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MAJORIS

# QUID NOVI

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS



## FIRST QUARTER FINISHED—WE ARE DOING WELL *by John Heaton, Headmaster*

Students and faculty are beginning the ninth week of school. Time has flown by, and thankfully, our anxieties about COVID-19 have not materialized. Last July as the Commonwealth was experiencing surges in infections, we found ways to open school in-person safely. We expected that within a few weeks we would have a positive case, and possibly rolling quarantines for various cohorts.

None of this has come to pass. At the end of last week there were zero positive cases among students or staff. About 60 students have missed a few days of school in spotty quarantines because of possible exposure outside of school, but in each of those cases, there has been no positive spread. Only one cohort in the school, third grade, was

quarantined on a case that was presumed positive. That, too, resolved with a negative result.

According to an article in *The Atlantic*, “Schools Aren’t Super Spreaders,”<sup>1</sup> some of last summer’s fear might have been unwarranted. Brown University’s Emily Oster says, “We are starting to get an evidenced-based picture of how school reopenings and remote learning are going, and the evidence is pointing in one direction. Schools do not, in fact, appear to be major spreaders of COVID-19.” Data collection across the country is showing an encouraging story. “Our data on almost 200,000 kids in 47 states from the last two weeks of September revealed an infection rate of 0.13 percent among students and 0.24 percent among staff. That’s about 1.3 infections over two weeks in

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## WHAT’S NEW?

## THIRD AND FOURTH GRADE TO THE LIBRARY

We are pleased to announce that the library is opening to some Grammar School classes this week. **Mrs. Phaedra Callaway**, our librarian, has been traveling to individual cohorts since August, reading stories and delivering books for check-out. Today the first class was welcomed back into the library for a regular library period. Third grade students enjoyed being back in this beautiful space and looking through the many more books available to them. Fourth grade returns later this week with the anticipation of the remainder of classes returning soon.

THINK. LEARN. LOVE. LIVE.

# T A B U L A E

## Archives

### WHO STARTED NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS?

**T**hirty years ago, **Dr. Robert Littlejohn**, a biology professor at Liberty University packed his family in the car and headed to the University of Idaho to engage in post-doctoral work while on sabbatical. His boys, then in middle school, didn't much like school and weren't looking forward to starting a new project for only a couple of semesters. When they arrived in Moscow, ID, however, they discovered the Logos School, a classical Christian school.

That's when life changed. The boys learned that school could be interesting, even fun. As often as not classes were characterized by discussion and lively debate, and they didn't waste time on seat work. As the months went by they asked their dad what would happen when they got back to Lynchburg. "Go back to the old school? Why don't we start one like this?"

Robert floated the idea casually with a few colleagues, but weeks and months went by without any action. No one in Lynchburg had seen up close what he had seen, and they couldn't really buy into the vision. They did, however, read "Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning," the book that sparked the founding of classical schools

all over the country. It sparked in Lynchburg, too.

Robert and his family returned to Lynchburg in May of 1991, and, with only three months to pull it together, they made the decision to move forward. The school enrolled 16 students all of whom had been home schooled (this couldn't be very different!). They shared three teachers who volunteered their time and the Reformed Episcopal Church which owned a small building in Forest gave them space to meet (you can see this church on 460 next to the Sheetz station in New London, now King of Kings Free Will Baptist Church).

They called the school New Covenant. Robert continued to teach at LU for three more years, but eventually transitioned to become the first headmaster in 1994. He served from the founding of the school through spring of 1998, at which point he returned to the collegiate environment. He was succeeded that summer by the Rev'd John Heaton who came to the school in July 1998.



*Original NCS building.*

## C U R R I C U L U M

### FIELD TRIPS

Our worlds have contracted over the past months.

Even the homebodies among us have felt restless at times and have looked for ways to get out of our houses. Hiking, long drives on the Blue Ridge Parkway, camping and other outdoor activities have helped, and some of us have been brave enough to visit family in faraway places. For our students, returning to the New Covenant Schools campus for live, in-person instruction and activities with peers, has broadened their daily experience. Students are learning not only from teachers and books, but also from each other as they participate in daily routines.

