

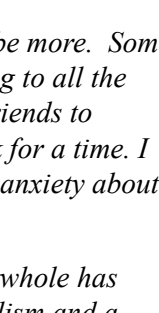


HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

... news from the Board of Education

FROM the SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Haddonfield Families:



I am writing this message for our district newsletter from my home, and I assume most of you are reading this in your own homes. We have just completed our second week of remote learning, and our first week of the rigid, state-mandated directive about social distancing, 8:00 p.m. curfews, and sheltering in place. Wow! Have any of us ever experienced anything like this, with the understanding that this is likely to continue for some time yet? Probably not.

There are inherent difficulties with the world events of today, and there will be more. Some of us are struggling with feelings of isolation, and some may still be adjusting to all the technology needed for everything from remote learning to socializing with friends to keeping up with work. And speaking of work, some of us may be out of work for a time. I believe it is fair to say that absolutely every one of us has experienced some anxiety about what is happening today and what is around the corner.

However, and I point this out with pride, our school district community as a whole has risen to most of the online learning challenges with enthusiasm, professionalism and a spirit of teamwork. Teachers, administrators, nurses, EAs, technology staff, secretaries, counselors, coaches, food service, custodians, maintenance, business office personnel, and everyone working in the district have pitched in. With just one official day of training, our talented educators have jumped into the deep end of the pool that is digital/virtual/remote teaching. I am impressed by how our colleagues continue to learn new ways to connect online, new ways to confer and plan online, and new ways to teach and learn online. They are sharing digital resources and tips as well as emotional support as we help each other to do the very best job possible to educate our children. "Building this as we are flying" is an understatement. Yet every brick and mortar K12 school district in the nation is doing the same thing.

Haddonfield families are an essential part of this team, and they have approached the complexities of sudden stay-at-home learning with a "Haddonfield Strong" attitude. Parents are posting photos and videos of their creative solutions for learning spaces; they are sharing ideas for managing a school schedule at home; offering to help those who may be hesitant to ask. All in all, they have proven to be resilient and positive during what may be the most unusual school year in any of our lives.

One of our district goals focuses on social-emotional learning, and the current worldwide crisis is certainly testing us all in this area. All five principals and assistant principals have been "checking in" with our families and students regularly. Teachers, secretaries, EAs, and other staff call families to gather feedback and to get a sense of how we are all doing. High School students have received a survey about overall well-being. The HMHS and HMS Student Council students and advisors meet to share concerns and to plan spirit-building activities and daily challenges to nurture the feeling that we are, indeed, in this together. One of our wonderful nurses created a new Twitter feed called @HSDBreath, encouraging everyone to get outside and walk or run one mile every day. Counselors have established Google Hangouts and Google Classrooms to maintain regular connections to their students. Other student groups have held virtual meetings to encourage the feeling of connection, and some have worked together to create and share spectacular musical videos.

Make sure you read your principals' communications about ways to get help, free seminars on the RULER method to help regulate emotions, TED talks about managing anxiety and much more. We have created a [list of these resources](#) on our website, and please remember our counselors are available to you and your children. Email them at:

- Central Elementary School, [Jamie Ledford](#)
- Elizabeth Haddon Elementary School, [Amanda LoCicero](#)
- J.F. Tatem Elementary School, [Caroline Brown](#)
- Haddonfield Middle School, [Danielle McKelvey](#) grade 6, [Auda Aquina](#) grade 7, [Nicole Ettinger](#) grade 8
- Haddonfield Memorial High School, [Students should contact their particular counselor but also may contact: Nurse Dana Reganata, Principal Tammy McHale, Assistant Principal Dan Licata or Dean of Students Hamisi Tarrant](#)

A "new normal" is emerging. We are not at all sure how it will pan out, but we are sure that we are committed to working together with all of you. Please read some of the stories shared on social media and written about below. Sign up for Twitter or Facebook, or log onto your existing accounts, to add to and benefit from the ocean of support that our community is sharing. On Twitter, please join us in posting supportive messages and using the hashtag #HSDWeAreInThisTogether.

