

Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, November 29, 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

• Kindergarten Badging

- Mike Bromirski presented information related to this topic. Please see the presentation file included in Schoology regarding our badging pilot program.
- [School Board Policy 212](#) – details our reporting of student progress
- [Comprehensive Plan Goal 3](#) – Home/School Partnership and communication between home and school
- In 2015-16, kindergarten teachers asked to meet about this topic feeling that what they were reporting on in report cards was not tightly aligned to the standards.
- In 2016-17, Hempfield formed a committee comprised of district individuals, including kindergarten teachers.
- In 2017-18, we launched a pilot of “badging” to report progress in kindergarten. 7 teachers in 9 classrooms across the district are involved in the pilot.
- Badging uses a digital platform to report progress to parents/guardians. Students have an e-portfolio instead of a traditional report card. Parents/Guardians receive a push notification update via their phone or tablet, or log into a computer.
- Individual tasks are aligned to standards. Teachers are downplaying the “badge” in the classroom because the focus needs to be more on the learning. The badge is a visual added to the e-Portfolio.
- Goal: Parents are more informed ongoing throughout the trimester, rather than a report card going home once per trimester.
- Parents/Guardians with students in the pilot classrooms received a letter about badging and were invited to participate in an in-person presentation.
- Badges are being developed by our high school students in the Technology & Engineering Department on a volunteer basis.
- We will collect feedback from parents (surveys), students (conversations), and teachers (meetings) in the spring to determine next steps.
- In the spring, we will look at the information to determine where we go from here – 1. expand into all kindergarten classrooms; 2. halt the badging pilot; 3. develop an alternative reporting method
- At this time, there is no plan to move badging beyond the kindergarten level.
- We are having conversations as to what a printed piece might look like for parents (i.e. – keepsake).
- Badging cannot yet be accomplished through Schoology. We are using a platform called FreshGrade. There is no financial cost in terms of accessing the platform because we are using the free version.

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- **District Data (PSSA and Keystone Results)**

- Mike Bromirski presented information related to this topic. Please see the presentation file included in Schoology regarding district data from the 2016-17 school year.
- PDE Reminder: Thorough transition to new standards requires time to develop curriculum, train teachers, and provide resources.
- We pride ourselves on maintaining a growth mindset. This is measured through PA Value Added Assessment Systems (PVAAS). We want to see steady performance improvement.
- Strong Growth: Algebra 1, Biology, 4th/8th Grade Science, and 5th/6th/8th Grade Math. Good Growth in ELA across the board 3rd-8th grade.
- Areas to further explore with PVAAS: 4th and 7th grade Math, Literature, and Closing the Achievement Gap (over a period of time)
- In terms of the PSSA exams, our 2017 ELA and Math % Proficient & Advanced Scores (as a district average) are strong compared to PA state averages (above state averages). When the state changed the math standards, the math standards became more rigorous than ever before.
- Also, our 2017 PSSA Science % Proficient & Advanced Scores (as a district average) are above state averages
- Keystone Data (reported in 11th grade year) – we are seeing consistent results of schools with similar enrollment size and similar diversity across the state
- This is the last year that PA Department of Education will report [School Performance Profile](#) (SPP) scores. Transitioning to PA Future Ready Index.
- SPP is still required by law (Act 82) to be reported for inclusion in teacher and administrator evaluations; however, they will not be made public by PDE.
- [PA Future Ready Index](#) will be a more holistic school evaluation tool (Per PDE).
- 2016-17 Advanced Placement Data: offered 21 AP classes & 34 sections. 341 students took AP classes with multiple students taking more than one AP course. 368 AP tests taken in our district. We have 25 AP courses being offered this current school year and more will be added next year based on the demand from students.
- Changes to upcoming PSSAs: ELA now 3 sessions (was 4 sessions; no writing prompt)/Math now 2 sessions (was 3 sessions)/Science is 2 sessions (remains same but appx 20 mins less time)
- Keystone Opt-Outs: 2 week window for parents to view the test. According to new state law, current sophomores and lower grade levels must pass all three keystones to graduate. If a student has been opted out due to religious conflict, the student must participate in an alternate pathway, Project-Based Assessment (PBA). As more information is provided to us by the state, we will provide that information to parents/guardians.
- We have a [2-Minute Talk](#) on “Standardized Testing” and our district’s view of testing as one piece of the puzzle.

