

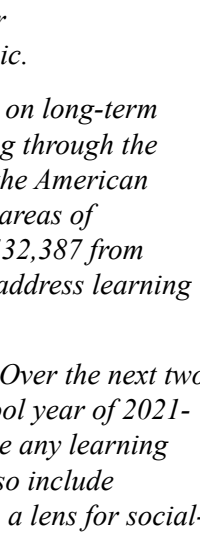


HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

... news from the Board of Education

FROM the SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Haddonfield Families, Staff and Community Members,



One of the most important things we learn in school is to evaluate our strengths and recognize areas we need to improve. Once we have done this, it is imperative that we put plans in place that are designed to fill in any gaps we discover and to implement a plan for long-term growth and progress. The process is the same for a school district. As we move forward, planning and implementing Phase III, we must institute plans for improvement beyond the immediate challenges resulting from the pandemic.

As we approach summer, Haddonfield School District is already planning on long-term solutions to current areas of need. We are fortunate to be receiving funding through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and the American Rescue Plan of 2021 that will enable HSD to evaluate, plan, and address areas of specifically identified need. These two programs have allotted money – \$532,387 from ESSER and \$422,000 from The America Rescue Plan – that we will use to address learning acceleration, mental health support, and facilities improvement.

A large portion of this money will be set aside for learning advancement. Over the next two months, HSD will be planning programs for the summer of 2021, the school year of 2021-22, and the summer of 2022 that will give students the opportunity to close any learning gaps that may have occurred during the last 13 months. Programs will also include enrichment in areas such as STEAM. All programs will be developed with a lens for social-emotional growth and will be designed to provide enrichment and growth for as many students as possible over the next 18 months.

Another portion of these funds will be dedicated to improving the long-term general health of our buildings. Plans will include but are not limited to upgrades and improvements in our ventilation systems, our bathrooms, and other projects we believe will make our buildings healthier for students and staff in the long term. Even when the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, we will be affected by the flu and other illnesses. Ultimately implementing systems that will reduce the spread of germs and viruses in our school buildings will benefit all those who learn and work in our school buildings.

The past 13 months have been more difficult than any of us could have imagined last spring, but I am confident that everyone in the Haddonfield School District community has learned and grown in spite of, and in some cases because of, the unforeseen and extreme challenges we all faced. But we did face them, and faced them together. It is particularly gratifying to me that we are now talking about plans that reflect “lessons learned” and that are a direct result of grant opportunities that will help us to ensure safety and wellness in our community’s future.

Chuck Klaus,
Superintendent of Schools

BOARD NEWS

Next Board Meeting April 22, 2021 7:00 p.m.

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

[Request in-person attendance \(limited capacity, randomly chosen\)](#) (bookmark this form)

[Submit comments prior to meeting](#) (bookmark this form)

Presentations from Recent Board Meetings:

[Posted on our website](#)

Read the “Board Meeting Summaries:”

[Posted on our website](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Coaches Needed

Please [apply here](#) for any coaching positions.

Crossing Guards

The Haddonfield Police Department seeks dependable applicants for several part-time crossing guard positions. Please consider helping our community by filling one of the available openings. Crossing guards earn \$17.61 per hour and currently work, on average, 8 to 10 hours per week – about 2 to 2.5 hours a day. At the current time, our guards work a morning post and a noon dismissal post, four days a week due to the hybrid schedule being followed by the public schools. When schools reopen full time, hours may increase to 10 to 15 hours per week. Applications are available at the Police Department or can be [filled out online](#).

Educational Assistants

Looking for a great part-time opportunity to become a member of the support staff in our schools? Work while your child is in school; share the same schedule and same days off.

HSD elementary schools are seeking caring, dedicated and child-centered Educational Assistants to support our students. Hours are 8:35-3:00 M-F; the start date is ASAP. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred. The hourly rate is approximately \$12/hour. If interested please [apply here](#).

DISTRICT NEWS

PHASE III START DATES CHANGED

(All HSD families and staff received this information via email between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31st. We share it here again for convenience.)