At the March 26th Board meeting, Academic CEO Dr. Colleen Murray shared a presentation entitled "Transition to Remote Learning in Response to COVID-19 Closure." Take a look; she covers all of the fantastic efforts by so many members of our community in some detail.

It seems as though we can talk about nothing other than COVID-19. But I need to raise a different topic.

The U.S. Census will be coming or has already come to your home. I believe Census mailings began going out on March 12.

The reason this is so important is that, if we count our households improperly, the school district could lose much-needed federal money. According to estimates, close to two million children under the age of 5 were missed in the last Census. In 2010, we missed one in ten children under the age of 5 which cost states a total of \$5 billion in Medicaid, CHIP, foster care, adoption, free-and-reduced lunch subsidies, federal program money for schools, and child care funds from Washington.

So here's the message: Even though Haddonfield may have a lower risk of undercounting in the Census, please be sure to count everyone living in your household when you receive your Census form. Don't forget grandchildren who are living with you, foster and adopted children living with you, and young children living with you. If we miss counting these people, the school district, the Borough, and the state lose federal dollars. Even our friends on Sesame Street know how important this is!

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we continue to try to do our very best for our students and staff.

Sincerely,

Larry Mussoline, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

Board Meeting, Work Session	April 23	7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting, approval/adoption of 2020-2021 Budget	April 30	7:00 p.m.

[All 2020 Board Meeting Dates on our website.](#)

DISTRICT NEWS

Current Information and FAQs for School Closure

Communication has become more important than ever as we deal with daily news updates, both local and global, and as we continue to navigate the unfamiliar waters of remote education and global.

On Twitter and Facebook, we are making a special effort to share news from the office of Governor Murphy. Yesterday, March 26, the governor tweeted the following:

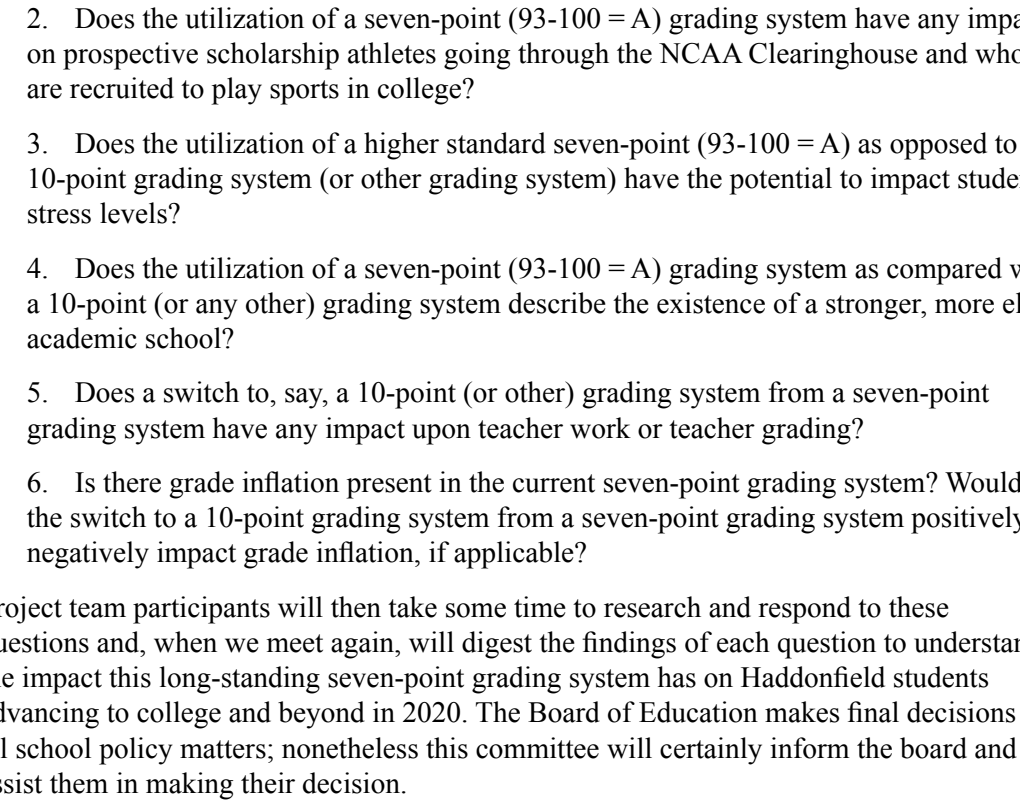
Let me be clear: The decision to reopen school districts rests with me. We will not be prepared to revisit the closure until at least April 17th, at the very earliest.

