

**Proposal for the Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee**  
**NHCS Employee Performance Bonus Plan Committee**

**By David Perry, NHCS Board Member**

**Goals:**

The goal of this committee is to devise a comprehensive Performance Bonus Plan that most (if not all) NHCS employees would be eligible to participate in. Once the Plan has been approved by the whole Board, a Board decision can be made in regard to who should be responsible for seeking funding for Plan implementation, and what school year makes sense for its initial implementation.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Performance Bonus Plan is to enhance the school district’s ability to recruit, develop, and retain the highest quality teachers and staff.

**Committee Composition & Operation:**

- A. **Voting Members** – Will consist of a committee Chair, and two other NHCS Board Members appointed by the NHCS Board Chair.
  
- B. **Recommended Committee Staff:**
  - 1. Superintendent (Currently Dr. Christopher Barnes or his delegate)
  - 2. Finance (Currently Ashley Sutton, CFO or her delegate)
  - 3. Human Resources (Currently Jennifer Geller or her delegate)
  - 4. Administrative Support (Currently Crystal Buie or her delegate)
  - 5. Other Staff (TBD) – Upon further input and discussion, the committee may vote to include other staff that would be beneficial for future meetings.
  
- C. **Employee Input** – It is essential to get the input of our employees while devising our comprehensive plan. Without the input and “buy-in” of employees we can’t hope to fulfill the purpose of the Plan. Therefore, when appropriate, we may ask other NHCS employees to participate in the committee during times when their participation is

appropriate and needed. Employees should be notified that they are welcome to contact the Committee Chair if they wish to make a presentation at an upcoming meeting, and the Chair can arrange to have them placed on the agenda.

- D. **Frequency of Meetings** – The committee will meet regularly. Preferably once per month, but at least once every 2 months. It is understood that board members and staff have other obligations, so the Chair of the Committee will be cognizant of that fact when scheduling meetings. So as to give as many employees as possible the opportunity to attend these meetings; they shall be scheduled to commence at 4 pm or later.
- E. **Reporting** – The committee Chair will report on the progress of the committee to the NHCS Board of Education at their regularly scheduled monthly meeting, or upon the request of the NHCS Board Chair.
- F. **Completion** – Once the committee has finalized a comprehensive plan, it will refer the plan to the NHCS Board of Education for its approval. If NHCS Board of Education determines that amendments to the plan are necessary, then this committee will revise the Plan accordingly and refer it back to the NHCS Board of Education. The Board may instruct the Committee to attempt to secure funding for the Plan or vote to assign this task to another party.

Once the Plan has been approved and implemented by the NHCS Board of Education, the main work of the Committee will be complete. At that point the NHCS Board of Education can vote to keep the committee open for a period of time to help fix any problems that arise during the first school year of the Plan's implementation. Alternatively, the NHCS Board of Education can choose to dissolve this committee and determine another method to manage the Plan for future and continued success.

**Guiding Principles of the Plan:**

While the specifics of the Employee Performance Bonus Plan have not yet been formulated, there are a few guiding principles that will guide the committee's work:

- A. **What it is Not** – The Plan in no way contemplates any reduction in employee wages or salaries in lieu of this performance bonus. Nor does this Plan obviate the need for our school district to lower classroom sizes, hire more teachers, and increase the base wages and salaries of NHCS employees. Our employees need to be able to afford to live in New Hanover County, based on their base wages or salary. The

Bonus Plan is solely intended to supplement employee wages and salaries by rewarding outstanding work. It will give NHCS a competitive advantage over all other public-school districts in North Carolina when it comes to recruiting, developing, and retaining the highest quality teachers and staff.

**B. Amount** – The amount of the Performance Bonus must be substantial. While we still need to determine what is financially feasible, an extremely small bonus will not be enough of a financial incentive to achieve the purposes of the Plan.

**C. Scope** - Every full-time NHCS employee should be eligible for the Performance Bonus: from the cafeteria worker; to the teacher; to the Central Office staff. A subject of committee discussion will be to address the bonus structure for part-time NHCS employees.

**D. Fairly Measuring Performance** – While most education professionals would agree that measuring employee performance is not an easy task, most would also agree that it is not an impossible one. They would also agree that our current system of only evaluating and rewarding employees based on degrees, certifications, and years of experience is sorely lacking and unjust. This committee will endeavor to formulate a fair system for evaluating and rewarding employee performance, based on the following qualities:

1. An emphasis on Individual Student Growth.
2. The need for transparent communication and collaboration between NHCS employees at all levels.
3. Innovation
4. A recognition that our employees should be able to employ practices that enable them to do their best work, without being micromanaged from above.
5. An objective evaluation process that NHCS employees can be confident will not be subjective or show favoritism.

**Start Date:**

If we want this Project to be successful it needs to be done right. I propose that an initial organizational meeting of the committee be scheduled for March of 2025.