2021 - 2022

Newport News Public Schools is advancing college, career and citizen-readiness!

Report to the Community

Pictured: A Saunders Elementary School dual language immersion classroom where students are taught in English and Spanish.
SUPERINTENDENT’S MESSAGE

It has truly been a rewarding year in Newport News Public Schools!

While there were many challenges, the opportunity of having all of our students return to in-person instruction for a full school year made all the difference in the world. For many students, the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year marked the first time in over a year that they had physically reported to school. I will always cherish the joy and excitement on the faces of our students and families when it was finally time to open our doors.

This annual report highlights much of the great work of our teachers, support staff, coaches and many others over the course of the past year. While there were challenges, our students demonstrated a love of learning and a level of resilience that we all should be very proud of.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated, “Only in the darkness can you see the stars.” While we have not been literally in the dark, we are experiencing one of the darkest periods in public education. Challenges such as hiring quality teachers, supporting students’ mental health and keeping schools safe are acute needs that will always be among our top priorities. Even during our most challenging times, we have experienced some of the most beautiful examples of quality teaching, caring and love for children.

We are grateful for many of the stars who grace the pages of this report. I hope you feel the same.

Please enjoy and join us in continuing our efforts to make Newport News Public Schools a premier school division.

Yours in Service,

George Parker, III, Ph.D.
Superintendent
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Newport News Public Schools educates 26,500 children in 41 schools: 3 early childhood centers, 24 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, 5 high schools, 1 middle/high combination school and a virtual learning academy. NNPS is a community of diverse learners: over 1,500 students speak a language other than English. NNPS employees number 4,688 including 2,045 teachers.

NNPS is home to 12 magnet schools and specialty academies that offer a specialized focus in the curriculum or distinctive type of environment or instruction. Magnet schools and specialty academies serve students across the city. Every student is eligible to apply.

Magnet schools offer students engaging teaching and learning in such areas as environmental science; marine science; communication and performing arts; aviation; global studies; university studies; math, science, technology and engineering; and virtual learning.

Newport News Public Schools also boasts two Governor’s Academies: the Governor’s STEM Academy at Heritage High School and the Governor’s Health Sciences Academy at Warwick High School. Denbigh High School is home to the Aviation Academy, the only high school aviation academy on the East Coast.

The International Baccalaureate program at Warwick High School gives students a rigorous and diverse education.

See how magnet and specialty programs are transforming education in NNPS.

Elementary School Magnet Programs
www.bit.ly/NNPSESMagnets

Middle School Magnet Programs
www.bit.ly/NNPSMSMagnets

High School Magnet Programs
www.bit.ly/NNPSHSMagnets
Each day in Newport News Public Schools the focus is on one mission: ensuring that all students graduate college, career and citizen-ready.

See how NNPS is preparing students for successful futures: www.bit.ly/NNPSMission

College-Ready

Advanced Placement Courses. The school division offers more Advanced Placement (AP) courses than any other school district or private school on the Peninsula. AP courses are open to all students and those with qualifying grades may earn college credit.

Dual-Enrollment. High school juniors and seniors have the option of earning college credit and high school credit concurrently through dual-enrollment courses at Virginia Peninsula Community College and Norfolk State University.

Early College. High school seniors may earn up to 19 semester hours of college credit prior to high school graduation in this unique partnership with Virginia Peninsula Community College. During their senior year, students complete their high school course work during the first semester and attend VPCC during the second semester.

Career-Ready

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). With innovative instruction, new technologies, state-of-the-art labs, and resourceful business partners, students at all levels are engaged in hands-on and minds-on activities that prepare them for further education and rewarding career possibilities in STEM.

Industry Certifications. NNPS offers more than 70 Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses designed around industry standards to ensure high-quality instruction for high-wage, high-demand and high-skill careers. CTE courses prepare students to earn more than a dozen industry certifications, accelerating student access to technical, high-skilled careers.
Citizen-Ready

Youth Development. Through school leadership academies and participation in clubs and organizations, students in all grades have the opportunity to develop leadership skills, volunteerism and citizenship.

The Bloom, Flourish and Blossom Empowerment Programs are division-wide, student-led empowerment initiatives designed to equip female students with the information and resources essential for their development as global leaders destined to make an impact in their schools, community and the world. Participants explore such topics such as self-discovery, positive relationships, and health and wellness. Students are also experience leadership development, service projects and volunteerism.

