



Next Step to Success Weekly Update



A Message from our Executive Director

NEXT STEP TO SUCCESS
WEEK 2
One Community, Many Schools

Different Schools. One Community. Keep Showing Up.

Week 2: One Community, Many Schools

Walk through our building on any afternoon this week and you'll see something you won't find anywhere else in Norfolk.

Our students arrive from schools all across Norfolk Public Schools, different buildings, different uniforms, different lunch tables, and different rivalries. Some of them have never met. Some of them only know each other by their reputation. And then they walk through our doors, and all of that gets left at the curb.

What we're building at Next Step to Success is a new ecosystem, a healthy one. Here, nobody is the kid they were labeled as at their home school. Here, a

student who's quiet in a 30-person classroom finds their voice. Here, the only thing that matters are how you treat the person sitting next to you and how hard you're willing to work.

This week our scholars also began setting their GRIT goals for the year, and they did it in front of one another. That takes courage, especially in a room of new faces. But that's exactly the point. When a student from one school commits out loud and hears a student from across town say, "I've got you," something shifts. That's the ecosystem doing its work.

Different schools. One community. Keep showing up.

Best,

James Harris
Executive Director

New Faces, New Expectations, One NSTS Community



A New Week, A Fresh Start at NSTS

This week at Next Step to Success was filled with new beginnings as our youth welcomed new peers, met new Success Coaches, and settled into updated routines and expectations. Change can take time, but our youth

approached the week with open minds, positive attitudes, and a willingness to learn. They began building new relationships, finding their place within the group, and learning what it means to be part of the NSTS community. Our coaches continued to focus on creating a welcoming and supportive environment while reinforcing the importance of respect, responsibility, and accountability. With each activity, conversation, and shared experience, our youth grew more comfortable and confident. It was an encouraging start, and we look forward to watching them strengthen their connections, embrace new opportunities, and continue taking meaningful steps toward success.

NSTS Leadership Insights

A Note from Muhanma Garcia, Director of Director of Strategic Growth, Partnerships, and Youth Engagement



NEXT STEP TO SUCCESS
YOUTH TODAY. LEADERS TOMORROW.

OPEN HOUSE!

YOUR NEXT STEP STARTS HERE!

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH
4:00PM – 6:00PM

FOR FAMILIES OF YOUTH AGES 13 – 18 YEARS RESIDING IN NORFOLK, VA

NEXT STEP TO SUCCESS
3401 Tidewater Drive
Norfolk, VA 23509

DISCOVER. CONNECT. EMPOWER.
Join us for an interactive evening to learn more about our after-school program, meet our team, tour our space, and explore the opportunities we offer!

- ACADEMIC SUPPORT
- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
- MENTORSHIP & LIFE SKILLS
- ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES
- COLLEGE & CAREER EXPLORATION
- A SAFE PLACE TO GROW

COME SEE WHAT MAKES NSTS THE NEXT STEP FOR YOUR YOUTH!

NEXT STEP TO SUCCESS
YOUTH TODAY. LEADERS TOMORROW.

(757) 995-2111
www.nextstepstosuccess.org
@nextstepstosuccess

BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES.
ONE STEP AT A TIME.

Attendance Matters: Let's Reach 80% Together!

At Next Step To Success, consistent attendance is an important part of a young person's success. Our goal is for every youth to maintain at least 80% weekly attendance, with a minimum of 3 days of participation each week.

Why does it matter? Every day at NSTS is an opportunity to build relationships, develop confidence, strengthen skills, and experience something new. Consistent participation allows our Success Coaches to build meaningful connections with youth and helps young people get the most out of their NSTS experience.

Let's show up, stay connected, and take the next step toward success

You're Invited: NSTS Open House

Thursday, September 24, 2026 | Beginning at 4:00 PM - We are excited to welcome families, youth, and community partners to the Next Step To Success Open House!

Come visit our space, learn more about our After-School Program, meet members of our team, and discover the experiences and opportunities available to Norfolk youth.

We look forward to opening our doors and welcoming you to NSTS!

NSTS Alumni Meet & Greet

Saturday, September 26, 2026 | 12:00 PM - Once a part of NSTS, always a part of the NSTS family! We are excited to bring our alumni together for an NSTS Alumni Meet & Greet. This is an amazing opportunity to reconnect, share experiences, celebrate accomplishments, and continue building relationships beyond high school.

We can't wait to reconnect with our NSTS alumni!

