

Norwood-Norfolk Central School District Board of Education Update



September 8, 2017

OFF TO A GREAT START

A new school year has begun! This week we greeted students back to school and we're off to a wonderful beginning. Our new faculty have hit the ground running and there is an energy that's almost palpable. We also greeted many new students to our community as transfers have run high this summer. Our student body has engaged many of these new students and we're showing them just what Flyer Pride means. We also have enjoyed getting to know our newest classes of children in Pre-Kindergarten (class of 2031) and Kindergarten (class of 2030). It's going to be a great year!



NNHS SENIOR SELECTED FOR CONFERENCE ALL-STATE WIND ENSEMBLE

NNHS band member Riley Haas has been selected to perform in the 2017 Conference All-State Wind Ensemble at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. Riley competed against hundreds of the best high school clarinetists across New York State to earn his seat. We're very proud of you, Riley. Congratulations!

INTERESTED IN ONE OF FIVE US MILITARY ACADEMIES?

We were recently contacted by the Office of Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (NY-21) regarding an opportunity for our students to begin planning for their future. The following is what was sent and there is a flyer attached with this email about this event.

I am reaching out to you to let you know about an exciting opportunity for your high school students who are considering applying to one of the five U.S. Military Academies and are interested in learning more about the process. On Thursday, October 5, 2017, representatives from the academies will be available at Onondaga Community College to discuss the application process and what students can expect while attending an academy. They will also answer any questions your students or their parents may have about the experience as a whole. Attached is a flyer with additional information about the event.

We ask that you please let your students and their parents know about this opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Jo Richards in our Watertown office at 315-782-3150 or at maryjo.richards@mail.house.gov.

This event is co-hosted by the US Senate and Congress. There will be representatives available from:

- U.S. Military Academy
- U.S. Naval Academy
- U.S. Coast Guard Academy
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
- U.S. Air Force Academy
- Army, Navy, and Air Force R.O.T.C.

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THE ACT – A COMPARATIVE OF NNCS VS. NYS

We recently received a letter from The ACT comparing the results of NNCS students with all the students from NYS who take the exam. The ACT test is the nation's most popular college entrance exam accepted and valued by all universities and colleges in the United States. The ACT is based on what students learn in high school and provides personalized information about their strengths for education and career planning.

The ACT reported that 100% of our NNCS students taking the exam were determined to be college-ready in English Composition when only 82% of the students state-wide take the exam meet this criteria. This is extraordinary and a testament to the preparation our students receive here at NNCS. Likewise, NNCS students did very well in other curricular areas in comparison to NYS. 82% of our students were college-ready in Algebra while NYS students were only 67% prepared. In social studies, 91% of our students scored college-ready and NYS students only met the standard 68% of the time. Biology students at NNCS were 82% college-ready when only 59% of the students in NYS taking the exam met that benchmark. We're proud of our students for meeting this established standard and celebrate their accomplishments.

LET'S GET INVOLVED!

Students get a lot out of school, but their experience can be improved if they get involved. At the NN High School, there are many opportunities for students to join a team, club, or group. Students who participate in extra-curricular activities generally have a more positive experience and impression of the school. Likewise, they tend to be more organized and have positive relationships with their peers and adults. Here is a list of the clubs and organizations at NNCS. Let's Get Involved!

Art Club – Mr. Yandeu

Yearbook – Mr. Hubbard

Key Club – Mrs. Dean

National Honor Society – Miss Childs

Robotics – Mr. Cook

Envirothon – Mr. Ellison

Whiz Quiz – Mr. Sullivan-Catlin

Varsity Club – Mrs. Cook

Travel Club – Mr. Rishe

Foreign Language – Mrs. Arrocha-Gettmann

Mock Trial – Mr. Sullivan-Catlin

Drama Club – Mr. Burnett

Musical/Stage Crew – Mr. Burnett

Bel-Aires – Mr. Burnett

Jazz Band – Mr. Wimmer

BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

During this school year our faculty and staff will be diligently working on targeted goals. The purpose is to use high-leverage strategies which lead to systemic improvement. You can access our Goals [HERE](#) or by visiting our website.

