



Huntingdon Area School District



SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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September 7, 2018

Greetings Parents and Guardians,

It's hard to believe that we've now been back to school for three weeks. We hope that your learners are settling in to their routines and are enjoying their school experience. At Huntingdon Area High School and Huntingdon Area Middle School, we are committed to developing the *Ideal Learning Experience* for our children, and this newsletter serves as one of the first updates about the happenings within the school, and coming events, as we focus on developing the "whole child" and promoting a climate of success for *All Learners, All Futures*. A successful educational process relies upon the cooperation of all stakeholders - parents, teachers, administrators, and most importantly, the learners. As we've had a busy and exciting start to the school year, we hope that your learners share their daily activities and experiences with you, and that as a school, we can continue to share the positive things that our learners and teachers are doing in the classroom. Please see below for some of our coming events.

One of the most exciting things that we've accomplished to start the year is the iPad distribution to our senior high learners. During the second week of school, two days were spent deploying the iPads, and another two days reviewing expectations and basic operating procedures in small group settings. In addition, as learners became accustomed to using the iPads, the school counselors led a guided activity that helped learners capture their learning style, interests, and career pursuits, information that will help teachers to get to know their learners better, and to tailor instruction to allow for more learner voice, choice, and motivation. The iPads are a powerful tool that can help to enhance learning by focusing on the 4Cs - Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity, and by providing access to many resources not available through traditional instructional means. However, it is important to note that technology is just a tool, and the key is effectively using it when it enhances the learning process. Our middle school and freshmen learners have experienced this already, and we look forward to freshmen being able to take on a leadership role as these tools begin to be utilized at the high school. For further information about some basic educational terms and resources regarding technology, please refer to the **Parent Resources** section listed below.

We were pleased to see a nice crowd at the Middle School Open House held Wednesday, August 29. Teachers were able to share expectations and information about content to be learned throughout the year, as well as to show how technology can enhance the learning process. Open House at the High School is scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, at 6 pm, beginning in the HS auditorium. Guests will be able to follow their learners' schedule to meet their children's teachers. We hope to see you there!

Next week marks seventeen years since the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Many of us vividly remember this day and the feelings of mourning, of reflection, and of patriotism, that we felt for weeks and months thereafter. However, most of our learners were yet to be born when this tragic event occurred. On Tuesday next week, we will be reading a statement during morning announcements about the events of this day, and we will be having a moment of silence throughout the day, each one corresponding to the times when the four planes crashed into the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, PA. I encourage you to speak with your children about your experiences on this day, and how it changed many of us personally, and as a country. We are encouraging our teachers to do the same.

Next week is also National Suicide Prevention Week. We have all been touched by suicide, be it on a personal level or as a member of our community. In partnership with the High School Key Club, we will be sharing positive and inspirational messages with learners on the announcements and in the hallways to share that we care about every individual in our school. In addition, we will be showing brief Public Service Announcements (PSAs) during homeroom to spread the important message about suicide prevention. Both HAMS and HAHS are also forming Aavidum groups. These groups will be targeted to learners that want to make a difference not only in preventing suicide, but also in contributing to a positive school climate that is aligned to our BEARCATS expectations, especially "Caring About the Team." Learners interested in participating in this club should listen to the announcements for information about sign-ups. A link to information about the national Aavidum group, a group that has its roots in Pennsylvania, is shared in the Parent Resources portion of this newsletter. Finally, at the community level, the local *Out of the Darkness* community walk, sponsored by the Central PA Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, will be held at Juniata College on Sunday, October 7th. An informational flyer about this event is attached to this newsletter. Various staff members will be participating in this event, as well as members of various school clubs. Learners interested in participating in this event, and getting additional information, should see their school counselor.

In closing, I encourage you to speak with your learners about their school experience, to give them guidance and help them monitor their progress in pursuit of being college and career ready, and to grow in their appreciation for our school and community. I look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with all school stakeholders to enhance the learning environment and work towards providing more, and better, opportunities for our children. Let's all be proud to be a Bearcat!

Coming Events

- High School Open House: Wednesday, September 12. 6:00 PM - HS Auditorium
- HAMS and HAHS Picture Day: Wednesday, September 19 (Make-ups 10/25)
- School Safety and Security Meeting: Thursday, September 27. 6: 30 PM - HS Auditorium
- Homecoming: Friday, October 5 (Various Activities)
- Out of the Darkness Walk: Sunday, October 7 - Juniata College
- Fall Ball Dance: Saturday, October 13 - Sponsored by Key Club
- Spark Book Study - Dates/Times TBD. Please contact Mrs. Linda Miller if interested.
Open to all secondary school parents/guardians

Parent Resources

Technology

- Common Sense Media and Digital Citizenship Resources
 - <https://www.common sense media.org/>
- SAMR (Substitution-Augmentation/Modification-Redefinition) Model
 - <https://www.common sense.org/education/videos/introduction-to-the-samr-model>
- TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge)
 - <http://matt-koehler.com/tpack2/tpack-explained/>
- Screen Time - 20/20/20
 - <https://www.aoa.org/documents/infographics/SYVM2016Infographics.pdf>
 - <https://www.aoa.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/computer-usage>
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School Resources and Suicide Prevention Information

- Student Assistance Program (SAP): Please see school counselors. Forms available on school website.
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- Crisis Text Line: TEXT PA to 741-741 or visit <http://www.crisistextline.org>
- Juniata Valley Tri-County Crisis: 1-800-929-9583 or www.ucbh.org
- Aavidum: <http://aavidum.com/cms>

September 11 Information

- For information about ways to speak with your children about 9/11, or to seek out ways to show patriotism by acts of kindness and volunteerism, please review www.911day.org