

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 9 Issue 1

HAMS

October 2014

Principal's Message

Greetings from
Huntingdon Area Middle School!

We have had an excellent start to the 2014-2015 school year. We want to welcome several new staff members to HAMS:
Mrs. Venios – assistant principal
Ms. Rygel- 7 Bears Science Teacher
Miss Webb- 7 Bears English Language Arts Teacher
Mr. Miller- 7/8 Cats English Language Arts and Reading Teacher
Mrs. Steward- Librarian
Mrs. Hallinan – English as a Second Language Teacher
Mrs. Russo- 6 Bearcats Learning Support Teacher

In addition to the new staff changes, the middle school has embraced the Positive School Wide Program this year to enhance the culture of our school. Our focus is **PRIDE- P-positivity, R-responsibility, I-integrity, D-determination- E- everyone together**. You should hear your son or daughter talking about PRIDE and how they demonstrate PRIDE around the school. The HAMS Family is looking forward to having a great year. If you have any concerns about your son or daughter, please feel free to call me at 814.643.2900.

Mrs. Deb Luffy
High School and Middle School
Principal

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Assistant Principal Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is a great privilege to introduce myself as HAMS's new Assistant Principal. Before I became a Bearcat, I was a 10th and 11th grade English teacher at Altoona Area High School for eight years and am thrilled to have this opportunity at Huntingdon! I love the family oriented community; my husband and I feel it is a perfect place to raise our two children.

It has been a very smooth beginning of the school year, and I have the wonderful students and staff to thank for that. Both groups are enthusiastic about learning, which means there will be many upcoming successes in and outside of the classroom. I'm looking forward to meeting the students' families through our upcoming community events and parent nights. We have many exciting activities planned, so you won't want to miss them. If you ever have a concern or issue, please feel free to contact me. Your child's safety and well-being are always our first priorities.

I'm so proud to be part of the Bearcat family!
Here's to a great year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Breanne Venios
Huntingdon Middle School Assistant
Principal



Counselors Corner

BY: Mrs. Miller

October News

On October 24, 2014, 6-8 students are invited to take a tour of Juniata College. The purpose of the visit is to expose students to educational opportunities beyond middle/high school. If you would like your child to participate, please contact the school counseling office.

Students are welcome to tour the Huntingdon County Career and Technology Center on Thursday, October 30, 2014 from 8:50 am - 11: 00 am. Participants may choose two areas of interest involving culinary arts, collision repair, automotive mechanics, computer servicing, carpentry, precision machining, HVAC and refrigeration, health occupations, cosmetology, electrical, as well as heating and plumbing. Space is limited to 8 students each month. The goal of the visit is to increase student awareness about educational and employment opportunities for the future. If you would like your child to participate, please contact the school counseling office.

With parental permission, students are invited to attend Middle School Group each Tuesday during lunch. Professionals from Mainstream Counseling, Youth Advocate Program, and HAMS meet with interested participants regarding an array of topics including careers, study strategies, friendship skills, conflict resolution, grief/loss, setting goals, divorce, drug and alcohol prevention, coping skills, peer pressure, acceptance, health and wellness, and other concerns. The goals of the group are to increase problem solving skills and enhance the social, academic, and career development of young people. Space is limited to 6-8 students each nine week period.

Career Speaker - Mary Jane Smith from MJEMS will visit with interested individuals who wish to pursue photography as a profession on Monday, October 6, 2014. Students will listen to the presentation during lunch in the school counseling office. Those who wish to attend should sign up as soon as possible. If you would like to serve as a career presenter, please contact Linda Miller.

Tasty Tidbits

By: Mrs. McNitt, Food Service Director

In August 2014, the Huntingdon Area School District Food Service began using e-Funds for schools, a secure website that allows parents/guardians another option for those who choose to make payments on-line. With e-Funds, parents/guardians have the ability to have lunch payments electronically withdrawn from their checking account or charged to their credit card at any time. Because this service is offered by a third party service provider there is a charge for processing your payment(s), similar to other on-line banking services. The district does not request or keep records of family checking or credit card account information. Because there is a charge for this third party service, when you sign up please review your options carefully.

You may view their child(ren)'s school breakfast, lunch, and a la carte food activity on-line. In addition, using your Skyward log-in, parents/guardians can check balances and view student meal purchases on line. There is also an eFunds and a Skyward link to each website on the homepage of the District website @ www.huntsd.org. All food service account activity information can still be obtained by calling directly to the Food Service Director's office. In addition, payments can still be made by sending money into the school to be put onto your child's account. This payment should be in an envelope clearly marked with your child's name, grade, school name, and keypad number (optional).

