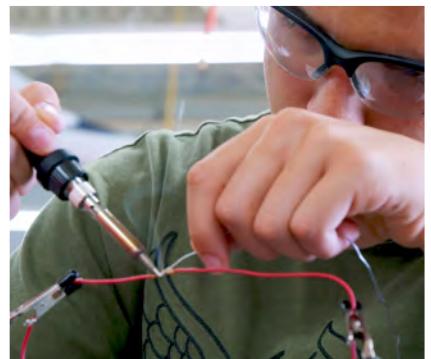


# Elevate 2030



EMPOWERING EVERY LEARNER

NEWPORT NEWS  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



# Letter from the School Board Chairman



Dr. Terri Best

Dear Newport News Public Schools Community:

Newport News Public Schools is entering an exciting new chapter. Thanks to the dedication of our students, families, educators, staff, and community partners, we have so much to be proud of and even more to look forward to through the important work that lies ahead. From rising student achievement to expanded opportunities in advanced learning, career pathways, and civic engagement, our district is building momentum for the future.

On behalf of the School Board, I am proud to introduce this school division's new strategic plan, *Elevate 2030: Empowering Every Learner*. Over the past year, the School Board has worked alongside educators, families, and community leaders to craft this bold new vision. This plan reflects the voices of our community and lays out ambitious goals to ensure every student is academically prepared, workforce-ready, and connected to meaningful real-world learning opportunities.

We are particularly proud of the five areas of focus that will guide our efforts over the next five years:

- **Academic Literacy** – ensuring 90 percent of students in grades 3 and 5 are proficient in reading and math by 2030.
- **Culture of Advancement** – expanding access to advanced learning and enrichment opportunities for all students.
- **Workforce Readiness** – preparing every graduate with the skills, credentials, and experiences needed for high-demand careers.
- **Civic and Business Partnerships** – strengthening ties with our community to provide authentic, real-world learning experiences.
- **Elevating Our Identity** – celebrating the success of our students and staff while sharing the powerful story of NNPS.

As a board, we are committed to supporting this vision by aligning policy, resources, and oversight to ensure progress. We will continue to listen, to advocate, and to hold ourselves accountable for the success of every child. Most importantly, we know this work cannot be done alone. The strength of this plan lies in the shared commitment of our entire community—families, educators, businesses, civic partners, and neighbors—working together for our students.

We are inspired every day by the resilience, talent, and potential of our young people. With your partnership, we will build futures that are strong, equitable, and full of promise. Together, we can make Newport News Public Schools a model of excellence and opportunity for all.

With gratitude and determination,

*Terri Best, Ph.D.*





## Letter from the Superintendent



Dear Newport News Public Schools Community,

I am proud to share with you our Strategic Plan for 2025–2030, a bold, student-centered roadmap designed to shape the future of our schools. Developed in partnership with students, families, educators, staff, and community members, this plan reflects our collective vision: to *elevate and empower every student in every classroom, every day.*

Anchored in our new mission to cultivate and empower every student's potential through high-quality instruction, personalized support, and strong relationships, the

Strategic Plan advances ambitious goals that prioritize both academic excellence and whole child development. Whether we are strengthening early literacy, expanding access to advanced learning, or preparing students for workforce success, we remain steadfast in our commitment to equity, innovation, and opportunity.

At the heart of this work is our Profile of a Learner, which outlines the essential skills and mindsets that all students, from PreK through 12th grade, will develop to thrive in college, career, and the community. These include becoming academically prepared, emotionally intelligent, innovative, resilient, and ready to lead with purpose and integrity.

Our plan responds to the priorities set by the School Board, beginning with a focus on academic literacy. By the year 2030, our goal is for 90% of students in grades 3 and 5 to demonstrate proficiency in reading and math, with steady annual growth and a dedicated effort to close achievement gaps. We are also committed to cultivating a culture of advancement by increasing student engagement and ensuring successful completion of advanced learning opportunities. Our focus on workforce readiness will prepare students to graduate equipped with the skills they need to enter high-demand careers and meet the needs of a changing economy.

Just as importantly, we will deepen civic and business partnerships so that every student in grades 6 through 12 engages in meaningful real-world learning that connects them to their communities and builds practical, lifelong skills. As we move forward, we will also elevate the identity of Newport News Public Schools by celebrating the successes of our students and staff and sharing the powerful stories that define who we are as a district.

