



Regular Meeting Cumberland County Board of Education

August 10, 2021

### Superintendent Updates the Board

Dr. Connelly began his update by commenting on the safe and smooth return of Cumberland County School students to in-person learning at the district's Year-Round schools on July 26 and the Early Colleges on August 9. He said he anticipates the return will be just as safe and smooth for the Traditional schools on August 23.

Afterward, Dr. Connelly shared information about the following highlights:

*CCS RISE 2021 Update* – The summer intervention program was a success as 5,451 students participated in Session 1 (Academic Intervention) and 4,662 students in Session 2. Also, 1,000 students registered to take part in the Acceleration for All virtual experience.

*Preparing for the Great Comeback Overview* – In preparing for the district's Great Comeback, the following significant efforts have taken place:

- In-Person Leadership Professional Development Session;
- In-Person Districtwide Professional Development;
- Arrival of 166 New Beginning Teachers; and
- Four Successful Rollin' Recruitment Fair bus stops.

Points of Pride – The following points of pride in the district were shared:

- 782 Athletic, Grant, State and National Awards (2018-2021)\*
- 63 Athletic Awards
- 177 Grant Awards
- 221 State Awards
- 101 National Awards
- 220 Other Noteworthy Awards

*\*Total count as reported by schools/departments*

Also, numerous national awards received by those in CCS were mentioned from Cumberland International Early College High School teacher Maureen Stover becoming a finalist for 2020-2021 National Teacher of the Year to the district receiving the Purple Star District Designation for 100 percent of its schools receiving the 2020-2021 Purple Star Award.

### Unanimous Approval Given to Superintendent's Recommendation for COVID-19 Masking, Safety Protocols

*Universal Masking Requirement for Students, Employees and Visitors*

In keeping with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#), Cumberland County Schools (CCS) will require all students (PreK–12), staff and visitors to wear face masks at the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

### Board of Education

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Dr. Marvin Connelly

The masking requirement is for everyone, regardless of vaccination status and applies to all schools and district facilities. Masks are also required on all public school transportation. Students will be able to take masks off while eating and drinking and outdoors as long as they are not in a crowded setting or participating in activities that involve close contact with others.

“From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic until now, we have made decisions based on the science and guidance from medical professionals,” said Dr. Marvin Connelly, Jr., CCS superintendent. “Our top priority is to operate our schools in-person all year as safely as possible. Universal masking is one of the best ways we can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

The Board unanimously approved Dr. Connelly’s recommendation for universal masking after receiving an update on the increasing number of positive COVID-19 cases in the school system and Cumberland County. A representative from the [ABC Collaborative](#) also shared information about the latest science and data in North Carolina. In North Carolina, the Delta variant has been the most commonly circulating variant since the week ending June 26, 2021. According to health officials, Delta spreads more than twice as easily from one person to another, compared with earlier strains. The Board will periodically review COVID-19 metrics to determine the length of time universal masking will be needed.

#### *CCS Launches Revised COVID-19 Dashboard*

The district has launched a revised COVID-19 dashboard to provide up-to-date information on positive COVID-19 cases in the school system. District staff will update the dashboard on Friday of each week. To access the dashboard, visit <https://bit.ly/ccscoviddashboard>. To learn more about the revised dashboard, watch the [overview video](#).

#### *Free COVID-19 Testing and Other Safety Protocols*

Thanks to federal funding, school-based COVID-19 testing is available and will provide another layer of support to help keep students and staff safe. While not required, parents will have the opportunity to opt-in to free COVID-19 testing for their students.

CCS schools and offices will refer individuals for diagnostic testing who have symptoms of COVID-19. Through the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services’ partnership with MAKO, a COVID-19 testing company, CCS will offer free rapid (antigen) testing on-site to facilitate quick COVID-19 diagnoses. Rapid antigen testing works to prevent in-school transmission while minimizing face-to-face learning time lost.

The district will also aim to maintain a minimum of three feet of distance between students and a minimum of six feet of distance between adults, to the greatest extent possible.

Learn more about the district’s COVID-19 safety protocols [here](#).

#### **Board Recognitions**

Betty Musselwhite, the associate superintendent of School Support Services, recognized Cumberland County Schools 2021 Teacher of the Year Nicole Rivers from Gray’s Creek High School and Principal of the Year Suzanne Owen from Cliffdale Elementary School. Both educators earned the Sandhills Regional winner title in their respective competitions! In June, Owen was also announced as the 2021 North Carolina Principals & Assistant Principals’ Association (NCPAPA) Elementary Principal of the Year.

