

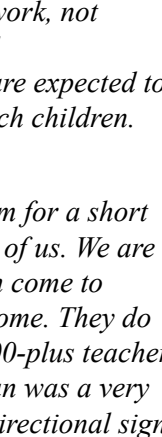


HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

... news from the Board of Education

FROM the SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Haddonfield Families:



We have been communicating with you throughout this unprecedented time in our lives. We know you understand the Governor closed schools in New Jersey until May 15th "at least." You all understand that he may get to try to open them after May 15th or keep them closed. We have no idea what his decision will be. We have no guidance as to what that opening may look like. We all trust it will be based on scientific data and the health and safety of everyone.

Over the weekend, I read through the surveys you completed for Dr. Murray. They were as expected. Many praised the efforts of our school system to gear up for online learning so quickly. Many others expressed concerns such as too much work, too little work, not enough face-to-face time, the real fear of lost learning, and maybe just total disillusionment over the whole world situation we are all in where parents are expected to work at home, have the proper meals ready, quarantine inside, and help teach children. Daunting tasks; all of them.

Those of us in education knew that we could sustain this new learning system for a short period of time. A longer period of online learning would be daunting for all of us. We are a traditional school system, custodial in nature, educative by design. Children come to school each day, stay for a period of time, are taught face-to-face, and go home. They do that 180 times during a school year. Taking that system and transitioning 200-plus teachers and 2,800 students into a full, online, K-12 cyber school with one day to plan was a very heavy lift. This world was thrust upon all of us without much warning. No directional signs are (or were) up and the street lights are off all over the place in this pandemic society. So, as many of you said in the survey, this is a time to raise all of us making the best of this situation. Health care workers. Emergency personnel. Grocery store workers. Small business and restaurant owners. Truck drivers. Educators. And so many others who are trying to work through this situation, making the best of these difficult times.

Let's do this in the next few days. Take some time to thank your child's teacher(s). Take some time to thank your child's principal(s). Take some time to thank a Board of Education member. Go out of your way to do that. I know you all know this fact, but everyone above took a brick-and-mortar, traditional school system, and transformed it into an online learning environment overnight. They did it without review packets, without paper assignments being laboriously sent home, and without saying we are simply going to review while we are not learning traditionally. The people above created a total cyber environment where we are continuing with lessons to the best of our abilities, picking up where we left off over a month ago. Again, I know you understand this, but what your Board of Education, principals, and teachers created was nothing short of a miraculous learning environment in your school system. Because of the teachers, the principals, and the Board, Haddonfield is a leader in their pandemic educational plan in the state and even the nation. Take some time to thank them all for their forward-looking leadership and work in these unparalleled times.

There is a lot of information below for you to read over detailing the unrivaled environment we are all experiencing. Enjoy the newsletter. In the next newsletter, Mr. Chuck Klaus will take over this column. I can't tell you how excited I am about that fact. Chuck is as honest as the day is long and as skilled a leader as I have seen.

Best wishes to you all,

Larry Mussoline, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

Board Meeting, approval/adoption of 2020-2021 Budget April 30 7:00 p.m.
[All 2020 Board Meeting Dates on our website.](#)
[Log in to watch \(and call in during designated time\) Board meetings](#)

Mark Your Calendar

Anxiety Workshop **Wednesday, May 6** **7:00 p.m.**
 Originally scheduled for March 25th in the HMHS library, the workshop has been rescheduled and redesigned as a Zoom meeting. Held in collaboration with Temple University's Anxiety Clinic, the workshop will help you identify and deal with issues related to anxiety.

- What is anxiety?
- Recognizing anxiety disorders, particularly in light of COVID-19
- Strategies for parents
- Treatment of anxiety
- Finding a therapist

Closer to the date, we will email all parents the log-in details including a password.

For more information, please contact
 Dr. Gino Priolo, Director of Special Education
 Co-Chair of the Social-Emotional Strategic Goal Committee
gpriolo@haddonfield.k12.nj.us

DISTRICT NEWS

The Board of Education Introduces New Communication Vehicle

In March, members of the Board of Education (BOE) Communications Committee got together to discuss the possibility of creating a new document designed to share information with Haddonfield families and the community at large.