7:00 p.m.

Response to Member Inquiries

- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)**

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- Tab Musser and Mike Bromirski addressed this topic in response to some questions we received via SPAC members related to the SEL topic.
- Our district believes in educating the “Whole Child” – healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged
- The needs and make-up of our elementary schools are so different. Principals and school counselors are given some latitude about programming and needs related to SEL. Team responds to any flare-ups – where are we seeing spikes and how do we respond to them.
- Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support Plans (SWPB) is an emphasis at each school. It may sound and look a little different at each school predicated on the needs of their school population.
- Counselors provide social emotional learning opportunities (planned lessons) to help students develop:
 - *Self-Awareness* - understanding one's own emotions, personal goals, and values. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations, having positive mindsets, and possessing a well-grounded sense of self-efficacy and optimism. High levels of self-awareness require the ability to recognize how thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected.
 - *Self-Management* - requires skills and attitudes that facilitate the ability to regulate one's own emotions and behaviors. This includes the ability to delay gratification, manage stress, control impulses, and persevere through challenges in order to achieve personal and educational goals.
 - *Social Awareness* - ability to understand, empathize, and feel compassion for those with different backgrounds or cultures. It also involves understanding social norms for behavior and recognizing family, school, and community resources and supports.
 - *Relationship Skills* - help students establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships, and to act in accordance with social norms. These skills involve communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking help when it is needed.
 - *Responsible Decision Making* - involves learning how to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse settings. It requires the ability to consider ethical standards, safety concerns, accurate behavioral norms for risky behaviors, the health and well-being of self and others, and to make realistic evaluation of various actions' consequences.
- The Short- and Long-Term Benefits of SEL
 - Know and can manage themselves
 - Understand the perspectives of others and relate effectively with them
 - Make sound choices about personal and social decisions
 - More positive attitudes toward oneself, others, and tasks including enhanced self-efficacy, confidence, persistence, empathy, connection and commitment to school, and a sense of purpose
 - More positive social behaviors and relationships with peers and adults
 - Reduced conduct problems and risk-taking behavior
 - Decreased emotional distress
 - Improved test scores, grades, and attendance

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- In the long run, greater social and emotional competence can increase the likelihood of high school graduation, readiness for postsecondary education, career success, positive family and work relationships, better mental health, reduced criminal behavior, and engaged citizenship
- What do School Counselors at HSD do?
 - Teaching and modeling social and emotional skills, providing opportunities for students to practice and hone those skills, and giving students an opportunity to apply these skills in various situations.
 - Organize activities that build positive relationships and a sense of community among students through structures such as regularly scheduled morning meetings or advisories that provide students with opportunities to connect with each other.
 - Schoolwide SEL involves integration into multi-tiered systems of support.
 - Building Family and Community Partnerships
 - Diversity as it relates to strengths and Interests and careers (taught in 1st grade)
 - Bucket filling (elementary)
 - Understanding personality (taught 5th grade)
 - Career awareness, which includes career café (learning from professionals - potential role models), career interviews
 - Conflict management, soft skills development, organizational skills (taught in middle school)
 - Personal reflection, interest inventories, job shadowing, goal setting (high school)
 - SCHOOL CULTURE - clubs, sports, activities
- **Technology Questions**
 - Mike Graham, Director of Technology, provided answers and insight to the following questions.
 - Is there a way for parents to control a timer in which the iPad will turn off after a parent programmed amount of time? For instance, could the iPad be equipped with a code/password that the parent could then use to help control the amount of screen time that the child is having?
 - There is no mechanism built into IOS to accomplish this. Instead, we work with a lot of parents who have specific requests/needs to shut off particular apps for discipline reasons, etc. Tech Department can place additional restrictions on iPads, when needed.
 - Is there a way in which the parents would be given clearance to interact with only their children, via email? Currently the filters are set that students can not send or receive emails from their parents.
 - Student email address can only be used for district applications, communication with other students and teachers.
 - We have this in place to protect our students, and we do not have the capability to isolate communications with parents/guardians.
 - MS/HS iPads can have additional email accounts (3rd party email) added and used without trouble.

