

Hamden Middle School

The Dragon's Tale: Principal Coogan's Weekly Update



Hamden Middle School Family Newsletter
Monday, August 24, 2020

HPS Reopening Plan

Throughout my career in education, I always feel a sense of excitement for the start of a new school year. The opening of school is comparable to the rituals associated with celebrating the New Year. We reflect on the past years and set goals for the one to come. I remember asking my students and their parents, "What are your hopes and dreams for this school year?" While I have many aspirations, my priority is to focus on creating a safe and positive learning community for all. I understand the health and safety of our students, family, faculty, and staff are at the forefront of everyone's mind. Please know, I am committed to working with all members of our community to ensure a successful return to school.

Over the month of August, I received many emails from parents. I appreciate your suggestions, questions and willingness to share ideas and concerns. I was able to identify common questions or concerns. In an effort to improve communication, I have prepared the following Frequently Asked Questions and Responses. Please review and continue to reach out to me.

Improving communication within our community is an ongoing goal for me. I understand it is essential to our partnership. This year, I will publish a weekly update, "The Dragon's Tale." It will be emailed home to all families, as well as posted on the school website. If you are not receiving emails from school, please contact Ms. Amita Singla, HMS Office Manager, in the main office at 203-407-7194.

In addition, families can follow me on Twitter @HMSDragons. Please begin to follow me and stay informed. I look forward to working with your families over the 2020-2021 academic year.



Michelle G. Coogan
HMS Principal

HAMDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question: What does the Hybrid Learning model look like at HMS?

Answer: Students who are participating in the Hybrid Learning model were divided into two groups. Groups were assigned based on the child's first initial of their last name. Students in Group 1 (Last name A-K) will attend school on Monday and Tuesday, as well as every other Friday. Students in Group 2 (Last name L-Z) will attend school on Wednesday and Thursday, as well as every other Friday. The following chart outlines the schedule for the first three weeks of school.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1: 9/8/20- 9/11/20	No School Labor Day	Group 1	Group 2	Group 2	Group 1
Week 2: 9/14/20- 9/18/20	Group 1	Group 1	Group 2	Group 2	Group 2
Week 3: 9/21/20- 9/25/20	Group 1	Group 1	Group 2	Group 2	Group 1

When students are not in school, they are expected to virtually engage in learning from their home. Students will follow their schedules and log into the various Google Classrooms. When learning from home, students will connect with their teachers. At times, students may find a recording of the teacher instructing the lesson. At times, students will zoom into the classroom and participate in the lesson. There will be opportunities to check in with teachers. Teachers will post learning activities, assignments, and assessments. Teachers will practice different approaches to delivering their lessons. All teachers recognize the importance of student engagement, and there will be a focus on connecting students at home with the teacher and students in the classroom.

Question: What does the Distance Learning model look like at HMS?

Answer: Students who are participating in the Distance Learning model will remain at home all five school days. They will follow their daily schedule and log into the various Google Classrooms. When learning from home, students will connect with their teachers. At times, students will Zoom into the classroom and participate in the lesson. There will be opportunities to check in with teachers. Teachers will post learning activities, assignments, and assessments. Teachers will practice different approaches to delivering their lessons. All teachers recognize the importance of student engagement, and there will be a focus on connecting students at home with the teacher and students in the classroom.

Question: I have chosen my child's educational plan for the return to school. What do I do if I want to change the plan?

Answer: At this time, we have a learning plan for all students. If a parent chooses to change the plan, s/he must email the school principal at mcoogan@hamden.org to explain their request in writing. We understand parents want the ability to change between the Hybrid Learning model and the Distance Learning model. We are committed to supporting all families. Upon receiving written notification, the principal will review cohorts and develop a plan for the student transition between models.

Question: My child is new to Hamden Middle School. How will you support my child with the transition to a new school?

Answer: We are hosting an informational session for all new students and families on Thursday, September 3rd at 6:00 p.m. All new students and families can virtually attend this informational session. We will provide visuals of our school and explain routines. In addition, our faculty and staff will be prepared to greet new students upon arrival during the first weeks of school. We will help students find their first period class, and teachers will be prepared to guide students throughout the day.

Question: How will daily attendance be collected?

Answer: During the first period of the day, student attendance will be collected both in the classroom and at home. When working from home, students must be logged into their Google Classroom by 8:10 a.m. every morning.

Question: When is the first day of school for students?

Answer: At this time, students will return to school on Tuesday, September 8th. We will communicate any changes, as needed.

Question: When will we receive my child's schedule?

Answer: Student schedules will be open for families to view in PowerSchool one week prior to the first day of school. (Date: Tuesday, September 1, 2020) The bell schedule will outline each student's house assignment, courses, teachers, and class times.

Question: Where will my child eat lunch?

Answer: Students will eat lunch in their classroom. Eighth grade students will eat during period 4, and seventh grade students will eat during period 6. Students will have about 20-23 minutes to eat lunch. If a student is buying lunch from the cafeteria, s/he will walk to the cafeteria and bring the lunch back to class.

Question: Will breakfast be provided to interested students?

Answer: Yes, if your child is interested in buying breakfast, s/he will gather their breakfast when entering the building and bring it to their first period class. They will have time to eat in the classroom.

Question: What medical forms are required? Do I need to complete them if my child is participating in the Distance Learning model?

Answer: Seventh grade students must have an updated physical within the time frame of May 1, 2019 to the present day. Students must have two vaccines, Meningococcal and T-Dap, documented on their completed physical. A paper copy of the completed physical must be delivered to the HMS Health Office prior to the first day of school, September 8, 2020. Parents who have questions should contact Nurse Julie Beaver at jbeaver@hamden.org or 203-407-7192.

HMS INFORMATIONAL SESSION FOR NEW STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Thursday, September 3, 2020

6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

We understand many families want an opportunity to see HMS and to connect with members of our community. We want to ensure we provide information to all new students and families in a safe manner. As a result, we will host a webinar on Thursday, September 3rd at 6 p.m. A specific link and program outline will be sent home later this week. Please save the date!



CONGRATULATIONS MS. PERROTTI!

Barbara Perrotti, former seventh grade administrator at HMS, has accepted the principalship at Shepherd Glen. She is excited to return the elementary grades and connect with the students, families, faculty, and staff. We are grateful for Ms. Perrotti's leadership and commitment to the HMS team. We wish her the best of luck in her new position.

While we are searching for a new assistant principal, seventh grade parents are invited to contact Jessica Coffey, grade 8 assistant principal, at jcoffey@hamden.org or

203-407-7187.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Back to school shopping is upon us. Stores have prominently displayed pens, pencils, notebooks, etc. **HPS has pre-ordered supplies for all of our students, including a backpack, pens, pencils, colored pencils, composition notebooks, and more.** When supplies arrive, they will be provided to all students in the Hybrid Learning and Distance Learning model. By ordering individual supplies, we will reduce the need to share common supplies in the classroom. For the first day of school, please send your child to school with a pen or pencil, lunch from home or money to purchase a lunch from the cafeteria. If additional supplies are needed, teachers will communicate with parents.