Based on the rise in regional numbers, Phase III implementation for grades 1-5 will be delayed by one week. **We will now implement Phase III for all in-person students* on Monday, April 19th.**

Why the Change?

COVID Metrics

We have maintained all along and reiterated in most communications that the targets we set are subject to change based upon major COVID indicators; more specifically (not all have to be met; we analyze this data as a whole):

- Declining or stable case rate incidence approaching 25 per 100,000
- Percent positivity less than 9%
- CALI score of 2 (Moderate Risk)
- Absence of high/moderate levels evidence of linked transmission occurring in schools
- Absence of rapidly accelerating community transmission

Previous Rise Following Break when the COVID Activity Level Index (CALI) score is above 2

One of our “lessons learned” is that positive cases rise following a sustained break from school (e.g. December/February) when our region is in the High Risk level (CALI score of 3), and we predict that we will see similar patterns following spring break.

As of this writing, the data bears out as follows:

Declining or stable case rate incidence approaching 25 per 100,000	Not met: Case rate has increased over the past four reporting periods and is currently at 25.63 per 100,000.
Percent positivity less than 9%	Met: Currently at 7.58%, but up from a low of 5.75% on 2/27
CALI score of 2 (Moderate Risk)	Not Met: As of data released on 3/25, CALI score is 3 (high risk)
Absence of high/moderate levels evidence of linked transmission occurring in schools	Met. We have little evidence to suggest that there are elevated levels of in-school transmission.
Absence of rapidly accelerating community transmission	Not Met, though we are receiving reports of increased community transmission - 5 in the past week, compared to 2 in the previous week.

There is no discussion of reverting back to a hybrid model. Absent significant increases in the data, Phase III will begin for all in-person students* in grades 1-12 on Monday, April 19. An example of a significant increase in the data would be a CALI score of 4.

* Preschool students will continue in their AM/PM model, and kindergarten students will continue in their AM-only model on and following April 19th.

To review the most detailed information (including schedules, beginning on page 20) regarding Phase III, please [see the newly updated “On the Road Back” document](#).

We owe a great deal of the successes we have had thus far not only to the support and excellence of our teachers, support staff, and administrators, but to the diligence and cooperation of our district families. We cannot put enough emphasis on the importance of **putting the community first** by considering others when making decisions to keep our community safe and by following district COVID guidance, particularly when it comes to travel and completion of the daily COVID screening. Thank you.

SOCIAL STUDIES COMMITTEE PROGRESS, DATA TEAM RESULTS and PBL WORK CONTINUATION

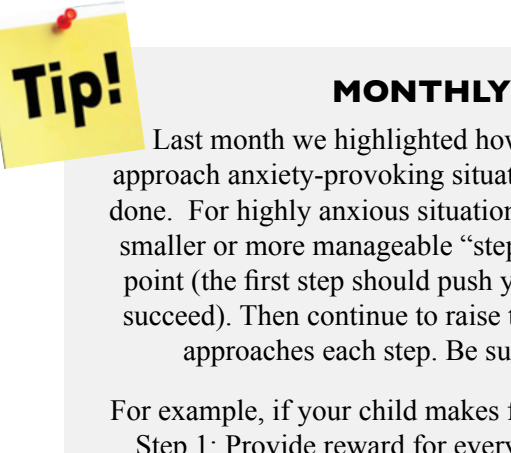
The Haddonfield School District has embarked on an assessment of the social studies curriculum, and we are forming a committee to assess math as well.

The Social Studies Committee – made up of parents, students, faculty and administrators – is a little more than halfway through its work. Each committee member took on one or more needs-assessment projects, researching, collecting data, and sharing the results. As one example, Dr. Beth Wassall (parent) conducted focus groups at each of the school levels, with the help of school administrators and the high school counseling department. HMHS students surveyed other students, also at each of the school levels. The results are invaluable and will drive our next steps. Teachers are using their wisdom and perspective by considering such questions as our policy for students taking classes for credit outside of Haddonfield. One committee member, Tatem mom Amy Lackpour, reached out to districts that we are calling “aspirational districts” because they have more experience integrating culturally responsive approaches to social studies learning. The committee will host one such district, West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, on April 14 to learn more about their work. In July, the Social Studies Committee will make curricular recommendations at the Board of Education.

