



Huntingdon Area School District



SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mr. Travis R. Lee,
Secondary Principal

Huntingdon Area Middle School

Mr. Zachary R. Treece, Assistant Principal
2500 Cassady Avenue, Huntingdon, PA 16652
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Huntingdon Area High School

Mr. Nicholas A. Payne, Assistant Principal
2400 Cassady Avenue, Suite 1, Huntingdon, PA 16652
(814)643-1080

March 9, 2018

Greetings Parents and Guardians,

As we approach spring and are nearing the fourth quarter of the school year, I am writing to share information about academic information, coming events, state assessment information, and special items of note. There is a lot to share, so I appreciate you taking the time to review this information. Before addressing these items, though, I first want to share about how appreciative that I am to be working with your learners. As I'm progressing through my first year as the Secondary Principal, I continue to be impressed with the great work that our learners are demonstrating not only in their academic learning, but also in their development as well-rounded, civic-minded individuals. 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. Our school's motto of "*All Learners, All Futures*" sets our focus in fulfilling our mission and vision, and we are seeing that embodied within our walls every day. Please know that the successes that we experience would not be possible without your cooperation and without the time and effort of our dedicated staff. 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. I'm proud to be a Bearcat, and I hope that you are too!

The first area that I will address is a concern that I'm sure is on many of our minds - learner safety and school safety procedures. In light of the recent school tragedy several weeks ago in Parkland, Florida, and numerous reports of subsequent school threats and rumors that have affected districts at the state level, the school resource officer, Officer McBride, school assistant principals, Mr. Treece and Mr. Payne, and I have met with learners through grade level or team assemblies to review safety protocols and proper reporting of suspicious behaviors. We also addressed concerns and provided awareness about the role of social media in these events, and learner responsibilities in this regard. The learners were very focused and respectful during these presentations and discussion. As a school district, we continuously review our safety procedures. The school is currently in a substantive year-long review process of our Emergency Operation Plan (EOP). Once this plan is completed, additional training and prevention measures will be implemented. More information about district safety procedures, including the role of families during emergencies and the reunification process, will be shared

at a parent update meeting on **Thursday, March 15, at 6:30 pm** in the High School auditorium. We hope that you can attend and develop an understanding of the steps that our schools take to keep learners safe.

With the recent events concerning school safety, learners and advocacy groups across the nation are focusing awareness efforts around various items concerning school safety. One coming event at the national level is the National School Walkout scheduled for Wednesday, March 14. In light of this event, the secondary schools will be honoring the victims of the Parkland, FL incident at 10:00 am with a moment of silence for 17 seconds, a second for each victim, followed by the reading of names and a message about learner safety. After discussions with a learner focus group, the school recognizes the importance of giving learners a voice about issues that are important to them, and developing citizenship and democratic skills. The school will be working with learners that are focused on these issues to help provide a forum for them to help influence positive change within our school, community, and society in general. More information about this will be shared with learners as these events are planned.

The next piece of information to share is that the school welcomes parents, guardians, and community members to the **HASD K-12 Learner Showcase**, scheduled for Monday, **March 26, from 5:00 - 7:00 pm** at the Middle School. This showcase will highlight many of the positive changes that are taking place within our classrooms. Most importantly, you will see and hear about these changes from the learners' perspectives. The showcase event will demonstrate how personalized learning concepts are being put into practice to enhance the learning environment through engaging and authentic practices that provide learners with a larger degree of choice and ownership in their education. There will be brief presentations from elementary, middle, and high school settings as well as the ability to hear and see of the musical and artistic talents of our learners.

Scheduling Night for the 2018-2019 school year will be held on **Tuesday, March 13, at 6:00 pm** at the High School. Learners currently in Grades 8-11 and their families are welcome to attend. The event will begin promptly at 6:00 pm in the auditorium with a brief presentation about the scheduling process, followed by sessions provided by content area teachers. A special presentation about a new innovative program at HAHS, a project based STEM program, will commence at 7:45 pm to round-out the evening. We hope to see you at this event in order to help your learner make the most informed decisions about the scheduling process and how to align the schedule to post-secondary career and college pursuits.

As we near the final quarter of the school year in April and May, state assessment season is quickly approaching. Learners in Grades 6-8 will be taking the PSSAs in April. Keystone Exams, end of course assessments for Algebra I, Literature, and Biology, will be administered in mid-May. Learners that will be participating in these assessments will be given more specific testing information within the coming weeks. We know that more learning takes place in school than can be quantified on a standardized test, and multiple measures of assessments are needed to judge learner outcomes, but the state assessments serve as important benchmarks for our progress and planning as a school.

Finally, I would like to share that we've had learners throughout the year participating and performing at a high level in multiple aspects of school life, including academic competitions, such as the Academic Quiz Bowl, Mock Trial, the PETE & C Innovator's Competition, and various speech and essay competitions, through district and regional performances with our musical department, through a great showing of art during the

community Art Walk, and through multiple athletic district championships and strong overall seasons, securing the Mountain League Summit Award for the fall and winter seasons. These types of activities help to foster development of the “whole student” and strengthen the school experience. As our school continues to pursue personalizing learning, and prepare learners to be college and career ready through an emphasis on the 4Cs (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity), these learning opportunities reinforce the development of our learners in ways that reach beyond the classroom. Please consider following the school website and school social media accounts to continue to learn about these achievements. Our learners are doing great things!

In closing, I want to express my gratitude for your continued support for our learners, our school, and our community. I hope that you can attend some of our coming events, and I hope that we can continue to work together to strengthen the learning environment and opportunities for our learners.

Sincerely,

Travis R. Lee,
Secondary Principal

Coming Events

Scheduling Night (Grades 8-11): Tuesday, March 13, 6:00 pm, HS Auditorium.

Parent Safety Meeting: Thursday, March 15, 6:30 pm, HS Auditorium

Learner Showcase: Monday, March 26, 5:00 pm, Middle School