The RISE! Male Empowerment Network was created to encourage youth-serving organizations and individuals to come together to serve male youth. The Network brings together a wealth of resources, expertise, and creative ideas that strengthen the collective work of those who are committed to improving the quality of life for young men in our city.

Service Learning. Service to others is introduced, taught and practiced as part of the elementary curriculum. Middle and high school students provide a wealth of services to the community by contributing their time and talents to service projects and volunteer efforts.

Scan or click to learn more about Youth Development’s Emerging Leaders Program.

www.bit.ly/YDEmergingLeaders

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Shanice Waite

Shanice Waite, an eighth grade student, was the recipient of the inaugural Ella Fitzgerald Middle School Principal’s Award. Shanice is a peer leader and a multi-sport athlete who is a track and field standout and a volleyball city champion. She was accepted into the International Baccalaureate program and drumline at Warwick High School for the 2022-2023 school year. “Shanice Waite is an amazing student, athlete and leader who excels at everything she does,” said her principal Dr. Micah Smith.
NNPS Students are Progressing: Reading and Math SOL Scores Rise

When the Virginia Department of Education released the 2021-2022 Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores for all public schools across the Commonwealth, there was good news for Newport News Public Schools.

The school division’s results are a story of resiliency and a commitment to meeting the physical and emotional needs of students. NNPS leaders take great pride in our students, who despite breaks in learning over a two-year period, demonstrated adaptability while giving their best.

The Virginia Department of Education’s accreditation process factors in student growth. Measuring student growth gives instructional staff a clear picture of the progress students are making as many recover from a loss of learning. Because of the pandemic, NNPS results follow a similar trend across the state with some noted exceptions. Because of NNPS’ emphasis on consistency in literacy and mathematics throughout the pandemic, during both periods of virtual and in-person instruction, 28 NNPS schools demonstrated academic growth in reading scores with 29 meeting the highest rating of level one. In mathematics, 31 schools met level one, while an additional 13 schools demonstrated improvement.

While NNPS results in reading and mathematics are promising, there is still much work to do. The school division’s focus on improvement in science and school attendance will be critical to raising academic outcomes for individual schools and the overall division. NNPS has set high expectations for teaching and learning through quality instruction, opportunities for student involvement and voice, and positive relationships. The curricula, instruction, social-emotional supports and family partnerships will continue to fortify the Profile of the NNPS Learner.

NNPS teachers and staff are ready and driven to ensure that all students have the resources and responsiveness they need to truly thrive.

See the characteristics that NNPS students will embody. View Newport News Public Schools’ Profile of a Learner:

www.nnschools.org/learner/
The Class of 2022 was accepted into 120 colleges, universities and military academies and earned more than $55 million in scholarships and academic awards.

The Class of 2022 remained committed to their goals with perseverance, dedication, and hard work. NNPS graduates mastered academic requirements, competed in sports and academic competitions, served their schools and communities, and developed the skills necessary to be productive citizens. During the course of their high school careers, Newport News Public Schools has continued to expand opportunities to give our students the knowledge and skills they need to graduate college, career and citizen-ready. The result of these efforts were on display in June as 1,550 students walked across the stage and received their well-deserved diploma in front of thousands of guests. Forty-five percent of the Class of 2022 graduated with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher and our graduates earned over 2,000 industry and career certifications. We’re extremely proud that Newport News Public Schools has opened doors for thousands of students — now we encourage the Class of 2022 to move forward and step into their future.
NNPS on-time graduation rate increases, tops state average

Newport News Public Schools’ graduation rate increased to 94.5% in 2021, higher than the state average of 93%. The school division's on-time graduation rate has increased significantly from 72.9% in 2008. During the same period, the dropout rate decreased from 12% to 1.4%.

The on-time graduation rate monitors a cohort of high school students entering ninth grade and assesses the graduation and dropout rates of these students four years later.

See our amazing graduates. Scan or click to watch the 2022 Graduation Ceremonies:

Over the summer, three NNPS students worked hard in the heat to beautify ten school campuses.

Crew members were enrollees in a course called Work Experience II. They aided the school system’s Plant Services department and served as paid interns spreading mulch in flowerbeds.

These student workers applied at the NNPS Human Resources offices and were processed as employees, following the same steps other employees complete, including fingerprinting and completing real job applications.

