



# Norfolk Public Schools

The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

Dear Norfolk Public Schools' Parents and Guardians:

I trust that the start of the 2022-2023 school year has been exciting and rewarding for you and your child(ren). This summer, our teachers, administrators, and all our staff worked to ensure that our students could build upon their academic successes as we returned to learning this fall. Our preliminary analysis of students' combined rate results from spring end-of-grade testing indicated significant gains, including growth of 10 points or more in reading and/or mathematics in 19 schools.

However, we acknowledge that we still have more work to do. Norfolk Public Schools relies upon strong classroom instruction supported by various sources of student data to identify gaps in learning and the implementation of research-based intervention strategies. Additional instructional supports include the continued use of programs that parents/guardians may hear about or see their children using at home, such as Lexia for reading support and Edmentum for mathematics. Please know that the school division's efforts extend to providing free tutoring support for students in grades three (3) through twelve (12) through FEV Tutor. This online platform provides either scheduled tutoring appointments or on-demand homework help. You can find more on this topic on the school division's website at [www.npsk12.com](http://www.npsk12.com) or through your child's(ren's) school(s).

Our efforts to provide tiered support to every student who needs it reflects our commitment to the goals outlined in the school division's strategic plan, entitled "Continuing the Drive." Norfolk Public Schools continues its journey toward *equity and excellence for all* by strategically focusing on the most important and impactful levers for improvement. These areas include student excellence, workforce, resources, community, and safety and climate. The City of Norfolk School Board is currently considering this plan, which was developed with input from our community stakeholders along with a committee of dedicated professionals from across the school division.

The school division's budget this year included multiple strategies to help us recruit, retain, and hire teachers and bus drivers, including pay raises and incentives. The school division worked tirelessly and aggressively throughout the summer to hire for vacant positions. However, staffing shortages continue to impact Norfolk Public Schools, as well as other school divisions around the country.

We thank you for your patience and understanding with division-wide transportation. Some students may experience bus delays, especially during the beginning of the school year. We continue to examine routes to ensure all those who ride our buses reach their destinations safely and on time. Please continue to use the *Here Comes the Bus* app to stay informed of your child's(ren's) pick up and drop off times.



# Norfolk Public Schools

The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

We also count on your continued support for the expectations described within our Student Code of Conduct, as well as for the safety and security of our schools and all within them. Norfolk Public Schools has upgraded its security technology throughout the school division. Our safety team has conducted training with security staff as well as our administrators, and we continue to work closely with our partners in the Norfolk Police Department.

Please be prepared to present identification anytime you enter a school building. Additionally, please talk to your child(ren) about the appropriate use of cell phones and social media, as well as sportsmanlike conduct during athletic events.

As always, parents and guardians represent our most important partners in education. We welcome you to our schools. Please stay connected to your child's(ren's) teacher, and we encourage you to volunteer! Norfolk Public Schools offers many meaningful volunteer opportunities to include mentoring, serving as chaperones, reading to our young scholars, and assisting teachers in their classrooms. To register to serve as a volunteer, visit [www.npsk12.com/volunteer](http://www.npsk12.com/volunteer).

I am pleased to share that Norfolk Public Schools will continue to offer *free* breakfast and lunch to all students through our Community Eligibility Provision. This program also allows families in the school division to access discounted broadband service through the federal Affordable Connectivity Program. Visit [fcc.gov/acp](http://fcc.gov/acp) to find out more about this program or to apply.

Please accept my warmest wishes for a happy and successful school year for you and your family!

Sincerely,

Dr. Sharon I. Byrdsong  
Superintendent of Schools