If you don't already, follow your school's accounts as well as the district's:

- Twitter: @HaddonSchools
- Facebook: @HaddonfieldSchoolDistrict

Your child's teachers and principals are doing an outstanding job sending you information and maintaining, in many cases, daily contact. However, based on some repeated questions, we have created an FAQ document which we will update as needed.

[FAQs for Haddonfield Parents, Students and Teachers](#)



District Donates Surplus Personal Protection Equipment

Earlier this week, we received a request from the NJDOE to provide Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for first responders in the state (the State indicated it was their intention to replace these materials once things return to normal). Assistant Superintendent Chuck Klaus worked with our nurses who went through their inventory and gathered any surplus materials they could spare. The donations were approved at the Board meeting last night, March 26th. Here are the materials the district was able to donate:

- 19 boxes of surgical gloves
- 30 N-95 masks
- 225 children's regular masks
- 100 regular masks
- 4 Personal Protection kits
- 2 Protective eyewear
- 2 protective face shields
- 3 disposable coveralls
- 250 Medical exam swabs
- Disposable thermometers
- Purell Sani-wipes
- Cough Drops

Project Team Formed to Research our Secondary School Grading System

A team has been formed to consider the current grading system in place at Haddonfield Memorial High School and Haddonfield Middle School. The team – consisting of students, teachers, parents, community members, administrators, Board members (who are also parents) – has met once so far, on Tuesday, March 10th.

Educational researcher Robert Marzano (2000) said, "The system of grades currently being used in most schools today is largely unchanged since its inception in the United States more than a century ago." We all remember grades in school being the key indicator of academic progress for parents, colleges, and many times for grants/ awards/scholarship purposes.

Joe Feldman (2019), another educational researcher, writes that "For students and families, grades can be a source of tremendous stress and anxiety" since so much is dependent upon them. Feldman continues, "Grades play a primary role in how adolescents shape their identities as learners and their life trajectories."

Therefore, the purpose of this project team is to determine if the current policy and regulation the board has in place meets the needs of our students today.

[Policy 2624](#) describes a seven-point grading system used in grades 6 through 12 in Haddonfield.

- 93-100=A
- 85-92=B
- 78-34=C
- 70-77=D
- Below 70=Failure

As Marzano said above, that system likely has been in place in Haddonfield for more than 100 years. We have no research to verify this, but community members don't remember any other system. So the question is: Is it the right system for 2020 to benefit our students going to college and beyond? The grading system project team is being formed to answer that question.

The research questions being examined by the team are as follows:

1. Does the utilization of a seven-point (93-100 = A) grading system have an impact on our students as prospective college applicants?
2. Does the utilization of a seven-point (93-100 = A) grading system have any impact on prospective scholarship athletes going through the NCAA Clearinghouse and who are recruited to play sports in college?
3. Does the utilization of a higher standard seven-point (93-100 = A) as opposed to a 10-point grading system (or other grading system) have the potential to impact student stress levels?
4. Does the utilization of a seven-point (93-100 = A) grading system as compared with a 10-point (or any other) grading system describe the existence of a stronger, more elite, academic school?
5. Does a switch to, say, a 10-point (or other) grading system from a seven-point grading system have any impact upon teacher work or teacher grading?
6. Is there grade inflation present in the current seven-point grading system? Would the switch to a 10-point grading system from a seven-point grading system positively or negatively impact grade inflation, if applicable?