The Plant Services Department supplied the mulch and a crew cab truck to transport the student workers, their teacher, and an instructional assistant to each worksite. The team started work early each day to get ahead of summer heat as they unloaded and spread the mulch.

Through this work-based learning experience, the interns learned about the world of work and, through hands-on real-world work experiences, gained valuable skills for future employment while accomplishing work tasks provided by Plant Services.

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, NNPS launched the Virtual Learning Academy (VLA), an online learning program for students in elementary school through high school which offers a blend of live and independent instruction led by NNPS teachers.

Web-based classes include core subjects - English, math, science and history - and electives and Advanced Placement courses.

The VLA is a modern approach to remote learning that gives students the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities and athletics in person at their zoned school. Strong community partnerships provide VLA students with meaningful learning and socially engaging field trips and activities.

Virtual Learning Academy students have choice and voice in how, when and where they learn. Learn more about the VLA middle and high school program: [www.bit.ly/NNPSVLA](http://www.bit.ly/NNPSVLA)
Newport News Public Schools enjoy a robust emphasis on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics), an interdisciplinary, hands-on approach that appeals to all students. Every school has a lead teacher who cheerleads the program and assists colleagues in planning inclusive, active and fun lessons that incorporate concepts from every subject to solve real-world problems in creative ways.

When the school calendar includes a half-day, students at Sedgefield Elementary know that means a STEAM Day. Dee’Jean Mendez, the school’s STEAM lead teacher, reports that attendance, which used to be a concern on half days, is now much higher because students don’t want to miss the fun lessons.

During the March STEAM Day, students in kindergarten learned about polar bears and Matthew Henson, the African American North Pole explorer, before they used toothpicks and marshmallows to build shelters for the bears.

Third graders made simple machines and demonstrated their models for the class, while fourth graders researched African American spies, including Josephine Baker and James Lafayette, before they created 3D models of tools to assist their research subject’s spycraft.

Ms. Mendez led her fifth-grade class through a lesson on African American quilt block designs and the messages the geometric shapes could convey before they moved to the gym to apply that geometry to creating mazes for robotic balls to navigate with controls from the students’ iPads.

As a result of these innovative lessons, students enjoy learning that is connected, creative and fun, leading many to feel more confident about studying math and science in the future.

STEAM Rises from Sedgefield Elementary Students’ Brains on Activity Days

Scan to see the Sedgefield students in action:
www.bit.ly/SedgefieldSTEAM

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Serenity Flores

Serenity Flores, a fourth grader at Carver Elementary, loves coming to school to learn math and reading. Her academic performance earned her membership in the school’s chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society. For two years, Serenity has played cello in Soundscapes, an after-school music instruction program offered at Carver. She hopes to continue playing cello in college and major in music.
NNPS Named Among Top Schools in the State

Newport News Public Schools is named a system of Top Schools in Virginia Living magazine’s 2022 list of notable institutions.

Virginia Living published the list of Top Schools in its March/April 2022 issue. The list highlights outstanding Virginia public and private institutions that boast exemplary programs and achievements.

With 12 magnet and specialty academies, a division-wide STEM curriculum, more Advanced Placement courses than any other public or private institution on the Virginia Peninsula, college dual enrollment, career and technical education programs and youth development programming and more, Newport News Public Schools is the smart place to learn.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Liana Gonzalez

Liana Gonzalez is a 4th grade student at Jenkins Elementary School. Liana is an honor roll student who is actively involved in her school community. She serves as a mentor to younger students and is a member of the Student Council Association. She has participated in numerous school community service projects including the One City Food Drive. Liana and the other members of the SCA collected and counted food items each day and reported on their progress during the morning news show. Jenkins students collected over 1,000 non-perishable food items for local families.
Notable Accomplishments & Awards

Literacy Plan
NNPS developed and launched a division-wide PK-12 Literacy Plan to build the capacity of all learners as readers, writers, communicators and researchers. Implementation strategies include innovative and equitable practices that close achievement gaps and increase access to rigorous learning experiences that are reflective of the NNPS Profile of a Learner.

