

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER TO THE PARENTS, COMMUNITY

Innovate!

Do something that you've never done before.



AMELIA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FAMILY:

What an exciting time of year. With the new school year comes new opportunities for learning and growth. This year's theme is: Innovate! Sometimes we think that in order to be innovative, we must be do things that have never been done before or we must change the world in significant ways. Innovation is much simpler than this. Innovation is doing something that *we* have never done before. This year, I am asking our teachers and students to try new things and push themselves in ways that they have not before. Along the way, we will encounter successes and failures, but by trying new approaches and methods, we will stretch in ways that we have never before.

The Amelia County Public Schools administrative team did exciting innovative work this July by visiting Port Isobel on Tangier Island. Through a grant, provided in connection with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, we spent three days learning about environmentally based education and whole-school sustainability. As we return to Amelia, we are ready and engaged to take learning deeper as it relates to our environment, local agriculture, and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. We look forward to partnering with local agricultural businesses so that we may connect our classroom learning with hands-on field study and experiences. Effective instruction connects learning to the outside world. Traditional learning models suggest that learning takes place within a pattern similar to industrialization and factory work. Our students are much more than products in an assembly line. Through innovative learning, inquiry, and project based instruction, we will better engage our students and help them prepare for an ever changing world.

Technology based instruction is thriving in Amelia Schools. We are entering the second year of the ACPS One-to-One Chromebook initiative. This school year, students in grades five through ten will be issued a personal Chromebook to be used for daily instruction. Our teachers and staff have been trained on using blended learning through the use of technology. Our students are invited to enhance their learning by taking their Chromebooks home with them daily.

Our middle and high school female students have been flexing their technology muscles as well. This past year, they formed a team to participate in the global Technovation Challenge. This is an entrepreneurship program where female students identify problem areas in their communities and then write apps to help solve and address these problems. How awesome that our students are learning how to write apps! Next year will be the third year of the newly formed ACHS Robotics team, the Cyber Raiders. Every year, more of our students are learning computer literacy and hands-on technology skills.

All of us at Amelia County Public Schools want to best prepare our students for college and careers. Much of the future remains unknown. Many jobs that our graduates will compete for have not yet been invented. We must remain future forward in or thinking. We are proud of the strong instructional and athletic programs that have been in place for many years and we welcome enhancing these opportunities through technology enhanced instruction and other innovation. May we have an awesome year!

Sincerely,
Jack McKinley
Superintendent

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