

# BYOD(evice) Pilot Program Begins

Three Newport News Public Schools are part of a pilot Bring Your Own Device program that lets students use familiar technology to make learning more immediate, interactive and fun.

The project is being tested at Crittenden Middle School, Heritage High School and Point Option. Its aim is to take advantage of the gadgets – smart phones, laptops, tablets or handheld gaming devices – many students already own and harness them for learning.

Before anyone logs on, students (and their parents) have to register the devices and agree to the rules. Teachers and administrators have the last word about when and where they are used. And, students who don't have their own devices will still be able to participate in activities, using NNPS equipment.

Pamela Johnson, instructional technology coach at Heritage High School, says about 85 percent of Heritage students have smart phones and 90 percent have laptops, though many are without internet access at home. Johnson says about 30 percent of students have an e-reader and 15 percent have a tablet. (Some HHS students have more than one device.)

Whether it's a smart phone or e-reader, the device needs to be able to connect to a wireless network and must have a media access control (MAC) address to allow it to be identified on the network. Sharing isn't per-

mitted, and students and families assume risks for damage, loss, theft or overage fees for cell phones. The devices must be charged at home, and school personnel will not provide technical support. There's also no texting, playing games or use in hallways.

Registration has taken place already at Crittenden, according to Bonnie Adams, the school's instructional technology coach. Students who registered devices received a sticker to post on their student agenda (class assignment book). Students who haven't registered will have to wait until the next enrollment period. Heritage has sent home information about the program and plans to follow up with town hall-type meetings for students.

Crittenden students who follow the rules will be allowed to listen to music during lunch: Eighth-graders on Fridays and other students at announced times. Heritage may incorporate the devices on Wacky Wednesdays, allowing reading at lunchtime.

Teachers at all three schools are using the tools in a variety of ways. According to Johnson, some English teachers are using open-access platforms like Google Docs for reading assignments. Students can comment on the assignment and carry on a virtual conversation about it. Math teachers may post problems on a Facebook page and students can post their solutions in the form of videos.

Adams says all of the devices have a contact list. Some teachers are using that feature to post vocabulary lists. Research on websites and informal surveys are other likely uses.

But, they aren't replacing textbooks. Students will still have to take home their books for assignments or to study for a test. And, while students can bring electronic readers like Kindles or Nooks to school, they can't download library books to those devices. There are thousands of e-books available for download in school libraries, which allows the schools to save space. But, those texts are downloaded to specific library and classroom computers, the only place where they can be accessed.

The wireless network should keep malware, viruses and worms from infecting school district computers, and the networks have been beefed up at the schools in anticipation of heavier use. Johnson says Heritage students can't wait to get started. She expects the program to point students toward greater integration of technology in their futures, whether as students, employees or citizens.

Adams also sees a world of discovery at students' fingertips, saying, "The best thing is that it puts kids in charge of their own learning. I can't imagine not having my iPad at my side. I want kids to have that same power. What these kids have at their fingertips is absolutely amazing."

## Calendar

**January**  
 21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Schools and offices closed)  
 25 Teacher workday (Students do not report)  
 28 Staff Development Day (Students do not report)  
 29 Second Semester begins

**February**  
 8 School Board Retreat  
 18 Presidents' Day (Schools closed; offices open)  
 19 5:30 p.m. School Board work session  
 7 p.m. School Board meeting  
 26 5:30 p.m. School Board work session (operating budget)

**March**  
 8 Students dismissed ½ day  
 12 7 p.m. School Board Budget Hearing  
 19 7 p.m. School Board Meeting (Budget Approval)  
 29 Students dismissed ½ day; teacher workday

## Board Briefs

**At its Nov. 13 meeting, the School Board:**

- Approved the proposed Fiscal Year 2013 legislative program.
- Heard a report about the NNPS curriculum.

**At its Dec. 18 meeting, the School Board:**

- Approved an easement at Lee Hall Elementary School necessary to install a water line.
- Approved proposed new course recommendations for 2013-2014.
- Adopted a state-required policy for the administration of epinephrine.
- Heard reports about the proposed expansion and relocation of Point Option and the Aviation Academy and Heritage High School's designation as a Governor's STEM Academy.