The district data team presentation was this past Thursday. It was the culmination of two years of work with our teachers, staff, teacher leaders, and district data team. The district data team is made up of Dr. Colleen Murray, Chief Academic Officer; Dan Licata, HMHS Assistant Principal; Dr. Karen Russo, HMS Assistant Principal; and Shannon Simkus, Principal of Central Elementary. This team meets regularly to review and plan how our district uses data to inform instruction. Here is a [recording of the live presentation](#) from March 25th and [here is the link to the presentation](#) (with loads of bonus slides).

The two-hour delay on Wednesday, March 24th allowed staff to focus on project-based learning (PBL) assessment data. Teachers worked as teams to determine what data they would want to collect from their newly created PBLs. Once they decided what data they wanted to collect, teachers created common assessments. [Read more about PBL in the February issue of the district newsletter](#).

Haddonfield School District is actively forming a Math Committee to evaluate the current curriculum and to make curricular recommendations to the Board of Education. The committee’s goals and the details of our meeting schedules are on this interest form. Please take a look and consider joining the Math Committee. Submit form by April 1st.



Read Across America Week

In the midst of a challenging school year, the Haddonfield elementary school media specialists, Jessica Miller and Sophie Nelson, put together a culturally responsive, literature-rich week of reading-filled activities for the 2021 Read Across America Week!

This year the theme was “Reading Across Haddonfield” where students engaged in reading activities that highlight the diverse culture of our community, downtown shops and local eateries. Students completed BINGO boards with various reading challenges throughout the week. Each day of the week was also focused on a specific theme including being an agent of change, influential Americans, perspective-taking, grit and perseverance, and celebrating one’s own voice! Throughout the week, students participated in a Favorite Sock Day, Buddy-Reading Day, and Pajama Day to help celebrate and bring excitement to being lifelong readers.



HMHS STUDENTS ATTENDED A PRESENTATION BY A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR/ARTIST/SCULPTOR

Through personal studies in “degenerate art,” HMHS teacher Karen Acton discovered a sculptor/painter named Gabriella Y. Karin. Karin is a Holocaust survivor who came to the United States from Slovakia, and who continued to passionately pursue her education. Acton contacted Karin and invited her to speak to Acton’s art class as well as students in Meghan McCormick’s class on the Holocaust. They met on Zoom on March 8. Students, grateful for the artist’s willingness to share her story, had poignant and inspiring questions for Karin.

To view her sculptures representative of her experience, [click here](#).
To access her memoir, [click here](#).

HMHS TO HOLD EQUITY SUMMIT

On April 16th, Haddonfield Memorial High School (HMHS) will host a virtual Equity Summit from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The event brings together 10 students from each of seven local high schools and it is designed to:

- allow students to establish relationships with students from neighboring towns,
- and to understand and embrace differences in order to promote acceptance of each other and our communities.

This event came about when Superintendent Chuck Klaus joined forces with HMHS Principal Tammy McHale, Dean of Students Hamisi Tarrant and teacher and Peer Bias Leaders advisor Rachel Lesse to explore ideas that would promote equity in our community. Tarrant and Lesse also reached out to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in Philadelphia for guidance.

“Our school has been working with the ADL for years, and we knew they would have great ideas for the summit,” said McHale. “Our students have attended ADL training and workshops, and we have worked with ADL to achieve status as a [No Place For Hate school](#).”

The Equity Summit consists of three sessions, a working lunch and a keynote speaker at the conclusion. The sessions include small-group activities designed to explore one’s own identity, identify associations with different groups, and build understanding of stereotypes, among other topics.

Keynote speaker Chris Singleton is a former minor league baseball player drafted by the Chicago Cubs. He became a nationally renowned speaker with a message of resilience, forgiveness and unity following the loss of his mother in the 2015 Mother Emanuel Church Tragedy in Charleston, S.C. On April 16th, Singleton’s message will be shared virtually with the entire HMHS school community.

