



Dorchester County
Public Schools
Every Child A Success!

SUPERINTENDENT'S STAFF BULLETIN

Henry V. Wagner, Jr., Ed.D. Superintendent

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Task Forces in DCPS – Updates

Elementary School Task Force

Mrs. Regina Teat, Supervisor of Early Childhood and Elementary Education

The Elementary Task Force is excited about bringing the *National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS)* to **ALL** of the DCPS elementary schools! After a brief discussion, the task force decided to research how to establish a chapter in each school, review guidelines for the society, and then formally adopt a plan. According to the NEHS, the purposes of the *National Elementary Honor Society* as identified in the NEHS National Constitution are “*to recognize students for their outstanding academic achievement and demonstrated personal responsibility, to provide meaningful service to the school and community, and to develop essential leadership skills in the students of elementary schools.*” The task force looks forward to the opportunity to recognize our children for both **scholarship** and outstanding **character** with this prestigious honor.

Middle School Task Force

Mrs. Patricia Vickers, Supervisor of Title I and II, Parent Involvement, and Science

The Middle School Task Force has established an **ad hoc committee** to study the general topic of homework in our middle schools. The charge of this committee will be to:

- develop a statement explaining the **purposes** and **benefits** of homework.
- provide a variety of suggestions for **assignments** (review, preview, etc.)
- recommend **parameters** for assigning homework (both minimum and maximum).
- offer several models of **grading** homework that are efficient for the teacher while providing effective feedback for the students.

High School Task Force

Mr. Michael Johnson, Supervisor of Mathematics and Local Accountability Coordinator

The High School Task Force is updating the **High School Program of Study for the 2012-2013 school year**. While the majority of the course offerings will remain the same for the upcoming school year, there are a

few important changes to note. **The Government High School Assessment (HSA)** will not be administered and is no longer a graduation requirement. Students will now need to pass the **Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology and English HSA**, or earn a **composite score of 1208** (sum of all three assessments) to meet this Maryland high school graduation requirement.

We are excited about our expanded course offerings at the **Dorchester Career and Technology Center**. New Program offerings include **CADD, Interactive Media Production, IT Networking (CISCO), Early Childhood Education, Fire Fighter/Emergency Medical Technician, Criminal Justice/Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and Cosmetology**. All of these courses were introduced in the 2011-2012 school year. The 2012-2013 High School Program of Study will be distributed to schools prior to the beginning of the **third marking period**.

The Forty Developmental Assets

(From the Search Institute Website www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets)

*Since its creation in 1990, Search Institute's framework of **Developmental Assets** has become the most widely used approach to positive youth development in the United States. Grounded in extensive research in youth development, resiliency, and prevention, the Developmental Assets represent the relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to avoid risks and to thrive. Studies of more than 2.2 million young people in the United States consistently show that the more assets young people have, the less likely they are to engage in a wide range of high-risk behaviors and the more likely they are to thrive. These assets have power for all young people, regardless of their gender, economic status, family, or race/ethnicity. Furthermore, the levels of these assets are better predictors of high-risk involvement or thriving than poverty or being from a single-parent family.*

In the months ahead, this bulletin will feature specific information about the Forty Developmental Assets and the DCPS partnership with the **Partnership for a Drug Free Dorchester** to promote them on behalf of our young men and women.

Budget Update

Last month, I described how we were beginning the process of constructing the **2012-2013 budget** by collaborating with **school principals** about **budget priorities** for next school year. This month, the process continues in a variety of ways, including a **Board of Education budget hearing on December 1** and an opportunity for public comment at the regular meeting on **December 15**. Additionally, we are compiling

feedback from **budget surveys** and will publicize that data in December. Finally, the Board of Education is seeking a meeting with our **state delegation** to reinforce the importance of fully funding public education.

New Location of the Office of Student Services

The Office of Student Services is now located in the **old DCTC** facility (now known as the **Dorchester Student Services Center**). The new phone number is **410-901-6940**.

Revised Board of Education Meeting Times

In response to a few requests from the public at recent Board meetings, the **Board of Education** will move the **regular session** starting times of its **January, March, and May** meetings from **3:00 PM to 6:00 PM**. The Board will reassess the matter of starting times for regular sessions for **2012-2013** based on the response to these adjusted times.

Track Renovation at North Dorchester High School

At its **October** meeting, the **Board of Education** approved the award of the **NDHS track renovation contract** to **American Tennis Courts, Inc.**, in the amount of **\$218,791.40**. The funding is from a **QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds) Grant** awarded to DCPS, and reflects the diligent efforts of **Chris Hauge, Facilities Engineer**, and his staff to acquire monies that other Maryland jurisdictions yielded in the capital budget process. Actual construction is beginning now on this much-anticipated project.

Covey Reflection

*“Habit Two, **Begin With the End in Mind**, can be enhanced by developing a **personal mission statement**. Write down your philosophy of life, focusing on what you want to **be (character)** and **do (contributions and achievements)**.”*

Happy Holidays

Finally, this season of Thanksgiving is an opportunity for me to express **my true gratitude** to each and every DCPS staff member. I wish you a very **Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays** and hope you experience the rest and renewal that this wonderful Season promises!