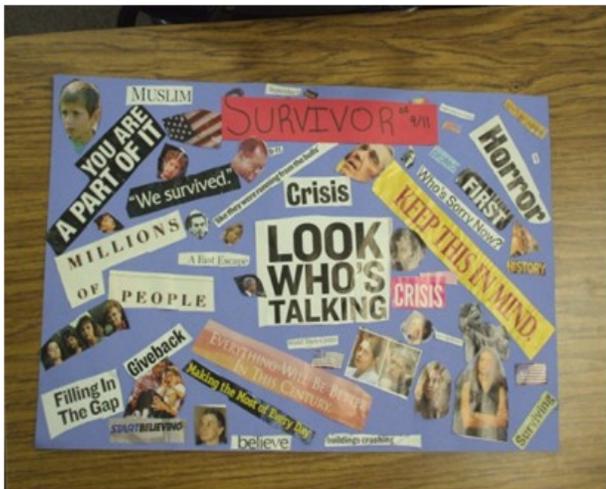
If you have any questions about your child's account please feel free to call the Food Service Director's office at (814) 641- 2190 so we can assist you.



September 11 with the 7 Bears

BY: Mr. Anders

The events that occurred on September 11, 2001 have shaped the mindset and attitude of a nation. In order to gain an understanding of September 11 the 7 Bears team set aside time to discuss and inform students of the background of that day. The students participated in a cooperative group project in social studies class. The project was based on a collage of the events from September 11 from the perspective of emergency personnel, survivors, victims or families of the victims. The students were able to gain valuable knowledge of the effects on people nationally, locally and socially. September 11, 2001 will be a day that will never be forgotten because of the impact those events had on people of all walks of life.



It Starts With Us

BY: Mr. Sowers

As our eighth grade students continue their journey into their last year in the middle school, it is imperative that teachers and parents stress the importance of being consistent with academics. So many times, students begin the school year performing extremely well in their classes and then gradually their motivation lessens. The only way for our adolescents to advance their positions in life is through a solid work ethic and dedication to their lives. At thirteen and fourteen years of age, this concept is extremely difficult for students to grasp, which should be all the motivation we need as their parents, teachers, mentors and role models to do everything we can to help develop consistent, positive habits, work ethics and working relationships. As parents and teachers, we can hold our students to higher but attainable expectations. It starts with us to provide the foundation from which a young adolescent can grow into a young man or woman who consistently cares about their future, the future of their community and the future of those whose with which lives they come in contact.

EVENTS AT HAMS

- Oct. 2- School Photos
- Oct. 13- Half day for students (Act 80)
- Oct. 23- End of First Marking Period
- Oct. 22- Fall Band Concert-7 PM
At the High School
- Oct. 24 & 28—Vision Screening



New 7/8 CATS Teacher

BY: Mr. Orenshaw

On the 7/8 Cats team we have had the pleasure to introduce a new teacher, Mr. Miller. Mr. Miller will be teaching language arts and is looking forward to a great year. We had a Q and A with Mr. Miller and are taking this time to share some of our findings with you all. Here goes:

Q: Mr. Miller, welcome to HAMS and the 7/8 Cats. As we try to get to know you, can you share some of your hobbies with us?

A: I love going to the movies with my fiance and ordering a bucket of popcorn and sharing a Coke. I enjoy reading sports literature.

I have a passion for fantasy sports. Preferably baseball and hockey, but I do play basketball and football as well.

Q: Tell us about your educational background.

A: I grew up in and graduated high school from Huntingdon. I then attended Clarion University of Pennsylvania and graduated with a degree in Secondary English Education in 2013.



Q: So what brought you back to Huntingdon?

A: Whether I like to admit it or not, Huntingdon is really a great place to grow up and live. When I went off to college for several years, it really made me appreciate the town and the people in it. It's true what they say, home is really where the heart is.

Q: What are you most excited to teach your students this year?

A: I am really excited to dig into the young adult literature that is made available to our students. The topics and themes are bold and rich, and the students really seem to have a passion for the newer books. It's all about making connections to our students' lives and bringing out that love for reading.

Q: You mentioned above you are a sports fan, who are your favorite teams?

A: Baltimore Orioles, St. Louis Blues, Philadelphia Eagles, Philadelphia 76ers, Penn State Nittany Lions

Q: What can students expect from your class?

