

ACPS Staff Newsletter

July 31, 2023

Hello Team Amherst:

This is the first of our monthly newsletters for the 2023-2024 school year. I hope everyone had a great summer and you are ready to start the new school year. I am excited about the start of the year and am looking forward to seeing everyone return. As in last year, the purpose of these newsletters is to provide staff with information about the school division as well as links to information that we hope you will find beneficial.

New teachers begin in processing and training today. All returning teachers and ten-month staff will report to work on August 7. This year we are hosting convocation on August 7 in the ACHS gymnasium. We will serve everyone breakfast beginning at 8:30 and I will start the convocation activities at 9:45. Staff will be released to their buildings for the remainder of the day at the conclusion of convocation. As in the past, I will allow staff who bring in a food donation for Amherst Cares to leave after noon on Friday August 11.

Our theme this year is ENGAGE. Last year we focused on Showing Up as part of the Show Up Amherst initiative. This year we not only need to Show Up but we need to ENGAGE. As we prepare for convocation and the opening of school, I need you to think what the term ENGAGE means and how it applies to your role in ACPS. Leadership from across the school division spent two days this summer at our leadership conference focused on engagement. Everything we do this year needs to be centered around ENGAGE. I will discuss this in detail with you at convocation and your building leadership will have further conversations with you at their opening meetings and throughout the year.

This year we developed courses in Canvas to cover a majority of the mandatory trainings and informational meetings. The courses went live on July 24 and you should have received an email regarding the courses and requirements. We made a concerted effort to allow you more time in your buildings to prepare for the upcoming school year and we hope you find this beneficial. Your building principals/supervisors will be in contact with you regarding your work schedule for the week.

I will continue to visit schools periodically throughout the school year to meet with staff and students in order to get a pulse on the state of the school division. I am also scheduled to be in your buildings to conduct classroom visits once each 9 weeks throughout the school year. These visits are non-evaluative and are designed to provide me an opportunity to be in the classrooms to observe our instructional practices and interact with staff and students.

We will continue with our #Show Up Amherst initiative this year as we roll out Show Up 2.0. Data suggests that our Show Up initiatives were successful in bringing awareness to the need to be “present” and led to improved student attendance across the division. The division team will be working with your school administration and ATSS teams to develop our Show Up initiatives for the year.

There is still no word on the state budget negotiations. As a result, we are still working off of the “skinny budget” for this school year. The lack of a budget amendment means we have to stay with the 5% raise that we discussed at the end of last school year. If the state does amend the budget and allocates additional funding, we will focus on increasing pay up to the 7% that we initially budgeted.

I thank you advance for everything you will do for our students, families, community, and each other this school year. We need to continue building on the successes of last year to include improving as individual educators and as a division. I am also looking forward to seeing the continued growth in our students as we progress through the school year. Remember to not only “Show UP” but to ENGAGE. Let us continue to build Team Amherst by working with and alongside our families and community to ENGAGE them in the education of our students. Finally, I encourage you to focus on your physical and emotional well-being as we go through the year. You need to take care of yourselves so you will be able to take care of your students. Thanks again for all you do and I am looking forward to seeing everyone at convocation.

Sincerely,

William

Upcoming Events

WELCOME BACK!

New Teacher Week

July 31 - August 4

Educator Back to School Work Week

August 6-11, & 14-15

First Day of School!