“I am very proud that our students and staff have such a strong commitment to working on issues of acceptance and equity,” said Lesse. “The Equity Summit is another example of how we continue to strive towards betterment of ourselves and our entire community.”

TWO FREE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS OFFERED: LGBTQ 101 and PREJUDICE & INTERSECTIONALITY

The Haddonfield Education Association is proud to partner with the HMS and HMHS Gender-Sexuality Alliance as well as Garden State Equality to offer these important virtual community workshops. We hope you’ll join us for both! [Click here to register](#).

Community Workshop 1: LGBTQ 101

April 19, 2021 (7:00 p.m.)

This module helps participants understand the basics of sexuality, delineating the terms “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender,” “non-binary,” “heterosexual,” and “cisgender” among others, as well as how these categories are “defined.” The workshop begins by exploring the basic stages of sexual development regarding the general physical, cognitive and emotional milestones people undergo as they mature. It also details the four different components that make up sexuality: chromosomal sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.

Community Workshop 2: Cycle of Prejudice & Intersectionality

April 26, 2021 (7:00 p.m.)

This module focuses on addressing seven forms of prejudice and implicit bias in order to improve academic achievement and create educational equity for all students. Participants will explore personal identities and the intersection of marginalized identities, power, privilege, and the achievement gap. This workshop helps educators improve their relationships and services for the LGBTQ community (and other minority groups). It includes with strategies on how to create safe, inclusive spaces for the LGBTQ community and therefore making spaces safer for all individuals.

A meeting link will be sent out one day before each event. Please reach out to [Stacey Brown-Downham](#) if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

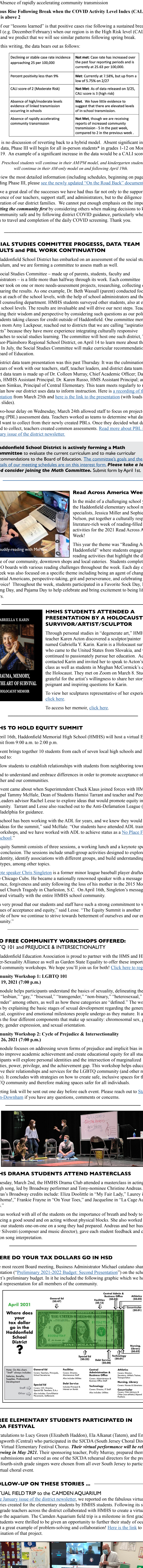
HMHS DRAMA STUDENTS ATTEND MASTERCLASS

On Tuesday, March 2nd, the HMHS Drama Club attended a masterclass in acting through song, led by Broadway performer and Tony-nominee Christine Andreas. Andreas’ Broadway credits include: Eliza Doolittle in “My Fair Lady,” Laurey in “Oklahoma!,” Frankie Frazey in “On Your Toes,” and Jacqueline in “La Cage Aux Folles.”

Andreas worked with all of the students on the importance of breath and body to producing a good sound and on acting without physical blocks. She also worked with six of our students one-on-one on a song they had prepared. Andreas and her husband Marty Silvestri (composer and music director), gave each student feedback and coached them on song interpretation.

WHERE DO YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO IN HSD

At the most recent Board meeting, Business Administrator Michael Catalano shared a presentation (“[Preliminary 2021-2022 Budget: Second Presentation](#)”) on the school district’s presentation. In it he included the following graphic which we hope is a helpful representation for all members of the community.