Scan to learn more about how NNPS is advancing student literacy: www.bit.ly/NNPSLiteracy

See the complete PK-12 Literacy Plan: www.nnschools.org/literacy

Facilities Master Plan
NNPS embarked on a long-range Facilities Master Plan process to identify and prioritize schools and facilities. Cooperative Strategies, a national school facility planning firm, led the development of the plan with input from the community and NNPS staff and students.

The plan identified over $500 million in major capital improvements including new construction and renovations to better meet the educational goals and needs of students over the next 10-15 years.

Scan to review the Facilities Master Plan: www.nnschools.org/futures

Expansion of Dual Language Immersion Program
The U. S. Department of Defense Education Activity awarded a World Language Advancement and Readiness grant worth $1.6 million to NNPS. The grant supports the addition of two schools to the existing Spanish dual language immersion program. The expansion of the dual language immersion program will provide the opportunity for military-connected students, as well as students in the northern end of the city, to participate in the program.

NNPS uses a 50/50 two-way dual language immersion model in which students receive instruction in English 50% of the time and the other 50% in Spanish.

Meritorious Budget
Newport News Public Schools earned the Association of School Business Officials International Meritorious Budget Award for excellence in the preparation and issuance of its budget for FY 2022. The award reflects NNPS’ commitment to sound fiscal management and budgetary policies.
NNPS Students Earn National and State Awards

Virginia High School League Class 4 Lincoln-Douglas Debate State Champion
Jan Fedyszyn, a junior on the Warwick High School Debate Team, was named the Virginia High School League Class 4 Lincoln-Douglas Debate State Champion. Fedyszyn earned top placements in regional and super regional competitions giving him the opportunity to advance to state competition.

National Archery in the Schools Tournament
Archery teams from Richneck Elementary, Gildersleeve Middle and Menchville High, and three individual archers competed in the National Archery in the Schools Program Tournament in Louisville, Kentucky. Three archers from B.C. Charles Elementary - Ryan Washington, Elyssa Wright and Peyton Telfare – qualified for the national tournament as individual archers.

Scan or click to see the award-winning archers in action.

www.bit.ly/NNPSArchery
**VHSL Class 4 Outdoor Track State Champions**
The Heritage High School Girls Outdoor Varsity Track team earned the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Class 4 Outdoor Track State Championship. Madison Whyte placed first in the 100, 200, and 400 meter, with Sabria Wooden coming in second in the 400.

**VHSL Class 5 Girls Basketball State Champions**
The Menchville High School Girls Varsity Basketball won the VHSL Class 5 State Championship. Amari Smith was named the Class 5 Girls Player of the Year and Head Coach Adrian Webb was named the Class 5 Girls Coach of the Year.

**VHSL Class 4 Indoor Track State Champions**
The Heritage High School Girls Varsity Indoor Track team won the VHSL Class 4 State Championship. During the state meet, Madison Whyte claimed individual state titles in the 55-meter dash and the 300-meter dash; Kara Ashley, Madison Whyte, Sabria Wooden and Sanaa Wooden won the 1,600 relay; and Kara Ashley, Myzhane Solomon, Sabria Wooden and Sanaa Wooden teamed up to win the 800 relay.

**Class 5B Outdoor Track Regional Champions**
The Woodside High School Boys Track Team captured the Class 5B Outdoor Regional Championship in spring 2022.
Five Inducted into Newport News Track Hall of Fame

Newport News Public Schools hosted its 40th Track Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in March. The event, held in conjunction with the Conn-Madden Relays at Todd Stadium, celebrated the accomplishments of Coach Juan Jackson, former head track coach at Denbigh High School; Coach Jerome Rhodes, former assistant track coach at Woodside High School; Terrence Riggins, Virginia AAA state champion who won the discus in the spring of 2007; Derrick Robbins, Sr., former track athlete at Woodside High School; and Maurice Pierce, former track athlete and district, regional and state qualifier from Warwick High School.

Watch the ceremony: www.bit.ly/NNHallofFame

Graduate Spotlight:

Abdalla Elrahhal

Abdalla, a 2022 Denbigh High graduate, was accepted into 89 colleges and received more than $8.8 million in scholarships and financial support. He accepted an appointment to the Air Force Academy after being nominated by Rep. Bobby Scott’s office. As an Aviation Academy student, Abdalla explored his passion for aerodynamic engineering while learning more about being a pilot.
NNPS Social Emotional Support Program Earns National Award

The National School Boards Association selected Newport News Public Schools’ TEaMS program as a 2022 Silver Magna Award winner.