Now it's time to break up those routines just a bit with field trips. This fall, trips are happening with mitigations, but they are happening. Thanks are due to parents for making themselves available to drive and chaperone. Without their help, we wouldn't be as able to allow for social distancing during transportation and at our trip

destinations. We also appreciate the venues that are carefully opening up outdoor activities to enrich and enliven learning. Here's a list of what's coming up:

#### **Watermarks Camp, Scottsville, VA**

We typically transport the entire Middle School to camp for a 2-day retreat. This year, each grade level in the Middle School will spend a day at Watermarks, but no two grades will visit on the same day. They will enjoy using the facilities of the camp, including the Zip Line, Climbing Wall, Archery Range and more.

#### **Pamplin Historical Park, Petersburg, VA**

Grades 5 and 6 will visit Pamplin Historical Park on different dates for an authentic experience of America's Civil War heritage, with the goal of nurturing a deeper appreciation and understanding of our nation's past.

#### **The National D-Day Memorial, Bedford, VA**

Grades 7 and 8 will travel to Bedford on two different dates to learn about the valor

and sacrifice of Americans during Operation Overlord.

#### **Amherst County, VA**

Seniors in the Environmental Science class will travel to a farm in Amherst County, where they will plant trees along waterways with the James River Association.

#### **Lexington, VA**

Juniors in American History will visit a variety of Civil War sites during the month of November.

#### **Johnson's Orchard, Bedford, VA**

The two sections of grade 1 will travel on two different days to Johnson's Orchard to learn the story of Johnny Appleseed, pet farm animals, and take home apples.

More trips are in the works before the winter months. Stay tuned!



*Fifth graders visit Pamplin Historical Park in Petersburg.*

# E T C E T E R A

## SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

### END OF QUARTER

The School of Rhetoric will have block exams **tomorrow, October 13**. This marks the end of the 1st quarter for them with a **12:15 pm dismissal time**.

### DC TRIP

The DC Trip is postponed. School will be in session this **Wednesday and Thursday, October 14-15** with a **NOON** dismissal on **Thursday**.

### POETRY RECITAL

The recital will be held on **Thursday, October 22 at 6:00 pm**. Hot beverages and light desserts will be served.

### FALL DANCE

The fall dance which was scheduled for **October 24** has been *canceled*.

### PSAT TESTING

**Grades 10 & 11** will be undergoing testing of the PSAT on **Thursday, October 29**. As is our custom, the School of Rhetoric (grades 9-12) will not begin until **9:00 am** that day (the rest of the school starts on time). This is to allow students the opportunity to get a bit more sleep before this testing. If you need to drop off your SOR students at the normal time, we will have supervised study halls.

## SOR & MIDDLE

### SPORTS PHOTOS

Team photos will be taken on **Monday, October 26 at 3:15 pm** for all athletes in **Grades 7-12**. If you want your student athlete's individual sports photo taken, please email **Beth Mayberry** at **bmayberry@newcovenantschools.org**.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### MIDDLE SCHOOL POETRY RECITAL

A Latte Poetry, will be held on **Friday, October 30 from 8:15-10:15 am**. This is a time change from the originally published information. The recital will be available through Zoom to those wishing to attend. Please watch for more information.

## EVERYONE

### LOST AND FOUND

All items in the lost and found will be purged this **Wednesday, October 14**. Stop in tomorrow or first thing Wednesday morning to claim any of your lost items. Unclaimed uniform items will be donated to the school store and all other items donated to a local charity.

### PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

We will be holding K-12 Parent Teacher Conferences on **Wednesday, November 4, from 12:30-6:00 pm**. You will receive a SignUp Genius to register online. **Students do not attend school this day.**

### FALL BREAK

This year's fall break will begin at **NOON** this **Thursday, October 15** and goes through **Monday, October 19**. Students return next **Tuesday, October 20**.

### SCHOOL PICTURE RETAKES

TSS Photography will return to campus on **Thursday, October 22** for picture retakes. If your student needs a retake, email **Beth Mayberry** at **bmayberry@newcovenantschools.org** to have your child put on the picture list.

### REPORT CARDS

On **Friday, October 23**, report cards will be issued.

### BOX TOPS

If you have been collecting paper box tops, please submit them to your teachers and/or to the front desk. The deadline for submitting these is **Tuesday, October 27**.

### ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Applications for the 2021-2022 school year are now being accepted for brand new siblings in all grades. Use this link to start your application today: <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/admissions/apply-here/>.