Project team participants will then take some time to research and respond to these questions and, when we meet again, will digest the findings of each question to understand the impact this long-standing seven-point grading system has on Haddonfield students advancing to college and beyond in 2020. The Board of Education makes final decisions on all school policy matters; nonetheless this committee will certainly inform the board and assist them in making their decision.

In simpler terms, this team is examining this key question: *Have things changed over the past 100 years to warrant us to alter the long-standing, seven-point, secondary grading system we use in our Haddonfield schools?*

The discussion from the first meeting was very productive and insightful. We will update you in future newsletters.

Internet Accessibility in Haddonfield Households

As we continue with what could be weeks of online learning, we want to be sure that all of our families have access to the Internet in their homes. **We have researched some free and low-cost options for families who qualify.** To qualify for this discounted Internet access, families must meet certain criteria such as being eligible for public assistance programs such as the National School Lunch Program, Housing Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP and SSI. **Here are some options:**

- [Comcast Internet Essentials \(Xfinity\) free for 60 days](#)
- [Verizon Lifeline \(Fios\)](#)
- Lifeline Applications for states including NJ
 - [Lifeline Application - English \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Lifeline Application - Spanish \(PDF\)](#)
- Lifeline Program Information for New Jersey
 - [Lifeline Service Details - English \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Lifeline Service Details - Spanish \(PDF\)](#)
- [Altice Advantage Internet \(Optimum or Suddenlink Service Area\)](#)
- [EarthLink](#)

If you do not have Internet access at home, please let us know by contacting Communications Specialist Polly Mitchell at pmitchell@haddonfield.k12.nj.us and we will do our best to help you.

SCHOOL NEWS

Remote Teaching and Learning – Haddonfield School District

#HSDWeAreInThisTogether

Today marks the end of Week 2 of remote teaching and learning in our district and in our homes. We have all made enormous adjustments, and we will continue to adapt and learn.

If you follow social media, you have seen many examples of what makes our community – teachers, staff – so resilient, neighbors, friends, Board members, Borough officials, and others – so families, and so successful. Many people have commented on the creativity, enthusiasm and collaborative spirit exemplified during what is most certainly a challenging situation for everyone.

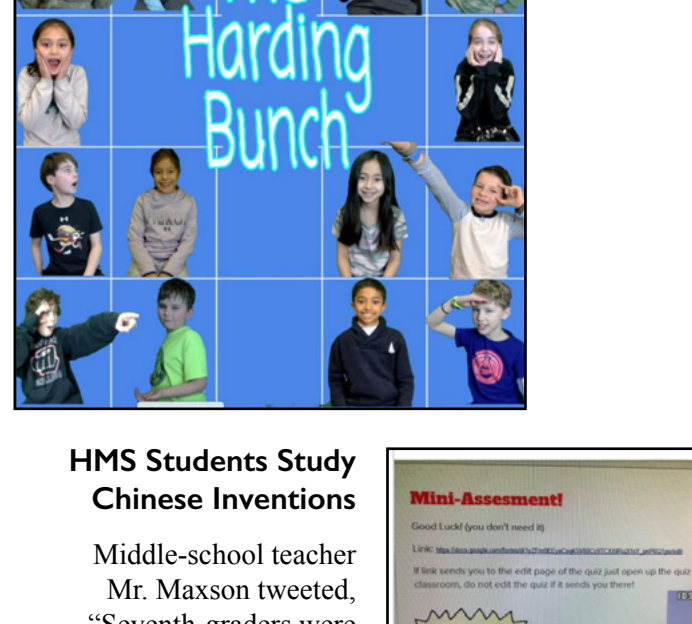
Especially in times when we are intentionally isolating ourselves, social media can help us to stay in touch and to maintain a feeling of connection. Please join in the fun. We have enjoyed academic lessons, dance challenges, jokes of the day, spirit days, and virtual athletic practices. We have seen our at-home learning spaces and gotten to know one another's dogs. We have said The Pledge of Allegiance with our principal and gotten virtual high fives from our teachers.

There are many ways to post and to follow one another.

