Dear Newport News Public Schools Community,

Youth Development is one of the student benchmarks of Newport News Public Schools’ Academic Agenda, making the school division unique in its approach to developing young people. Preparing students academically is a priority, yet NNPS also recognizes that preparing students to be capable, contributing citizens is just as important. We understand that, to truly help students prepare for life beyond their years in NNPS, we must help them develop the skills necessary to navigate their future careers and lives safely and successfully.

The Youth Development Initiative in Newport News Public Schools focuses on preparing our students socially and emotionally. This is accomplished by supplementing their academic experiences with diverse opportunities for personal growth and development. Our department operates on the premise that all young people will be successful when offered the appropriate combination of opportunities, supports and services. As a school division, we are dedicated to ensuring that all of our students are provided every opportunity to become college, career, and citizen-ready.

This handbook will provide you with an overview of the Youth Development initiative in Newport News Public Schools. You will find information regarding the youth development principles employed in our daily work, the youth development structures in place in every school and examples of current programs moving the Youth Development initiative forward.

We encourage you to connect to the Youth Development “movement” and take advantage of the available resources. Together, we can support the evolution of our school division into one that assists all students along their journey of realizing their potentials.

Sincerely,

NNPS Youth Development Team

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Youth Development in NNPS is our process of working with young people in a purposeful way to provide them with supportive relationships, meaningful opportunities, and access to services that help them develop a strong, positive sense of who they are and what they can do.

Purpose and Rationale

The Youth Development initiative in Newport News Public Schools emerged from the understanding that preparing our students for global success would require more than academic proficiency. We understand that academics is our first priority, but we also have an obligation to prepare our young people to be successful in other facets of their lives. Youth Development is one of three benchmarks guiding our work as professionals to ensure that all students graduate college, career, and citizen-ready.

Youth Development is a critical component of the school experience because students attend more, achieve more, and graduate at higher rates when their needs are met. These needs, as supported by research, are the services, opportunities, and supports which are essential for a young person's success in any environment. Youth Development is the deliberate division-wide effort to meet those needs.
The NNPS Youth Development Model Includes Four Focus Areas:

- **Leadership Opportunities** – providing young people with opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their schools and communities by giving them a chance to share in decision-making and leadership. This can happen in classes, school activities and clubs/organizations.

- **Clubs and Organizations** – providing young people with opportunities beyond academics so they can explore new interests, exhibit strengths and form relationships that may be different than those found in their classrooms.

- **Student Support** – providing support for students so that they can realize success despite challenges. Support systems include structures both during and outside of school and cover a wide range of services including assistance with: academic, social and emotional challenges.

- **Employee Expertise** – working with adults in the NNPS community to broaden their knowledge, skills and tools for effectively developing young people on a daily basis.
Youth Development seeks to develop our youth by nurturing a strong, positive sense of who they are and what they can do. This is accomplished not only in the classroom, but during extracurricular activities that include clubs, organizations, and sports and activities. Research has proven that students who are involved in structured extracurricular activities are more likely to have better grades, have higher standardized test scores, attend school more and have higher self-concepts. Furthermore, students are also less likely to use substances, drop out of school and misbehave while in school. Student involvement in clubs, activities and athletics has increased nearly 42% division-wide since the 2007-2008 school year due to the intentional efforts of youth developers in Newport News Public Schools.

The 2013-14 data does not include elementary school participation.
There are Youth Development leaders in every elementary, middle and high school in NNPS. These staff members serve as the building representatives and act as ambassadors for the Department of Youth Development. They are responsible for ensuring that students are introduced to the many opportunities available to them in their respective buildings. These leaders also gauge school culture with the assistance of their student team members and implement action steps to positively affect this culture. Data about student engagement is reviewed to ensure that every student has the opportunity to be involved in experiences that help positively develop them as students, responsible citizens and leaders.

