



HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

... news from the Board of Education

FROM THE INCOMING SUPERINTENDENT

Greetings, Haddonfield Families,

As I write this, we are closing in on the final hours of the extraordinary 2019-2020 school year. Putting it mildly, this year has stretched many of us to our limits.

Here in Haddonfield, we have made the best of a challenging situation, not just for our schools, but for our entire community. I am proud of the way we all adapted to unexpected, and frankly abrupt, changes from in-person to at-home schooling. THANK YOU to everyone on the staff, to all of our students, and to the THIANKS YOU supporters these changes with good humor and great care. Thank you.

Today, two topics weigh heavily on my mind.

First ... In the aftermath of the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, Board members and administrators have received communication from a group of alumni and community members concerned about how Haddonfield has approached equity, inclusive curriculum, anti-racism education, and diverse hiring practices.

I am not at all surprised and am honestly proud that Haddonfield alumni, parents, and community members have strong feelings on these topics. Board President Adam Sangillo penned [this letter](#) to those who reached out. In it, Mr. Sangillo points out what has been done, what is being done now and what is planned for the future; however, we are at a point where looking at what we have done and are doing is not enough. We must take a fresh look at our goals and programs with a lens focused on equity and a promise that the work we are doing is designed not to simply address and reduce racism, but that is proactively anti-racist. We don't have all the answers on how to achieve this goal, but we are committed to work actively to grow and promote this stance. We are committed to providing our students with the avenues and opportunities to become allies and accomplices in developing a proactively anti-racist environment.

To this end, we are redoubling our efforts by scheduling a "town hall meeting" planned for June 29th at 6:00 p.m. led by Dr. Shelley Zion, Executive Director of Rowan University's Center for Access, Success and Equity. District administrators, staff, and interested community members will be available to discuss concerns and a vision for the future. Details of the meeting format will be emailed and will be posted on the HSD website in the near future.

While we still have far to travel, we have started on this journey. In January and February of 2019, we launched the district's Long-Range Strategic Plan (LRSP). One of the three major goals is Cultural Competence. We have worked hard to improve our curriculum, our professional development and our overarching awareness of many issues related to equity and racism. Please feel free to examine [what we have posted online](#) on this subject. I welcome your input, and I encourage you to participate in the process. I look forward to hearing from you on June 29th.

Second ... what's next? The uncertainty of what school will look like in September looms large. We have already started discussing how to prepare for what may lie ahead.

The short, immediate and truthful answer is that we simply don't know. All New Jersey districts are looking to the Governor and to the state Department of Education for guidance so that we can prepare, but as of this date, we have little information. I can tell you that we are trying to make plans, and we are hoping that state guidance will come sooner rather than later.

This week, I began to form committees to attempt to make reasonable plans for the options for fall 2020 that we can currently imagine. These committees include teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. The committees are:

Instruction - how do we best deliver instruction in the event we must continue distant or blended learning?

Social and Emotional Learning - we must put supports in place for students and staff who have suffered anxiety, trauma or loss during this time.

Facilities - how buildings and classrooms might be used effectively and safely; what does hygiene look like in September?

Communication - keeping staff, students, families, county and state offices and the community well-informed.

Health - what precautions and accommodations will be required in the fall if we return to the classrooms?

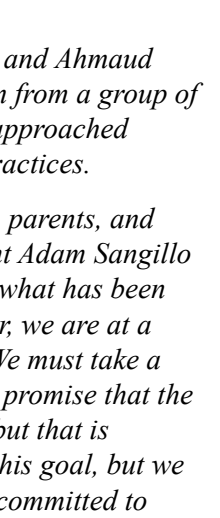
The chair of each committee has started the process of developing his/her Action Teams to address each area of focus.

As we work through different scenarios and make appropriate plans, we will keep all school families informed. Thank you for your confidence and your patience!

Sincerely,

Chuck Klaus

Incoming Superintendent of Schools



Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

Board Meeting July 16 Retreat 5:00 p.m., Business Meeting 7:00 p.m.