## SPORTS SCORES

### MEN'S VARSITY SOCCER

NCS .....	2
Timberlake Christian.....	0
NCS .....	3
Lynchburg Home Schools.....	0

### MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER

NCS .....	7
Timberlake Christian.....	0

### VARSITY VOLLEYBALL

NCS .....	3
North Cross.....	0

### MIDDLE SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY

Boys.....	1st Place
Girls .....	2nd Place

### SENIOR NIGHT FOR VARSITY LADIES VOLLEYBALL

This special night is **tomorrow, October 13 at 7:00 pm**. The ladies will take on the Timberlake Tornados.



## FUNDRAISING REPORT

	GOAL	YTD
Annual Fund	\$30,000	\$7,027
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$13,404
Foundation	\$200,000	Pledged \$75,000 Received \$21,566

Please consider New Covenant Schools in your giving. All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent that the law provides. Donations may be given through cash, check, stock transfers, or IRA distributions. Contact **Dayna Renalds** in the Development Office for more information.

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a school of 1,000 kids, or 2.2 infections over two weeks in a group of 1,000 staff. Even in high-risk areas of the country, the student rates were well under half a percent.”

The most important data for our purposes, however, are those collected in Central Virginia. Over the last thirty days the Virginia Department of Health has dramatically improved its reporting dashboard<sup>2</sup> for schools, and our staff monitors it daily. While the Commonwealth is improving overall, Central Virginia continues to be in a fluctuating situation with higher numbers than Northern Virginia or Richmond. For example, our daily case rate per 100,000 is 22, which is double the “high threshold.” Daily PCR positivity hovers at 6.3%, higher than most other regions, and still above the acceptable transmission level. With this and all other data taken together, the Near Southwest Region which includes Lynchburg, remains classified at “substantial community transmission.”

What does this mean? It means that we continue to be careful; it means that we remain vigilant and it means that we continue to review our mitigation plan. If

you are like me, you are a little weary of the inconveniences, and tired of the clumsy mitigations that we maintain on the campus. From my point of view, I continue to be pleased that we are “in-person” and virus-free. The current cost of inconvenience to our students is far outweighed by the benefits of being in school. We will continue to monitor the data, participate in regular conversations with our local health department, and take the precautions that have served us well to this point.

As we look forward to the Fall Break, your students will benefit from the time off. Please remember, however, if you are traveling, to be mindful of where you are and what you are doing. The nursing staff emphasizes that the best way for you to help is to continue health screening for your child at home and pay attention to cold-like symptoms and especially fever. We wish you a restful break, and we want you to return safely to school next week without putting the school at risk.



***Wearing masks is remaining vigilant.***

## HELP THE YEARBOOK WITH YOUR PHOTOS



If you have taken good photos of events or activities around NCS, you are invited to submit them throughout the year for consideration for inclusion in the annual yearbook. We are now particularly looking for your summer 2020 vacation photos or of the 2020-21 Convocation held earlier this year. Send your submissions as JPG attachments (largest/actual size) to **Mark Hernandez** at **Mhernandez@newcovenantschools.org**.

## QUID NOVI

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CLASS OF 2021 • Mike Lovell • Kristin Durand • CLASS OF 2022 • Dr. Tim Brophy • Bob Price • Leslie Moeller • Dan Vollmer • Amy Bonebright • Class of 2023 • Kristin Hampton • Darryl Whitesell • Nancy Hall • Sam Mizener • Tom Rogers • Anne Scruggs

### EX OFFICIO

Rev'd John Heaton

### OUR MISSION

New Covenant Schools is an educational community serving families of Central Virginia, providing an exceptional education in a classical curriculum within the framework of historic Christianity, furnishing the student with the tools of education and the inspiration to be a lifelong learner.

**new covenant schools**

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/schools-arent-superspreaders/616669/?fclid=1wAR3HnvHgYn13-eFErrMFSU5BnGAYYLFSApeamhH9\\_qjMOT\\_4C1pBLGmpVvo](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/schools-arent-superspreaders/616669/?fclid=1wAR3HnvHgYn13-eFErrMFSU5BnGAYYLFSApeamhH9_qjMOT_4C1pBLGmpVvo)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/key-measures/pandemic-metrics/school-metrics/>