

# Hampstead Hill Academy #047

Matthew Hornbeck, Principal  
Mari Satterlee, Assistant Principal  
Arleen Proto, Assistant Principal

500 South Linwood Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224

(410) 396-9146 (tel)  
(410) 396-3637 (fax)

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If you build it, they will come.

– the novel *Shoeless Joe* by W. P. Kinsella (later made into the movie *Field of Dreams*)

August 10, 2009

Dear Hampstead Hill Family,

Thank you for choosing Hampstead Hill Academy, and welcome to the 2009-2010 school year! This promises to be a great year as we build on what we know works to motivate students and on our record of student achievement. We are also building a 21<sup>st</sup> century school that sparkles.

We are building a school culture that is nurturing, consistent, structured and fair. As a Restorative Practices site, we are building community in each classroom and promoting good citizenship and respect. Most importantly, we are ready to motivate and engage your child in their learning. We know that helping students learn how to synthesize information, problem solve, think critically and organize their materials are essential, lifelong skills. Teachers are busy planning projects and enrichment activities to expand our curriculum. There will be many opportunities throughout the year to celebrate your child's progress (see the calendar below for three evening celebrations of student achievement).

Let us celebrate our students! We are so very proud of their accomplishments. Hampstead Hill Academy is one of the highest achieving and fastest improving schools in the state. Once again, our girls and boys posted admirable scores on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA). 86% of our kids passed the MSA. Students in nearly every grade outperformed the state average in reading and math. One highlight was our seventh graders. 95.7% passed the reading portion of the MSA and an amazing 40% of those students scored in the "advanced" category.

More telling is the growth made buildingwide over the course of the year on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). MAP offers pre and post test data in reading and math to help us measure growth over the course of a year. One great thing about MAP is that we can see whether our programs added any value to student learning. For example, a student may pass the MSA, but not have "grown" at all over the course of the year because they were already high performing. With MAP, we can see if the student knows more and can apply their knowledge at the end of the year. All of this outstanding achievement is a testament to the hard, smart work of our talented staff and committed students.

We are knee-deep in renovations. You will scarcely recognize many parts of the building when you return. The good news is that we are on schedule. It is very exciting to see walls built and new windows and flooring. I'm particularly pleased with our new library, art room, music room and semi-private music lesson room. The new glass windows are a revelation – it's amazing what light can do. We plan to get pictures of the renovation up on our website sometime in September.

We hope you are finding time to enjoy your summer – reading, spending time with family and friends, traveling and doing the things you like to do. Classroom assignments are not final and will be posted online ([www.hha47.org](http://www.hha47.org)) and at school on the afternoon of Thursday, August 27, 2009.

There will be a new librarian, new technology teacher, new food educator and two new teachers to help our students learn what they need to know to be successful. There will be more information on our new staff members in the student newspaper. When you see a new face, please make them feel welcome.

### **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**

You are cordially invited to attend a ribbon cutting ceremony at Hampstead Hill Academy on Friday, August 28, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. We will have just completed a \$1.7M renovation that includes new prekindergarten and kindergarten classroom spaces, new glass windows, new flooring and painting, and a new library and art room. The ribbon cutting will be held moments before our annual "Meet Your Teacher Day" the Friday before the first day of school. We are inviting CEO Andres Alonso, Mayor Sheila Dixon, City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, City Councilman Jim Kraft, Delegate Pete Hammond and other local leaders.

### **Meet Your Teacher!**

You and your child are cordially invited to our Hampstead Hill "**MEET YOUR TEACHER CELEBRATION!**" **Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m.** Come join us for an informal, get-acquainted morning with your child's new teacher. There will be a surprise, special guest (of the feathered variety) that morning as well. The Food for Life program will provide a reception. A parent or guardian must accompany children attending the occasion. There will be an opportunity to purchase uniform shirts at a reasonable cost.

### **Kindergarten Homeroom Assignments**

Most kindergarten homeroom assignments will be made based on the brief assessment conducted over the summer. If your kindergarten child's homeroom is listed as TBD (to be determined), he or she needs to be tested. Kindergarteners who need to be placed in a homeroom should come to school Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. You do not need an appointment for this special kindergarten testing.

### **PreK and 1-8 Homeroom Assignments**

Homeroom teacher and room number assignments for Prekindergarten and grades 1-8 will be posted at the school beginning Thursday, August 27, 2009. Please do not call the office requesting this information. This information will be simultaneously posted on the website. Based on an assessment of skills in the first weeks of the year, there may be a need to change some homeroom assignments. If students are new to the building, homeroom assignments will be temporary until we can properly place the student.