The committee members are: Jaime Grookett (chair), Adam Sangillo (BOE President), Lynn Hoag, and Linda Hochgertel.

Each document will be brief and will be posted the week following each voting meeting of the BOE, once per month. The "Board Meeting Bulletin" will feature information about recent votes and issues as well as upcoming topics of public interest. It is intended to be a more informal, accessible way for the community to learn about Board discussions and decisions as well as why these decisions are made.

The first (March) Board Meeting Bulletin was posted on April 3rd under NEWS on both the district website and on the BOE website. The second (April) will be posted by May 5th.

"We hope to provide the community with a quick and easy way to get a summary of the issues that are currently being discussed at board meetings," said committee member Lynn Hoag. "Additionally, the bulletin allows us to connect those issues to the district's strategic plans and goals."

The district newsletter will continue to be emailed and will provide additional information, school stories, administrative news, and more details about issues and school events.

Parent Survey on Online Learning: Results and Learnings

All over the United States, schools have been forced to address the educational needs of students who are quarantined at home. Many districts have had to face the reality that their student populations represent various economic levels and that not all of their students have internet access or computers/devices at home. These districts, in general, are sending home paper packets for enrichment and review, because they simply cannot teach new material or move ahead in any subject area.

In Haddonfield, we too have had to make big adjustments to move from in-person to virtual teaching, but we have not had to reduce our expectations. Our families have access to the Internet as well as at least one device at home, and so we jumped into remote education with the intention to continue to provide excellence in education.

There has undoubtedly been a learning curve. Some teachers, students, and parents have hit the ground running, and some have moved forward more slowly, but we are making progress and headed toward the same goal which is to ensure our students continue their learning progressions and are ready for the next school year.

In times of great change, it is imperative that we gather data to see how we are doing and to identify areas that are working very well and areas that need improvement. With these questions in mind, we sent a survey to every parent in the district immediately before Spring Break, during the fourth week of remote education. The response rate was excellent: 806 surveys came in, a 30% response rate.

Here are some general, summary statistics:

- 80% of our parents rated "our teachers are communicating classwork and assessment information" 4 or 5 out of 5.
- 74% of our parents rated "the workload our child is receiving is relevant" as 4 or 5 out of 5.
- 51% of our parents rated "our child is making progress" as 4 or 5 out of 5.

Below are a few examples of actual comments expressing positive and negative reactions:

I think you are doing a wonderful job! It is difficult for me to determine if my child is learning or progressing as I know our family is not as talented as my child's teacher. I do think everything from the school/teacher/principal have been very organized and smooth. We are so grateful for you.

It's very challenging as a parent of a first-grader, they are not self-directed as of yet and it takes a great deal of parent time to get things accomplished.

She spends all day trying to figure out homework. We have to miss our work commitments to try to explain concepts to her and keep her on track. She couldn't understand her ratio assignments and we tried to help but there's a reason we aren't math teachers: It's exhausting and stressful. Expectations should be cut in half during this time.

What we have learned:

We learned that a huge number of parents are impressed, proud, and grateful for how quickly and expertly we transitioned to online learning. They're grateful for the personalization their children receive. Phone calls to parents and students just to check up on them, staytuned with their teachers and principals, and high school discussions that take into consideration students' personal goals and interests, more. Parents are grateful for the opportunities their child/children have for interaction and are eager for more of this type of learning. This includes things like community meetings, small-group video conferencing meetings, check-ins with counselors and administrators, and music lessons, among other types. Parents are looking for more consistency across schools, grade levels, and teachers.

Dr. Murray will make a presentation to the Board at the April 30th meeting. However, she has posted it on our website today so all parents can review it if they wish. We hope parents will also participate in the Board meetings which can be viewed [here](#).

We have at least three more weeks of remote instruction, based on Governor Murphy's latest statements. Yet we all realize that this new normal may continue throughout the remainder of the school year. We have reviewed the survey results closely, and we are working hard to maintain those practices that have been most successful and to improve in areas that have been less so. Thank you for your valuable input. It has been very helpful to all of us trying to continue the quality of education we all expect in Haddonfield.