August 16

EDUCATOR BACK TO SCHOOL WORK WEEK

Special Events

August 7

Convocation: 8:30-10:30 am

August 9

Open House: 1:00-7:00 pm

August 15

Transition Day

Elementary Transition for Pre-K, K & New to School 1st Graders: Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Middle School Transition for 6th & New to School 7th Graders: Time: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

High School Transition for 9th & New to School 10th Graders: Time: 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

2023-2024 School Year Employee Required Training Information

This year all employees will complete the required training through the platform and delivery system of CANVAS. This includes training in the employee handbook, reviewing the OSHA presentation and taking the quiz, understanding compliance with Title IX, fulfilling the requirements for cultural competencies, and completing the quiz by all licensed employees, as well as other safety, discipline, and instructional requirements. If you have not logged into the CANVAS platform before, in order to help you through that process we have created a video: <https://watch.screencastify.com/v/xavYHTo6hefpx3CpoTsa>

If you already have access to your Canvas Dashboard the Course information can be found here for you to auto-enroll and access the course content: [ACPS Engaged Canvas Course](#). Within this course, you will find directions on accessing the other courses related to your specific area and requirements for completion. Please note that courses will not automatically populate on your Canvas Dashboard. In order to gain access to the specific course curriculum you must click enroll for each course.

The course will be available to all employees starting July 25, 2023. You will have until August 16, 2023, by 4:30 pm to complete the required elements that are specific to your job responsibilities. Please work with your direct supervisor if you have any questions or concerns regarding the requirements or the process to use this school year. If you need technical support please contact Joe Goldman at jgoldman@amherst.k12.va.us or Wanda Smith at wsmith@amherst.k12.va.us if you have content questions please reach out to the person identified as the presenter of that course.



Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment is coming up soon. Please watch for more information.

The physical, mental, and emotional well-being of our staff is incredibly important.

Education is a rewarding and difficult profession and we need to make sure we are taking care of ourselves so we are able to care for our students. As an employee, you have access to many wellness resources, click the link to the right for more information!

Health and Wellness Resources

After School and Extracurricular Activities

Our students and staff are actively involved in a variety of extracurricular activities throughout the division. Please show your support for our students and your colleagues by attending events, participating, or volunteering!



#SHOWUPAMHERST COMMUNITY TAILGATE

EVERYONE IS INVITED!

COME OUT AND #SHOWUP FOR OUR STUDENTS, STAFF, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY AND EACH OTHER! JOIN US FOR A COOKOUT AT THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT THE FRONT OF AMHERST COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL. HOTDOGS AND HAMBURGERS WILL BE PROVIDED. ENJOY FOOD AND TIME TOGETHER BEFORE THE BIG GAME! THIS IS A FREE COMMUNITY EVENT.

**September 1, 2023
5:30-7:00 pm
Lancer Stadium
139 Lancer Lane**

KICKOFF @ 7:00 PM

If you would like to remain for the game and cheer on our Lancers, tickets can be purchased at the gate!

**SHOWUP
AMHERST**



**Amherst County
Public Schools**



EXPLORE YOUR WELLNESS BENEFITS

We make wellness easy,
with everything you need,
all in one place.

**Visit your member portal, and
explore wellness:**

- Daily workouts
- Guided meditation
- Exclusive wellness content
- Healthy recipes

**Discover a whole health approach
to wellness.**

- We cover all dimensions of total well-being
- Our workout videos are tailored for all levels
- We provide 'wellness your way' with self-led tools and on-demand activities



How to GET STARTED

1. Visit www.allonehealth.com/support
2. Click on Member Portal, and login or create a new account using your company code: **amhco**
3. Click on Explore Wellness and start your journey





Anthem  
And Its Affiliate HealthKeepers, Inc.

Building Healthy Families



A new program to support growing families

Benefits to help you thrive

Live health coaches

Interactive health trackers

24/7 access

Personalized content

Every family is unique, growing in its own way. Anthem's new, all-in-one program, at no extra cost to you, can help keep your family strong whether you're trying to conceive, expecting a child, or in the thick of raising young children.

Building Healthy Families offers personalized, digital support through the SydneySM Health mobile app or on [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com). This convenient hub offers an extensive collection of tools and information to help you navigate your family's unique journey.

Designed with you in mind

When you enroll in Building Healthy Families, you can count on personalized support at every stage. You'll have unlimited access to:



Digital tools and resources for pregnancy and beyond

- Track your ovulation.
- Monitor prenatal health risks, such as blood pressure and weight.
- Receive updates on the progress of your pregnancy such as the baby's development and your body changes.
- Log feedings, diaper changes, growth, vaccinations, and developmental milestones.