NNPS established Tiered Emotional and Mental Health Supports (TEaMS) in 2019. The program offers a continuum of social and emotional services to students, ranging from classroom lessons addressing social emotional learning to direct outpatient clinical mental health support. In addition to TEaMS professionals, all school level employees are trained in the Youth Mental Health Awareness curriculum, equipping them to recognize mental health needs and refer students for assistance.

The TEaMS approach removes barriers to mental health care by providing services at no cost to families. The program fully funds licensed clinical mental health therapists who serve in the school setting, allowing all students access to needed help. It is highly unusual for a school system to count licensed therapists among its own staff, and NNPS is the only school system in southeastern Virginia to offer such access to these professionals in schools.

NNPS was featured in the April 2022 issue of the American School Board Journal and was recognized during the NSBA’s annual conference in April.
NNPS has Talented, Award-Winning Employees

Newport News Public Schools is home to three W!SE Gold Star Teachers: Iris Harris-Williams at Enterprise Academy, and Hope London and Lisa McAlister at Denbigh High School. To earn the Gold Star Award, a teacher must have achieved a 93% passing rate on the W!SE Financial Literacy Certification Test in at least one class during the 2020-21 school year.

Karen Digiorgio, library media specialist at B.C. Charles Elementary School, earned recertification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Mrs. Digiorgio completed the rigorous process to become recertified in Library Media, pre-K through 12. National Board certification is a symbol of excellence in teaching and professional growth and the highest credential in the teaching profession. The certification process usually takes between one and three years.

Menchville High School Girls Varsity Basketball Head Coach Adrian Webb was named the Virginia High School League Class 5 Coach of the Year. Coach Webb led the Lady Monarchs to the VHSL State Championship, a first-ever for Menchville.

The NNPS Community Relations team earned ten recognitions in the 2022 National School Public Relations Association Publications and Digital Media Awards. The team’s campaigns and materials to promote school system events, employee recruitment, specialty programs and back-to-school events earned four awards of merit and six honorable mentions.

The group’s achievements were recognized in July at the NSPRA National Seminar in Chicago.
NNPS Principals, Assistant Principals of the Year

In honor of their exemplary leadership and service to NNPS and their students, six school administrators were selected as Principals and Assistant Principals of the Year for 2022-2023. The honorees were named during the Leadership Reception, following the inaugural Golf Classic at Kiln Creek Golf Club.

Pictured: School Board Vice Chairman Lisa Surles-Law, Elementary School Assistant Principal of the Year Suzanne Ramirez, Elementary School Principal of the Year Jacky Barber, Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year Dr. Victor Guisao, Middle School Principal of the Year Lisa Gatz-Daniel, High School Assistant Principal of the Year Terry Fenner, High School Principal of the Year Dr. Kellie Mason, School Board Chairman Douglas Brown, and Superintendent Dr. George Parker.

Scan to watch the Leadership Awards Presentation: www.bit.ly/NNPSLeaders

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

Emily Andrews, NNPS Teacher of the Year

Emily Andrews teaches eighth grade civics and economics at Hines Middle School. She teaches her students important critical thinking skills to help them become engaged citizens. She guides her students to analyze documents, draw conclusions and separate fact from opinion. She believes that civics and economics equips students with the skills and knowledge to be informed members of society. She encourages her students to take an active role in improving their communities and uses research opportunities and role-play to encourage them to learn more about local and national issues.

Ms. Andrews joined the teaching profession after 10 years in international development because she thought the best way to prompt change was to become an educator.
General Stanford Elementary, located inside the gates of Fort Eustis, is named a Purple Star School.

The Virginia Department of Education awards this designation to schools that meet their high standards for service to military-connected students and their families.

To be named a Purple Star school, staff must complete training in meeting the needs of military students. Purple Star schools must also offer online information specifically designed for military families and must offer new students peer support to ease their transition.

For one of its schools to be awarded the Purple Star, the school system must also demonstrate its support for military families. In September, the Newport News School Board passed a resolution committing to support the approximately 6,500 military-connected students in the school system through on-going professional development for teachers to prepare them to best meet the needs of this population and through focused communication to keep these families informed of the school and community resources available to them.

