February 8, 2010

Dear NNPS Families:

I am writing to inform you about new guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education regarding the collection of race and ethnicity data for students across the country, including Newport News. These changes include the addition of new racial/ethnic categories.

The federal government requires states to collect this information to provide a more accurate picture of the nation’s ethnic and racial diversity. In past years, Virginia public school students were limited to selecting one race/ethnicity. These new requirements will enable individuals to more accurately identify their racial/ethnic heritage.

Information regarding a student’s race and ethnicity is requested at the time of enrollment in Newport News Public Schools (NNPS). To satisfy these new guidelines, NNPS has developed an updated form for currently enrolled students to complete. This new form will also be used for all newly enrolled students starting in February 2010. These updates will ensure our compliance with the new standards in collecting, maintaining, and reporting individual student race and ethnicity data.

Please take a moment to complete the new NNPS race/ethnicity form and return it with your child as soon as possible. These new categories will replace all existing race/ethnicity categories for use in state and federal data collections. More information regarding these new guidelines is also available on the NNPS Web site at http://sbo.nn.k12.va.us/ethnicityrace.

Respectfully,

Daniel Curry-Corcoran, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Accountability