

Halifax Rise!

I remember fondly those big basketball games at Liberty University where we were down 1 or 2 points with the clock ticking and the crowd going wild. Our team had to stop the offense from scoring, recover the ball, and then score ourselves to win the game. With the clock winding down, I was checking the star player on the opposing team. As he came down the court, I looked straight into his eyes sending him the message that I am going to stop you. You will not score! He took the shot, and I timed it perfectly and blocked that potentially game-cementing shot. Now, I had to dribble down the court and score with the clock still ticking and feeding off the energy of the crowd. I go to score - I do not mean with a lay-up but with a thunderous slam dunk. Wow, those were the days.

I learned a lot from playing high school and collegiate basketball. The game taught me competitiveness, teamwork, accepting responsibility and many more skills I use today.

Why were we able to win the game? The quick answer would be by practicing. Practice does not automatically mean you will win but the benefits are keys to success. You see, practicing allows one to put together the puzzle. Practice allows everyone to mentally rehearse processes, utilize hands-on work, and explore new ways to solve problems. Practice allows you to optimize skill development and become a more efficient learner. Practice allows you to collaborate with your team so that everyone understands their role in meeting the ultimate objective.

As I rode the school buses this week and greeted students and parents at the bus stop, you can feel the excitement as we return to a sense of normalcy. I thought about how we practiced for this day when students returned for summer school this past June. Our team developed protocols and refined them over the summer. As we enter Part II, Phase I, we have prepared to bring our staff and students back to begin reopening under our “new normal”. We have to learn from our past and reimagine Halifax County Schools with a focus on coherence. Coherence is the quality of forming a unified whole; being logical and consistent. Keeping our students and staff as safe as possible is a unified effort and remains our top priority. We are entering the school year slow and steady with a continued focus on student achievement.

As we enter a new year, faculty and staff have implemented universal safety protocols to ensure the health and well-being of our students and staff. Planning for the safe return to schools has been a top priority of district leaders and principals. The fruits of our labor can be found on the district website. We have launched a Reopening Schools tab on our HCS webpage. There, you can easily locate updated information on the HCS Reopening Plan, Reopening Process Flow Charts, and the District Remote Instruction Plan. I encourage all parents and guardians to frequently visit the HCS webpage, and follow our social media for up to date and accurate information. Learn more about your children’s remote instructional day by visiting their school webpages. Access the Teacher Information page for your students’ class schedule, links to assignments, lesson videos, support resources, office hours, and more.

Many thanks for your continued support as we strive to do what is best for ALL of our students and staff during these challenging times. Remember, you are an essential part of your child’s success on our coherence journey this year!