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

[Log in to watch \(and call in during designated time\) Board meetings](#)

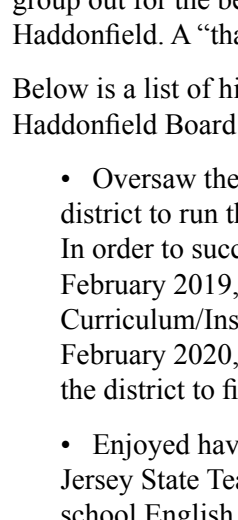
Presentation from the June 11th Board Meeting:

[2019-2020 Bi-Annual Superintendent's HIB Report, Period 2](#)

Board Meeting Bulletins

[Posted on our website](#)

DISTRICT NEWS



Dr. Carmen Henderson Named New Director of Special Education

At the June 11th meeting, the Haddonfield Board of Education voted unanimously to approve Dr. Carmen Henderson as Director of Special Education for the Haddonfield School District. She will assume that role on July 1, 2020.

Dr. Henderson has been working in our district for one year as an LDT-C (Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant) and as a Child Study Team case manager. She brings many years of experience, skill and training as well as a deep passion for special education students and their families. Welcome, Dr. Henderson!

Read the complete news release [here](#).

Board of Education Accomplishments for the 2019-20 School Year

It's June again and time to describe for you the 2019-20 school year accomplishments of the Haddonfield Board of Education (BOE) led by President Adam Sangillo and Vice President David Siedell. Over the summer, when you see a BOE member, thank him/her for the work done for you as taxpayers, parents, and for the overall betterment of the school district. Heather Paoli, Susan Kuyner, Tom Vecchio, Jaime Grookett, Justin Benford, Lynn Hoag and Linda Hochgertel round out our board team. They are an excellent team, a collective group out for the betterment of students and the continual improvement of our schools in Haddonfield. A "thank you" would go a long way.

Below is a list of highlights of the innumerable accomplishments for 2019-20 of the Haddonfield Board of Education:

- Oversaw the re-establishment of myriad important organizational systems in the district to run the organization effectively and to comply with NJQSAC requirements. In order to successfully pass the NJQSAC compliance audit that Haddonfield failed in February 2019, the district had to show improvement in five key organizational systems: Curriculum/Instruction, HR Management, Facilities, Finance, and Governance. By February 2020, the board ensured all these required systems were properly in place for the district to finally pass the NJQSAC audit one year after failing.
- Enjoyed having both Haddonfield School District's and Camden County's first New Jersey State Teacher of the Year when NJ DOE awarded that esteemed title to our high school English teacher, Kimberly Dickstein Hughes, in the fall of 2019.
- Created a new policy to recoup some expenses incurred from outside organizations who wish to utilize our school facilities, thereby creating a revenue stream to assist taxpayers in supporting the needs of the school system.
- Created a new policy, largely because of the disparity of student GPAs as a result of academic course weighting and grade inflation, that restructures commencement student achievement recognition away from an antiquated system of only recognizing two individuals at the graduation ceremony and toward a collegiate, cum laude system, where the top 20% of each graduating class is properly recognized for their strong academic work in high school.
- Created a new policy aligning ourselves with other top academic high schools, both public and private, that more properly accounts for and recognizes high school students completing first year college course work through the national Advanced Placement (AP) system by shifting AP course weighting toward one that better rewards students opting to take the end-of-course AP exam versus students opting to simply take the AP course without the rigor of taking the final exam.
- Created a new policy that shifts our secondary grading system away from the 100-year-old 7-point, "93-100 = A" system to a 10-point, "90-100 = A" system. According to the research that a stakeholder project team completed, the Board did this to better align our grading practices with the majority of top academic high schools nationally and to better position our students in the college academic and athletic admissions process.
- Established a policy releasing the Haddonfield Adult School of its ties to the school district's financial audits by recommending it become a federal 501(c)(3) organization governed by its own board. The Adult School program had been tied to the District through board resolution many years ago. However, the County Superintendent warned the District of possible state-imposed financial penalties after the District received four (4) consecutive years of negative financial audit findings. The BOE was subsequently forced to untie the Adult School program from District coffers to protect taxpayers from possible penalties, yet remains a partner if this group wishes to continue important community programming.
- Continually improve by periodically checking district programs and to be fiscally responsive to taxpayers, the board put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to examine the existing child care program in district facilities for before- and after-school child care. After an extensive interview and evaluation process, the board approved a new child care provider for the 2020-21 school year, AlphaBest, that will bring a national reputation, new and innovative programming, comparable pricing, the possibility of having longer hours of operation, and a revenue share agreement providing over \$50,000 yearly for the use of district facilities, thereby creating another revenue stream for taxpayers.
- Oversaw a small cooperative partnership with Haddonfield Friends School where we supply their lunches daily and they compensate us for that service, creating another small revenue stream for taxpayers.
- Continued the work begun two years ago on cultural competence, equity and diversity with Dr. Shelley Zion of Rowan University Center for Access, Success, and Equity, through targeted teacher professional development (PD), administrative team training, and elementary student voice groups. This year, to ensure state-mandated and board-required equity lessons were occurring through our K12 curricular continuum, Dr. Zion conducted an extensive review of our entire K12 curriculum. After identifying gaps, Dr. Zion met with faculty teams to fill those gaps to ensure issues like racial bias, acceptance, and understanding of other cultures were embedded in our curriculum throughout the Haddonfield school system. Each K12 principal complemented this cultural competence curricular demand with ancillary programs such as the Red Trunk Project, whole-school diversity lessons and with various assemblies dealing with cultural competence. The board has also hired excellent candidates from diverse backgrounds for administrative and teaching positions during this school year, thereby beginning to address another major milestone goal in our overall diversity program. Cultural competence/equity/diversity has been a major goal of the Haddonfield BOE since a racial incident brought national attention to the school and community in the spring of 2018 and prompted a thoughtful, strategic and long-range approach.
- Through our strategic plan, the board promoted district participation in a nationally recognized social-emotional program through Yale University. The RULER program is used by many schools throughout the United States and will provide a district team with the necessary knowledge to help students and staff with social-emotional issues of various kinds.
- Created a new full-time position of Student Assistant Coordinator/Crisis Counselor for the start of the 2020-21 school year. This person is critical to our new social-emotional program and will help all school-based crisis teams to identify and assist K-12 students and parents who are at risk.
- Budgeted and approved a brand-new high school weight room after understanding the deteriorating condition of the old facility, available to all HMHS students at the start of the 2020-21 school year.
- This school year added two additional grade levels (grades 9 and 10) to the student 1:1 Chromebook initiative that began two years ago. At the start of the 2020-21 school year, the 1:1 initiative will include all students in grades 5 thru 11. Widespread provision of Chromebooks has been fortuitous for our students to use at home during the remote education mandate.
- Hired Brian Falkowski as an interim Business Administrator, a fiscally responsible move costing the district less than paying someone full time after the resignation of our former BA. In addition, with his extensive background experience, Falkowski became an essential mentor to our Assistant BA, Michael Catalano, and helped us tremendously to gain compliance in finance and HR areas of the QSAC review.
- Knowing our residents had Internet connectivity at home and knowing our students had devices, the board started a full online teaching program for all Haddonfield students and teachers scaling on March 16th and concluding on June 19th, the last day of the school year. The PD day the board approved prior to school closing helping faculty switch from in-person to online teaching, and the Board's enduring demand to continue with the business of education, rather than simply providing handouts and review work, is a credit to their leadership.
