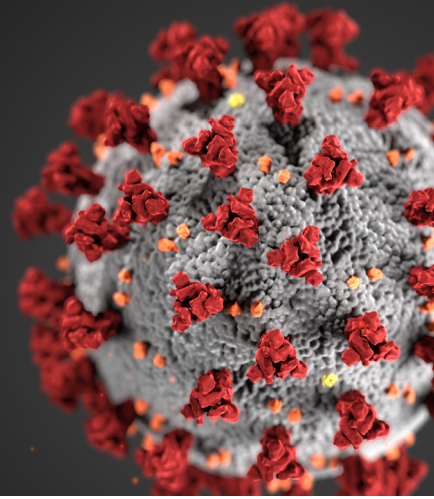




CORONAVIRUS COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

News to keep our school community up to date during the Coronavirus crisis



Message from Superintendent Dr. Sharon I. Byrdsong



I was so heartened by the outpouring of gratitude for our teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. It was the perfect time to show our thanks for teachers who are doing such remarkable work.

There's another group who also deserve our deep appreciation—our high school seniors. I am extremely proud of their dedication and resolve to finish their senior year with grace and tenacity. I have admired their flexibility and resiliency as we have navigated this uncertain time together.

In a few weeks, our seniors will be noted by historians as the Class of 2020 graduates who, despite a pandemic, successfully fulfilled their academic requirements and learned invaluable lessons in so doing.

Countless young people are now being inspired to consider careers as scientists, doctors, nurses, and medical researchers. I believe their vision to make the world a better place is crystal clear. We look forward to applauding our seniors and families at our upcoming graduation celebration activities.

VIRTUAL GRADUATIONS, SPECIAL EVENTS PLANNED FOR JUNE

Norfolk Public Schools is excited to salute its seniors and their success. Based on the recent survey feedback, NPS is offering a variety of graduation celebrations. Although constrained by current health guidelines, NPS hopes these celebrations will be meaningful and memorable for seniors and their families.

Cap and Gown Distribution – Month of May

Every high school has its own process in place for distributing caps and gowns to seniors. Principals will be contacting seniors directly with their individual school's specific process for picking up caps and gowns.

Virtual Graduations – June 8 and 9

Every high school will be hosting its own virtual graduation on the same date and time as originally scheduled. The virtual ceremonies will feature pre-recorded speeches, music, and a PowerPoint slideshow of each senior's picture, name, and

additional graduation information. Seniors and families can gather in their homes to watch the ceremony and celebrate together. Seniors will also be able to commemorate this special time with their classmates by posting celebratory comments and photos of graduation festivities using an online tool called Padlet (details to come).

Each high school's virtual ceremony will be livestreamed on the date and time that the graduation was originally scheduled. Reruns of the ceremony will be available on the NPS YouTube channel as well as on Channel 47.

Mementos and Memories Event – June 11 and 12

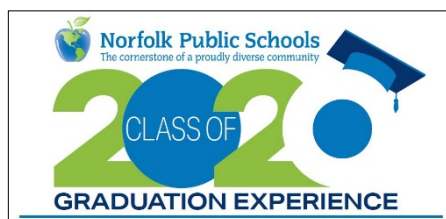
Each high school will hold a special event whereby graduates and their families can schedule an appointment to pick up diplomas and graduation programs, and pose for professional photos in their caps and gowns. This event will be organized in alignment

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Virtual Graduations

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with current health guidelines. Seniors will also have an opportunity to turn in their mobile devices, library books, athletic equipment, and other school property, if they have not already done so.



Video Salute to Seniors – Week of June 22

Seniors, families, and friends can enjoy a video montage that will feature photos of graduates posing in their caps and gowns at landmarks and places around the City of Norfolk. Principals will provide details regarding where to send photos and the deadline for the submission of photos. The compilation video will be posted on the NPS YouTube channel and broadcast on Channel 47 beginning the week of June 22.

An In-Person Graduation Ceremony – August 3-4

(Only if permitted under the directives of government officials, advised by medical experts, and supported by state health guidelines) Family and friends can celebrate the Class of 2020 in an in-person graduation ceremony at the Chartway Arena on the Old Dominion University campus. There will be limited seating with social distancing. More details to come as plans are available.

We are looking forward to celebrating the Class of 2020 through these exciting special events. Seniors and families should watch for e-mails from their school regarding many of these details.

News for Families of Students with Disabilities

Schools and departments are continuing to work together to provide learning opportunities to our students with disabilities.

Teachers and related service providers are reaching out to parents/guardians and sharing resources, answering questions about learning plans, and working with students on learning alternatives, as needed.

Norfolk Public Schools realizes that the virtual learning format is not ideal for every student and will continue to provide flexibility in learning activities to meet the needs of all learners based on academic and functional circumstances.

Instructional materials and activities, including related service supports, have been updated and shared on the Learning Support-Special Education Services [Learning in Place webpage](#).



New Resource Offered in Partnership with Rethink Ed

Norfolk Public Schools and Rethink Ed have partnered to provide access to Rethink Ed's Special Education program through June 30, 2020. It is a comprehensive K-12 online platform for social-emotional learning supports for students of all ages and abilities, and accessible by teachers, staff, parents/guardians, and caregivers. Visit the [NPS Rethink Ed](#) webpage to create a free account.

