



THIS IS

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Blue Devil Newsletter #3

August 30, 2019

Happy New Year! I'm so excited for the 2019-2020 school year to begin. We have big plans at Varina to *Cross the Line of Average* and bring the Henrico Learner Profile and Deeper Learning to life.

Over the course of the next few newsletters, I will introduce you to leaders at Varina. That information is at the end of this newsletter. I hope you will take a moment to get to know the passionate, dedicated educators who lead Varina. This week, I am sharing my statement with you. Best wishes for an amazing 2019-2020 school year!

Horns Up!
Ann Marie Seely
Principal

STUDENT SCHEDULES

If you weren't able to stop by Varina to pick-up your student's schedule, it is now available in PowerSchool. Please check your student's first period class so he/she knows where to go on Tuesday. We will have printed copies of schedules in first period. If you are unable to check PowerSchool this weekend, there will be staff members on campus on Tuesday to direct students to class..

FEE PAYMENTS

We are no longer accepting fee payments in the main office. Students can pay their fees to any teacher beginning Wednesday, September 4. We are not accepting fee payments the first day of school. Online payments can be made at any time.

If you aren't able to make your fee payments at this time, please pay online as you can. We will still distribute student laptops as long as the proper forms are signed and last year's laptop and charger have been returned.

The senior fee must be paid in order for the student to pick up a cap and gown for graduation. This year, and moving forward, all gowns will be navy blue.

LAPTOP DISTRIBUTION

Laptops will be distributed beginning the second week of school through English classes. Your student must have the signed Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy on file. The \$25 fee for the laptop and charger and the \$5 Information Access and Retrieval fee will remain on your account until it is paid.

SUMMER READING REMINDER

The HCPS Summer Reading assignment for College Prep and Honors English classes will be due during the third week of school for a grade. Students had a choice of the materials they wanted to read with the goal of reading 20 minutes per day. A reading log that includes the following will be collected: Title, Author, Genre, Summary/Reflection/Connection, and Time spent in the text. The log may be handwritten or electronic. Summer reading is due no later than September 30. Please refer to the directions at <https://tinyurl.com/SummerReadingVHS> or contact Beth Firmin mefirmin@henrico.k12.va.us for additional information.

CENTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS - SUMMER READING

The Center for Communications and Media Relations summer reading assignment for the 9th grade Honors class is due Thursday, September 20 and 10th grade Honors class is due on Wednesday, September 19. Both the AP Language and Composition and AP Literature and Composition class summer reading assignments will be due on Monday, September 9 for 11th and 12th grade Center students. Please contact Heidi Craft at hhcraft@henrico.k12.va.us for additional information.

DRESS CODE

The Henrico County Code of Student Conduct clearly outlines the dress code requirements for students. Here is the link to the Code. The dress code is on pages 8 & 9.
<https://henricoschools.us/pdf/Schools/CodeOfStudentConduct.pdf>

We expect students to dress for success at Varina beginning on the first day of school.

The dress code will be enforced in the following way:

Minor Dress Code Infractions

1. Students will receive a written reminder of the dress code requirements.
2. The reminder will be logged in PowerSchool as a student conference.
3. The parent will receive an email regarding the infraction.
4. After two reminders, the student will talk with the administrator regarding additional consequences.

Major Dress Code Infractions

1. The student will be given the opportunity to permanently correct the infraction (change into their own clothes).
2. The student will be given the opportunity to change into clean, school-provided, weather-appropriate clothing (t-shirt/shorts).
3. The student will be allowed to call a parent/guardian for a change of clothes. This option cannot require a student to miss a lot of class time.
4. If a student refuses to cooperate with the staff member, the infraction will be considered insubordination/defiance and appropriate consequences will apply.

The administrators reserve the right to implement the dress code according to their discretion.

Course Change Requests

During the first week of school the only class change requests that will be honored are those that are the result of a scheduling error (ie-the student already passed the class). Requests to change non-AP classes begin the week of September 9; requests to drop AP classes begin October 15. All requests must be submitted via the required form. This form can be picked up by the student from the School Counseling Office. The form must be completed by the student, teacher, parent, and counselor before it is forwarded to the principal for review. Requests are not automatically approved. Changes will be considered based on available seats in the requested class. Requests to drop a class and add a study hall will be limited. With the exception of students who attend an ACE center, all students are provided with 35 minutes of study time Tuesday-Thursday, We offer a wide range of electives to allow for student choice.

PSAT TEST ADMINISTRATION

The PSAT will be administered nationwide on *Wednesday October 16, 2019* from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. All HCPS freshman and sophomore students will participate through their English classes. The students will be testing from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

*Juniors that would like to participate will be eligible for the National Merit Scholarship. Please print the attached form and return it as well as the fee to School Counseling by September 13th.

