 2020. A virtual FAFSA Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11, 2020, from 11:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and In-person FAFSA Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 11:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Sports conditioning began Monday, November 9th. Students must wear a mask, have a current physical on file in the athletic office, and be in good academic standing. Students also should bring their own filled water bottles, and health screenings will be conducted prior to conditioning each day. Dr. Burns introduced the Big 5 School-wide instructional strategies that will have a positive impact on student achievement: Student Engagement, Grading Practices, Family Engagement, Student Engagement, and Additional Administrative Support. **IMPORTANT DATES** ● November 17, 2020 - In-person Graduation Regalia Orders/Sophomore Ring Orders - 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. onsite in the auditorium. ● November 17, 2020/November 19, 2020 - Picture Days ● November 18, 2020 - Senior Pictures - Yours Truly will communicate dates, times, and protocols for formal pictures (drapes/tuxedos). ● November 21, 2020 - Retakes/Missed Pictures onsite at Yours Truly (call for appointment)

Director of Instruction and Student Services Mr. Adam Letizia updated the Board on the Equity Taskforce. Mr. Letizia reports that there are 16 members on the Taskforce. Throughout the school year, the Equity Taskforce will meet to examine current practices and to identify areas for continuous improvement.

Mr. Letizia reported on behalf of **Dr. Jamie Sears**, Director of Special Education & Student Services, that Seclusion and Restraint training has begun. For Level 1, conflict & resolution, all personnel receive training. Level 2 training focuses on specified essential personnel receiving training.

Dr. Holly Wargo reported that November 9-13, 2020, is National School Psychology Week and recognized Miss Amanda Schimmoller, NCPS Psychologist. School Psychologists remain a resource for our communities and are focused on helping all students grow and thrive in school and at home.

Board Member Comments

Board Member **Dana O’Bier** gave an update on the Northern Neck Technical and Alternative Education meeting held on October 27, 2020. Forty-six Northumberland students attend The Northern Neck Technical Center; 40 in person and 6 virtual. The Alternative Education Program has one student attending.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



NES



NMS

NHS

Board Member **Dr. Cheryl Davis** congratulated the entire staff of Northumberland County Schools. She is thrilled to have students in school and administration and teachers that care.

Board Member **Denise Mazyck** thanked the public for their support. She will appreciate hearing from the public and will listen, review and consider each comment.