Elementary Youth Development Leads and Teams

Youth Development leaders in our elementary schools focus on supporting the curriculum by acting as a building-level resource to administrators, staff and students. The elementary curricula includes opportunities to nurture youth developmental competencies within students. Service learning encourages students to assume leadership roles and learn in a manner different than “traditional” teaching. It is an experiential learning and teaching modality that allows students to connect classroom learning to relevant real-world experiences, while positively impacting an identified problem in their community. Students learn as they give back to their communities. Elementary youth development leaders assist staff by providing advice and guidance during the ICARE service learning process as the resident building experts while also developing and implementing youth development practices as a resource for building staff and students. More information about ICARE is on page 12.

Secondary Youth Development Leads and Teams

Youth development leaders in our middle and high schools work to enhance the environment and culture of their respective schools and, through their work with young people, that of the school division. These leaders create opportunities for young people to meaningfully contribute to their school and local and global communities. They also have identified teams of other individuals in their building including students and enlist their aid in effecting change in their schools. These “champions” sponsor student clubs, spearhead school initiatives, support young leaders in their growth and build competencies in students and adults within the division. Secondary leaders are recognized as catalysts of change in their buildings through their collaboration with others, passion for helping young people grow into successful adults, project creation and dedication to the Youth Development mission.
WHAT DOES YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?

Elementary School

Students at Sanford Elementary adopted the SPCA as their service learning project, and collected and delivered supplies to meet the needs of the animals at the facility.

Middle School

In CampConnect, students explored colleges, careers and citizenship in a three-week summer experience.

High School

Participants of the NNPS Governor’s Youth Development Academy were instrumental in the success of the NNPS and CNU Community STEM Day which had more than 3,000 attendees.
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

In elementary school, NNPS students develop an AWARENESS of Youth Development practices:

- Youth Development principles are intentionally embedded in the curriculum and classroom practice
- Students begin participating in clubs, activities and organizations based on their interests and strengths
- Students develop and complete meaningful service learning projects at their schools
- Students are encouraged to begin taking leadership roles in the classroom and throughout school
- Students are introduced to citizen-readiness through the deliberate development and nurturing of positive character traits
- Adult Youth Development leaders support students to enhance school culture by developing youth initiatives and supporting existing ones

Opportunities for Elementary School Students

Elementary Service
Introducing citizenship through service begins early in Newport News Public Schools. Elementary students are introduced to the concept of service and contributing to their community through purposeful experiences in their classrooms and school communities. Service learning in our classrooms (ICARE) and service rendered in our community are integral to our mission of preparing every student to be college, career, and citizen-ready.

Clubs and Activities
Students are first introduced to extracurricular activities at the elementary school level, an important component of the youth development initiative. On designated days throughout the school year young people participate in clubs or activities deliberately provided to expose them to new interests, help them learn new skills or nurture existing ones, and develop bonds with teachers and peers that go beyond those established in traditional classroom settings.

Student Council Association
Youth leadership is one of the building blocks of Youth Development. Students are introduced to leadership roles in their classrooms and in school clubs and organizations. The SCA is one example of a school club in which students learn and develop leadership skills, roles and processes. Many of our elementary schools conduct elections for young people to assume leadership roles within the clubs and their schools.

Students at Nelson Elementary help care for the garden in the Outdoor Learning Classroom.
ICARE
The Youth Development team and the Department of Curriculum and Development created a model for elementary school service learning in NNPS. This model, called ICARE, is based on national standards for service learning and is included in our school curriculum, ensuring that every student in elementary school takes part in a service learning experience before they transition to middle school. ICARE is an acronym which represents each stage of this service learning process:

I – Investigation: This stage includes research activities that guide students to determine a need and define the community that they will focus on throughout the school year. This is student-driven.

C – Construction: Students and teachers/staff develop an action plan with possible solutions to the need determined during the investigation phase.

A – Action: The implementation phase during which the plan is put into action by students through meaningful service.

R – Reflection: This stage focuses on helping students understand the service experience, think about its meaning, and draw connections between their experience, their community and what they learn in the classroom.