Health and wellness expertise for your family and pregnancy

- During pregnancy, talk to a health coach via chat or phone about your questions and concerns.
- Explore a library with thousands of educational articles and videos.
- Connect with a maternity nurse and access lactation support.

This is an exciting time for your family, but that doesn't mean there aren't challenges. Building Healthy Families has the support you need to nurture a healthy pregnancy and tackle every stage of your family's growth with confidence.



Building Healthy Families is coming January 1, 2023

To enroll

Beginning January 1, open the Sydney Health mobile app and go to My Health Dashboard. Choose the Building Healthy Families tile under Featured Programs.

The more activities you complete, the greater your reward.

When you complete any of the activities listed below sponsored by VBA, you'll earn rewards to put toward electronic gift cards for select retailers. You choose the activities you'd like to complete to receive the maximum of \$400:

- Member profile - \$100
- Initial assessment - \$100
- Interim assessment - \$100
- Postpartum assessment - \$100

Sydney Health is offered through an arrangement with Carelon Digital Platforms, a separate company offering mobile application services on behalf of your health plan. ©2020-2022

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc. Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and its affiliate HealthKeepers, Inc., serving all of Virginia except for the City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the area east of State Route 123, are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.

Expanding your virtual care options

Find complete care support, on your time, through the **Sydney Health app**

Visit with a doctor at your convenience

Accessing the care you need, when you need it, matters. That's why our SydneySM Health mobile app connects you to a team of doctors ready to help you on your time. There are two secure ways to find low or no-additional cost care through our app:

1 Chat with a doctor 24/7 without an appointment

- Urgent care support for health issues, such as allergies, a cold, or the flu.
- New prescriptions¹ for concerns such as a cough or a sinus infection.

2 Schedule a virtual primary care appointment

- Routine care, including virtual annual preventive care (wellness) visit and prescription refills.^{1,2,3,4}
- Personalized care plans for chronic conditions, such as asthma or diabetes.

Assess your symptoms with the Symptom Checker

When you're sick, you can use the Symptom Checker on Sydney Health to answer a few questions about how you're feeling. That information is run against millions of medical data points to provide care advice tailored to you.

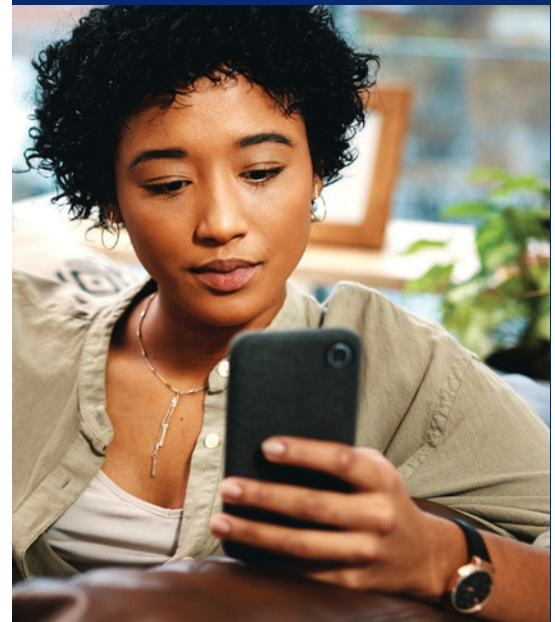
Save money and time with virtual care

Sydney Health brings care to you anywhere, anytime. The Symptom Checker is always free to use, while virtual primary care visits and on-demand urgent care through the app are available at low or no-additional cost.

Download our Sydney Health mobile app today



Set up your account right away and it will be ready to use when you need it.