Scan to see the Purple Star Celebration: www.bit.ly/GSESpurplestar
High Schools Earn Top Honors for Financial Literacy

An Achievable Dream High School has been named a W!SE Blue Star School. To earn this accolade, a school must have achieved an 80% passing rate on the W!SE Financial Literacy Certification Test and have either a majority of students on a given grade level receive personal finance instruction or have at least 10% of the school’s students take the Certification Test.

Three Newport News high schools are listed among the 100 Best W!SE High Schools Teaching Personal Finance: Achievable Dream High School, Menchville High School and Woodside High School. The national ranking recognizes excellence in personal finance instruction.

GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT:

Lauren Francis

Lauren Francis, a 2022 graduate of Woodside High School, is the recipient of the 2022 Wayne D. Lett Scholarship. Lauren plans to attend Christopher Newport University and to teach English. Francis was active in the Student Council Association, marching band, the Student Athletic Leadership Team, and as a community volunteer.

The $10,000 award is given to an NNPS senior preparing to become a teacher. Recipients of the scholarship agree to teach in Newport News Public Schools for three years. The program is administered by the Newport News Education Foundation as a tribute to Wayne D. Lett, Ed.D., a former superintendent of Newport News Public Schools.

The first NNPS/Newport News Education Foundation Golf Tournament was a rousing success, with 37 sponsors and 88 players enjoying a day on the links and raising $36,835 for Newport News Public Schools. Missed this year’s event? Take a mulligan and watch for news about next year’s tournament, tentatively planned for June 15, 2023. Email nnschoolsgolf@nn.k12.va.us to find out how to become a sponsor.

NNPS Partners Support Students, Instruction

Riverside Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Specialists Named the Official Sports Medicine Team for NNPS

Riverside Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Specialists has partnered with NNPS to provide sports medicine care to high school athletes. Riverside’s sports medicine team also supports NNPS athletes by reviewing all athletic trainer protocols, providing professional development to athletic trainers and serving on division-wide athletic committees.

Riverside Sports Medicine Specialists provide medical care and oversight in several areas including sports physicals, injury management at sporting events and medical management of sport related injuries to help return athletes to play.

“We could not be more excited to have this opportunity to bring our expertise to work with the student athletes at NNPS,” says John Barley, D.O., a sports medicine physician with Riverside Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Specialists. “Our team is dedicated to providing the highest quality medical care, where we focus on improving performance, decreasing injuries and providing access to highly qualified sports medicine specialists.”

Newport News/Hampton Area Missionary Council Donates Supplies to the ESL Welcome Center

In March, representatives of the Newport News/Hampton Area Missionary Council delivered school supplies for English as a Second Language (ESL) students to the ESL Welcome Center located at the Watkins Early Childhood Center. The representatives were greeted by ESL supervisor, Bruno Morales, as they unloaded boxes of pencils, folders, water bottles, earbuds, and other supplies. Council President Pat Johnson, whose organization wants to support NNPS students, said “Just tell us what your schools need and we will work to get it.”

The missionary council represents 21 faith-based organizations in Newport News and Hampton. In addition to providing more school supplies, they are committed to supporting NNPS students and teachers as volunteers to provide support in classrooms and at school activities.
School Board Names
Three Organizations to the VSBA Honor Roll

The Newport News School Board voted to name Community Knights, Anthem HealthKeepers Plus and the Newsome-Bailey Project to the 2022 Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll for their ongoing commitment to Newport News Public Schools. The VSBA established the Business Honor Roll to recognize local organizations and businesses that play a key role in supporting our communities and local schools.

Community Knights, a non-profit organization based in Newport News, supports public schools and local non-profit organizations. The organization’s dedicated staff and volunteers help cultivate a vibrant, interconnected community through a continuous loop of volunteerism and community driven fundraising. As of spring 2022, Community Knights had awarded 817 grants worth $1,607,000 to 199 public schools and non-profit organizations, with much of that amount going to support students, families and staff in Newport News Public Schools. Community Knights has financially supported youth development programs, robotics teams, archery teams, arts programs, parent support groups and student activities through generous grant donations.

Students across Newport News and the Newport News Books on Bikes program got a big boost from Anthem HealthKeepers Plus, which donated trike bikes to 13 Newport News preschools and elementary schools in August. Family and Community Engagement Specialists use the trike bikes to stay connected with students and promote literacy after school hours and during school holidays. The specialists and other school staff, who serve the 13 schools, use the bikes to ride along with the Newport News Books on Bikes volunteers to visit neighborhoods to deliver books directly to students. Books on Bikes keeps children excited and engaged in reading. Anthem HealthKeepers Plus has also financially supported student and family events, school courtyards, music programs, and health and fitness programs at numerous schools.

