Hatboro-Horsham Announces Success with the New School Performance Profile

The Hatboro-Horsham School District applauds its schools for their scores in the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s (PDE) new reporting system – the Pennsylvania School Performance Profile (SPP). Across the board, Hatboro-Horsham School District elementary schools displayed brilliant results through high achievement.

“The district is proud to have not only such talented students, but also teachers and staff to guide our future leaders toward a better future,” said Superintendent Dr. Curtis Griffin. “However, as we celebrate this achievement, it is important to remember that this information is partial.”

The current scores calculated by PDE only considered 85% of achievement and growth indicators. The Hatboro-Horsham High School’s score is considered incomplete since not all data from the most recent Keystone exams were used. Keith Valley Middle School’s score is not yet available due to potential coding errors with the Keystone Exams, which affect data calculations.

The SPP, which was released by the PDE in October, is intentionally designed to capture more than the PSSA test scores in order to offer a more thorough assessment of individual school performance. Besides providing facts about the District’s demographic composition and enrollment size, the SPP provides an overview on each school’s specific academic performance using a single score. The score, based on 100 points, has multiple measures of accountability to provide a comprehensive profile of each school, which will be phased in by 2014. That score for this year was derived using the following indicators:

- Indicators of Academic Achievement.
- Indicators of Academic Growth through the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) Growth Index.
- Other academic indicators were partially implemented.
- Additional extra credit points were also awarded based on the percentage of students rated “Advanced” on PSSAs and Advanced Placement course achievements.

For the 2014 School Performance Profile, the following indicators will be added to the PDE’s calculations:

- Indicators of closing the Achievement Gap among all students.
- Indicators of closing the Achievement Gap among historically underperforming students.
- Other academic indicators.

“One specific area of success within the district is three of our Title I schools have received Federal Accountability Designation Rewards on the SPP,” announced Dr. Griffin.

Blair Mill and Pennypack elementary schools have been honored with the classification of Reward schools for High Achievement. High Achievement represents the highest 5% Title I schools based on PVAAS (Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System) aggregate growth scores in math and reading in the PSSAs or Algebra and Literature among all students.

“We look forward to a comprehensive analysis of our schools by January,” Griffin said. “While this report points to many successes worthy of celebrating, a complete picture of progress will provide us with insight into where we can improve. This is a new system and one that will require a closer look at all of our schools to see what steps are needed to maintain achievement, support continued growth, and to make improvements where they are needed.”

According to Dr. Griffin, each of the District’s schools will be carefully evaluating the SPP data and developing an action plan based on evident strengths and growth areas. Each principal will be sharing plans with parents in their respective schools later this fall.

“We encourage our parents and community to look at our school’s performance profile score and look at the specific performance results for each academic performance measure,” said Dr. Griffin. Data from this SPP report is available for public review at www.paschoolperformance.org.
Their writing stamina has increased and has become richer,” Roslevege said. Pennypack piloted the program in some classrooms two years ago and fully implemented it during the 2012-13 school year. “This really gets kids immersed in the content they’re writing, such as generating many ideas prior to the actual sentence writing.”

The program also uses anchor texts, picture books or small books that aid in generating topics for writing and expose students to talented writers.

“I see children excited about writing, eager to share their writing with each other...”

“The use of well-known children’s books helps the students to understand concepts, skills, and how authors think,” Mrs. Green said. Other teachers believe that as interest in the program grows, is correlates with better overall student performance. “The kids really learn to embrace the craft of writing.”

The Being A Writer program was created by the Developmental Studies Center, a nonprofit educational publisher dedicated to children’s academic, ethical and social development. The program’s methods and materials correlate with Common Core Standards.

“The Being A Writer program is building our students’ ability to communicate their ideas and opinions in a community of learners,” said Simmons Elementary School Principal Karen Kanter.

Starting at every elementary grade level, the program will build a writing community in classrooms.

“The Being A Writer curriculum has been an inspiration for my classes. The writing community that the program establishes creates a supportive environment for writing,” said Jill Green, a fifth-grade teacher at Simmons Elementary School.

Simmons first-grade teachers Lora Booth and Jen Koeber also noted that the writing community helped to build cooperative relationships that encourage sharing projects and teach students how to listen to others and organize their writing ideas.

2013 Athletic Wall of Fame Inductees

Hatboro-Horsham School District is happy to announce its inductees for the 2013 Athletic Wall of Fame. This year’s inductees feature eight talented athletes and the 2008 Lady Hatters Softball Team.

Nominations for induction were presented during the summer, and reviewed by a Selection Committee composed of administrators, School Board members, community members, and current and former coaches and teachers.

“These athletes’ achievements represent the contribution of their skill and time to the Hatboro-Horsham High School sports program,” said Principal Dennis William, Jr. “We are proud to honor their commitment, talent, and accomplishments, and to recognize how they aided our school’s ability to win in various competitive sports arenas.”

Congratulations to all!