- Created an excellent pandemic response plan utilizing a variety of communication techniques (voice, newsletter, email, text). The BOE was proactive in closing school before the Governor's mandate to protect all students and employees. They rapidly communicated and deployed a teacher PD day to ensure teachers could leverage digital teaching and learning platforms during the school closure. In April a COVID-19 web page and a FAQ document to keep parents informed, and in April created a feedback loop survey to open to their experiences with online learning. They are researching tirelessly how to return school in September as they wait patiently for guidance from the NJDOE and the Governor's office.
- Oversaw the creation of a new high school master schedule to be implemented in the fall of 2020. This flexible schedule with alternating block days and regular days, provides students and teachers with 21st-century flexibility and metacognitive time to reflect and plan ahead. This creative schedule will allow for better use of digital platforms, for more collaboration time between teachers (special ed. and regular ed.) and for deeper student collaboration. It provides the structure for deeper learning and for more student downtime for their emotional wellbeing. High school teacher teams with Principal McHale began researching this new schedule by visiting high schools utilizing similar creative schedules (Princeton, Cherry Hill East, and Rancocas Valley) beginning during the 2018-19 school year. After a two-year study period, the new schedule will be implemented in the 2020-21 school year.
- Oversaw the creation of a new elementary school master schedule also to be implemented in the fall of 2020. This new schedule provides critical daily common planning time for core teachers (as well as special education teachers) for the first time in Haddonfield's history. It also better streamlines and standardizes the special subject area classes and provides for smoother daily core subject scheduling.
- Supported the use of a digital web-based elementary scheduling program, used for the first time in Haddonfield, for the start of the 2020-21 school year. Both the creation of the new master schedule and the new scheduling program provide for better coordination of student/teacher contact timeframes during each day, modernizing Haddonfield's elementary program.
- Approved a new high school Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Diploma program and approved the AP Seminar and Research Certificate program starting in the 2020-21 school year whereby interested students can take college-level seminar courses through the College Board AP program. The AP Capstone helps students develop key skills in research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing, and presenting that they will use frequently in the course of conducting research and communicating their results. Haddonfield students who earn scores of 3 or higher in the AP Seminar and AP Research courses and a 3 or higher on four additional AP courses of their choosing receive the AP Capstone Diploma through this College Board initiative. This diploma is akin to the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program that is connected to many international and distinguished private schools.
- Oversaw the creation of a new sixth-grade online personalized math program called ST Math used to supplement face-to-face instruction during the 2019-20 school year. The program will be expanded to grade 7 math during the 2020-21 school year in September. Fortunately, this web-based program was important during the school closure period allowing sixth-grade students to continue with their online teacher-led math classes and to progress.
- Created a new teacher induction program where teachers new to the district and new to the profession met monthly with Dr. Murray and other mentor teachers to discuss timely and relevant topics.
- In order to comply with the curriculum and instruction area of NJQSAC, 235 courses had to be rewritten and revised over the past 12 months to properly comply with state-mandated written course-of-study requirements.
- To understand gaps present in our K-8 math curriculum, articulation work was done with teacher teams to better map areas in our courses needing enhancements to comply with N.J. state learning standards.
- Teacher leaders and Dr. Murray created monthly curriculum-related newsletters as feedback loops for teachers describing examples of teaching excellence within the district.
- With the downturn of college grads going into teacher education as a profession nationwide, the board increased our teacher recruitment opportunities by posting openings on NJ School Jobs Web Portal, K12 Job Spot, and on our new-and-improved HR web portal. Prior to this year we posted job openings solely on our website.
- Oversaw the laborious state regulatory process to approve building renovations in order to create secure vestibules at Tatem and at Lizzy Haddon Elementary. The Board then mandated the renovations begin as soon as we knew the Governor closed school for the remainder of the school year. Barring any unforeseen problems, both school vestibules will be in place for the start of the 2020-21 school year.
- Approved surveillance cameras to be bid and placed at all school sites, inside and outside of all buildings, for the start of the 2020-21 school year for property protection and security. These cameras will be accessible in real time to the Haddonfield Police Department.
- Mandated that digital mapping of all district building floor plans be conducted over the summer, hopefully to be completed before the start of the 2020-21 school year. Digital maps of floor plans are distributed to first responder/police data bases allowing for first responders to better respond to emergencies in our schools.
- Saw to it that vaping detectors were placed at HMHS in an effort to deter the detrimental practice of underage vaping, during the fall of 2019.
- Dedicated and - along with the Haddonfield Educational Trust and the Tatem PTA - financially supported a new ADA-accessible playground at Tatem Elementary School in September of 2019.
- Approved a new outdoor classroom area to be constructed at Tatem Elementary, fully funded by the Tatem PTA.
- Paved the Tatem Elementary School parking lot in fall 2019.
- Improved grass areas at Tatem and at Central Elementary School in fall 2019.
- Hired a dedicated painter in the facilities department, full time, to work after school hours to improve all school facilities during the 2019-20 school year.
- Received a grant to retrofit Central Elementary School with LED lighting in order to reduce building energy costs for taxpayers. The work nears completion.
- Expanded the use of digital presentation equipment for secondary classrooms by adding 21 additional Promethean boards. There were no digital presentation boards in secondary classrooms two years ago. Today 45% of HMHS classrooms and 50% of the middle school classrooms have Promethean boards.
- Appointed Mr. Chuck Klaus Superintendent of Schools starting on July 1, 2020. Then appointed Dr. Gino Priolo as Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Dr. Carmen Henderson as Director of Special Education, rounding out an excellent administrative team that also includes Dr. Colleen Murray, the Academic CEO since November 2018.
- Continued with their strong communications plan for district residents and taxpayers by emailing two district newsletters each month instead of the one utilized last year and creating a more personalized Board Meeting Bulletin written by Board members and posted after each voting board meeting. The Board also expanded the use of voice mail by all administrators over the course of this school year to improve messaging.
- Began the teacher negotiation process since the Haddonfield teachers' union contract expires at the end of the 2019-20 school year.

