

Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 22, 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

○ **Standardized Assessments**

- Why do we have standardized assessments? Chapter 4 of PA School Code
- Hempfield strongly believes that we must review multiple data points, not simply standardized tests, to determine trends/patterns
- Information and documents pertaining to state assessments are [available on our website](#).
- Mike Bromirski and Chris also recently completed a [2-minute talk](#) about state assessments
- Mike B. shared additional thinking about standardized assessments and the role they place in the district (see PPT presentation)

○ **2017-18 School Calendar**

- On March 20, our school board adopted the school calendar for 2017-18.
- On March 6, the first school board meeting of the month, Chris shared the following information with the board (see PPT presentation)
- Thanks to Shannon Zimmerman, her assistant Sam Eck, and the rest of our team for the assistance in processing data that we received on the survey we conducted late January/early February.
- The data were extremely helpful to us as we finalized the calendar proposal for next year, as were the comments shared by SPAC team members back in January.

7:00 p.m. Response to Member Inquiries

○ **Homework**

- [September 2016 2-minute talk](#) focused on homework
- Hempfield parent shared concerns with a member of SPAC, believing that what we shared in our video was disingenuous and that we “cherry-picked” content from research that was 10-years old.
- The research referenced was actually a meta-analysis done by Duke professor Harris Cooper in 2006 on all research that could be assembled to that point in time about the homework topic. If you go out and try to find more recent research on this topic, it is not easily come by.
- Chris does not think anything shared in our video was out of line with what this seminal research study presented or that has been shared by people like Cathy Vatterott in her book Re-Thinking Homework (2009). Vatterott is one of the small number of people who has had work published on this topic in the last 10 years.

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- While it is true there is weaker relationship between homework and student achievement at the elementary level than at the secondary level, there is still much debate about whether there is value in homework for elementary students – there is not overwhelming support for no homework at the elementary level either. Vatterott might disagree for the youngest of students (K-3), but there are others who would suggest otherwise – thus the debate.
- We believe that, when assigned for appropriate purposes and for an amount of time that is developmentally appropriate (even Vatterott concurs with the decades-old “10 minute rule” per grade level as a maximum), there is value in students completing some homework, even if that simply entails reading with their parents for 10-15 minutes.
- For us, the real issues are:
 - Purpose behind the homework assigned (purposeful vs. busy work)
 - Amount of time it should take (10-minute rule)
 - Parental contact with the teacher if there are concerns about what parents are seeing at home

Purpose of Homework

1. Extend learning and provide practice in applying concepts, ideas, or skills initially presented in the classroom
2. Provide opportunities for independent learning
3. Strengthen concept and skill development
4. Provide opportunities for enrichment

- If you'd like to see a fairly recent treatment of the homework debate, please check out this website: <http://time.com/4466390/homework-debate-research/>
- **Secondary String Program**
 - A question was raised about enrollment in our secondary strings program. Here are statistics that are current as of today:
 - The preliminary enrollment for Concert Strings (9th grade) next year is 27 full-year and 3 half-year. This compares with the current 9th grade enrollment of 27 full-year and 2 half-year.
 - The preliminary enrollment number for Symphony Strings (10th-12th grade) next year is 47 full-year and 5 half-year. This compares with the current enrollment of 46 full-year and 9 half-year.
 - Per Dr. Mudrick, no significant attrition in the high school as far as he can tell. We typically will have some attrition from 8th to 9th grade due to the "smorgasbord" of course offerings available at the high school and some academic conflicts.

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- Last week, Chris received some great news regarding the high school program, included below, that was shared across the district in his end-of-week celebrations e-mail to staff:
*"On March 16, 2017, the Hempfield Symphony Strings (group composed of students in grades 10-12) performed in their **first** LLMEA Music Performance Adjudication at Millersville University. The Symphony Strings received a rating of "1" (Superior) in both the concert and sight-reading section of the event. Groups that perform in this event play two prepared concert pieces in front of two judges. After performance of the concert music, students sight-read (perform a piece that they have never seen before) and perform after a study period of only five minutes. The challenging part of the sight-reading section is that students are not allowed to make any sounds on their instruments during the study period but are expected to perform it well. In both the concert music and sight-reading portions, students are evaluated on several criteria such as Tone, Technique, and Interpretation."*
- We don't have any preliminary strings enrollment numbers of rising 7th and 8th graders as yet.
- We typically will have attrition from 6th grade going into 7th grade, largely due to kids/parents fearing the past paradigm of not enough flex study hall time and/or somewhat due to students realizing they might not be able to keep up with more challenging music.
- We are in the process of sharing the new paradigm in the middle school, given the changes occurring to the middle school schedule and how music instruction has actually been enhanced given opportunities presented by the new middle school schedule.
- **Assignments in Schoology**
 - Concern was over the consistency of teachers using Schoology to post assignment information, etc.
 - We are working in the direction of using Schoology. As more of our teachers receive training in the use of Schoology (corresponded to grade levels preparing for students who will receive iPads), we will be rolling out minimum expectations related to things such as frequency of posting of assignments, the types of information that should be shared, etc.
 - All teachers except K and G3 will have been trained by next year – we will be in position to share and hold the vast majority of our staff accountable to minimum expectations that will be established for next year.
- **Cellular Tower near Rohrerstown Elementary School**
 - Per COO Dan Forry, installation of this cell tower should begin this summer.
 - Our agreement with Verizon will result in revenues of \$2,000 per month that will increase 15% every 5 years.
 - Extra revenue will be generated if/when additional carriers/antennas are added to the tower.
 - In addition to roughly \$24,000 in revenues per year, Verizon customers will experience improved cell coverage.

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- **Lead Levels in Drinking Water**
 - A question was raised about lead in the school district drinking water.
 - This was something we began looking at more than a year ago to ensure that we have no issues here in the district.
 - Key information that we shared with the School Board earlier in the year (October, 2016):
 - All of our buildings are fed from public water systems and the district receives annual testing reports.
 - [Hempfield Water Authority](#) (Landisville & Centerville Campuses, Rohrerstown)
 - [Columbia Water Company](#) (Farmdale & Mountville)
 - [East Petersburg Borough Water Department](#) (East Pete)
 - Language from U.S. Code regarding lead piping/plumbing:
 - *42 U.S. Code 300g-6 – Prohibition on use of lead pipes, solder, and flux: No person may use any pipe, any pipe or plumbing fitting or fixture, any solder, or any flux, after June 19, 1986, in the installation or repair of— (i) any public water system; or (ii) any plumbing in a residential or nonresidential facility providing water for human consumption, that is not lead free (within the meaning of subsection (d) of this section).*
 - <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/300g-6>
 - All Hempfield district buildings have been renovated or constructed since 1994. As of 1994 (8 years after lead was banned from use), all plumbing was replaced or installed new to the water mains where we pick up water from the local water authorities that serve the district.
 - There is no lead plumbing in any of our buildings, and the reports we are receiving annually from our water suppliers indicate no issues with lead in the water.

7:30 p.m. Discussion

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

Monday, May 1, 2017