

Welcome Back NCSU Families!

Liz Butterfield • 3 days ago • Friday, Aug 23 at 11:49 AM • **North Country Supervisory Union, School Boards - All**



August 23, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

After so much rain last summer, I was hopeful that we would have more sunshine this year. Although we did have more sunshine, we definitely got more than our fair share of rain – and some of us received devastating amounts of rain. We are used to monitoring weather in the winter for potential snow days, but it is a new reality that we are monitoring weather forecasts during the summer for potential flash flooding or washouts. If you have had to contend with flooding challenges for your own home or family, I'm sending my very best thoughts to you and yours for recovery and rebuilding.

In addition to not having the amount of sunshine we wished for, the summer took a decidedly more challenging turn with the PCB test results in B wing (the academic wing with most of the classrooms) at North Country Union High School (NCUHS) at the end of June. When we started the summer, we knew that we would have a \$3 million mitigation project happening in C wing, which is primarily North Country Career Center, and a few high school classrooms. With the increased PCB levels in B wing, the project's scope grew to include B wing, and the cost went up to \$5.9 million. You've likely heard that the initial draft results were not good. Although we were hoping for better results, hope isn't a strategy, so the NCUHS administration and staff have been working on contingency plans for the worst-case scenario. This will allow us to have in-person learning and open as close to on time and as safe as possible. Not opening or remote instruction were not on the table as options as we know how harmful this is for students and teachers. We also recognize that this entire situation has created a lot of anxiety and stress for many students and their families, in addition to teachers and staff. Everyone involved is doing their absolute best to try to minimize disruption and anxiety in a less-than-ideal situation.

Over the last few years, we have struggled to fill positions, but this year, we have many more schools that are fully staffed – or very close. Last year at this time, we had 7.9 open certified positions across NCSU, but many of those were classroom teaching positions. This year, we have about the same amount of open positions, but most of those are part-time unified arts teaching positions (i.e., 60% music or 40% art). This statement should not be interpreted that we don't value music or art teachers, but rather that we are moving in the right direction for being able to fill full-time teaching positions. Certainly, not having an art or music teacher will impact all students and staff at the schools affected, but I know that your principals are working on a short-term solution for filling the gap and will share that with you if they haven't already. Support staff openings are also less than they were last year at this time, with approximately 8 – 10 positions versus the 25 or so from last summer. I am getting daily emails from principals asking for permission to hire support staff candidates, so I am confident that this number will shrink as we get closer to the beginning of school.

Our district's commitment continues to be to develop and maintain character, competence, creativity, and community for our students. We will be piloting a new literacy program in all our K – 6 or K – 8 schools across our supervisory union, providing more consistent and rigorous literacy instruction. We have a renewed commitment to connecting with and engaging all students in learning. However, if you or your child have challenges or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher, guidance counselor, or administrator for support. We don't want any child or family to struggle when we might be able to help.

I wish you the very best for a successful school year. If there is any way that I can help to support your child or family, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Elaine Collins
NCSU Superintendent of Schools

Dear NCSU Families and Caregivers,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year!"—a jingle that rings true as we approach the start of school. For some, this season is filled with excitement and anticipation. For others, holding on to the warmth and relaxation of summer for just a little longer feels just right (as long as Mother Nature graces us with sunny days and no more rain!). And let's be honest, who wouldn't want summer to last forever? No matter how you're feeling, I hope you find joy in these last few days of summer vacation.

My educational journey has been exciting, spanning over a dozen years as a classroom teacher, followed by 13 years as a school principal. Since starting as the Assistant Superintendent on July 1, I've had the pleasure of meeting and working with principals across our supervisory union. It's been wonderful to see the progress of various construction projects (the PCB work at the high school is a different story!) and to hear about the many accomplishments and celebrations from last school year. I've also enjoyed discussing the school-wide goals for the upcoming year. My first few weeks have been filled with meetings about grants, getting acquainted with our various online platforms, and connecting with many wonderful staff, parents, and board members.

I'm excited to continue this rewarding work with all of you as we strive to create the best educational experience for your child. Wishing you and your family all the best as you begin this exciting new chapter in your child's educational journey.

Warmly,

Jennifer W. Nye
Assistant Superintendent NCSU
jennifer.nye@ncsuvt.org
(802) 334.5847 ext. 2032

Dear NCSU Families,

North Country Supervisory Union has implemented the Emergent 3 (E3) emergency response platform, now available to staff across all our facilities. Please refer to the infographic below for more details.

In the event of an emergency, you will receive notifications and updates through ParentSquare.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at (802) 334-5847 or liz.butterfield@ncsuvt.org.

Wishing you a wonderful and safe school year!

Sincerely,

Liz Butterfield (she/her)

Executive Assistant / Communications Coordinator

North Country Supervisory Union

#ncsucommunity

www.NCSUVT.org

E3 NCSU AND EMERGENT 3 E3

Partners in ensuring the safety of North Country Supervisory Union students and staff.

What is E3?

Emergent 3 (E3) is an emergency response system that allows school staff to instantly notify administrators, each other, and 911 in an emergency situation. Lightning-fast response times ensure that emergency responders will be on scene as soon as possible.



Mapping and Floor Plans

Live interactive maps and floor plans include room in the school, plus playgrounds, sports fields, parking lots, storage shed, etc. Live maps and floorplans are immediately available to all administrators, faculty, staff, and first responders.

Parent and Guardian Notifications

In an emergency, parents and guardians will be notified via ParentSquare. If warranted, your student's school will provide additional updates and information via ParentSquare.



ParentSquare



Safety First

NCSU and local first responders are working together to ensure the safety of our students, staff, faculty, and visitors

For more information, contact your student's principal, visit www.ncsuvt.org/school-safety or call 802-334-0925.