Together, we are not just launching a new plan - we are building momentum for lasting change. We will continue to tell our story, uplift the voices of students and educators, and demonstrate the impact of our collective efforts. From neighborhood classrooms to city-wide partnerships, great things are happening across our schools every day.

To the members of the strategic planning steering committee, thank you for your commitment, insight, and leadership. Your contributions have shaped a plan that reflects our shared values and bold aspirations.

This plan is a call to action, and I invite every member of our community to join us in bringing it to life. Let us continue to think big, act with purpose, and work together to ensure that every child in Newport News Public Schools is empowered to succeed.

In partnership,

***Michele Mitchell, Ed.D.***

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## Mission

We cultivate and empower every student's potential through high-quality, rigorous instruction, personalized support, and strong relationships. In partnership with families and communities, we elevate learning experiences that prepare students to thrive as engaged learners, adaptable individuals, and confident contributors: community, college, and career ready.

## Vision

► **Elevate.**

► **Empower.**

► **One NNPS.**

## Core Values

► **Integrity**

We are committed to being honest, transparent and ethical

► **Respect**

We value every individual

► **Accountability**

We own our actions and commitments

► **Excellence**

We strive for high quality in everything we do

► **Empowerment**

We foster growth and recognize potential in everyone

► **Collaboration**

We connect, communicate, and create solutions together, ensuring all stakeholders are informed and engaged

# Board Goals Summary

## Academic Literacy

**Goal:** By 2030, 90% of students in grades 3 and 5 will be proficient in reading and math, with steady annual growth and a focus on closing achievement gaps.



## Culture of Advancement

**Goal:** By 2030, we will increase student engagement and successful completion of advanced learning opportunities across all areas of the curriculum, while maintaining strong academic growth at all grade levels to ensure students are prepared for future-ready pathways.



## Workforce Readiness

**Goal:** By 2030, we will increase the number of students who graduate workforce-ready, equipped to enter high-demand careers and meet the needs of a changing economy.



## Civic and Business Partnerships

**Goal:** By 2030, all students in grades 6–12 will engage in real-world learning experiences that connect them to their communities and prepare them for future success.



## Elevating Our Identity

**Goal:** By 2030, Newport News Public Schools will strengthen the district's image through consistent storytelling, elevating community pride, and the celebration of student and staff successes.



# Academic Literacy



**Goal:** By 2030, 90% of students in grades 3 and 5 will be proficient in reading and math, with steady annual growth and a focus on closing achievement gaps.

## ACTION STEPS

**1.1. Strengthen core instruction in reading and math through aligned curriculum, high-quality resources, and ongoing professional learning for teachers, with a focus on data to guide instruction.**

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

We will increase proficiency rates in grades 3 and 5 in reading and math by at least 6 percentage points each year, reaching 90% by 2030.

**1.2. Embed inclusive practices such as co-teaching, scaffolds, and specially designed instruction (SDI) to ensure students with disabilities, English learners, and other high-need subgroups have equitable access to grade-level content and accelerated learning opportunities.**

By 2030, we will ensure reporting group proficiency rates in grades 3 and 5 reading and math are within 15 percentage points of overall student proficiency.

All reporting groups will demonstrate at least 3 percentage points of annual growth in proficiency until the gap target is reached.

**1.3. Integrate literacy and numeracy skills across all content areas by equipping teachers to embed reading, writing, problem-solving, and academic vocabulary into daily lessons.**

By 2030, we will ensure 100% of schools show evidence of cross-curricular literacy and numeracy integration—through lesson plans, walkthroughs, and student work—reviewed quarterly and tied to annual growth targets.

**1.4.1. Implement a comprehensive teacher recruitment strategy, including early hiring timelines, university partnerships, residency pipelines, military-to-teacher pathways, and incentives for hard-to-staff schools/content areas.**

By 2030:

- Teacher retention will increase to 90%, with annual growth of 3 percentage points.
- NNPS will reduce vacancies by 40% division wide, with annual vacancy reduction targets.
- 100% of new teachers will complete the enhanced induction program with positive satisfaction ratings of 85% or higher.

