



**HHS  
PARENT  
MEETING**

**PLEASE JOIN US!**

## **HHS PTSA / SEPTA PARENT MEETING MINUTES**

**3/21/22 6:30 pm VIA ZOOM**

### **Personnel**

The current Latin and French Teacher, Mrs. Aleiner is going on leave indefinitely. There were no applicants for the role, as is (covering both languages), and recruitment efforts were unsuccessful. They have split the role into two part-time positions with a 60% Latin and 40% French teacher division. They are actively recruiting and hope to be able to fill both roles.

Mr. Marciano and Ms. Rudd (both part time English teachers) are retiring, creating an opening for 1 fulltime English teacher. Interviews are likely to commence late April and will include the usual committee representation from PTSA and SEPTA.

Mr. Marciano's role as the leader of the theater productions (a schedule B stipend position - see Clubs discussion below) will be a difficult role to fill. Some teachers have expressed interest, and the administration is hopeful that this will be a smooth transition. The administration is aware of the impact of Mr. Marciano's retirement on the theater department, including the possibility that the school will not be able to offer theater as an elective in FMS or HHS.

### **SAT**

[SATS](#) are offered at many schools and sites throughout Westchester. HHS used to host some SAT dates, however the burden on the school is excessive and there are no plans for HHS to become a test site again. Mr. Adipietro will discuss with Ms. Kocur whether it might be possible to offer one test date at HHS, perhaps during a school day (as has occurred in the past).

### **National Honors Society**

HHS has a local chapter of the [NHS](#). Students are invited to apply in Junior year based on grade point average. If accepted, there is an induction ceremony during Senior year, and an expectation of hours of service ("giving back") during senior year, which primarily consists of tutoring younger students. The four pillars of NHS are: Scholarship, Character, Leadership, and Service.

The application process begins with receiving an invitation to apply (addressed to the student) from the school NHS Advisors, Ms. Shaw (Guidance Counselor) and Ms. Rudolph (English teacher). These letters were sent home in February. Applications are due April 8<sup>th</sup>. When all applications are received, a list of applicants is sent to faculty and to Administration (Mr. Adipietro and Ms. Hardesty) who can attest to character. Character is a significant component. Leadership and service expectations are lower this year due to fewer opportunities as a result of COVID.

All 11<sup>th</sup> grade parents – encourage your kids to apply if they were invited. The number of accepted students ranges each year from 25 to 50 or so students.

## Assessments

Parents have noted that in some classes students have not been allowed to receive their tests to take home, and that this limits their ability to utilize the test as a learning tool. The school does *not* have any policy stating that tests cannot be returned to students.

The exception to this is state tests (e.g., Regents exams) which are not allowed to leave the building, per state law. However, a parent, student and a tutor are invited to come and view the test privately to review and learn from it. They may not take pictures nor can it be taken home, but the district does allow for a group viewing.

Mr. Adipietro plans to discuss this issue at the next faculty meeting. In the past, teachers did not return tests at times due to the burden of creating new tests. However, tools have been purchased for teachers to mitigate this issue. He will revisit using those tools, and will learn from the teachers what other reasons contribute to this to allow for problem solving. We will revisit this issue at upcoming PTSA meetings.

Additionally, grades are being posted on the portal before tests have been returned to students. Mr. Adipietro is aware that this contributes to student stress and will discuss with teachers not posting grades until after tests have been returned. In addition, they are considering returning to the policy of closing the portal during the day (8 am – 4pm) to decrease student stress.

[Regents](#) exams will occur in June. The 11<sup>th</sup> grade history test (for all classes) is on June 1. This is a new exam, called the Framework Exam. Scores will come back the last week of school. The rest of the Regents exams are scheduled in late June.

HHS will be a Field Test school for World History 2 (Constructed Response section). This happens in class, not during the Regents test. It does not affect the student's grade nor are their scores recorded individually.