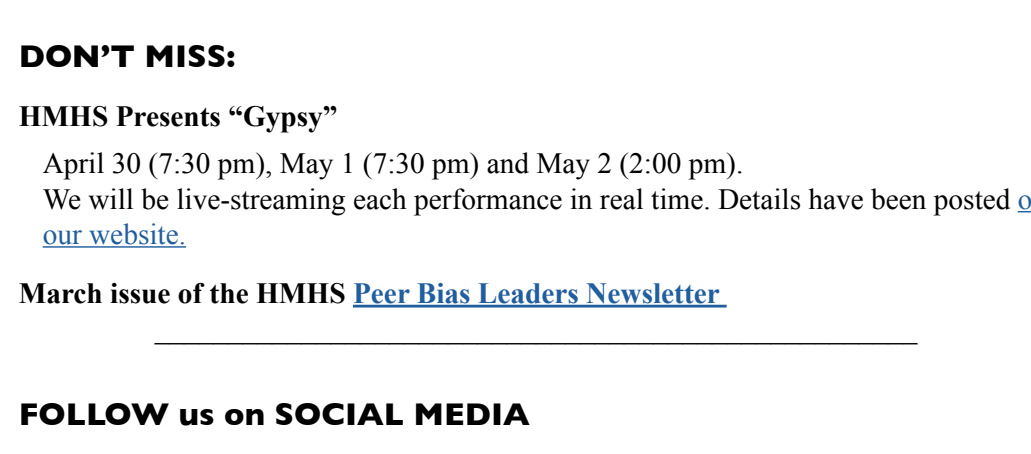


THREE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN SJCD FESTIVAL

Congratulations to Lucy Green (Elizabeth Haddon), Ela Alkanat (Tatem), and Emma Hollingsworth (Central) who participated in the SJCD (South Jersey Choral Directors Assn) Virtual Elementary Festival Chorus. *Their virtual performance will be released for viewing in May 2021.* Their sponsoring teacher, Polly Murray, prepared them for video submissions and served as one of the SJCD rehearsal directors for the program. Forty fourth-sixth grade singers were chosen from all over South Jersey to participate in the virtual choral event.

FOLLOW-UP ON THESE STORIES ...

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP to the CAMDEN AQUARIUM
In the [January issue of the district newsletter](#), we reported on the fabulous virtual libraries created for the elementary students by HMHS students. Following its success, first-grade teachers across the district collaborated with HMHS to create a virtual field trip to the aquarium. The Camden Aquarium field trip is a milestone in first grade, and the students were thrilled to be given an opportunity to further their study of ocean life. What a great example of problem-solving and collaboration! [Here is the link](#) to the culmination of that project.



PERSUASIVE WRITING IN FIFTH GRADE

In the [February issue of the district newsletter](#), we reported on a unit of persuasive writing in Mike DeFillippis’s fifth-grade class at Tatem. In wrapping up this writing unit, students chose topics with a specific audience in mind. One of those was our own superintendent, Chuck Klaus. On March 29th, Mr. Klaus (ABOVE) came to the classroom to hear and respond to concerns about such topics as remodeling the girls’ bathroom, having 100% virtual, remodeling the basketball court, and why snow days should be snow days (not virtual days). After getting estimated costs, students surveyed fellow classmates and residents to further bolster their claims. Excellent work!



MONTHLY ANXIETY TIP:

Last month we highlighted how important it is to encourage kids to approach anxiety-provoking situations. Sometimes this is easier said than done. For highly anxious situations, we recommend breaking the task into smaller or more manageable “steps.” First, identify a reasonable starting point (the first step should push your child slightly, but they are likely to succeed). Then continue to raise the bar and provide praise as your child approaches each step. Be sure to practice as much as possible.

For example, if your child makes frequent calls to parents when separated, Step 1: Provide reward for every day of completed schoolwork/school attendance, regardless of phone calls to parent at work, Step 2: Allow a certain number of calls at designated times, Step 3: Gradually reduce calls, rewarding child for days with no calls

LATEST INFORMATION re PHASE III on our WEBSITE

[Phase III Plan and Schedules](#)

LATEST INFORMATION re COVID-19 on our WEBSITE

All HSD Health [general messages](#) are posted on our website.

All HSD Health [COVID+ messages](#) are posted on our website.

Active [COVID+ Dashboard](#)

DON'T MISS:

HMHS Presents “Gypsy”

April 30 (7:30 pm), May 1 (7:30 pm) and May 2 (2:00 pm). We will be live-streaming each performance in real time. Details have been posted [on our website](#).