A Note from Carly Gelles, Director of Education

It has been another good week at NSTS as our youth continue getting into the rhythm of the new school year. We know that the beginning of the year can come with a lot of adjustments, from new classes and teachers to figuring out schedules, expectations, and everything in between. Our coaches are continuing to support youth as they navigate those changes while encouraging them to stay engaged, make good decisions, and take ownership of their responsibilities. We are also continuing to provide a balance of academic support, enrichment, and opportunities for youth to build the skills they need both in and outside of the classroom.

As we move further into the school year, academics will continue to be a major focus for our team. We will be monitoring grades and checking in with youth to identify concerns early and help them stay on track. Thank you to the families who have already provided the necessary documentation that allows us to support and monitor academic progress. Please continue to reach out to me directly whenever you have questions or concerns about your child's academics, progress, or overall experience at NSTS. We appreciate the continued partnership with our families and look forward to a strong year together!

A Note from Kaelyn Hundley, Director of Programming

Our youth are settling into the small changes that come with the new school year, while we continue to welcome new faces into our program. Our coaches are having fun getting to know new youth while continuing to mentor and support those returning, and our interns and volunteers have done an amazing job finding

their place throughout our halls. It has been exciting to see everyone build relationships and create a welcoming environment for our youth.

We are also excited to see our partnerships getting back into full swing! This week, The Hermitage Museum & Gardens returned to Next Step to Success for a hands-on pottery experience. After years of visiting their museum and art studio, it was special to have them bring the experience to us at our temporary home on Tidewater Drive. Youth explored different types of clay, experimented with new techniques, and had fun discovering which clay they enjoyed working with most. We are grateful for partners like The Hermitage who continue to bring opportunities for creativity, learning, and growth to our youth. We can't wait to see what the rest of the school year brings!

Confidence Cafe Weekly Update

FUEL
KINDNESS
BUILD
CONFIDENCE
GREAT FOOD
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

CONFIDENCE CAFÉ

WEEKLY DINNER MENU

SEPTEMBER 14-18

Good
Food
Brighter
Futures
♡

MONDAY



Salisbury Steak with Onion Gravy

Seasoned Rice • Broccoli

Good
Meals
Brighter
Days
♡

TUESDAY



Loaded Beef Nachos

Lettuce • Tomato • Cheese • Salsa
Cinnamon-Sugar Churros



WEDNESDAY

Big
Flavors
Bigger
Potential
♡



Wings & Wedges



THURSDAY



Baked Ziti

Garlic Knots • Caesar Salad



Pasta
Fuel
Progress
♡

FRIDAY



Mediterranean Bowls

Chicken Shawarma • Turmeric Rice
Cucumber-Tomato Salad • Hummus • Pita
Pineapple Upside-Down Dump Cake



#HowYouEating
Let's Eat & Level Up!

GOOD
FOOD
BOLDER
YOUTH

SAME
TABLE
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS
♡

From DePaul's Legacy to the Next Generation's Future

WERE YOU BORN AT DEPAUL HOSPITAL?

Your story started here. Now, help write the next chapter.

Then



Our Future



From a Legacy of *care...* To where *futures* are built.

 **HONOR THE PAST.
INVEST IN THE FUTURE.**

Purchase a commemorative brick
and be part of transforming the historic
DePaul Hospital site into the future home
of Next Step to Success.

 Leave a Lasting Legacy

 Honor a Loved One or Family

 Support Norfolk's Youth



SCAN TO

**BUY YOUR
BRICK
Today!**



**NEXT
STEP**  **TO
SUCCESS**



St. Vincent de Paul House
Future Home of Next Step to Success

Were You Born at the Historic DePaul Hospital?

For generations, DePaul Hospital was more than a building. It was where families began, where first breaths were taken, and where lifelong stories started.

If you or someone you love has a connection to DePaul, this is your opportunity to honor that legacy in a meaningful and lasting way.

Next Step to Success is proud to carry that history forward as we transform this historic space into a place where young people can grow, learn, and build their futures. By purchasing a commemorative brick, you become a permanent part of this next chapter — celebrating the past while investing in the future of Norfolk's youth.

Each brick tells a story. Each name becomes part of the foundation.

**Honor your DePaul story. Invest in their future. Purchase your
commemorative brick today.**

[Buy a Brick](#)

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Next Step To Success | 3401 Tidewater Dr. | Norfolk,
VA 23509 US



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