To review the complete agenda and the presentations, visit <http://www.board-docs.com/vsba/nnpss/Board.nsf/Public#>

Visit [nnschools.org/board](http://nnschools.org/board) for more info. School Board meetings and work sessions air live on Cox Cable channel 47, Verizon FiOS 17 and on the internet at [www.nnpstv.com](http://www.nnpstv.com).



# NEWSBreak

PUBLISHED FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JANUARY 2013 FIND US ONLINE AT [NNSCHOOLS.ORG/INTRANET](http://NNSCHOOLS.ORG/INTRANET)

## Sky's the Limit for Aviation Academy Students

You might expect that high-school students in a career-oriented magnet program would be all business when it comes to their studies. And, students at the Aviation Academy take education very seriously. Then, again, their curriculum does cover real, life-or-death issues like navigation and air-traffic control. And the students rub shoulders regularly with industry professionals.

As students trickle into Dhyronn Goggins' Aviation Technology II class, they get out their projects, put on safety glasses and get to work. Megan McLean, a 10th-grader wearing an animal print top and an impeccable manicure, squeezes a hand riveter with both hands. Fellow student Ryan Rhodes stands behind her, coaching, as she propels a rivet through a piece of sheet metal.

Later, during William LaManque's Aviation Pilot Training class, students inspect each rivet on a small plane parked outside their classroom at Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport. As they run their hands over the plane, checking its ailerons to ensure they move smoothly, a cargo plane taxis down the runway for takeoff. Although their donated Cessna isn't flown any more, the students practice taxiing in the plane, and they connect their studies to the activity on the runway and take the preflight check very seriously.

Inside the classroom, Dominic D'Amico uses a navigation plotter to map a course on an aviation chart spread across the table. He notes obstacles (water towers) and landmarks along the way of the theoretical flight, corrects the plane's heading to accommodate prevailing winds and computes the maximum weight and fuel needs for the craft. He explains the variables, confident of his problem-solving.

He's also cool behind the controls of the school's flight simulator, where he's helped by Lanté Tucker, another 10th-grader. Tucker points out landmarks on the five computer screens that offer a panoramic – and accurate – view of the Peninsula. D'Amico's hands and feet move automatically as he scans 15 dials on the dashboard screen in front of him. A few minutes later, he touches down on the virtual runway. Both students exhale slowly.

Aviation Academy Administrator Aaron Smith takes pride in the rapport among students in the program. But he says students in the program aren't all academic overachievers. Despite their lofty ambitions, they are grounded and focused as they work toward certifications and a range of careers. Smith does admit



Tenth-grader Lanté Tucker goes through preflight checks on the Aviation Academy's donated Cessna at Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport.

his students have a different perspective than other students. Aviation Academy students see firsthand the financial effects of an airline ending service to the airport, as AirTran did last year. They discuss the work of city officials to bring businesses – and revenue – to Newport News. They also participate in air-disaster drills. The experiences are part of what Smith calls the academy's "hidden curriculum."

There's a demanding classroom curriculum, too. Aviation Academy students have the same academic requirements as non-magnet students, and they take Standards of Learning tests, but they also take advanced math and science courses and career classes in aviation maintenance, aviation management or technology. Students can take dual-enrollment classes for college credit and earn certification in a variety of specialties, like A+ or Cisco and electronics. The Aviation Academy is work-

ing with Liberty University in Lynchburg to arrange for students to be certified as aviation maintenance technicians, too.

Tucker says he likes the magnet program because the school is smaller, which lets him learn more and focus on his career. "It works for me." He likens the program to a college education, saying students are more serious about what they're doing "because it's their dream."

Smith echoes the sentiment, saying, "When a child sees a value in education, it takes learning, career aspirations and inquisitiveness to a whole other level."

The program began in the fall of 1995, started by retired Lt. Col. Curtis Grant as part of Denbigh's JROTC program. The Department of Defense contributed grant funds in the early years of the program. The academy partnered with Delta Airlines and Hampton

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## Unsung Hero: Dianne Pride

Smart, Safe Schools are places where staff members contribute to a nurturing environment that encourages students to grow academically and civically. Know an employee who has gone above and beyond to mentor youth and represent the Smart, Safe Schools philosophy? Send Unsung Hero nominations to [marguerite.hargreaves@nn.k12.va.us](mailto:marguerite.hargreaves@nn.k12.va.us).

Dianne Pride, administrative secretary at Kiln Creek Elementary School, is January's Unsung Hero. Janet Glasofer, lead special education teacher at the school, calls Pride "part of the glue that keeps us all together."