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BE PROUD! BE LOUD! BE SUPPORTIVE!

Come out and watch our Flyers take on the competition. A schedule of all contests and practices can be found [HERE](#). Let's get out and Be Proud! Be Loud! And Be Supportive!

PATRIOT DAY

September 11th - Patriot Day - a day of observance to remember the vicious attacks on our country (9/11/01). I will never forget the terror I felt on that day worrying about family members and friends. Consoling students who felt true fear for the very first time. Watching my mentors break down into tears. Wondering a simple question, "Why?" A terrible day in the history of our country.

Yet, I also chose to view Patriot Day as a day of awakening. A day that when the dust settled each community stood side by side and declared that the American Spirit would not be diminished. Every house proudly flew the Red, White, and Blue. There are only a handful of times in the history of our country when the American Spirit was so bright; our mission so clear.

It's difficult for me to imagine that the students we serve have only read or watched a documentary about this event. Our oldest students were not yet of school age when this tragedy struck. In fact, many of our younger teachers were young adolescents at this time. We owe it to them to tell our stories of that day and of the days which followed. This is the most important historical day from my living memory and our students should know of its' relevance and importance to our Country.

Patriot Day - a day that we remember the loss and sacrifices of that day and the sacrifices that families have given in the two ensuing wars which were sparked by this event. I deeply appreciate the men and women who protect our great Nation and those who serve overseas.

I am humbled by the magnitude of this day and am deeply honored to be a citizen of this great Nation.

I will never forget!

BUBBLE TROUBLE

On September 20th our elementary students will be entertained by Bubble Trouble. What an entertaining production. We're sure to have the students laughing and enjoying the event.



A bubble volcano. A bubble roller coaster. A kid in a bubble? Jeff Boyer takes bubbles to the max in this one-man bubble extravaganza. It is the craziest, most creative bubble show around. Jeff juggles bubbles, sculpts and builds with bubbles, makes fog-filled bubbles and more. Mixing comedy, music and interactive bubble-magic, he will engage and delight the audience. Members of the audience will join Jeff on stage to participate in the performance.

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NEW OPTION FOR PAYING TAXES

For the 2017-2018 school tax collection season, taxpayers will now be able to make their school tax payment online. There is a fee to the homeowner for using this service. The fee is NOT for the school but is assessed by the company collecting the taxes. It is their fee, not ours.

Payment options include Visa, Mastercard or Discover credit or debit. The requirements and fees are:

- Minimum of \$2 payment
- Fee of 3% of tax bill or amount paid + \$.50 if using MC/VISA/DISCOVER
- No AMEX accepted
- Payment online has to be made in full - installment payments are not an option
- The fees collected go directly to The Satellite.biz bank account; the District does not receive any of the fees collected.

The URL to make online tax payments is: <http://taxlookup.net/search.aspx?jurisdiction=norwoodcsd>. This link is not active, yet, but will be up and running in late August. All service or technology issues are handled with the provider, The Satellite.biz. The District Office is not responsible for handling inquires for support.

Taxpayers can still pay their taxes at the Norfolk Town Offices at the designated hours.

A MESSAGE FROM NYS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school! I hope summer vacation gave you time to rest, recharge, and relax with family and friends.

As much as I am thrilled that school is starting again, the difficult news coming out of Texas in the wake of Hurricane Harvey and the events that happened in Charlottesville last month are reminders of the challenges facing our country today. Given the connectedness of the modern world, the heartbreaking images of flooding in Houston and news clips of the unrest in Charlottesville are nearly unavoidable. Even though these things took place many miles from New York, they still have a profound effect on us and our children.