Policy 2624, the Secondary Grading System, Officially Changed

At the June 11th meeting, the Haddonfield Board of Education voted to change [Policy 2624](#), the secondary grading system, from a 7-point (93-100 = A) to a 10-point (90-100 = A) grading system.

Earlier this year, a project team was formed, meeting in March and April to determine appropriate questions and to share research. [Project team materials](#), including a link to their April meeting, were posted on our website on April 30th. The first reading of the proposed change occurred at the May 21st Board meeting and included a [detailed presentation](#).

After a great deal of research, the project team concluded that this change benefited Haddonfield students in several ways, including college acceptances, college scholarships, and day-to-day school-related stress. Comparing Haddonfield Schools to other elite high schools in New Jersey and around the country, the team concluded that the vast majority of these schools already use the 10-point system without negatively affecting rigor.

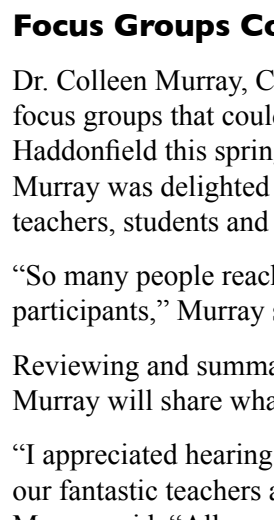
For detailed questions and answers please read the [slides in the May 21st Board presentation](#).

The 10-point, 90-100 = A system will be in effect at the start of the 2020-21 school year.

Physical Plant Project Updates

SECURE VESTIBULES

Asbestos abatement in the Elizabeth Haddon foyer has been completed, and construction of the new secure vestibule has begun. Because no asbestos abatement was needed at Tatem, construction for that secure vestibule is a little farther along. Both vestibules should be completed well before September 1st.

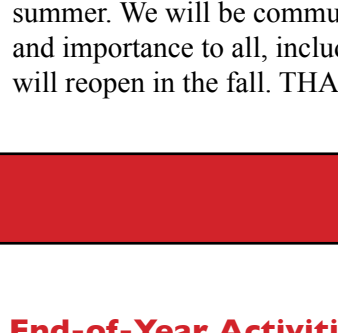


HARDSCAPE PROJECT

A renovation to the "Stadium Courtyard/Legacy Walk" at the entrance to the HMHS stadium on Sylvan Lake Avenue is well on its way to completion. Personalized pavers, plants and benches are all part of the plan to improve the stadium entrance. This project was funded by the Haddonfield Alumni Society and the Haddonfield Educational Trust.

CAMERA INSTALLATION

Camera installation in various places inside and outside of **all district buildings** will occur this summer, and technicians have begun the long process of pulling wires.



Empty Bowl Project

Middle School art teacher Erika Gehringer and her current seventh- and eighth-graders have been making ceramic bowls for two years. They originally wanted to hold an "Empty Bowl" fund raising event to benefit the Food Bank of South Jersey. The event would have included people buying a bowl and then getting together to share a meal, but the quarantine forced Gehringer to redesign the project. She created a [website](#) with an explanatory video and two buttons, allowing people to (a) purchase a bowl and/or (b) make a donation, still in support of the Food Bank.

Gehringer and her students have raised \$1,000 so far! If you would still like to buy a bowl or make a contribution, you may do so via the website (above) or meeting with Gehringer behind HMS Friday, June 19, after 9:00 a.m.