- DISTRICT Facebook: @HaddonfieldSchoolDistrict
- DISTRICT Twitter: @HaddonSchools;
- CENTRAL Twitter: @CentralES1
- LIZZY HADDON Twitter: @HaddonES1
- J.F. TATEM Twitter: @JFTatemES
- HMS Twitter: @HaddonfieldMS
- HMHS Twitter: @HaddonfieldHS
- CHILD STUDY TEAM: Twitter @hsdst

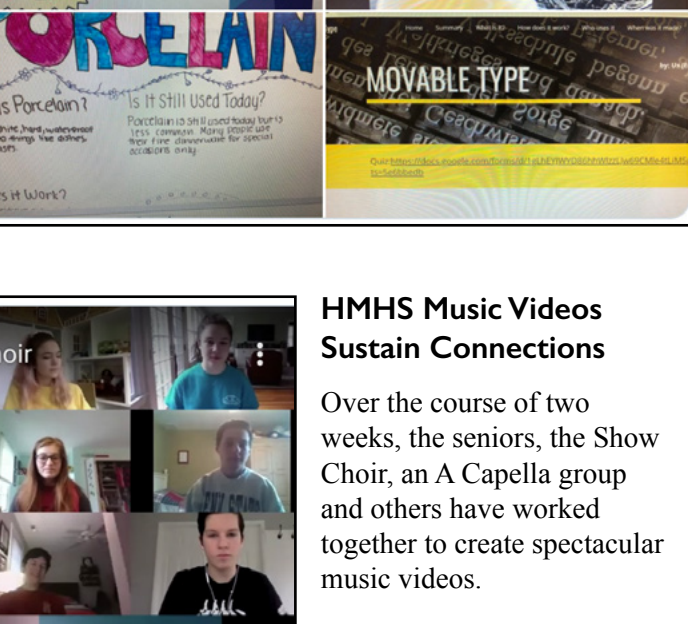
There are a great number of other Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts. Ask your middle school or high school students about departments, clubs, teams, classes, teachers and other accounts you may wish to follow. Follow athletics, music, your favorite teacher or student group. And remember, if you post something you are doing for remote learning, please include the hashtag #HSDWeAreInThisTogether.

Here are a very few examples of how we have been working together.



"Look at My Project!"

Elizabeth Haddon student Olivia proudly holds up her completed "monuments" project for her teacher, Mrs. Zitter.

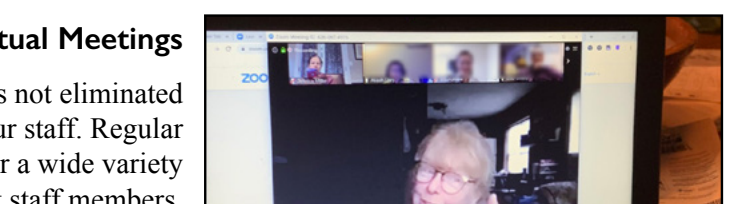


"That's the Way We All Became the Harding Bunch"

A Tatem third-grade teacher, Mrs. Harding, applied a creative theme to her class meeting!

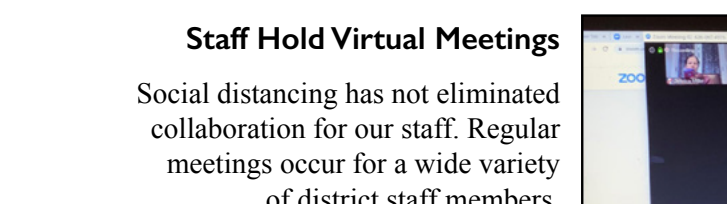
HMS Students Study Chinese Inventions

Middle-school teacher Mr. Mason tweeted, "Seventh-graders were still able to teach each other about a Medieval inventions from China through different mediums. They even made their own Google hangouts and created quizlets for one another!"



HMHS Music Videos Sustain Connections

Over the course of two weeks, the seniors, the Show Choir, an A Capella group and others have worked together to create spectacular music videos.



Staff Hold Virtual Meetings

Social distancing has not eliminated collaboration for our staff. Regular meetings occur for a wide variety of district staff members.