E – Exhibition: This is the final stage of a service learning project during which students display and share their work in a public forum with various audiences.
In middle school, NNPS students are encouraged to explore:

- Students have expanded opportunities to participate in clubs, activities and organizations
- Students are provided with opportunities to participate in organized sports including intramurals and the NNPS middle school sports program.
- Teachers develop youth by giving them greater autonomy and responsibility in the classroom
- Students are encouraged to give back to their schools and local communities through purposeful opportunities and activities
- Students are expected to participate in and are provided with opportunities to take active leadership roles in their schools and communities
- Youth Development leaders develop school-specific initiatives to provide meaningful opportunities for engagement beyond classroom interaction
- Youth Development teams provide a forum for students to voice ideas and take action in their schools with a structured support system

Opportunities for Middle School Students

Clubs, Activities and Athletics
The opportunity for our young people to participate in enriching activities outside of the classroom continues through middle school. Middle school students are expected to continue exploring new interests and strengths through clubs and activities such as intramural sports, student-developed clubs, and the NNPS middle school sports program. Adults staff are encouraged to begin shifting leadership roles and responsibilities to students within clubs, to prepare them for their transition to high school and beyond.

CampConnect
CampConnect is a summer program, presented in collaboration with the NNPS Career Pathways initiative, for rising 7th and 8th grade students. Participants take part in rich, hands-on experiences aligned with our school mission of preparing each student to graduate college, career, and citizen-ready. Students visit local colleges, participate in interactive tours of local businesses and perform acts of service in our community during this three week experience.

Youth Development Teams
Beginning in middle school, students are encouraged to take more of a formal role in enhancing their schools through active leadership. For example, students have the opportunity to serve on their school youth development teams and partner with adults to develop ideas, construct strategies and implement their collective plans to improve their school.
In high school, NNPS students:

- Are provided with numerous and diverse opportunities to participate in and assume leadership roles in clubs, activities and athletics
- Are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning process including internships, educational planning and vocational experiences
- Have increased opportunities to lead and participate in service projects in their school and local and global communities
- Are expected to and provided with the means to prepare for post-graduation life
- As a part of their Youth Development teams, work within a structure for sharing ideas for enhancing their school, developing plans to expound on them and supporting the implementation of these ideas.
- Are supported by Youth Development leaders who support young people in their efforts to positively impact their schools and community through specific programs and initiatives.

Opportunities for High School Students

Clubs, Activities and Athletics

Clubs, activities and athletics are an integral component of the high school experience in NNPS. We expect every student to take part in extracurricular activities; high school students have access to a multitude of diverse and specialized clubs that are student-created and student-led. Meaningful leadership roles for students are key to the youth development initiative. Students are encouraged to provide service to the community through clubs, organizations and athletic teams as a continued emphasis on the importance of citizenship and wholly developing our students.

Governor’s Youth Development Academy

The Governor’s Youth Development Academy is a year-long program supported by the Virginia Department of Education. This program, available to NNPS 9th and 10th graders, provides experiences and opportunities aligned with our college, career, and citizen-readiness school mission while building deliberate opportunities for leadership and skill development. Students engage in rich, interactive experiences during their visits to area colleges (college-readiness) and area businesses (career-readiness) while also volunteering for several organizations and causes in the community (citizen-readiness). Members join and lead other youth development initiatives to help “shift” toward a youth development environment in each of our high schools.

Project Inclusion

Project Inclusion is a year-long program during which groups of high school students explore diversity and issues of tolerance, develop a plan to promote and nurture tolerance in their schools and implement those plans with the assistance of adult sponsors who are a part of the process from beginning to end. This program, developed by the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities and implemented by Newport News Public Schools, encourages students to take an active role in changing negative behaviors by increasing their awareness, and teaching them techniques to cope with their emotions and strategies to address the behaviors.
WHAT IS SERVICE?