85% of virtual visits resolve the person's need.⁵

¹ Virtual annual preventive care (wellness) visits through the Sydney Health app are available starting September 2022. The virtual annual preventive care (wellness) visit is covered in full unless the employer has a limit or cap under their benefit plan.

² Virtual primary care medical services provided by Preventive Medical Associates P.C. through an arrangement with Hydrogen Health, which provides the virtual care platform.

³ Eligible employees are those who have not yet had an annual preventive care (wellness) visit during the plan year (either virtual or in-person) whose group benefit plan covers a virtual primary care exam. If an employer group has a cap on the number of preventive care (wellness) visits that are covered in full and the employee has exceeded the cap but would like to have another preventive care (wellness) visit, they may be responsible for copays and other out-of-pocket costs for the visit. Employees should consult their benefit plan and/or contact Member Services if they have any questions.

⁴ Your doctor will determine if a prescription is needed at time of visit.

⁵ K Health analysis of Q4 2020 visit dispositions.

Sydney Health is offered through an arrangement with Cerebral Digital Platforms, a separate company offering mobile application services on behalf of your health plan. ©2020-2022 The Virtual Primary Care experience is offered through an arrangement with Hydrogen Health.

In addition to using a telehealth service, you can receive in-person or virtual care from your own doctor or another healthcare professional in your plan's network. If you receive care from a doctor or healthcare professional not in your plan's network, your share of the costs may be higher. You may also receive a bill for any charges not covered by your health plan.

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Save money with discounts at anthem.com

As an Anthem member, you qualify for discounts on products and services that help promote better health and well-being.* These discounts are available through SpecialOffers to help you save money while taking care of your health.

Vision, hearing and dental

Glasses.com™ and 1-800-CONTACTS® — Shop for the latest brand-name frames at a fraction of the cost for similar frames at other retailers. You are also entitled to an additional \$20 off orders of \$100 or more, free shipping and free returns.

EyeMed — Take 30% off a new pair of glasses, 20% off non-prescription sunglasses and 20% off all eyewear accessories.

Premier LASIK — Save \$800 on LASIK when you choose any “featured” Premier LASIK Network provider. Save 15% with all other in-network providers.

TruVision — Save up to 40% on LASIK eye surgery at more than 1,000 locations.

Nations Hearing — Receive hearing screenings and in-home service at no additional cost. All hearing aids start at \$599 each.

Hearing Care Solutions — Digital instruments start at \$500, and a hearing exam is free. Hearing Care Solutions has 3,100 locations and eight manufacturers, and offers a three-year warranty, batteries for two years and unlimited visits for one year.

Amplifon — Take 25% off, plus an extra \$50 off one hearing aid; \$125 off two.

ProClear™ Aligners — Take \$1,200 off a set of custom aligners. You can improve your smile without metal braces and time-consuming dental visits. Your order is 50% off and comes with a free whitening kit.



Fitness and health

Active&Fit Direct™ — Active&Fit Direct allows you to choose from more than 11,000 participating fitness centers nationwide for \$25 a month (plus a \$25 enrollment fee and applicable taxes). Offered through American Specialty Health Fitness, Inc.

FitBit — Work toward your fitness goals with Fitbit trackers and smartwatches that go with your lifestyle and budget. Save up to 22% on select Fitbit devices.

Garmin — Take 20% off select Garmin wellness devices.

Jenny Craig® — Join this weight loss program for free. Jenny Craig provides you with everything you need, making it easier to reach your goals. You can save \$200 in food, in addition to free coaching, with minimum purchase. Save an extra 5% off your full menu purchase. Details apply.

ChooseHealthy® — Discounts are available on acupuncture, chiropractic, massage, podiatry, physical therapy and nutritional services. You also have discounts on fitness equipment, wearable trackers and health products, such as vitamins and nutrition bars.

GlobalFit — Discounts apply on gym memberships, fitness equipment, coaching and other services.

Family and home

23andMe — Take \$40 off each Health + Ancestry kit. Save 20% on a 23andMe kit and learn about your wellness, ancestry and more.