Check Out the Archived Zoom Q&A

Want to know how to support your child during the school closure? Interested in hearing how others are handling challenges with learning at home? Check out the archived Zoom Q&A session from May 15 for answers to these questions and more on the [Learning Support-Special Education Services webpage](#). If you have additional questions, please send them to parentresourcecenter@nps.k12.va.us. And look for another Zoom Q&A session to be scheduled in June.

We Want to Hear from You!

The Learning Support-Special Education Services staff want to know how you and your student are doing during the extended school closure. We invite you to complete the [Family Check-In Survey](#). If you are unable to access this online survey, please e-mail jrichardson1@nps.k12.va.us.



NPS Expands Meal Distribution Program to Five More Sites, Condenses Distribution Schedule to Three Days a Week

On Monday, May 11, Norfolk Public Schools added five more meal distribution sites to the current 12 sites and three locations for school bus deliveries. The new sites are: Crossroads School, Little Creek Elementary, Ocean View Elementary, Tanners Creek Elementary, and Tidewater Park Elementary.

Also on May 11, the meal distribution schedule changed to Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays but will maintain the current times of 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The same amount of food will continue to be distributed, as the meal bags will contain multiple meals to cover Tuesdays and Thursdays as well as the weekends. The change is being made to limit the exposure of school nutrition staff, students, and the public to each other and ensure a safer process for distribution.

The 12 original food distribution sites will remain: Azalea Gardens Middle School, Booker T. Washington High School, Camp Allen Elementary, Coleman Place Elementary, James Monroe Elementary, Lake Taylor School, Norview Elementary, Oceanair Elementary, P.B. Young Elementary, Southside STEM Academy, St. Helena Elementary, and Suburban Park Elementary.

Delivery of meals via NPS school buses will also continue with the condensed schedule with the same sites and hours: Titustown Recreation Center (11 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.); Huntersville Community Center (12 noon – 12:30 p.m.) and Grandy Village Recreation Center (1 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.).

Free Books To Be Distributed at Meal Sites



The Virginia Center for the Book, along with the help of the Virginia Humanities [Changing the Narrative](#) grant, is donating books to students and families of Norfolk Public Schools.

Approximately 600 books will be distributed at the 12 original meal distribution sites on Wednesday, May 27, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on a first-come, first-served basis. (See box to the left for the locations of the 12 original distribution sites.)

NPS is excited about this partnership and the opportunity to provide students culturally diverse, engaging titles to read and enjoy.

NPS Participating in Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program

Families who are eligible to receive free and reduced-price school meals can benefit from a state program that will provide additional support to buy food during the pandemic.

This assistance, known as P-EBT, is in addition to the meals provided through the current NPS meal distribution program (see above box).

Households do not have to apply to participate if a student was eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals at school before the closure. Benefits will be automatically issued to those households. For more information, please visit our [Frequently Asked Questions webpage](#).



Phase IV of Learning in Place Plans to Launch May 18

Beginning Monday, May 18, Phase IV Learning in Place plans will be posted on the NPS webpage by grade level. Phase IV will extend through June 5. These new materials and activities are designed to keep students engaged in the learning process during the extended closure.

Students may now turn in their completed work from Phase I, II, and III on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at their home school or scan in their packets and e-mail their teachers directly. A cover page will be available at the school's drop-off point to be completed and attached to packets.

Paper copies of Learning in Place plans will be available for pick up on at one of the 12 original "grab-and-go" meal distribution sites for students (not at the five sites recently added). Students and families may pick up packets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. during the weeks of May 18 and May 27. Please note that Monday, May 25, is Memorial Day and no packet distribution will occur.

School Board Approves 2020-2021 Calendar

In a meeting held virtually on May 6, the Norfolk School Board approved a 180-day academic calendar for the 2020-21 school year. The calendar was adopted after an extensive public input process.

The adopted calendar includes these important dates:

- Schools will be closed to students and staff on Labor Day, September 7.
- The first day of school will be Tuesday, September 8.
- Election Day, November 3, will be a virtual teacher day and schools will be closed to students.
- Veterans Day, November 11, will be a holiday for students and staff.
- The Thanksgiving Break will be observed November 26 and November 27.
- The Winter Break will extend two full weeks, December 21-31.
- Schools will be closed to students and staff on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 18, and on President's Day, February 15.
- Spring Break will be observed April 5-9.
- Schools will be closed to students and staff on Memorial Day, May 31.
- The last day of school for students will be June 17.

For details, please read more on the [NPS website](#).

Families, Students, and Schools Show NPS Teachers Tons of Appreciation and Love



Students and parents/guardians sent in more than 250 photos with messages of gratitude for their teachers in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-8. Check them out in our [teacher appreciation video](#).

Sherwood Forest Elementary Principal Cheryl Jordan decked out her vehicle for the Robin Hoots Teacher-Scholar Appreciation Parade on May 5.



Maury High School Boosters invited students to show thanks as teachers picked up their free lunches at the school on May 7. [Watch the video](#).

On May 6, Lake Taylor High School Principal Latesha Wade Jenkins (left) led a caravan of cars to each teacher's home to let them know how much each one is appreciated and loved. The caravan covered 234 miles and lasted 12 hours.

