

Hampstead Hill Academy #047

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Education is not filling a pail but the lighting of a fire. ~William Butler Yeats

It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. ~Aristotle

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school. ~Albert Einstein

July 30, 2011

Dear Hampstead Hill Family,

Thank you for choosing to send your child to Hampstead Hill Academy (HHA), and welcome to the new school year! This year promises to be great as we set high expectations for learning and have some serious fun. Our test scores are among the highest in the state, but learning at our school means much more than test scores. We want our academic programs to come alive for students. Our students will move beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge to produce work that is unique and exciting; projects and papers that communicate, persuade and convince. Ultimately, we want HHA girls and boys to become the thinkers, innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders our city and nation require. This year's entering kindergarten students are the college class of 2028 – and we're glad to be an important part of their path.

Our school culture aims to be nurturing and consistent. As a Restorative Practices site, we build community in each classroom and promote 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 project fairs and enrichment activities to expand our curriculum. There will be many opportunities throughout the year to celebrate your child's progress.

Our students performed well on the state test again this year. We are proud to report that HHA remains a top school. 81% of our kids passed the MSA and all students outperformed the city average in reading and math. Highlights include 3rd grade math (89% pass rate), 4th grade math (92.6% pass rate), 7th grade reading (90% pass rate) and 7th grade math (88% pass rate). You should pay particular attention to the percent of students scoring at the advanced level, which improved significantly at many grade levels. We increased the numbers of kids scoring advanced in reading in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 and increased the numbers of kids scoring advanced in math in grades 3, 4, and 7. For detailed information on our test scores you can log on to <http://mdreportcard.org>. More telling is the significant academic growth 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 student growth from the beginning to the end of the year. With MAP, we can see whether our programs added value to student learning.

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 quite final and will be posted online (www.hha47.org) and at school on the afternoon of Thursday, August 25, 2011. Have a terrific rest of the summer.

Sincerely,

Matthew Hornbeck
Principal

Arleen Proto
Assistant Principal

John Paz
Assistant Principal

2011-2012 Leadership Team

The 2011-2012 Instructional Leadership Team includes Matt Hornbeck (Principal), Arleen Proto (Assistant Principal), John Paz (Assistant Principal), Nora Hogan (Director of Teaching and Learning), Laura Trosch (Director of Enrichment), Joanna Carlson (PreK/K Team Leader), Meghan Bierley (1st/2nd Team Leader), Jonathan Swann (3rd/4th Team Leader), Andrew Chapin (5th/6th Team Leader), Brian White (7th/8th Team Leader), Chrissa Carlson (Resource Team Leader), Kathy Kostos (ESOL Team Leader), Wayne Larrivey (Special Education Team Leader), Geri Swann (School Family Council Chair) and Sara Gerrish (Student Outcomes Committee Chair).

Welcome to New Staff

We have a stellar group of talented new staff joining our ranks. We welcome John Paz (Assistant Principal), Nora Hogan (Director of Teaching and Learning), Laura Trosch (Director of Enrichment), Graciella Drew (Director of Restorative Practices), Lisa Foreman (3rd grade language/science teacher), Rachel Wolfman (4th grade reading teacher), Jessica O'Brien (6th grade history/science teacher), Elizabeth Bernstein (7th grade English/history teacher), Dan Erfe (8th grade math/science teacher), Lauren Chapin (technology resource teacher), Karen Yeoman (Spanish resource teacher), Jenny Kim (ESOL teacher), Grace Lim (ESOL teacher), Kati Casto (ESOL teacher) and Sara Levenstein (1st grade assistant teacher). A number of staff will return in new roles. In addition, we continue to partner with Experience Corps to bring about 10 trained volunteers into our classrooms to assist with everything from editing student writing to working on projects. Ms. Swann will be coordinating the Experience Corps members. When you see a new face, please make them feel welcome.

Update on the PreK Addition

If anyone has been through the frustration and excitement of home renovations, you know what we're going through. While thrilled with the space, the pace of construction leaves something to be desired. We anticipate construction continuing through the middle of September. Our littlest ones – 42 prekindergarten students – will spend the first two weeks of the year in temporary rooms in the main building as their new classrooms are finished. The front doors will not be accessible until mid September. Please continue to enter by the side door nearest the office and remember to check in at the office before proceeding to your destination.

Meet Your Teacher!

You and your child are cordially invited to our Hampstead Hill **"MEET YOUR TEACHER CELEBRATION!"** **Friday, August 26th from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m.** Come join us for an informal, get-acquainted morning with your child's new teacher(s). There will be two surprise, special guests (of the feathered variety) that morning as well. The Food for Life program will provide a reception. A parent or guardian should accompany children attending the occasion. There will be an opportunity to purchase HHA 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 Tuesday, August 22nd 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 25, 2011. Please do not call the office to request this information. Homeroom assignments will be simultaneously posted on our website at www.hha47.org. Based on an assessment of skills in the first weeks of the year, there may be a need to change a few homeroom assignments. If students are new, homeroom assignments will be temporary until placed.

Arrival and dismissal procedures

The 2011-2012 school year begins Monday, August 29, 2011 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:

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| PreK-4 | lining up on the blacktop and entering through the stairwell entrance by main office. |
| 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

HHA is a uniform school. ALL STUDENTS MUST WEAR A COLLARED NAVY TOP WITH KHAKI BOTTOM. No other color of blue is acceptable, only navy blue. We sell high quality polo shirts embroidered with our logo for \$12 each. Students out of uniform will be asked to call home for a change of clothes. Please make sure your child is in uniform every day. Please see an administrator with concerns.

Supply list

Supply lists are included with this letter and are available for all grades at the main office. Please clearly label all supplies, clothing, lunch boxes, etc. with the name of your child. 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. The cost is about \$3/hour or free to families who qualify for state child care vouchers. In order to qualify for a state childcare vouchers, the family must have received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in the last year or receive SSI benefits. Please contact FFG Director Ms. D. 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. The district will again this year monitor the attendance of your child. If there are too many days missed, you will receive a letter from City Schools asking you to attend a hearing. Hearing Officers have the authority to levy fines of up to \$50 per day. Again, attendance is required by law. More importantly, we can only teach the kids who come to 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 2011, 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 \$2.35 for lunch. Breakfast will continue to be free for everyone and will begin August 29, 2011, 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.

Please note these important dates on your calendar

- Friday, August 26, 2011 – **Meet Your Teacher Day**, 9:00-11 a.m.
- Monday, August 29, 2011 – **First day of school**. School starts at 8:00 a.m.
- Monday, September 5, 2011 – **Labor Day, Schools Closed**
- Tuesday, September 13, 2011 – **Primary Election Day, Schools Closed**
- Thursday, September 15, 2011 - **Back to School Night** from 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, November 10, 2011 – **Student Celebration Night** from 5:30-7:30 pm.
- Thursday, March 29, 2012 – **Student Celebration Night** from 5:30-7:30 pm.
- March 12-21, 2012 – **Maryland School Assessment (MSA)** READING and MATH for grades 3-8.
- April 16-20, 2012 – **Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)** for grades 1 and 2.
- April 16-May 4, 2012 – **Maryland School Assessment (MSA)** SCIENCE for grades 5 and 8.

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.