### **Arrival and dismissal procedures**

**The 2009-2010 school year begins Monday, August 31, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.** Once school begins, we expect students to get back into a routine for learning - plenty of sleep on school nights, a good breakfast each morning, and coming to school on time ready to learn. Being on time means entering the building promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students will line up by numbered homeroom on the blacktop. Depending on the grade, your child should prepare to enter school each day by:

Grades PreK-4	lining up on the blacktop and entering through the stairwell entrance by main office.
Grades 5-8	gathering in front of the building, north of the ramp and entering through the Linwood Avenue entrance.

School will dismiss each day at 2:40 p.m. For safety's sake, teachers of our youngest children will walk their classes onto the playground for dismissal. Parents must wait until these students line up and check in with the teacher before leaving with their child. Be sure your child follows dismissal procedures outlined by his/her teacher. Please make certain your child knows where and when he/she will be picked up after school. If your child walks, he/she should go directly home at dismissal. Please note that unless there is an emergency, the office will not sign out students from 2:20 until 2:40. Parents arriving early for pickup should let their children finish the school day.

### **Uniform Policy**

We are a uniform school. ALL STUDENTS (PREK-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE) MUST WEAR A COLLARED NAVY TOP WITH KHAKI BOTTOM. No other color of blue is acceptable, only navy blue. We've had reports of good prices and selection (including navy shirts) at Target, Sears, J.C. Penney, Wal-Mart, and K-Mart. We sell embroidered, high quality polo shirts for \$12 each. Students out of uniform will be held after school for a few minutes and may miss recess or not be permitted to sit at the same table with their classmates during lunch. Please make sure your child is in uniform every day. Please see an administrator with concerns.

### **Supply list**

Supply lists for all grades are available at <http://www.hha47.org/parents/>. Please clearly label all supplies, clothing, lunch boxes, etc. Please note that all book bags must fit inside a locker. Many of the rolling-style backpacks may not fit. Depending on the class, teachers may add to this supply list during the first days of school.

### **After school program**

Again this year, we are requesting that parents arrange for their children to be picked up at the end of the day, which is 2:40. The school is unable to supervise children who have been left after school dismisses. For the convenience of our families, HHA offers a great before and after school program for children in grades PreK-8. *Fitness, Fun, and Games* provides services for children from 6:30 until 8:00 a.m. and again from 2:40 until 6:30 p.m. This is a safe, quality program housed in our building and it is very affordable. Contact FFG Director Jen Caldwell at (410) 732-8778 for more information or to register your child.

### **Attendance is critical**

Students succeed when they attend school and are on time. All students who are absent receive a phone call home. Students who are signed out before 10:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the day. For those families that live outside of our zone, attendance is even more important because excessive absence, lateness, and signing your child out early will result in a transfer to your zoned school.

### **Playground Rules**

Our wonderful playground is available to the community whenever school is not in session. Please note that the playground is closed in the morning before school starts. Students supervised by a parent or adult family member may play on our playground after school. Only supervised children up to age 10 are allowed on the playground. Littering or misuse of the playground will result in the loss of playground privileges. Please let the office know if you see anyone misusing the playground. Our security cameras keep a watchful eye of the playground as well.

### **Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Those students that received a free or reduced lunch last year will remain in the same category through September 2009, when applications for the new year will be processed. Each family must return a new application each year. Reduced price for lunch is .40. All other students will pay \$2.25 for lunch. Breakfast will continue to be free for everyone and will begin August 31, 2009, at 7:40 a.m. Again, for safety reasons, all students having breakfast must enter the cafeteria using the Streeper Street entrance.

### **Monthly Newsletters**

Look for an important parent newsletter to be sent home with your child on the first day of school. It will contain useful information for you and your family. Newsletters are printed monthly and will be sent home the last school day of each month. Newsletters are available online, and they are translated into Spanish each month too.

We look forward to seeing each of you. Remember to read with your children each day. Boys and girls should be reading something they enjoy every day, as well as maintaining their math facts. Have a great rest of the summer!

Sincerely,

Matthew Hornbeck  
Principal

Mari Satterlee  
Assistant Principal

Arleen Proto  
Assistant Principal

**Please note these important dates on your calendar**

- Friday, August 28, 2009 – **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**, 8:30 a.m.
- Friday, August 28, 2009 – **Meet Your Teacher Day**, 9:00-11 a.m.
- Monday, August 31, 2009 – **First day of school**. School starts at 8:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, September 16, 2009 - **Back to School Night (and Book Fair)** from 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, November 19, 2009 – **Classroom celebration of student work** from 5:30-7:30 pm.
- Thursday, February 11, 2010 – **Classroom celebration of student work** from 5:30-7:30 pm.
- March 8-23, 2010 – **Maryland School Assessment (MSA)** for grades 3-8.
- April 12-16, 2010 – **Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)** for grades one and two.

A complete calendar will be sent home in the first days of school. We have many clubs and activities that you will learn more about at the beginning of the school year as well.