The redesigned PSAT being offered on October 16, 2019, will provide preparation for the SAT with detailed score reports arriving in January 2020. Students are encouraged to check out the free personalized practice through Khan Academy for the PSAT and SAT tests found here: (<https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>)

SAFETY FIRST

The policies and procedures implemented at Varina are first, and foremost, done with student safety in mind. Our choice to search students, their bookbags, phones, cars, etc. is always done through the lens of keeping everyone safe. Schools operate under civil law and have more flexibility to search in order to keep our students, staff, and campus safe. We also have the right to question students without a parent or guardian present. Again, we do this with safety in mind.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL FORMS

The following **interactive** forms can be completed **online** via the Rycor Parent Portal:

- Denial of Permission to Photograph
- Code of Student Conduct Signature Page
- Laptop Charger Letter
- Student Identification and Art Release Form
- HCPS Nutrition Services Parent Information Signature Form
- College Entry Exam Waiver Form
- Safety Contract – Science
- Community Service Form
- Student Information Record
- OSP Information about paying fees

The following forms are attached to this email:

- Henrico County Residents – Vehicle Registration Information

- Virginia Compulsory Attendance Law
- Notification of Screenings
- Annual Notice to Students/Parents
- School Counseling Services
- FAMIS
- Notice on Eating Disorders

The following forms are being **sent home** as paper copies with your student the first week of school:

- Authorization to Pick Up form
- Health History form
- Opioid Awareness handout
- Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

Please return the Health History form and the Authorization to Pick-up form as soon as possible. If we do not have a new Authorization to Pick-up Form on file, we will only be able to release your student to those contacts listed in PowerSchool.

CAMPUS VISITORS

VHS complies with the HCPS policies and procedures for campus visitors. ALL visitors (those who are not VHS students or staff members) must report to the main office to sign in. Sign in includes providing photo identification that is scanned into our Visitor Management System and signing in on our clipboard. Visitors will be provided with a visitor badge that must be worn at all times while on campus. These badges should be turned in to the main office when you exit campus so you can be signed out.

FOOD DELIVERY

Last year, we saw a drastic rise in food delivery orders from Grub Hub, Door Dash, and Uber Eats. These deliveries pose both a safety risk and a disruption to the learning environment and, therefore, are not allowed. Calling unknown food delivery people to an open school campus

poses a major safety risk. Food will be confiscated and returned to students at the end of the school day in the main office. The school is not responsible for loss of money or food in these transactions. Outside food delivery is not allowed from any party. Parents are welcome to add money to their student's lunch account via the online account system.

MORNING DROP OFF

VHS staff are not available until 8:15 to supervise students. At 8:15 the cafeteria and the library will be open for students. Please do not drop off your child until this time unless he/she is taking an early-bird class. In that case, the student may arrive at 7:55.

DRESS OF YOUR DREAMS

"Dress of Your Dreams" is coming up in September. At this event, girls are invited to come and pick out a dress for their upcoming homecoming and prom. This year, there are almost 500 dresses that were all donated by people in the community! Please see the attached flyer for additional information.

CAFETERIA DURING LUNCH

For the safety and security of all, students must remain inside the cafeteria during their assigned lunch time. They are not allowed to be outside on the sidewalks. Students interested in visiting the library during lunch can reach out to the librarians Mrs. Glatt and Mrs. Spencer for a pass. Students are also reminded to bus their own trays following lunch. Trash should not be left on the tables.

Meet the Leader: Ann Marie Seely, Principal



I believe in the power of public education.

As a military brat, I understand the need for quality education and resources in the public school setting. Over the course of 18 years, I attended seven different schools in four different states. My experiences ranged from quality to mediocre. After graduating from King's College in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in English and a focus on education, I committed my life to providing quality public education to students.

My career in teaching began at Atlee High School in Hanover County where I was an English and journalism teacher for eight years. In addition to teaching, I served as a department leader, newspaper advisor, and curriculum writer. In 2004, I earned my National Board Certification in

English/Language Arts. In 2006, I earned a Master's Degree in Administration/Supervision from the University of Virginia.

With a desire to serve public education in a larger capacity, I became the English and Reading Specialist for Henrico County Public Schools in July of 2006. While I enjoyed working with teachers and developing curriculum, I missed interacting with students and being part of a school community. In 2011, I was promoted to associate principal at Pocahontas Middle School. In 2013, I accepted the position of principal at Varina.

Public education is one of the greatest things about our country. We are in the middle of an important shift in education. It's time to develop Life Ready learners who are strong in the 6Cs of Deeper Learning – communication, collaboration, character, creativity, critical thinking, and citizenship. Each student deserves the best possible education we can provide in order to navigate an ever-changing world. I am committed to lifelong learning and adapting to the changing needs of teenagers. High School is definitely not the same as it was in 1994, and educators have to stay current not only in best practices but also in teenage life. From social media to social issues, the best educators are in tune with the likes and needs of their students. They get to know their students as individuals, and they are authentic in their interactions with them.

I am honored to serve as the principal at Varina High School. I love everything about working at a high school – watching students learn, prom, sports, clubs, working with teachers, serving the community – everything. I believe students come to school wanting to do their best, and it's our job to provide opportunities for them to shine. I am committed to developing students and staff who are Thoughtful, Honorable, Inspiring, and Safe. THIS is Varina.