March issue of the HMHS [Peer Bias Leaders Newsletter](#)

FOLLOW us on SOCIAL MEDIA

DISTRICT Facebook: [“Haddonfield School District”](#) and Twitter: [“@HaddonSchools.”](#)

SCHOOL STORIES

CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Third-graders have been working on research projects for Women’s History Month. This two-week project includes research, an art installation, and a museum share. These projects are cross-curricular as they tie in our current unit on essay writing.

ELIZABETH HADDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Here in Kindergarten we’re all very excited about the changing weather and welcoming spring. We have all made spring math flowers that show various ways to represent a number. We’ve also been discussing signs of spring and will soon begin planning our gardening projects as well.

Last week we explored different types of paper and investigated what makes paper good for writing and what makes paper easy to fold. This week we will investigate how new paper can be made from old paper and how paper can be strong to form a paper-mache bowl.

As we adjusted to having combined cohorts, we have loved meeting new friends!

LEFT: Sarah shows us her math flower!

J.F. TATEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Elementary students have been working hard on creating artwork at home this school year and have been doing an amazing job! The fifth-grade students made great use of their at-home resources by creating a project entirely out of natural objects that they collected around their homes. Students learned about the artist Andy Goldsworthy. Goldsworthy is a sculptor who creates “land art” by collecting and positioning natural objects that he finds to create abstract artwork. Check out some of the beautiful work that fifth grade students at Tatem created, all with natural objects that they found!

ABOVE: Land art created by Ian Rodriguez and Ruby Goodworth.

HADDONFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL: PAWS FOR PEACE brings the HMS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

One of many programs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting isolation has been the Haddonfield Middle School (HMS) Peer Mediation program, called Paws for Peace. Naturally, our students rose to the occasion and made adjustments that have been creative and fun.

The Peer Mediation program trains a small group of seventh- and eighth-grade students to help their peers to resolve conflicts using interpersonal skills, critical thinking, empathy and collaboration. Typically, two peer mentors would sit down with the student(s) experiencing conflict and work out a resolution. In the last year, physical distancing and dual-cohort scheduling has made this extremely difficult.

Earlier this year, current peer mentors met with their advisor, teacher Johnathan Maxson, to discuss unique issues related to isolation and to reconsider their role and plans. They determined that the best solution was to find innovative ways to build school community and increase the feeling of belonging.

Beginning in February, the students organized a social gathering during lunch on a Virtual Wednesday. The first such event was a Disney trivia game, entirely written by the students. Their peers and teachers joined in the fun, bringing about 40 participants to the gathering! In March, they held a March Madness event, including brackets (NCAA men’s basketball) they created and distributed. Their next event will be a screening of “Miracle,” a movie about the 1980 U.S. Olympic ice hockey team that illustrates teamwork, resilience and overcoming adversity.

“I am incredibly proud of what a small band of passionate students can do for their school,” said Maxson. “These ideas and activities are entirely student-created and student-led, and I know the community appreciates them.”

HADDONFIELD MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL: STUDENTS CREATE VIRTUAL SEL WELLNESS ROOM

Staff and students can avail themselves of another creative approach to social-emotional learning (SEL) in the [high school’s Social-Emotional Learning Wellness Room](#).

Earlier this year, Dean of Student Life Hamisi Tarrant brought an idea to Holly Penna, the HMHS Student Assistance Counselor/Crisis Counselor, on how to help students during these difficult times.

“I thought this was a great idea, especially during the isolation of a pandemic,” Penna said. “It is difficult for students to just drop in on a counselor or the nurse or a teacher when we are not all in the building together. A virtual room sounded like a practical, effective option.”

Penna reached out to two NHS (National Honor Society) students, Shane Ventura and Alexander Roseman, to create the website. They found together what should be included and how people might use it. The result is a beautiful, peaceful and useful virtual location. A visitor to the site will find meditations, soothing music, exercises, nutrition tips, and even coloring. There are various ways to counter anxiety, several inspirational speeches and “Good News” from the likes of John Krasinski.

The site also includes resources for crisis situations such as organizations with 24/7 phone numbers.

“As educators, we have come to understand that we must support the social-emotional health of all members of our community,” said Tarrant. “I am so proud of what Holly, Shane and Alexander have created.”