A: When students come to class, they should expect to have fun with reading and writing. I love to incorporate creative writing and entertaining texts to engage the students and to help students reach their potential with their own learning.

Q: Give us a few interesting facts about you:

A: I collect hats, I am getting married in May and I work construction in the summer months.

A big thanks to Mr. Miller for his time. We look forward to a great year!



Computers in the classroom



Chromebooks in the classroom

BY: Mr. Smith

Both seventh and eighth grade Cat students are using Chromebooks in their Social Studies classes. Chromebook is designed by Google, and it allows students to browse the Internet, use Gmail, and create Google Docs. The Chromebooks that Mr. Smith has in his classroom are smaller and lighter than the PC laptops and MacBooks in the middle school. In terms of pricing, the Chromebook offers users a quality laptop for a reasonable price. For comparison purposes, the lower end Chromebook begins as low as \$199, and the cheapest MacBook Air starts at \$999. The Chromebook has replaced the eighth grade social studies textbook. Therefore, eighth grade parents will not see their child bring home a textbook for social studies. Mr. Smith is currently phasing out the textbook in his seventh grade classes.

During the month of September, the seventh and eighth grade social studies classes learned how to create Google Docs on the Chromebooks. After learning how to do this, both the seventh and eighth graders wrote a paper using Google Docs, and then shared it with another classmate who helped them peer edit their paper. In addition to using Google Docs to write papers, the seventh and eighth graders took quizzes online using Google Form. Mr. Smith uses Google Form to create quizzes for his students, which students take online and then submit. The days of paper tests and quizzes are a thing of the past in Mr. Smith's social studies classrooms.

Lastly, the seventh graders recently watched a lecture video about timelines. In the past, Mr. Smith taught students how to create timelines using the traditional lecture format. However, the lecture video allowed seventh grade students to learn about timelines at their own pace. Students could stop or replay the lecture video as needed. Additionally, the lecture video allowed Mr. Smith to walk around the room and help students one-on-one. The future of using technology in Education is alive in Mr. Smith's classroom.

A Year of Change- 6 Bearcats

BY: Mrs. Dickson

The transition from the elementary school to middle school is always a fear in parents' hearts and minds. Once the students have gotten through the first couple of weeks, the fears subside and the students and parents have acclimated to their new surroundings and schedules. The students are moving throughout the day through an 8 period day with 44 minute classes. Students are extremely fortunate to have Reading for two periods and other core classes for one period a day. The students 7th period class finds them working in study hall or participating in choir or band. This year the 6th grade students have their specials 8th period. The students rotate through specials such as Tech Ed, Gym, Study Skills, Library, Music, and Art. What a great way to finish out the day.

The students have also seen the introduction of the "Bearcat Buckaroos". This "money" is rewarded to students exhibiting positive behavior throughout the day. Students are learning how to show PRIDE in themselves, their school, and their work. A store is in the works, to open shortly, for the exchange of "buckaroos" for prizes. Goals are set for the team and when the goal is met a team prize day is planned. The students' progress will be monitored in each team and school-wide goals are set. Upon reaching the school-wide goal, the school will participate in a school-wide prize day. We are hoping that the students are enjoying the accumulation of the "buckaroos". Anticipation of spending the money is almost as fun as spending it.

One change that you may have heard of from your son or daughter is the coveted role of "Student of the Month". This year the 6 Bearcats will be choosing one girl and one boy for this honored role during the months of September, December, March, and June. It is a true honor for the students that are chosen to receive this award. A true student of the month exhibits many positive contributions to their team, classes, and classmates. Teachers look at the students' grades, leadership skills, citizenship, attendance, school spirit, participation, quality of work, initiative, pride, responsibility, and humbleness. The votes are cast and with administrative approval the student is awarded the honor. The students are then honored at the monthly school board meeting where a certificate is given and handshakes and smiles abound from board members.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

BY: Mrs. Schneider

When looking at the health and physical education schedule, one will notice that there is a change from last school year. Mrs. Schneider and Mr. Carlson are excited to announce that all 7th and 8th grade students have health and physical education every other day for the entire year which enables them to stress skill work, cardiovascular fitness, core strength, muscular strength, and flexibility as well as game play. The 6th grade students have health and physical education every third day for half of a year and they will concentrate on cardiovascular fitness through movement and game play to keep them active.