Please continue to communicate with your child's teachers and principals.
 #HSDWeAreInThisTogether

Supporting ALL of Haddonfield's Learners

Moving from in-person to remote education has been challenging for everyone, and certainly special education services have been no exception. From the first day "at home," March 17th, the Child Study Team (CST) has worked diligently to continue to provide services to our students to the greatest extent possible and to support our families.

We proudly share the following data and information about the work of our Child Study Team:

- Since March 1, the CST has successfully completed 188 Annual Review Meetings, 125 of which have occurred remotely!
- 60 additional IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings, including IEP Reviews, Identification and Re-evaluation Meetings.
- On April 1st, 2020, the NJDOE approved a rule modification that allowed "related services" to be provided via teletherapy. Related services include Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Speech Therapy, Behavioral Therapy, and Counseling.
- As soon as schools closed, our district team had begun putting the infrastructure (software/training/scheduling) together to deliver teletherapy in the event this rule change came to fruition. This allowed an immediate roll-out of teletherapies shortly after April 1st.
- Related Services through teletherapy has been successful. Our Speech and Language specialists are using an innovative and interactive online interface, called Theraplatform, to provide these services. Our OT staff is currently testing the same software. Parents are encouraged to contact their related service provider(s) if there are any questions or concerns.

You may [click here](#) to view the district's Provision of Appropriate Special Education and Related Services for Students with Disabilities. This document provides an overview of the following topics:

- Materials and Assignments to Meet Student Needs
- Scheduling of Evaluations, IEP Reviews, Eligibility meetings, and Re-evaluation Meeting
- Communication Plan for All Parents
- Related Services
- Compensatory Services

A [web page](#) has been established that archives most all of the Special Education-specific information that has been distributed; this allows for easy reference for families to access additional.

Additional CST announcements are published to our Twitter feed at @HsdCst. Please follow us!

Please be sure to reach out to your child's special education provider and/or Case Manager with any questions or concerns.

One Family's Reflection on Remote Education in Haddonfield

As week five of remote education comes to a close, we all may be reflecting on the challenges of state-mandated school closings and the ups and downs of teaching and/or learning at home. The experiences of each teacher, administrator, counselor, aide, therapist and coach vary of course, just as every student and every family could share different stories about their daily lessons and school work.

What follows is just one Haddonfield story, highlighting one family's experience with two particular elementary teachers. We know there are many, many other excellent teachers, and we have heard about hundreds of other positive remote education experiences. But the perspective of this story is a little bit different, coming from parents who are also Haddonfield teachers.

The Miller family consists of parents, Mike Miller, who teaches history at the high school and Jessica Miller, who is the Central-Middle School media specialist and technology coordinator, and two boys who attend Tatem Elementary School.

Before spring break, Jess and Mike shared these reflections with their children's principal and HSD administrative team. What follows is part of their thoughtful message.

As we are about to begin week three of remote learning in Haddonfield, we wanted to take a moment to reflect over the past weeks not only as educators in Haddonfield but also as parents. Mike and I are fortunate in situations like these to have a perspective from both viewpoints. We understand firsthand the time, expertise, knowledge, and care that the teachers are putting into making their lessons meaningful for the students, just as we are doing the same with our own Haddonfield students and classes. However, we wanted to take a few minutes tonight to reflect upon and highlight some of the amazing work our sons' teachers have been doing.

Our son's first-grade teacher, Jane Mercadante, hit the ground running. On day one, she had her Google classroom ready and shared engaging lessons. Mike and I were not sure how much a first-grader could complete digitally, but Jane has done an amazing job. As the weeks progressed, she incorporated new learning modules and activities for the students, making this experience incredibly positive for all of us. This far, Jane has provided instruction through audio recording for Foundations dictation, video lessons teaching drill words, Zoom meetings for synchronous teaching experiences, and the Seesaw app that allows students to upload their own work. In one memorable video, Jane was dressed in a furry jacket and hat while she taught the students about the arctic habitat! When I step back and think how all of this has been accomplished in less than three weeks, I am in awe. We feel incredibly grateful to be living in Haddonfield with a teacher like Jane Mercadante.