## Student Events Post COVID

COVID restrictions have lifted and the Student Union is actively developing events:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> PEP rally for Spring Sports April 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Badminton Tourney
- Another Talent Show
- Movie Nights

Senior Prom will allow outside guests **IF** the COVID numbers hold. Mr. Adipeitro is being cautious before making a full announcement in the event there is a surge. June 6<sup>th</sup> is the date for Senior Prom – this is planned so there is a gap before graduation, in the event a student contracts COVID.

Academic Quiz Bowl April 7<sup>th</sup> – will be in person.

There will also be an Academic Challenge event held at HHS one Saturday.

## Club Feedback Discussion

[Student Clubs at HHS](#) consist of some well-developed, faculty involved clubs that have been around for many years and in which the faculty are very invested. Some of these clubs include Schedule B funding (a stipend for the teacher) and are negotiated through the Hastings Teachers Association and approved by the [BOE](#). These clubs tend to be inclusive and successful at drawing students in. A large number of clubs are student-initiated and frequently “fizzle-out”. Mr. Adipietro invited parent conversation to brainstorm about how to improve the culture around clubs at HHS, and how to develop successful clubs, and how to engage students earlier in high school such that the clubs have depth.

Suggestions and comments included:

- When students create a club they put a proposal together and get a faculty advisor (every club has to have a faculty advisor). These clubs tend to have less faculty engagement, and the students frequently do not know how to organize something.
- The school might consider ways to identify what the educators see as the most valuable kinds of clubs, and assure that faculty efforts are directed there. This has the ancillary benefit of leaving these dedicated faculty less available for spurious student clubs.
- Some student-led clubs are innovative and successful. When a student has a clear plan and demonstrates their efforts through actions (prior successes), this can encourage faculty involvement.
- Some student clubs struggle to get the word out (especially if they seek to use weekends to meet), and could benefit from adult direction.
- Parents support assuring that Schedule B funds are procured to support the teachers. Parents and PTSA would be happy to offer any monetary support needed for student initiatives - but this is limited to funding for materials and supplies, and cannot pay teachers.
- For student-driven clubs, they could be asked to present to the BOE as a way of developing accountability.

### PTSA Announcements

- [Superintendent's Forum](#) – Thursday March 24 at 6:30 PM
- PTSA Sponsored presentation by Sharon and Chelsea Maxwell entitled "*Who's Raising Our Kids? Nurturing Human Values in a Digital World*" - Monday March 28 at 7 PM [Submit your questions in advance](#)
- Please fill out the [PTSA Traffic Safety Committee survey](#)
- HHS Staff Appreciation Lunch will be held May 19<sup>th</sup>. The PTSA will be soliciting monetary donations from the community (instead of asking people to cook). We will also need a few volunteers at the lunch to set up and clean-up. More to come soon.
- [Family University](#) is on April 20<sup>th</sup> – more information to come.
- The PTSA Nominating Committee needs a HHS parent volunteer to help select the Executive Committee of the PTSA for next year. Contact [Robin Muskin](#)

### SEPTA Announcements

- SEPTA FMS Community Conversation is on Wednesday, March 23rd @ 6:30pm. Topics include:
  - MTSS Process
  - Academic & SEL Screener
  - Sensory Room
  - Transition
  - PBIS/Supporting students during recess
- Discussion with *Dr. McKersie and Special Education* on Tuesday, March 29th @ 6:30pm regarding the updated vision of Special Education in Hastings. Dr. McKersie will present the vision proposed to the board for Special Education and take any questions. *Link will be in the Daily.*
- Presentation: "*DEI in the District*" by Jenice Mateo-Toledo and Kristen Kumar. *TBA in April.*
- We've had to cancel our two main fundraisers -- Trivia Night and the Carnival -- for the past two years, which has severely impacted our ability to award scholarships. **100% of the donations will be awarded to graduating seniors.** Please consider a donation in any amount to help award graduating seniors - [Scholarship Fund](#)