Some of the units that the students will have the opportunity to experience in physical education are: Flicker Football, Physical Fitness, Soccer, Kickball, Archery, Fitness Center, Speedball, Scooter Handball, Dance, Floor Hockey, Field Hockey, Softball/Wiffleball, Angle Ball, Dodgeball, Basketball, Volleyball, Relays, and Small Games.

The health units that have the most concentration are: Personal Health, Relationships, Drugs and Alcohol, AIDS/HIV, Physical Fitness and Activity, and Nutrition.

With the obesity rate increasing in the United States, it is the goal of the health and physical education department to stress the importance of physical activity and good nutrition every day. Students have been given a fitness log which they started on September 8, 2014. In this log, students record their physical activity for five out of seven days every week. Students are required to have at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity which can include their physical education time, leisure time activities that require movement, or sport time. Some of the areas that students may include are walking, jogging, running, mowing the grass, riding their bikes, walking the dog, splitting wood, chores that require physical strength or movement, all extracurricular activities or sports, or any form of movement that requires physical activity or strength. Students can come to the health room every morning before school and record information in their designated folder or record their activities on an electronically online format.

Mrs. Schneider and Mr. Carlson are looking forward to an exciting year with the students and plan to improve all aspects of their health so they can lead better lives now and in the future.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) Prevention and Treatment

**BY: Mrs. Felton
School Nurse**

Prevention: There is no vaccine to protect against the viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease. A person can lower their risk of being infected by washing hands often with soap and water, especially after changing diapers and using the toilet. Visit [CDC's Clean Hands Save Lives!](#) for more information.

Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and soiled items, including toys. Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with people with hand, foot, and mouth disease. If a person has mouth sores, it might be painful to swallow. However, drinking liquids is important to stay hydrated. If a person cannot swallow enough liquids, these may need to be given through an IV in their vein.

Treatment: There is no specific treatment for hand, foot and mouth disease. However, some things can be done to relieve symptoms, such as taking over-the-counter medications to relieve pain and fever (Caution: Aspirin should not be given to children.) Use mouthwashes or sprays that numb mouth pain. Persons who are concerned about their symptoms should contact their health care provider.



A Note from the HAMS Music Department

BY: Mrs. Canner

Hello! My name is Mrs. Canner and I am the middle school music teacher here at HAMS!

Since school started, the 6th grade choir has been very busy! This year, the choir is made up of 40 dedicated students. Rehearsing on B and D days during 6th period, we have begun preparing for the fall concert. At the fall concert, you will hear selections including *Simple Gifts* and *Siyahamba* (Swahili). Student accompanists will also be featured with 6th grade choir on piano and various percussion instruments!

Rehearsing during 5th period on B, D and F days the 7th and 8th grade choir is creating music together such as *One Small Voice*, from Sesame Street and *Drill Ye Tarriers Drill*, an American folk song. Student accompanists featured in these selections include Caroline Sliver and Beth Speck. Comprised of 55 members, we are so excited to prepare wonderful music to get you in the fall spirit!

Not only are the choir members exploring the music world, the band students in the music department are discovering ways to get excited about the changing seasons. The 7th and 8th grade band, some 45 members, is preparing a variety of pieces including *Latinesque* and *Suite in Minor Mode*. Each time we rehearse, we get more and more excited for the changing weather. Thanksgiving break will be here before we know it!

Stony Creek March is the piece 6th grade band is readying for the fall concert. All 22 members are really looking forward to putting on a great performance for you and your family to enjoy.

So, when is this fall concert we're so excited about?

Wednesday, October 22nd, 2014

High School Auditorium ~

7:00pm

Please bring your family and friends to support these hard working musicians!



ATTENDANCE

When a student returns to school after an absence, they must present a properly signed excuse during homeroom. When visiting a doctor please obtain a written excuse from them. Students have 3 days after their return to school to bring in their excuse. Each day that is not covered by a legal excuse will result in an unexcused day on record. Excuses do not have to be accepted after the three day window has passed.

If your son or daughter participates in any extra-curricular activities they must be in school by 9:30 AM to participate in that day's event or practice. If a student is absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, the student will be in jeopardy of losing his/her eligibility until he/she has been in attendance for a total of 45 school days following the 20th day absence.

Students participating in extra-curricular activities must pass at least four (4) of the core subjects to be eligible. Eligibility will be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period and will be reported on a weekly basis. A student not meeting this requirement will be ineligible for 15 school days. Extra-curricular activities cannot be an excuse for missing detention. In addition, failure to report to detention will result in an additional detention hall assignment or suspension.

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