**1.4.2. Strengthen induction and mentoring supports for new teachers and enhance ongoing professional learning aligned with high-quality instruction.**



## Academic Literacy (Cont.)

### ACTION STEPS

- 1.4.3. Implement strategies to improve teacher retention, including leadership coaching, school climate monitoring, recognition initiatives, and workload reduction efforts.**
- 1.4.4. Build internal pipelines for aspiring teachers, paraprofessionals, and high school students (e.g., Educators Rising, CTE Teacher Prep pathways).**

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, the percentage of teachers rated “effective or highly effective” will increase by 5% annually, reflecting improved instructional capacity.

By 2030, the number of “emergency” or “provisional” teacher placements will decrease by 10% annually.

# Culture of Advancement

**Goal:** By 2030, we will increase student engagement and successful completion of advanced learning opportunities across all areas of the curriculum, while maintaining strong academic growth at all grade levels to ensure students are prepared for future-ready pathways.



## ACTION STEPS

**2.1. Establish an additional pathway for academic enrichment at the elementary level to complement existing Talented and Gifted (TAG) and magnet programs, ensuring broader access to advanced learning opportunities.**

**2.2. Implement the Advanced Learning Communication Plan to increase family awareness and understanding of advancement opportunities through an interactive course guide, targeted social media strategies, an administrator handbook and a professional development framework.**

**2.3. Provide ongoing, targeted professional development for teachers, instructional coaches, and school leaders to enhance instructional capacity in academic enrichment, differentiation, and high-level questioning strategies that promote deeper learning for all students.**

**2.4. Expand access to rigorous academic pathways that prepare middle and high school students for college success, including honors, dual enrollment and other advanced coursework.**

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, 100% of elementary schools will implement at least one academic enrichment offering beyond TAG and magnet programs, with participation increasing by 5% annually and reflecting equitable representation by race, gender, language status, and economic background.

By 2030, 85% of families across NNPS will report increased awareness and understanding of advanced learning opportunities as a result of the enhanced communication plan, as measured by division-wide family surveys, engagement analytics, and participation data.

By 2030, NNPS will build staff capacity to support advanced learning by ensuring that at least 90% of instructional staff engage in professional learning focused on enrichment and differentiation, with observable shifts in instructional practice across all schools.

By 2030, 85% of secondary students will enroll in and successfully complete at least one advanced learning course annually, such as Pre-AP, dual enrollment or honors, demonstrating mastery of college-ready skills, with outcomes monitored to ensure equitable participation and achievement across student subgroups.



## Culture of Advancement (Cont.)

### ACTION STEPS

**2.5. Establish mechanisms for student voice and leadership in shaping and evaluating advanced learning opportunities (e.g., student advisory groups, enrichment ambassadors, annual student surveys on rigor and engagement).**

**2.6. Launch a quarterly “Safety & Well-Being Dashboard” for families and staff that reports progress on drills, audits, and climate data.**

**2.7. Strengthen systems of social-emotional learning, student voice, and restorative practices to create safe, inclusive, welcoming school climates.**

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, 100% of secondary schools and 75% of elementary schools will implement structures for student feedback and co-creation of enrichment opportunities, with data used annually to refine programs and pathways.

By 2030, perception survey confidence in NNPS safety systems will increase by 10% annually.

By 2030, suspensions will decrease by 8% annually.

By 2030, chronic absenteeism will decrease by 2 percentage points annually due to climate and safety improvements.

# Workforce Readiness



**Goal:** By 2030, we will increase the number of students who graduate workforce-ready, equipped to enter high-demand careers and meet the needs of a changing economy.

## ACTION STEPS

**3.1. Expand and offer diverse career pathways for all students aligned with both regional and national workforce needs.**

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, we will increase enrollment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by 10% annually.

By 2030, we will increase the number of graduates who will earn one or more high-demand industry credentials by 5% annually.

**3.2. Integrate soft skills and civic responsibility into daily instruction.**

By 2030, at least 70% of students participate in a civic engagement activity within their class or school each year.

By the end of each academic year, 100% of eligible students will have had the opportunity to register to vote during scheduled class time.

By 2030, 100% of appropriate elementary, middle, and high school courses incorporate [Virginia Department of Education-defined Workplace Readiness Skills](#) into curriculum materials.

