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STRENGTHENING UNIVERSITY-PUBLIC SCHOOL TIES

NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS HONORS PRESIDENT KELLY

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | February 21, 2024*Read time: about 1 min*

Speaking to members of the Newport News School Board, President William Kelly and First Lady Angie Kelly underscored their respect and support for educators. Both grew up in families that included public school teachers.

“We know how important education is and we value the hard work that our teachers, administrators, and staff put in day in and day out to serve and support the youth of our community,” President Kelly said.

Kelly’s remarks came at a Feb. 20 meeting of the NNPS School Board, where he was introduced and honored along with Mrs. Kelly. The Kellys are concluding their first eight months at CNU and have made many visits to local boards, companies and organizations.

“It is clear to me that we have an opportunity to strengthen our ties with the City of Newport News and the Peninsula overall,” President Kelly said.

He was welcomed by Board Chair Lisa Surles-Law. “You speak from the heart, you are authentic and we’re really glad to have you with us,” she said.

President Kelly identified four ways that CNU and NNPS are collaborating:

- CNU’s Community Captains program has helped 125 NNPS students prepare for college. Community Captains is an early admission, two-year college and life readiness program focused on helping students succeed after

high school. Community Captains also serve the community, and recently built and delivered 80 beds to NNPS students who were “bedless.”

- CNU’s Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) five-year program provides well-prepared teachers to serve NNPS children. NNPS offers MAT students valuable and formative clinical experiences as they prepare to become licensed teachers.

Two upcoming events will also deepen the CNU-NNPS ties:

- On Friday, April 12, the Ferguson Center for the Arts will be hosting the first ever Newport News Public Schools Music Festival, with 2,000 NNPS students performing in concerts.
- On Friday, March 22, CNU is hosting the second in its series of Community Walks. Participants will stroll from the University to nearby Hidenwood Elementary School, and all are welcome to join in.

Several CNU students from Newport News attended the School Board meeting. Community Captain Chris Mojica ’25, a Warwick High School graduate, introduced President Kelly, who concluded his remarks by encouraging more NNPS students to follow in Chris’s footsteps: “I am committed to ensuring CNU is the most inclusive campus possible. Every student has the right to feel like they truly belong on our campus and we are working to create a culture of inclusion and a sense of belonging for every Captain. And I know the women and men in this room tonight have tremendous influence on the young students in our community. Please encourage them to check out their hometown university.”