On one hand, recent events have uncovered an unfortunate reality about our country - it's clear we have a long way to go to get to a place of true inclusiveness, understanding, and respect. But, on the other, more positive hand, these events have also helped to remind us about the kindness of neighbors and the resilience of the human spirit. They show us that in spite of these latest tests to our nation's character, there are reasons to remain hopeful about the future.

Most importantly for me, the events underscore the indispensable role of schools. Schools are places of respite for children who have lost their homes and much more; they are communities that provide comfort and security in times of need; and they are institutions where lessons go far beyond academics. In classrooms, children learn to be considerate and compassionate individuals who embrace diversity and differences with open minds and hearts.

In this context, our work becomes even more imperative. That's why I am eager for the new school year to get underway. This year, which will be my third as State Education Commissioner, we will continue to work together to build upon the progress that we've made over the past two years to improve public education in New York State.

In other words, like our students, we have homework to do to make our schools even stronger.

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Our first assignment involves our Next Generation Learning Standards. Later this month, the Board of Regents is set to adopt these new standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, which is the culmination of a two-year-long review process that included more than 4,000 public comments and the input of committees made up of 130 parents and teachers.

But getting the new standards in place is just the start. The next steps involve engagement and implementation. This time, we will roll out the new standards over the course of several years, allowing ample time for teachers, your children, and you to feel comfortable with the revised material before students are tested on it.

Another big project for us is our Every Student Succeeds Act Plan - ESSA for short. For the past 15 months, we have engaged with thousands of stakeholders, policy experts, and educators to put together our plan.

ESSA replaced No Child Left Behind and gives us a new opportunity to look at how well our schools are doing and provide additional supports to schools that need them. Our plan emphasizes the importance of fostering equity in education for all of our students and expands measures for school support and accountability, and for student and school success. You'll be hearing much more about ESSA once our plan is approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

There's more to do too. This year, we will start the process of gathering input from teachers on a new evaluation system - one that will be done with teachers, not done to them as was most recently the case. We will also look for new strategies to achieve true equity across New York's schools and do more to ensure every classroom respects and celebrates our State's rich diversity.

We realize that our homework won't be easy, and we won't be able to do it alone. We'll lean on you and our teachers and administrators for help so we can truly understand what's happening in our schools and hear your ideas on how best to move forward. It's the same approach we teach our students - if you do your research and seek out other perspectives, your finished product will be much better. For more details about our work ahead, you can watch my [back-to-school video](#).

Thank you for all you do to strengthen our schools. The parent-school connection is a key component to school and student success. I encourage you to continue to be involved in your child's school this year. Attend meetings with your school's leadership, find out more about what your child is learning in class, and reach out to your child's teacher, principal, or superintendent if you have questions. Your involvement will only enrich your child's educational experience.

As the new school year begins, I also ask that you keep in mind the school communities in Texas and other places affected by recent events. There is no better time for your school communities to pull together to show the rest of the country the strength and generosity of New Yorkers.

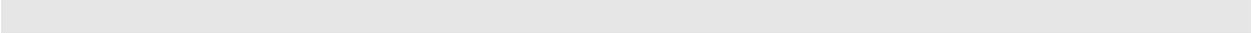
Best wishes for a positive and productive school year. Together, we will make it the best one yet.

Sincerely,
MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner



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UPCOMING EVENTS

9/11	President & Vice-President Meet with Superintendent
9/12	SLC Shared Services Panel
9/14	District Improvement Group
9/19	Pre-K – Grade 2 School Pictures
	Board of Education Meeting
9/20	Grade 3 – 6 School Pictures
	Wellness Meeting
9/21	Elementary Open House
9/22	MS Fun Night
9/23	Key Club Free Movie Day
9/26	Grade 7 – 9 School Pictures
9/27	Grade 10 – 12 School Pictures
9/30	Class of 2018 Kickball Tourney
10/3	St. Lawrence County Schools Summit
10/6	Early Dismissal for Staff Development
10/9	Columbus Day
10/10	President & Vice-President Meet with Superintendent

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