**3.3. Provide hands-on, real-world learning experiences through partnerships.**

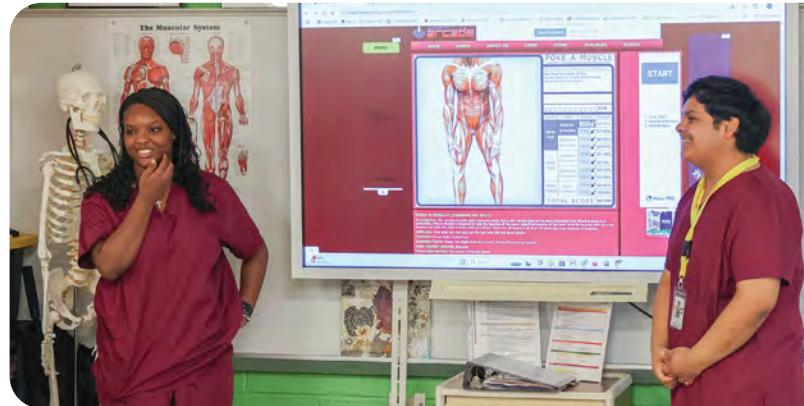
By 2030, we will Increase the number of [CTE high-quality work-based learning \(HQWBL\)](#) experiences completed by 15% annually.

By 2030, at least 50% of high school students complete one or more CTE HQWBL experiences by graduation.



# Civic and Business Partnerships

**Goal:** By 2030, all students in grades 6–12 will engage in real-world learning experiences that connect them to their communities and prepare them for future success.



## ACTION STEPS

**4.1. Create a comprehensive framework for defining school division needs to match with potential business and community supports; build a network of partnerships with a diverse group of businesses and organizations to support a variety of student interests and learning experiences; leverage civic partnerships for student service learning and engagement.**

**4.2. Partner with local organizations to co-design learning experiences; ensure experiential learning is mapped to standards in NNPS Profile of a Learner.**

**4.3. Develop a centralized portal for schools and partners to connect, post opportunities and share outcomes; ensure access in multiple languages and formats for equity.**

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, we will design and complete infrastructure to coordinate partnership engagement by year one.

By 2030, we will also assign management responsibility to administrator/execution team.

By 2030, all schools will identify at least three strategic partners aligned with learning goals.

By 2030, we will increase to 100% student participation in business and community partner-designed experiential learning activities that are mapped to NNPS Profile of a Learner through STEM challenges, history projects, cultural expos, etc.

By 2030, we will track the number, type and impact of partnerships per school. Include metrics such as student participation in learning experiences, feedback from partners, family survey responses and postsecondary plan development.

# Elevating Our Identity



**Goal:** By 2030, Newport News Public Schools will strengthen the district's image through consistent storytelling, elevating community pride, and the celebration of student and staff success.

## ACTION STEPS

**5.1. Engage a marketing and communications consultant to lead a multi-year branding initiative. The consultant will conduct a brand audit, design a visual identity refresh, and implement an integrated media campaign.**

**5.2. Launch a coordinated storytelling campaign that shares weekly success stories of students, staff, and schools via the district website, newsletters, social media, and partner media outlets.**

**5.3. Design and promote a “District of Choice” brand identity with a new slogan and media assets. Incorporate into recruitment materials, school signage, and community presentations.**

**5.4. Track and grow regional media exposure through intentional pitching of NNPS success stories, programs, and partnerships to local media.**

**5.5. Implement an annual workforce recruitment marketing campaign including branding, testimonials, digital media outreach, and recruitment events.**

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

By 2030, 100% completion of Year one campaign milestones as outlined in the consultant's scope of work (brand audit, messaging toolkit, launch plan, visual identity) by July 30, 2026.

By February 2026, we will launch a refreshed brand identity.

By 2030, we will achieve a minimum 10% annual increase in positive stakeholder perception from 2025-2026 baseline.

By 2030, there will be a 15% annual increase in engagement metrics (newsletter open rates, social media shares, website visits).

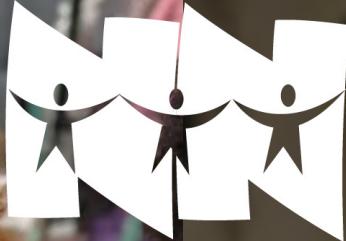
By 2030, at least 52 feature stories are published annually (1 per week).

By February 2026, 100% of principals will be trained in district messaging.

By 2030, there will be a 10% annual increase in perception survey ratings on effective communication.

By 2030, NNPS will see a 15% annual increase in applications across priority shortage areas.