Glasofer writes, "She answers an endless supply of questions from parents, students and teachers. She assures parents when buses are not exactly where they are expected to be and calms worries of all kinds. She produces a beautiful yearbook every year. She knows parents and children and helps others on staff remember when families are experiencing difficulties."

Pride has been a Newport News Public Schools parent and school volunteer. Whatever her role, Principal Deborah Pack says, Pride "is an advocate for children. She works closely with our PTA to ensure all activities include our entire school population. Dianne attends those functions and helps the PTA wherever needed." Pack says Pride helped write and update the school's crisis plan and

keeps her cool during an emergency.

Kiln Creek librarian Barbara Letteri-Walker calls Pride "the heart and soul of our school. She is always willing to help anyone here at Kiln Creek. She spends countless hours making sure that all of our students' needs are met. She has been the PTA staff representative for many years. She has a nurturing and loving disposition. When anyone has a problem, Dianne has the solution."

Kiln Creek Registrar Lorraine Purvis has worked with Pride for nine years, at Yates Elementary School and Kiln Creek. She writes, "Her first thought is always, 'What's best for the kids?' Dianne gives endless hours for the benefit of the students. She is at every PTA event and is actively involved in helping our PTA plan events. ... It is important to her that all students are able to attend events and have a good time, regardless of their income."

Adds lead fourth-grade teacher Tia Martin, "She is a perfect representation of what a staff member should be in Newport News.

She is a mentor to the students here, and the PTA always counts on her for full support of each and every event."



Dianne Pride, of Kiln Creek Elementary.

## NEWSBreak

NEWSBreak is published by the Newport News Public Schools Office of Community Relations, 12465 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23606. Publication of information in this newsletter constitutes official notification. Director Public Information and Community Involvement: Michelle Price. NEWSBreak Editor: Marguerite Hargreaves.

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# Four Teachers Earn National Board Certification



Melinda Hodgkiss is fifth-grade lead teacher at Hilton Elementary School.



Patricia McNichol is kindergarten lead teacher at Hidenwood Elementary School.



Paige Randall is kindergarten lead teacher at Palmer Elementary School.



Wade Wooley coaches first-grade teachers at six elementary schools in the district.

Four more Newport News Public Schools teachers have completed the process of earning National Board Certification in their respective specialties. The demanding National Board Certification process can take up to three years. It requires more than 300 hours spent putting together a "career portfolio" of teaching materials, student work and multimedia examples. A reflective written component looks at teaching goals, methods and results. The candidates also have to undergo an assessment.

Teachers need three years of experience and a valid Virginia license before applying. (The program does not replace the state licensing program.) NNPS now claims 65 national board-certified teachers.

The newly certified teachers are: Melinda Hodgkiss, Hilton Elementary School, Middle Childhood Generalist; Patricia McNichol, Hidenwood Elementary School, Early Childhood Generalist; Paige Randall, Palmer Elementary School, Early Childhood Generalist; and Wade Wooley, literacy instructional coach, Early Childhood Generalist. The NBCT credential is valid for 10 years. Rachel Swords, an interventionist at Sanford Elementary School, has renewed her certification as an Early Childhood Generalist.

Hodgkiss says she was inspired to become a teacher by her seventh-grade science teacher. "I could always tell that she wanted her lessons to be meaningful and memorable. She also showed an active interest in her students as individuals. She supported us in class and at after-school functions."

McNichol says the process helped her understand what she doesn't know: "I have a lot to learn and need to always look for new ways to improve how I teach."

Randall calls certification "challenging, but a very powerful learning experience."

Wooley would advise teachers considering certification to try it, saying, "You have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

## Aviation

*Continued from page 1*

school and was an aircraft structural repairman in the Army during the first Gulf War.

"It really brings me back," he says about visiting the Aviation Academy. Vladu says magnet students are detail-oriented and that teamwork is embedded in the program. He sees the magnet students as an asset at Denbigh, where Aviation Academy students serve as school leaders.

Adam Reese, a junior, has his eyes on a military career, as a fixed-wing pilot in the Coast Guard or Navy. He made his first solo cross-country flight recently, to Elizabeth City, N.C. Reese, who began learning how to fly in September 2011, says he was "very nervous" about the solo flight, adding "This school is the reason I started to train for my license."