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- There was also discussion in regards to the "Securely" emails that we get. Some were completely unaware that this was available and others wanted to gain a better understanding of how they could be using it to its fullest capabilities.
 - [Securely is our iPad content filtering](#). Securely's parent interface is under development. If you've signed up for a Schoology account, the information is automatically shared with Securely. A "bedtime" feature is in the Securely road map. We will demo Securely at the next SPAC meeting.
- There was also a question in regards to parents having access to the middle school student's Google calendar accounts, mainly to avoid scheduling orthodontic appts during inopportune times.
 - Mike Graham fixed this issue. Google calendar accounts can now be shared with parents/guardians.
- There was a concern that the Schoology feed now has a parental limited view. In the past parents could randomly check this and follow it like a "Facebook feed", however the parent view is now much more limited.
 - Parents can be members of groups, courses, etc. The various views can be difficult to navigate, if you don't understand where to look.
 - If you click on your student's name, it will click over to the "student view." From there, you can view all updates, materials, documents, etc.
 - We will look for additional Schoology training materials to assist parents/guardians.
- **Health Lessons**
 - Mike Bromirski and Tab Musser addressed this topic. Below are some things to know/share about what we do with hygiene lessons in 5th grade and why we address these issues in at this time and in this way.
 - 5th grade hygiene lesson is actually more related to pre-pubescent females and the changes that occur. This lesson is taught by the school nurse. You can [preview the video here](#). Because this lesson is very specific to the changes that occur in female bodies, male students do not participate.
 - No 5th grade boys went out to recess or had free play during the time girls are involved in the lesson.
 - Drue Feilmeier, Director of Curriculum, will be connecting with our Health & PE Supervisor and our School Nurse Coordinator to determine if there is an appropriate lesson for 5th grade boys that would be taught simultaneously to the girls' lesson.
 - A formal lesson for both boys and girls occurs in 6th grade. Again, this is handled by the school nurse and can be [previewed here](#).
- **Cell Towers**
 - Chris Adams addressed questions related to the cell tower issue that were shared via SPAC Representatives.
 - Chris referenced an article prepared by the American Bar Association regarding the impact of cell towers (and other infrastructural features on property values). The article was published in *Probate and Property* the spring of 2016 and concludes that, "studies have long shown that cell towers have no appreciable effect on property values, but opponents of towers, and some

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boards that consider these applications, refuse to believe the studies.” Please see the article pdf provided in the Schoology folder.

- Earlier this fall, the district consulted with its insurance carrier on this topic – after a preliminary and then more thorough review of the district’s liability policy, we received written notification from our carrier that the presence of towers at the LMS and RES sites would not impact our coverage. Per our insurance carrier, “The leasing of property to the cell tower company has no impact to the districts insurance coverage or cost.”

- **Doctoral Student Research**

- Lisa Anderson is conducting doctoral research on the perceptions of staff and parents related to career readiness.
- Chris Adams approved that we will be provide access to our staff to take Lisa’s survey.
- Parents are also invited to participate, and we will provide the information to our SPAC representatives. Please share as you see fit, noting that it is voluntary to participate.
- We are highly interested in the data and can benefit from the research.

7:30 p.m. Discussion

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

Tuesday, January 30

Monday, March 26

Tuesday, May 29