- The 2008 Lady Hatters Softball Team
- Jennifer Repkoe, Class of 1991 Softball, Basketball & Field Hockey
- Chad Liott, Class of 1994 Wrestling
- Daniel McKay, Class of 1997 Cross Country, Track & Field
- Jennifer Purvis, Class of 2007 Field Hockey & Lacrosse
- Kerry Swayne, Class of 2007 Cross Country, Track & Field
- Taylor Swezey, Class of 2007 Field Hockey & Lacrosse
- Courtney Zingle, Class of 2007 Softball
- Steve Topper, Class of 2008 Cross Country, Track & Field

Hatboro-Horsham Education Foundation has been enriching K-12 education in the area since 1987. This year it is hosting world-class speakers through its annual Arts & Ideas series. For more information, please visit www.hhef.org.
Around Our Schools

Blair Mill
Fifth graders at Blair Mill Elementary School kicked off the school year by establishing academic and personal goals for the first trimester. Teachers are instilling this practice to increase students’ ownership in setting goals and monitoring progress. Students are finding that their favorite part is having conferences with teachers and parents about their performance and celebrating successes.

Crooked Billet
Fourth graders at Crooked Billet Elementary School are completing a FOSS Science Investigation focused on density and water. Students observe the effect that temperature has on water’s density.

Hallowell
Hallowell Elementary School started its year with the annual “Go For 3 Day,” which featured the La Salle men’s basketball team educating students about successful habits. The S.A.G.E. Recruitment Breakfast launched the District’s newest partnership with the senior community.

Pennypack
The 100 Mile Kickoff event at Pennypack Elementary School initiated its 100 Mile Club project in which students and staff will attempt to run or walk 100 miles during the 2013-14 school year.

Simmons
At Simmons Elementary School’s Back-to-School Night, the Home and School Association dedicated the new reading garden with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The association spent four years raising money to create this welcoming outdoor space for students, teachers and families.

Keith Valley
On KV Cares Day, students at Keith Valley Middle School participated in bullying intervention initiatives. Teachers and staff worked to empower students through the day’s events as part of their KV K’NEX program, which educates about bullying.

High School
The Hatboro-Horsham High School has been busy beautifying the campus by installing a new sign on the front of the building and renovating the courtyard to include new and refinished picnic benches, and new plantings, planters and solar lights.

Hatboro-Horsham School District received donations of school supplies for students and classrooms from Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. This gift, donated at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, will discretely assist students and their families in need.

For more than 35 years, Aldie Counseling Center has been dedicated to providing effective treatment to those whose lives have been affected by experimentation with, misuse of, or addiction to alcohol and other drugs. Let us be the bridge that helps you cross the challenging currents of establishing a solid foundation in recovery.

The Adolescent Counseling Program is one of seven comprehensive services offered at Aldie Counseling Center all with the focus on addiction and subsequent recovery of the individual and family system. This particular program serves individuals 14-18 years of age and includes a comprehensive intake assessment and a four-tiered level of care system to meet individual needs. Aldie is committed to decreasing the number of youth in the community who are abusing substances through early intervention, psycho-education, individual, family, and/or group therapy efforts. To obtain further information about our services, please visit our website at www.aldie.org or call the Doylestown office at (215) 345-8530 or the Langhorne office at (215) 642-3230.
Focus on Technology: Hybrid Learning Program

One major initiative of the Hatboro-Horsham School District this year is hybrid learning, which educates and inspires students through online delivery and interpersonal instruction and blends technology with the traditional classroom.

The District is looking toward the future by updating its use of technology throughout its buildings.

“This is one of the biggest and most exciting things happening in the District,” said David Weber, Director of Curriculum for Educational Programs and Assessments.

The program, partly funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, is not yet district-wide, although the District is working with consultants to determine how to implement it. Throughout the school year, 15 teachers from all grade levels will gather data and feedback about the program.

The District is implementing a model called “Rotate in the Classroom,” which does not stray far from the course structure that educators already use. An active work flow allows students to maximize their alertness and retention while encouraging cooperation with other students.

The classes are divided into thirds, with students engaging in a different form of learning at each station. One station is instruction utilizing computers installed with adaptive educational software. The second one is direct instruction, with the teacher personalizing the material with a smaller group of students. In the third station, students work on a specific project or assignment with a group, learning not only the subject matter but also about teamwork and collaboration.

“We believe that hybrid learning can help teachers identify where students might be struggling,” Weber said. “This helps in improving feedback and overall classroom flow. If it’s successful, then it is something that we would likely want to expand.”

For the 2013-14 school year, the District is working to determine the best tools for both students and teachers that will enhance education for years to come. We invite you to follow our efforts with this series of articles that highlight the updates to education that are advancing learning within the District.

H-H Tip-Line
215 - 420 - 5100
tips@hatboro-horsham.org
Anonymous · Help a Friend
Help Yourself
More Than Just HHTV

Hatboro-Horsham School District’s television system, HHTV, is more than a communication tool that allows the District to keep its residents informed – it is also an avenue of education for students interested in a career in the communications or film industry.

According to Bob Anderson, Video Production Coordinator for the School District, programming for HHTV is produced by District staff and students to inform, educate and entertain viewers about the District. Students get a chance to begin learning and honing skills that move beyond theoretical, creating a product that is seen by the community.