Safe Beginnings® — Babyproof your home while saving 15% on everything from safety gates to outlet covers.

Nationwide Pet Insurance — Receive an automatic 5% discount when you enroll through your company or organization. Save up to 15% when you enroll multiple pets.

ASPCA Pet Insurance — Take 5% off pet insurance. You can choose from three levels of care, including flexible deductibles and custom reimbursements.

WINFertility® — Save up to 40% on infertility treatment. WINFertility helps make quality treatment affordable.

LifeMart® — Take advantage of great deals on beauty and skin care, diet plans, fitness club memberships and plans, personal care, spa services and yoga classes, sports gear and vision care.

Medicine and treatment

SelfHelpWorks — Choose one of the online Living programs and save 15% on coaching to help you lose weight, stop smoking, manage stress or diabetes, restore sound sleep or face an alcohol problem.

Brevena — Enjoy a 41% discount on BREVENA® skin care creams and balms for smooth, rejuvenated skin from face to foot.

Puritan's Pride® — Choose from a large selection of discounted vitamins, minerals and supplements from Puritan's Pride.

Allergy Control Products and National Allergy Supply — Save up to 25% on select doctor-recommended products such as allergy-friendly bedding, air purifiers and filters, asthma products and more. Orders over \$59 ship for free by ground within the contiguous U.S.

To find the discounts available to you, log in to **anthem.com**, choose **Care** and select **Discounts**.

Your SpecialOffers discounts are part of our effort to support your personal health journey. Taking care of your health can be easier with the savings offered through your health plan.

*** All discounts are subject to change without notice.**

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Simple steps to reduce your cancer risk

Cancer affects people of all different ages and backgrounds. Sometimes it can't be avoided, but you can still take action to protect your health. By making healthy choices and having regular preventive screenings, you're doing what you can to stay a step ahead of cancer.

The power of preventive screenings

Cancer is most treatable when it's detected early, before symptoms appear. At this point, the cancer is usually still "local" and contained to one organ or part of the body.

Preventive cancer screenings help detect cancer during the local stage, before it spreads to other parts of the body and becomes more difficult to treat successfully.¹



Recommended cancer screenings

Discuss your individual risk factors with your doctor and ask which preventive cancer screenings may be right for you. Common cancer screenings include:

Breast cancer screening (mammography)

Cervical cancer screening (Pap tests and other gynecological exams)

Colorectal cancer screening

Prostate cancer screening (prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test)

Lung cancer screening (low-dose CT scan)



Take action to lower your cancer risk



Eat healthy and move your body

Being overweight (having a body mass index of 25 to 29) or obese (body mass index of 30 or more) increases the risk of certain cancers, including uterine, breast, pancreatic, and colorectal.² Living a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and regular exercise can help lower your risk of developing cancer.



Use sunscreen

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the U.S.³ Protect your skin from the sun by using a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15, staying in the shade, and wearing clothing like a hat or long sleeves — especially if you plan to be outdoors in the middle of the day.³ Remember to also check your skin regularly for any changes or new moles, and report them to your doctor.



Stop smoking

Don't use tobacco and avoid cigarette smoke. Smoking is linked to at least 10 cancers, including lung, mouth, throat, larynx, pancreatic, and urinary bladder cancer. On top of that, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. Even if you already have a smoking-related illness, you'll see health benefits from quitting.⁴

Be confident that you're cancer-free

Find personalized cancer screening guidelines at [anthem.com/preventive-care](https://www.anthem.com/preventive-care).

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [How to Prevent Cancer or Find It Early](#) (accessed July 2022); [cdc.gov](#).
² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Obesity and Cancer](#) (accessed July 2022); [cdc.gov](#).
³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Skin Cancer](#) (accessed July 2022); [cdc.gov](#).
⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Smoking & Tobacco Use](#) (accessed July 2022); [cdc.gov](#).

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