The Newsome-Bailey Project is a faith-based nonprofit organization in Newport News that partners with educational therapists, tutors and volunteers who work together to equip and empower students and their families. Their dedicated staff and volunteers have promoted success and development through tutoring, mentoring and other programs. In partnership with NNPS, the Newsome-Bailey Educational Therapy Program is conducted during the school day and after school at the school or another site during extended school closures. For more than a decade, the organization has provided educational services to students at Newsome Park Elementary School and Marshall Early Learning Center, along with enrichment activities including family dinners, horseback riding and swimming lessons.
Institute Awards Grants and Books to NNPS Preschoolers

The Black Child Development Institute (BCDI)-Hampton Roads presented grant funds and books to preschool classrooms in Newport News Public Schools.

Darlene Walker, president of BCDI-Hampton Roads, said, “We know the importance of establishing home reading libraries and hope that the funds and books the preschool programs receive will support the school system’s youngest students on their path to success.”

Denbigh, Marshall and Watkins early childhood education centers received checks for $1,000 each. The two preschool classrooms at General Stanford Elementary received $300. All students in the preschool programs will also receive books of their own through the generosity of the Institute.

The Black Child Development Institute is a nonprofit organization with a mission to improve and advance the quality of life for Black children and families through education and advocacy. While the group advocates especially for African American children, their generosity is extended to every child in the selected schools.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

Steven Wilks, Producer Access Hollywood

Steven, a Menchville High School graduate, serves as a news producer for Access Hollywood, a nationally syndicated entertainment news program. He is responsible for gathering and selecting news content, writing copy for stories and planning the daily program.

Steven credits his success in broadcasting to the hands-on instruction he received in the two-year TV Production program at the NNPS Telecommunications Center. The program teaches students the aspects of TV and video production from shooting video to editing and directing. Students also have the opportunity to work on remote productions including live school board meetings, athletic events and graduation ceremonies.

“I would not be where I’m at now if I did not have that foundation from the Telecommunications Program,” Steven said. Hear how NNPS gave Steven his foundation for success:

www.bit.ly/SWilks
Huntington Middle School: Preserving History

The Newport News School Board and the City Council approved a Southeast Community Resource Area Master Plan, which includes a new 600-student Huntington Middle School. The project is guided by five key principles:

- **Community** - The resource area should create a heart for the community and renew a sense of community pride.
- **Heritage** - The design should embrace and reflect the vibrant history and culture of the community.
- **Connectivity** - The campus should be a place of multi-generational opportunities, providing spaces for and connections among youth, adults, and seniors.
- **Wellness** - The facilities should promote healthy lifestyles for students and community members.
- **Catalyst** - The project should spark a renewed interest in the redevelopment of the Southeast Community.

The concept plan includes areas which will be available to the public during non-school hours: a forum, gym, and cafeteria, and school focused areas including the academic wing and learning commons (library). The school’s academic wing will serve 200 students on each floor in learning studios (classrooms), science learning labs, a resource room, and open/shared collaboration areas for individual student and group work.

NNPS and the design team will engage families, alumni and the community to actualize the history of Huntington High School in the new school.

Design completion is expected by January 2023 with an anticipated opening in fall 2024. The school’s curriculum will focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics).
NNPS honors the memory of Flora Crittenden: teacher, counselor, city council member, state legislator and civil rights leader. Her legacy of service lives on in her namesake Crittenden Middle School and in her lasting impact on our students and community.

She served NNPS for 32 years as a teacher, department head, guidance counselor and guidance director at Carver High School and Carver Intermediate School. Following her career in education, Mrs. Crittenden served a term on the Newport News City Council and was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates for 11 years.

She graduated from Huntington High School in 1941 and earned a bachelor’s degree from Virginia State University and a master’s degree from Indiana University.

In 1994, the Newport News School Board renamed Carver the Flora D. Crittenden Middle School, a magnet school for mathematics, science, and technology.

Scan or click to see a commemoration of love and service in honor of Mrs. Crittenden’s 95th birthday.

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