Our older son's third-grade teacher, Jen Harding, is nothing short of exemplary as well. From the first day of remote instruction, our son has not skipped a beat with his academics or overall education. Jen first brought students together using Google Meet and then moved to Zoom. She continues to meet with her entire class every day at 10:00 a.m., and she provides daily synchronous lessons that have included math, reading, writing, and science. In addition, Jen asks the students about their feelings. As our district continues to pay close attention to SEL (social-emotional learning) aspects for each student, Jen's Google form is an important opportunity for the kids to let her know how they are feeling. Another highlight of the past several weeks is that Jen has offered breakout STEM challenges and Makerspace time each week. This has been enjoyed by all members of the Miller family! During week one, the students created parachute and carriers for their Lego mini-figures. During week two, they had to create some kind of chain reaction. Jen has used a variety of technology tools such as Flipgrid to make the learning fun and engaging but also rigorous and challenging.

Honestly, I could go on and on about how amazing these two teachers are and how lucky we feel as parents to have our children in their classes. The special-area teachers and Deb Landy have also all done an amazing job providing highly motivating, engaging, and entertaining lessons. These learning experiences are what set Haddonfield apart from other school districts.

Remote learning and teaching at the Miller house.

Remote learning and teaching at the Miller house.

Strategic SEL Initiatives: Update

School-based SEL (social-emotional learning) Data Teams have been working to complete the data analysis of the adult (school staff) and student survey data from winter 2020. That work will be completed shortly. Next they will conduct virtual focus groups to help engage in a deeper dive into the data. We are seeking volunteers to participate in these focus groups, including teachers, certified personnel, students, and support staff.

School-based RULER implementation teams (three-member teams from each school) have completed their six-week online training with Yale University's Center for Emotional Intelligence. (RULER = Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating emotions.)

We have planned two important training sessions for all of our faculty/staff focusing on two of the four RULER Anchor Tools for Emotional Intelligence, the Charter and the Mood Meter. The first training will take place on Friday, May 1st (May 4th for HMHS), and will focus on the creation of each school's RULER Charter. The emotional climate of a school affects the community's well-being and students' ability to learn. The Charter is a collaborative document that helps schools establish supportive and productive learning environments. It is created by members of the community, outlining how they aspire to treat each other. Together, the community describes how they want to feel at school, the behaviors that foster those feelings, and guidelines for preventing and managing unwanted feelings and conflict. By working together to build the Charter, everyone establishes common goals and holds each other accountable for creating the positive climate they envision.

The second faculty/staff training will be held on Friday, May 8th (May 11th for HMHS). This session will focus on an introduction to the RULER Mood Meter. Learning to identify and label emotions is a critical step toward cultivating emotional intelligence. Using the Mood Meter, students and educators become more mindful of how their emotions change throughout the day and how their emotions, in turn, affect their actions. They develop the self-awareness they need to inform their choices. Students learn to expand their emotional vocabulary, replacing basic feeling words with more sophisticated terms. They graduate from using words like "ok" or "fine" to using words like "alighted" and "hopeless," or "tranquil" and "serene." By teaching subtle distinctions between similar feelings, the Mood Meter empowers students and educators to recognize the full scope of their emotional lives and address all feelings more effectively.

Here are the school-specific schedules for these training sessions, mandatory for all faculty and staff. Parents: please note that teachers and support staff may not be available to students during these training sessions. Each session will last for approximately 1 hour:

School	Session	Date	Time
Central	RULER Charter	5/1	10:00 AM
	RULER Mood Meter	5/8	1:00 PM
Tatem	RULER Charter	5/1	10:00 AM
	RULER Mood Meter	5/8	1:30 PM
Haddon	RULER Charter	5/1	10:00 AM
	RULER Mood Meter	5/8	1:00 PM
HMS	RULER Charter	5/1	1:00 PM
	RULER Mood Meter	5/8	10:00 AM
HMHS	RULER Charter	Week of 5/4	During prep day per department
	RULER Mood Meter	Week of 5/11	During prep day per department

Please follow our SEL Twitter feed @HsdSel for helpful and timely SEL information, including articles and webinar opportunities.

UPDATE on RFP for Before- and After-School Child Care Program

In the February 14th issue of the district newsletter and the March issue of the Board Meeting Bulletin, we shared information about an RFP (request for proposal) process set in motion to explore options for before- and after-school child care programs. It is a "best practice" for any organization to look at the changing landscape of offerings and evaluate service providers on a regular basis. To our knowledge, we had never completed an exercise like this with respect to our child care program, and it seemed like a necessary step in offering the best options for our students, families, and taxpayers.