By 2030, regional perception surveys will reflect a 10% annual increase in “NNPS is an employer of choice.”



## Resilient

Responsive to challenges and demonstrate self-directed learning

## Innovative

Solve problems with creativity and a future-focused mindset

## Academically Prepared

Literate and workforce-minded, ready for future endeavors

## Emotionally Intelligent

Navigate life and relationships with empathy and self-awareness

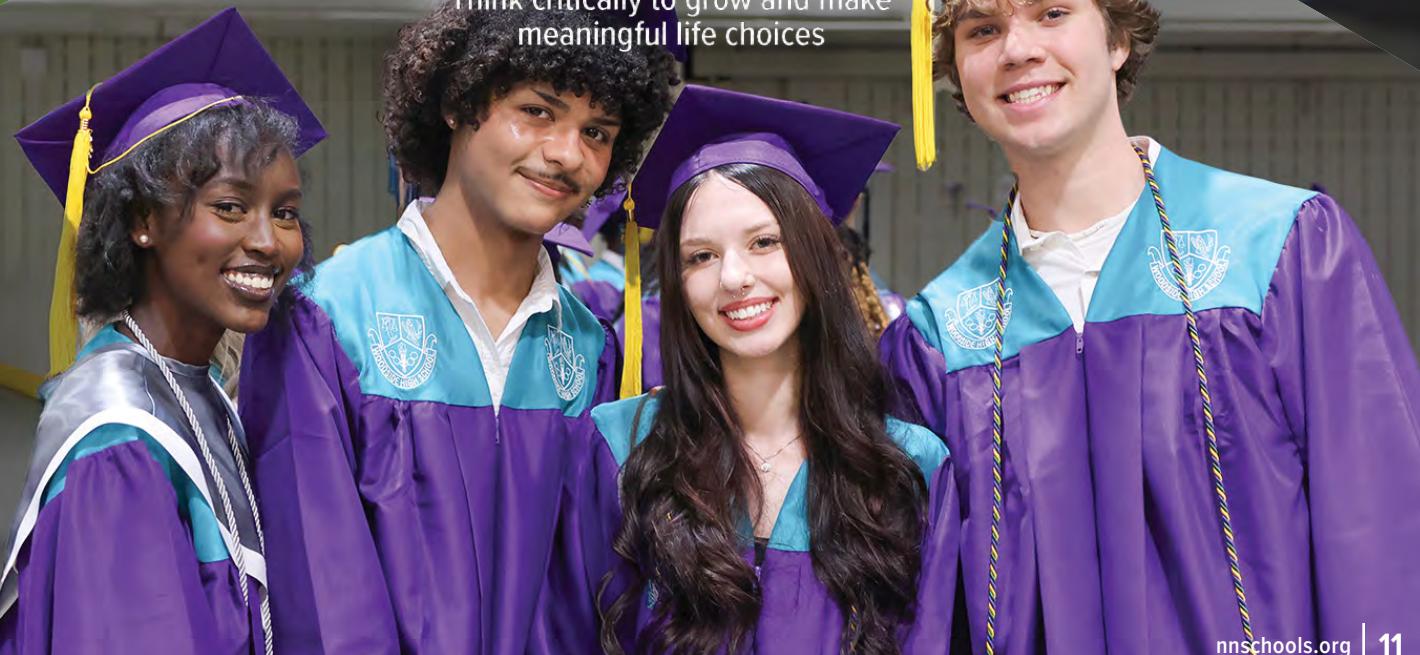
## Profile of A Learner

## Leader

Lead with purpose, influence, and integrity beyond the classroom

## Reflective

Think critically to grow and make meaningful life choices



# Steering Committee Members

In the spring of 2025, the leadership of Newport News Public Schools partnered with Insight Education Group (IEG) of the K12 Coalition to plan and facilitate their strategic plan. Driven by a cross-functional, community-based Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Insight Education Group launched a series of six meetings to begin the collaborative work. This committee, composed of diverse stakeholders including educators, parents, community leaders, and representatives from local organizations, played a pivotal role in shaping the direction of the division's future. Through collaborative workshops and data-driven discussions facilitated by Insight Education Group, the committee provided invaluable insights and perspectives, ensuring that the resulting strategic plan reflected the collective aspirations and priorities of the entire community. Additional feedback and data points came from the community and School Board through focus groups, surveys and board workshops.