Focus Groups Convened to Reflect on Remote Education

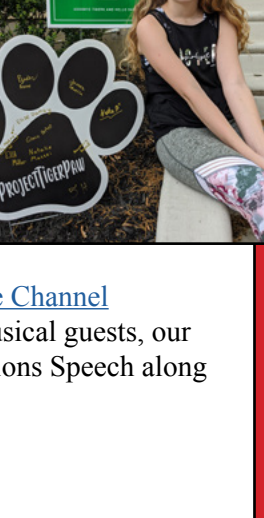
Dr. Colleen Murray, Chief Academic Officer, reached out to the school community to form focus groups that could meet to discuss the experience of remote teaching and learning in Haddonfield this spring. Originally hoping to get enough respondents to form four groups, Murray was delighted to generate so much interest that she created eight groups of parents, teachers, students and staff.

"So many people reached out to me that I used an app called "Random Picker" to choose participants," Murray said. "I wish I could have included everyone."

Reviewing and summarizing the 160 pages of data she gathered will take some time, but Murray will share what she heard and learned later this summer.

"I appreciated hearing so many parents and students express their gratitude and praise for our fantastic teachers and staff, as well as their frank concerns and creative suggestions," Murray said. "All constituents made sincere and thoughtful contributions to these essential conversations."

More to come!



Look for Important Information shared via Email

Parents of students in grades 3-8:

On Friday, June 12th, your building principal emailed you a letter about recent benchmark assessments for your child/ren.

Summer Communication:

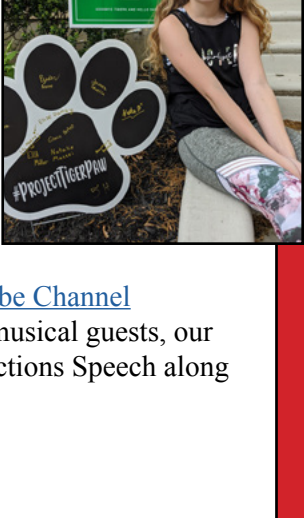
Please make a point to check your email periodically during the summer. We will be communicating about various topics of interest and importance to all, including but not limited to if and how schools will reopen in the fall. THANK YOU!

SCHOOL NEWS

End-of-Year Activities and Events

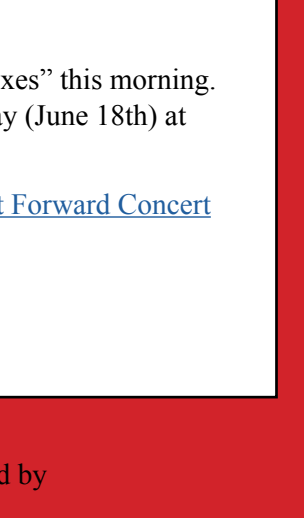
ELEMENTARY FIELD DAY 2020

On Wednesday, June 17th, all three elementary schools enjoyed "virtual field day," a creative and fun event formed by the collaboration of PE teachers in seven different schools. [Here's the link!](#)



CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

[Fifth-Grade Remembrance Video](#)

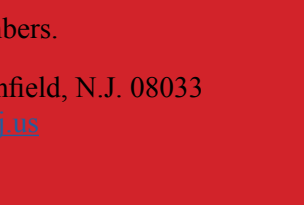


ELIZABETH HADDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

[Fifth-Grade Promotion Video](#)

AHA FUNDRAISING

Once again, Lizzy students rose to the principal's challenge to raise money for the American Heart Association. Because the students topped the \$20,000 goal for the fourth consecutive year (they raised \$21,304), Mr. Bissinger got a buzz cut and PE teacher Jennifer Wisniewski surprised the top fund raiser from each grade at home with an "award of excellence." Great job to all!



TATEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

[Tatem Fifth-Grade Recognition Video](#)

HADDONFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

June 19 - 6:00 p.m. - a prerecorded video will be linked to [our YouTube Channel](#) featuring the **HMS Promotion Ceremony** which will include special musical guests, our Student Council President's Address, our Welcome Speech and a Reflections Speech along with the reading of our 8th-graders by the Student Council Officers.

[Video welcoming incoming sixth graders](#)

HADDONFIELD MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

Senior parents and students enjoyed special delivery of their "senior boxes" this morning. **Check your email for a link to the graduation video**, to be aired today (June 18th) at approximately 8:00 p.m. Congratulations, class of 2020!

[Senior Send-Off](#) [Bulldawgs on Broadway](#) [Play It Forward Concert](#)

[Senior Award Ceremony](#) [Band Spring Concert](#)

[Virtual Dance recital](#) [Arts in the Courtyard](#)