**Administrative Recommendations**

*Central Services*

Executive Director of Transportation Kristi Harden

*Assistant Principals*

Douglas Byrd High	Jeffrey Gotshall
Douglas Byrd Middle	Taylor Price
Morganton Road Elementary	Tiana Thompson
New Century International Elementary	Erica Caine
J.W. Seabrook Elementary	Brandi Stanley
Cumberland Polytechnic High	James Dockery
College Lakes Elementary	Jill Good
Anne Chesnutt Middle	Whitney Iglesias
Bill Hefner Elementary	Jessica Cashwell
Cliffdale Elementary	Charlie Davis
Cross Creek & Cumberland International Early Colleges	Angela Williams
Douglas Byrd High	Shanita Wooten
E.E. Miller Elementary	Sarah Ruddock
Gray's Creek Middle	Loraine Leigh
Hope Mills Middle	Jaime Gilas
Massey Hill Classical	Rachel Andress
Pine Forest High	Pierre Cobb

**Board Approves 2021-2022 School Fees and Dues List**

The Board approved the Finance Committee's recommended school fees and dues list for the new school year. Numerous dues and fees for students in the district's elementary, middle, and high schools, clubs and organizations, and athletics are outlined in the schedule.

**Academic Services 2021-2022 Purchase Agreements Get Approval**

Members of the Board approved the following purchase agreements from Academic Services' for services and/or goods for the new school year: A Plus Test Prep (ACT test prep and strategies for all juniors and sophomores); BetterLesson (Coaching and professional development for all middle school teachers, instructional coaches and school administrators); Instructure-Canvas (A cloud-based, real-time learning management system that supports teacher, learning and student success); and the National Training Network (Coaching and professional development for all high school math teachers.)

**CCS and FSU MOA, Meal Services Contract Receive Support**

The memorandum of agreement that sets the parameters for the operation of Cumberland County Schools' Cross Creek Early College High School (CCECHS) and Cumberland International Early College High School (CIECHS) on the campus of Fayetteville State University (FSU) was signed by the Board of Education. The MOA highlights facility use, admissions, tuition, fees and other costs and provisions. The Board also agreed to a contract that outlines FSU's responsibility in providing nutritious meals for students attending both Early Colleges.

### **The Board Enters a Cooperative Agreement for Students with Disabilities**

The Board and the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services entered an agreement that provides vocational rehabilitation services for eligible students within the district in order to assist them with their transition from school to work.

### **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Program Gets Approval to Expand**

Members of the Board agreed to the purchase of *Second Step*, a research-based, teacher-informed, and classroom-tested program that promotes the social-emotional development, safety, and well-being of children from early learning through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The program had already been piloted in four local schools (Manchester Elementary, Lillian Black Elementary, W.T. Brown Elementary and Spring Lake Middle) and 15 digital licenses have been purchased for select DODEA Grant schools during the 2021-2022 school year. The Board agreed that CCS will utilize the elementary and middle school digital programs in all K-8 buildings in the district. Student Services employees and teachers will incorporate the pre-made lessons into their daily schedules, e.g., morning meetings, and classroom guidance/large group instruction, in order to meet the needs of teaching SEL. *Second Step* is CASEL aligned.

### **Board Policy Regulating Extracurricular Activities, Co-curricular Activities and Student Organizations Gets ‘Thumbs Up’**

Board Policy 3620 requires students to maintain a certain grade point average and attendance rate to take part in various school-based activities. Because of challenges associated with the pandemic, e.g., some students’ access to instruction, attendance and ultimately their final grades, the Board of Education approved temporarily waiving the following components of Policy 3620 for the previous semester (Spring 2021) only:

- 2.0 grade point average or a minimum of a 70 for the previous semester;
- “missed no more than 54 class periods” of a 4x4 schedule for the previous semester; and
- “must be in daily attendance 85 percent” on a traditional 7-period schedule for the previous semester.

### **The First Reading of Revised Policies Approved**

The following first reading of revised policies were approved by the Board:

6140 – Student Wellness  
7730 – Employee Conflict of Interest  
8305 – Federal Grant Administration  
9120 – Bidding for Construction Work

### **Board Approves 4 Policy Revisions**

The following second reading of revised policies were approved by the Board:

4040/7310 – Staff-Student Relations  
4240/7312 – Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety  
4316 – Student Dress Code  
7720 – Employee Political Activities