Our current provider, Haddonfield Child Care, was invited to present proposals for our review, in addition to other organizations. In all, seven companies submitted proposals. All seven were interviewed on March 11th by a committee of three board members, four principals (elementary and middle), Assistant Superintendent Chuck Klaus, Board Secretary Mike Catalano, Technology Director John Miller, and Dr. Mussoline. After narrowing the field to two providers, members of the committee conducted reference checks since site visits were made impossible because of the COVID-19 outbreak and social distancing.

A presentation of the selection process was made by Klaus at the April 23rd board meeting and a recommendation was made to contract with AlphaBEST Education Inc. Before- and after-school services from AlphaBEST would begin at the start of the next school year. They are a North Carolina-based company serving 45 districts (415 schools) in 13 states. They are child care providers for the following New Jersey districts: Hopatcong, Millburn, Mount Olive, Stanhope, and Warren.

AlphaBEST Program Overview

A vote and potential approval will occur at the April 30th board meeting. Parents are encouraged to attend these virtual meetings. [Here is the link.](#)

Update on Safety and Security Projects

During our mandated school closure, administrators, Board members and committees continue to meet and work remotely on district initiatives, programs, and projects. At yesterday's Board work session, the board discussed many of the Committee's recommendations for the 2020-21 school year that are included in the budget that will be approved at the April 30th BOE meeting.

The following is a list of ongoing safety and security projects and plans for the 2020-2021 school year. These items were discussed over the winter with a subcommittee of the community-based School Safety Committee led by Sandra Horwitz, District Testing and Accountability Coordinator. Members of that subcommittee were committee members Kay Flannery, Jim Tucker, Dennis Tully, and Ken Strakides along with Michael Catalano, secretary to the Board of Education; Jason Cutler, Chief of Haddonfield Police Department; Lynn Hoag, parent and Board member, Policy Committee Chair; Chuck Klaus, Assistant Superintendent; Susan Kutner, Board member, Facilities Committee Chair; Timothy McFerren, Director of Facilities; John Miller, Director of Technology; Larry Mussoline, Superintendent; Adam Sangillo, parent and Board President.

- **Vestibules** for Elizabeth Haddon and Tatem Elementary Schools are still on track to begin on June 20th or as soon as we are able school will not open for this year. This project is to be completed over the summer.
- Our Buildings and Grounds team has nearly completed a project that provides **mandated coverings for classroom door windows** for use during a lockdown.
- We are budgeting to contract with a company that will **digitally map all school floor plans** for emergency responder use. This system enables first responders to better communicate with each other and with school personnel in the event of an emergency. This mapping software would also allow first responders to provide assistance most efficiently and effectively.
- We are applying for two separate grants to cover the cost of an **integrated camera system located at all school sites** and a **state-of-the-art Lockdown Notification system**, also for all school sites. Vendors have provided proposals and cost estimates. One of the grants, the New Jersey state grant related to Alyssa's Law, should be easily attainable. The other, a federal grant, is highly competitive and more difficult to attain. Sandy Horwitz leads this grant writing process for the district.
- The Board approved a **new position of Student Assistance Coordinator/Crisis Counselor** to work throughout our school system with students who are identified as being at risk. This is an important position for the school district as another mechanism in place to try to prevent crisis situations from occurring.
- Of course the District continues to support the reoccurring full expense for the **high school resource officer** for the next school year.

This school year the District began a **partnership with Yale** and their renowned **RULER social-emotional program for staff and students**. That partnership will be extended into the 2020-21 school year with many other teachers getting trained and tangible wellness programming provided to staff and students. These pre-emptive measures are equally as important as the school hardening measures the district has undertaken over the past two years.

All safety measures and expectations are in effect during this period of remote learning, including STOPit (the anonymous reporting app). Parents should contact their principal in the event of cyber HIB (harassment, intimidation, bullying) or any other safety concerns.

Follow Us at @Haddonfield_BG

The most recent district Twitter account highlights the work of some of the district's unsung heroes, our buildings and grounds crew.