Student service to the community is an expectation and an integral component of our mission to ensure that every student is college, career and citizen-ready. Our obligation as youth developers is to provide and connect our students with meaningful service opportunities in their areas of interest. Elementary students volunteer through various clubs and ICARE service learning projects, while middle school students serve through club and classroom volunteerism. In high school, students have a number of opportunities through youth development teams, classroom experiences, and clubs and organizations. Clubs such as Youth Volunteer Corps, Key Club and DECA recognize and promote service in schools across NNPS. In high school, students have a number of opportunities through youth development initiatives, classroom experiences, and clubs and organizations.

How Do We Celebrate Service In NNPS?

We believe that celebrating the service our young people provide to their schools and their communities is an important part of engendering lifelong volunteerism. The STAR Awards, Students Taking Action and Responsibility, is an annual celebration of Newport News Public Schools, the students and the service students have rendered in their community. Student groups are recognized during a ceremony which highlights their service and celebrates it in the presence of their peers, families, local professionals, public officials and selected guests.
Newport News Public Schools has made Youth Development a foundation for all of our work with young people. The work is deliberate, meaningful and grounded in researched practice.

**Glasser’s Choice Theory**
The Choice Theory, developed by Dr. William Glasser, states that a person’s outlook and “world view” is based upon the satisfying (or non-satisfaction) of the following five integral needs:
- survival (food, clothing, personal safety)
- belonging (connectedness)
- power (significance, competence)
- freedom (autonomy)
- fun (learning)

**Developmental Assets**
As the foundation for the Search Institute, the developmental assets are 40 identified predictors to success in a young person’s life. The more assets a young person believes they possess, the better chance they have of developing into a successful, healthy adult. Promoting the Developmental Assets is a crucial part of Youth Development in NNPS.

**Developmental Outcomes**
Much like the developmental assets, developmental outcomes are predictors of positive Youth Development and are separated into the two categories of: Identity (who one is) and Ability (what one can do). Each category, in turn, has six developmental outcomes associated with it. The Advancing Youth Development curriculum emphasizes the deliberate building of these outcomes in youth to ensure positive Youth Development.
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Newport News Public School Youth Development Web Page
www.nnschools.org/youthdevelopment/

NNPS Youth Development Facebook Page
www.facebook.com/pages/NNPS-Youth-Development/226668870727333

Alternatives, Inc. (Advancing Youth Development)
www.altinc.org/

Extracurricular Activity:
How does participation encourage positive youth development?
www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cy/other/fs9932.pdf

The Search Institute (Developmental Assets)
www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets

The William Glasser Institute (Glasser’s Choice Theory)
www.wglasser.com

Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (Project Inclusion)
www.inclusiveva.org/

Youth Volunteer Corps of Hampton Roads
www.yvchr.org

Positive Youth Development
www.actforyouth.net

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.servicelearning.org
NNPS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS
FEATURED ON “THIS JUST IN”

Elementary STAR Awards
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/G8S479HUB1B7/This-Just-In-117-Week-of-May-21-2012

Saunders Recycling Campaign
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/BS48M7S34G3O/This-Just-In-163-Week-of-Apr-8-2013

Red Ribbon Week
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/4BD1B1BK8OAX/This-Just-In-193-Week-of-November-4-2013

Heritage HATS, Warwick Feeding 5000
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/6SO29YNKW2HK/This-Just-In-198-Week-of-December-9-2013

Youth Career Expo
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/H7BRHR24UDBY/This-Just-In-209-Week-of-February-24-2014

Charles ICARE Watershed Day “We All Live Downstream”
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/RY2WAYYBG44U/This-Just-In-213-Week-of-March-24-2014

Earth Day Events, NNPS Youth Development
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/8DG483N1W8AW/This-Just-In-219-Week-of-May-5-2014

STEM Community Day, Warwick Club Rush, and ICARE
http://nnpstv.com/mediacenter/video/OND5WSKX4WMW/This-Just-In-225-Week-of-June-16-2014

YVC CanStructure Food Bank Drive
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3L1MVahEa4k
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