

Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2017



HSD Mission

To provide safe environments and responsive programs that inspire all students to become lifelong learners and contributing citizens in a global society

HSD Vision

Personal growth, achievement, and success for every student

6:30 p.m. Updates

- **Middle School Schedule Proposal**
 - The proposed middle school schedule has been several years in the making.
 - In 2014, HSD conduct an initial survey. Then, during 2015-16 HSD completed a second survey to confirm feedback from parents, staff and community.
 - Priorities included Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), freeing up flex, adding staff/team collaboration time during the day, including intervention for students during the day (not flex), and increasing exploratory class options.
 - The proposed schedule includes:
 - 7 periods (46 minutes): this is an increase from the current schedule
 - 4 lunch periods (organized by team)
 - 1050 instruction hours (more than what is required by the state)
 - Physical Education will be held 90 days a year, intervention time will offset Phys. Ed. if needed
 - There will be 4 additional music-based exploratory classes that students can choose from. This will add a second option for instrumental/ensemble students.
 - Merging ELA and Reading blocks to allow a single teacher to get to know the students' needs in both subject areas
 - New schedule is budget neutral
 - [See the Board Presentation from January 2017 for more information.](#)

7:10 p.m. Response to Member Inquiries

- **Number of Hours vs. Number of Days**
 - The minimum requirements for the number of instructional days (180) and instructional hours (900 elementary, 990 secondary) are outlined in the PA School Code.

§ 51.61. Instructional school day and school year.

(a) The minimum length of an instructional school day for certain grade levels shall be as follows:

- (1) *Nursery schools*—2 hours.

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(2) *Kindergarten*—2 1/2 hours.

(3) *Grades one through eight*—5 hours.

(4) *Grades 9 through 12*—5 1/2 hours.

(b) In grades K through 12, schools shall be in session a minimum of 180 days of instruction or the equivalent clock hour requirement, with prior approval of the Board. Upon request, the Board may, when a meritorious educational program warrants, approve a school year containing a minimum of 990 secondary or 900 elementary and 450 kindergarten hours of instruction as the equivalent of 180 school days.

- We are not aware of any school districts within the region that regularly complete fewer than 180 student days from year to year. This does not mean there aren't schools that seek Act 80 exceptions, but this is not a common practice.
- An Act 80 exception requires approval from the State. We would also need to determine the impact of such a change, if granted, on the subsidy received from the state.
- School days per year (for students and staffs) are negotiated. Any change would also require us to revisit the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and negotiate potential changes, if approval would be granted by the State.
- **How to Stay Connected with Hempfield School District**
 - Our goal would be to have a single sign-in for parents and students, but this option isn't available with the information systems we use.
 - Many of the education tools (Sapphire and Schoology) do not integrate with each other and, at this time, we cannot justify the cost or time of switching to a new interface.
 - As the 1:1 iPad program rolls out, all teachers will be trained and will be using Schoology.
 - Sapphire and Schoology will be the go-to places where sign-ins are required for communication, beyond the district website and mobile app.
 - To see all of the ways in which we communicate and to get connected, [visit this page of the website.](#)
- **Case Manager Roles vs. School Counselor Roles for Students with IEP/GIEP**
 - Case managers typically have more contact with students based on their IEP/GIEP as they have progress monitoring responsibilities that necessitate periodic check-in. The frequency of these check-ins depends on what is reflected in the IEP/GIEP.

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- Case managers are focused on items in the IEP/GIEP, but they work closely with the counselor to access resources available to students and families.
 - Case managers work with parents/guardians and the district team on IEP/GIEP. Counselors may be part of this team.
 - Case managers do not replace counseling services, however. They are fulfilling different roles.
 - Counselors may not be as involved with the academics of IEP/GIEP students, due to case manager progress monitoring, if the special needs are academically-related. They would still be involved with social-emotional supports.
 - School Counselors fulfil social, emotional and academic needs when they fall outside of an IEP/GIEP.
 - At the high school level, case managers collaborate to different degrees with counselors on transition planning, depending on student post-secondary aspirations (college, trade schools, military, employment opportunities, etc.)
 - If you have questions, please contact your building/grade school counselor and or teacher. If you feel you still have questions, please contact the Guidance or Special Education/Gifted Supervisor.
- **Driver's Education Training**
 - School districts may provide a driver education program as per 24 P.S. § 15-1519 et seq. of the Public School Code of 1949.
 - If the district reinstated this program it would not be cost effective. It is more cost effective for parents, the district and tax payers to rely on third party services to fulfill this roll.
 - To learn more about Driver's Education, [visit this page of our website](#).
 - **CES Play**
 - The instructional time issue, which was the reason the play was discontinued, came to light as the new CES principal was seeking answers from the grade level team that were asked by parents that had contacted him. These questions pertained to processes and procedures related to preparing the play – requirement to participate, when rehearsals took place, how parts were decided, etc.

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- At no time did any parent file a complaint about the play or even ask that it be discontinued for religious or any other reasons.
 - Mr. Kramer (CES principal) worked with staff and approached the PTO about assisting with preparing the play either during non-instructional time or after school, but there was not any interest at this time.
 - Mr. Kramer offered to meet with every CES parent that requested the opportunity to speak with him about their concerns related to the play – he met with everyone who asked for a face-to-face opportunity.
 - Please check out the [FAQ](#) on the district website if you have not done so and would like more information about the play situation.
- **Hempfield High School Security Officer**
 - Former HHS Safety Officer submitted his resignation. He was not terminated; he was not asked to resign.
 - He was well-liked by students, staff and administration.
 - We are currently looking to fill this position.
 - **Hempfield High School Counselor Roles**
 - At the high school level, the counselor's job is to connect students and parents with resources and answer questions about the college application process.
 - They are not responsible for completing a financial aid application for a student.
 - When you have a question or concern, we always urge parents to reach out to the direct contact. Please contact the School Counselor or Mrs. Melissa Boas, School Counseling Supervisor.
 - **Freshman Academy Success Flex**
 - This is a dedicated flex that helps students who may be struggling in a class.
 - If you have questions about flex guidelines or are concerned about your student, please reach out to the subject area teacher first. If you still feel that your concern has not been addressed, please contact Dr. Beth Becker, Ninth Grade Principal.

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- **Coaching Staff Size and Additions**

- Coaching staff size is based on many elements.
- Positions are included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) at HSD.
- The number of coaches is based on the number of students involved, the nature of the sport, where it takes place, span of supervisory responsibility, etc.
- When looking to address concerns, please reach out to the coach first, followed by Mr. Steve Polonus, Athletic Director.

7:30 p.m. Discussion

- **Calendar Draft Options Under Consideration**

- Dr. Adams requested that SPAC members review two calendar options, one similar to our current calendar, the second option included an extended “spring break” concept.
- We will be distributing a survey to the internal and external HSD community. We will share this survey on our digital platforms, once district leadership team and SPAC feedback is reviewed and any draft refinements deemed to be appropriate are made.

Future Meetings: 6:30-8:00 pm, Public Board Room

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Monday, May 1, 2017