**13**  
Focus Groups



**3**  
Board Workshops



**1120**  
Survey Participants

## Thank you to our Steering Committee Members!

**Ms. Ada Badgley**, Chief of Staff and Director of Strategic Initiatives, Virginia Peninsula Community College

**Dr. Felicia Barnett**, Executive Director, Youth Development and Family Engagement

**Ms. Rhonda Bell**, Office of Science Education, Jefferson Lab

**Dr. Terri Best**, School Board Chairman

**Ms. Tracy Brooks**, Special Assistant to the Superintendent

**Dr. Marsha Cale**, Executive Director, New Horizons Educational Regional Centers

**Pastor Natalie Chamberlain**, Pastor, Hilton Christian Church

**Ms. Sharon Conti**, President, Virginia Educators Credit Union

**Miss Tainijua Dewberry**, Student, Heritage High School

**Mr. Rusty Fairheart**, Chief Operations Officer

**Dr. Nina Farris**, Director of Human Resources

**Mr. Pat Finneran**, President and Principal Consultant, K12 Consulting, LLC

**Capt. Alison Funaiock**, Community and Youth Outreach Division, Newport News Police Department

**Ms. Elizabeth Galbreath**, Principal, Sedgefield Elementary School

**Ms. Lisa Gatz-Daniel**, Principal, Hines Middle School

**Mr. Michael Hamilton**, Dean of Student Success, Riverside Health Systems

**Dr. Mary Hardesty**, Principal, Woodside High School

**Mr. Gary Hunter**, School Board Member

**Ms. Casey Jenkins**, Superintendent of Youth Programs, Newport News Department of Parks & Recreation

**Mr. Brandon Jones**, Director of Community Captains and Program Outreach, Christopher Newport University

**Ms. Sabrina Jones**, Director of Strategic and Corporate Partnerships, The Mariners' Museum and Park

**Ms. Rebecca Kleinhample**, Executive Director, Virginia Living Museum

**Ms. Tanesha Koonce**, Middle School Teacher of the Year, B. T. Washington Middle School

**Ms. Holly Koons**, Executive Director, Torgler Fine Arts Center

**Mr. Michael Leech**, Owner, Professional Auto Diagnostics and Repairs

**Miss Kyla Leggette**, Student Representative to the School Board, Menchville High School

**Miss April Lin**, Student, Woodside High School Student

**Ms. Helen-Joy Lynerd**, NNPS Parent

**Mr. Eoghan (Owen) Miller**, Chief Strategy Officer, City of Newport News

**Mr. Dale Mingilton**, Foundation and Corporate Partnership Liaison

**Ms. Scarlett Minto**, Chief Financial Officer

**Dr. Michele Mitchell**, NNPS Superintendent

**Ms. Michele Nordeen**, President, Newport News Council of PTAs

**Mr. John Olson**, Campus President, ECPI University

**Mr. Darrell Pankratz**, Executive Director, Secondary Teaching & Learning and K-12 Programs

**Ms. Jessica Reynolds**, Division Teacher of the Year, Kiln Creek Elementary School

**Dr. Angela Rhett**, Director, Professional Growth and Innovation

**Ms. Varinda Robinson**, Retired NNPS Program Administrator, Federal Programs

**Dr. Kipp Rogers**, Chief Academic Officer

**Ms. Maribel Saimre**, Executive Director, Special Education and Student Support Services

**Ms. Sherri Sanchez**, Director, Testing, Assessment and Accountability

**Mr. Wayne Santos**, Executive Director, Technology

**Ms. Angela Seiders**, Executive Director, PK-12 School Leadership

**Mr. Cameron Smith**, Student, Warwick High School

**Dr. Wayne Smith**, Acting Chief Schools Officer

**Rev. Dr. Kevin Swann**, Pastor, Ivy Baptist Church

**Mr. Anthony Tyler**, Director, Academic Enrichment and Intervention

**Mr. Razvan Verde**, Former Student Representative to the School Board, Warwick High School

**Mr. Robert White**, Executive Director, Public Information & Community Involvement

# New Faces, Shared Purpose

We are proud to welcome the educators and staff who joined NNPS this year. Their passion and commitment will strengthen our collective efforts to Empower Every Learner.





12465 Warwick Boulevard  
Newport News, Virginia 23606

[nnschools.org](http://nnschools.org)



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