Reese learned about the magnet program from his father. He says teaching at the Aviation Academy is more hands-on, which he appreciates. He thinks other students have helped him to figure out his future, the certifications he wants, flight school and a career in the military.

Senior Jasmine Booker plans to attend Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. She wants to study aviation maintenance and minor in piloting. She hopes to join the Air Force, but wants to fly for recreational purposes only. Booker, whose sister attended the Aviation Academy, thinks there are more opportunities there than at other schools. She says academy students have more technical, "real-world" experience, adding, "I love what they teach here and how they go about it."

Aviation Academy students are required to participate in service projects and receive a program seal on their diplomas. Smith says he recruits students at public and private middle schools. He hopes to have 450 students in the program eventually. But, a recent proposal to move the program to another location, away from the airport, has been shelved for the foreseeable future.

According to the "Virginia Aviation and Space Workforce Analysis and Strategy Development," published in April, there are eight aviation and space-related magnet high schools in Virginia. A report from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce predicts Virginia will need to fill 374,310 STEM-related (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) jobs by 2018, and STEM jobs will make up 8 percent of all jobs in the state. Most jobs will require postsecondary education or training, according to the report.



Dominic D'Amico uses a navigation plotter to map a course on an aviation chart spread across the table. He also has to compute the weight of the aircraft and its fuel needs.

## News & Notes:

Have news about your school or work location that you would like to share? Send news and photos to [marguerite.hargreaves@nn.k12.va.us](mailto:marguerite.hargreaves@nn.k12.va.us)

Heritage High School has been named a Governor's STEM Academy, the 17th program in the state to earn the distinction from the Virginia Board of Education. Heritage is already a magnet school for engineering and technology. The new STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) academy will focus on four program areas: architecture and engineering design, computer systems technology, electronics and engineering and modeling and simulation.

The academy will open in September and is expected to begin with 150 freshmen and grow to 400 students in four years. Almost 1,100 students attend Heritage now.

Students have to apply to the academy and, once accepted, will have to meet stringent criteria that include completion of a STEM-related internship, 200 hours of service and earning industry certification and at least nine transferable college credits. Among the

academy goals are boosting the graduation rate and reducing the dropout rate at Heritage and increasing post-secondary studies and entry into high-skill, high-wage and high-demand careers.

STEM academy partners include major local employers (Newport News Shipbuilding, NASA, Jefferson Lab and Riverside Health System) and educational institutions (Christopher Newport University, Hampton University, Norfolk State University and Thomas Nelson Community College). A STEM Summit at Jefferson Lab in March emphasized the need for a technically trained workforce (locally and nationally) and the need for STEM-related initiatives, including business partnerships. A partnership with Newport News Shipbuilding already provides internships for about 50 Heritage students. The shipyard opened an office at the school during the December STEM academy celebration.

■ Have a question about the codes you see on your NNPS paycheck? The Payroll Department has explanations on the intranet: [https://intranet.nn.k12.va.us/payroll/documents/pay\\_codes.pdf](https://intranet.nn.k12.va.us/payroll/documents/pay_codes.pdf)

There's also a list of common acronyms and abbreviations: [https://intranet.nn.k12.va.us/payroll/documents/payroll\\_acronyms.pdf](https://intranet.nn.k12.va.us/payroll/documents/payroll_acronyms.pdf)

■ For your benefit: Jo-Ann Fabric and Crafts' Teacher Rewards Discount Card offers 15% off every purchase, in stores and online. To sign up for a card, visit the website: <http://www.joann.com/teacherrewards/>

Other discounts extended to NNPS employees can be found on the intranet: <http://nnschools.org/hr/benefits/discounts.html>

■ Not having much success with a New Year's resolution to stop smoking or drop the extra pounds you put on during the holidays? There's an EAP (employee assistance program) for that.

The NNPS employee assistance program, an employee benefit, provides help for employees dealing with workplace issues or family problems. But the LifeSynch program includes more proactive "work-life services," like stopping smoking, elder care or budgeting for a child's college education.

The approach is aimed at wholeness and heading off potential problems. Employees' dependents can use the program, too.

There is a 24-hour, confidential telephone hotline (1-866-219-1232). Online services are confidential as well. To get started, go to the LifeSynch website and use nnp as the user name and password: <http://www.lifesynch.com/eap/>