Director Tim McFerren started posting photos and text via Twitter in October, sharing images of our talented staff landscaping, painting, building watering systems, creating window covers, replacing lights and fixtures, removing fallen trees, replacing window blinds, repairing HVAC and plumbing, and MUCH more.

This small team works quietly to maintain our buildings and grounds. Follow them on Twitter, like and retweet!

LEFT: Tatem's all-purpose room gets power-lift backboards.

SCHOOL NEWS

Central Celebrates Earth Week

In honor of Earth Week, teachers Jennifer Gallyogly and Taylor Koskowiak (Co-Advisors of the Environmental Club) put together a week of challenges for Central students.

Students create an acrostic poem with the words EARTH or NATURE

Students sit outside and quietly listen for all the nature sounds they can hear and make a list of these sounds.

Listen to the book: "Dear Children of the Earth," on youtube.com.

Find something in nature and really look at it, appreciating its uniqueness and design for survival.

Write a letter to the earth outlining how they will help to protect it. Place the letter outside, perhaps in a tree.

Students write their name with natural objects: stones, leaves, blossoms, etc.

In addition, art teachers shared Earth and Nature art projects such as "trash to treasures" for grades 3-5!

Lizzy Haddon Makes News

Third-grade basketball phenoms at Lizzy Haddon held a Zoom meeting (left) to share their "moves" since the Talent Show had been cancelled. Much to their surprise, several of the Harlem Globetrotters joined the group. [Watch this!](#)

Teacher Molly Grimenstein was interviewed by the Haddonfield Sun: "[Haddon Elementary Teacher Learns on the Go](#)."

All of the Lizzy teachers joined together to make [this video](#): "Home School Musical; We're All in This Together, Six Feet Apart." Enjoy!

And finally, every morning, Principal Jerry Bissinger holds morning announcements, stands for the Pledge of Allegiance, shares birthday greetings, offers his thought for the day and gives a note about "this day in history." Here's [one example](#).

Think About It Thursday

- Today is a Day 6!
- [Click here](#) for your P.E. assignments!
- [Click here](#) for your Spanish assignments!
- Go to Mrs. Mildrum's Google Classroom for orchestra assignments!

Teacher Christina Parady gave a Women's History assignment to her second-graders to "interview a woman in your life." She shared interview questions such as "What is your earliest childhood memory?"

Jason Rosenberg shared a document outlining remote PE with specific requirements and due dates. The charts included activities for upper body, lower body, cardio, dance, yoga and "self-design."

Kelcey Klee and her fifth-graders analyzed a poem, "Sing for Spring," answering questions such as "What is the speaker's viewpoint?" and "Find and write the hyperbole used in stanza 7."

Middle School Reaches Out in Various Ways

Teacher Johnathan Maxson (left) taught a class on "The Silk Road" for NJTV on April 21st. All New Jersey families can tune in daily for a variety of lessons for grades 3-6 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. weekdays.

Teachers Sharon Verdeur and Danielle Mckelvey are "holding the door" each Friday in lieu of their actual in-person door duty to continue welcoming our sixth-graders to virtual school. A few dozen students pop in and out to say, "Hi."

Daria Resnick, Synthia Delgado and Dan Knighton are holding "virtual lunch" with eighth-graders throughout the week. The students share their favorite and least favorite lunch-time meals, and they spend time catching up.

Ana Sanchez is checking with her eighth-graders and assessing their Spanish-speaking skills at the same time. Students who began with a three-minute requirement have been chatting in Spanish for up to 15 minutes per conversation.

Stay tuned: Ms. Sanchez also has staff participating in a virtual Fashion Show!

HMHS Takes the Creative Approach

Being separated during the quarantine didn't stop the high school choir members from "coming together" for a concert, posted at 7:00 p.m. this past Wednesday. Did you miss it? [Here's the link](#) to "Haddonfield Sings from Home." The concert also served as a fund raiser for Music Cares, a COVID-19 relief fund.

Food & Nutrition teacher Arleen Iavicoli treated her students to a guest speaker, regional executive chef Ryan Pomeroy. He led the students through his recipe for vegetable and shrimp Asian stir-fry. Students enjoyed interacting with him and learning more about cooking and nutrition.

The next issue of the Haddonfield School District News will be shared in late May. It is written/edited by Communications Specialist Polly Mitchell and distributed to staff, families, and community members.