Students interested in television production should consider courses taught at the high school, such as TV1 and TV2, led by Mr. Dave Thomas. Students can get hands on experience in an environment that simulates real world applications.

Programming for this year will include featured athletic events and games; “HH Road Nation,” where students explore potential careers; information about Internet safety; and more. A full schedule of programs throughout the day can be found on the District website, www.hatboro-horsham.org/Page/463.

HHTV is owned and operated by the District. Comcast subscribers can watch on channel 28, Verizon subscribers on channel 33, and Internet users can catch live programming on the HHTV website, which also hosts video archives.

School Board Member Reflections

Remember the excitement of the first day back to school? You reconquaint with old friends; you meet new ones; you compare rosters. Well, that’s how it seemed when the teachers, staff and administrators got together to welcome the new school year. The high school auditorium was abuzz with excited chatter about vacations, catching up with news and new ideas to share.

After the speeches were given and the new hires were introduced, the administrators handed out awards. These were not just “perfect attendance” or “nobody fell asleep in the classroom” awards. No, these were WAY outside the box recognition, displaying innovative, creative thinking to keep the students motivated in a learning atmosphere.

In fact, some of the award recipients were probably saying, “There was a box?”

The first day back to school is exciting to me, especially when I know that the teachers, staff, and administrators are eager to get on with the new school year.
National Acclaim for EASTERN Center Students

Students of the Eastern Center for Arts and Technology (EASTERN) are making great strides, proving their excellence on a national stage.

EASTERN Commercial Art student and Hatboro-Horsham senior Ali Dredge was part of the competitive team at the SkillsUSA National Competition in Kansas City, MO, placing an impressive tenth in the nation. The National Competition included both secondary and post-secondary institutions all over the country. In order to enter the national-level competition, Ali and her team won first place for Chapter Display at the SkillsUSA State Competition.

To win the SkillsUSA Chapter Display design, the team was required to develop a concept to match this year’s national theme, “SkillsUSA Champions at Work – Prepared with the Skills America Needs.”

“’This program taught me how to be more professional and has given me skills I can incorporate into real life,” Ali said. Ali has always been interested in illustration and has been an artist for as long as she can remember. “EASTERN is an experience that most people should have, but unfortunately most people don’t seize the opportunity. I just completed my junior year, I now have a professional resume, and I feel ready to take on college and anything that comes my way.”

Also present at the SkillsUSA National Competition was EASTERN Culinary Arts and Hatboro-Horsham High School senior Lauren Bissig. Lauren won first place for Culinary Arts at the SkillsUSA State Competition in April, and later in June placed twelfth at the National Competition, against 43 other competitors. She was the first ever first-year EASTERN Culinary Arts student to accomplish this.

“It was cool being surrounded by all that energy and drive and being able to gain a new perspective on food. Plus there’s a good chance that I could see a lot of my competitors in culinary school,” said Lauren. She added that her favorite part of the competition was being surrounded by people from all over the country who have the same passion for food that she does. “I learned a lot about myself from going, and it has only helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses,” Lauren said.

National competitor, senior Lauren Bissig

First Place Chapter Display at SkillsUSA State Competition

Lauren is also furthering her Culinary Arts program by interning at Mica Restaurant in Chestnut Hill since last October. She works several days a week and values the experience and knowledge that she gains each day, chronicling her experiences there. After graduation from EASTERN and Hatboro-Horsham High School, Lauren intends to go to culinary school and pursue a career in the field.
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Senior Citizen Volunteer Programs Are a Win-Win

Throughout the Hatboro-Horsham School District, senior citizens are working with schools in an effort to not only assist the District, but also to pass on life lessons to students.

At Hallowell Elementary School, a new partnership with Senior Adults for Greater Education (S.A.G.E.) allows senior citizens to volunteer in a wide array of activities. Volunteers encourage students in their lessons once a week, offering individualized attention and sharing in students’ excitement as they learn. Some activities are based on classroom needs, which can include reading to students, helping in an art or science class, mentoring a student, and presenting an oral history.

“This gives us an opportunity to have volunteers in our school helping the children,” said Hallowell Principal Steven Glaize. “It also allows for a part of the community to see what happens in school and actively participate in education. It provides a window into our world to see the strengths of others with positive impact on the children.”

Blair Mill Elementary School is looking forward to continuing its partnership with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Montgomery County. This program offers a volunteer base of about 1,300 residents. Volunteers engage with students in all grades and assist with activities such as mentoring, improving child literacy, tutoring and more.

According to Blair Mill Principal Nancy Doherty, the program is a student and faculty favorite, and she looks forward to an 11th successful year.

“We’re very proud of our ongoing work with RSVP,” Doherty said. “The children and volunteers both look forward to the days when the volunteers visit the school. Blair Mill has worked with RSVP for years, and it’s an incredible asset to the students’ academic and social education. The children benefit from the accumulated wisdom and experience of the seniors, as well as from the caring bonds that are created.”

Community members interested in volunteering should contact their nearest Hatboro-Horsham school.