



Council of Key Communicators
Monday, April 20, 2020
Virtual Remote Meeting
9:00 a.m.



Communication Solutions Group Introductions

Dr. Loughead introduced Leza Raffel and Kellie Gates, communication consultants who will be working with the District as part of the Communications Solutions Group. Additionally, he highlighted a few upcoming events which will be publicized to the District:

- The April 27th School Board Budget Meeting: This meeting will require sharing of important information about funding issues as a result of the coronavirus impact.
- End-of-Year Activities for seniors and other students: Dr. Loughead noted the District hopes to have an outdoor graduation in July if possible, and wants to celebrate student accomplishments and milestones in other creative ways.
- Hampton Magazine: The July issue will feature The Class of 2020.

Pass/Fail Grading Plan

Committee members said parents and students are aware of the plan, understand it, and very much appreciate it. They praised Dr. Marguerite Imbarlina, High School Principal, for creating an extremely helpful video that detailed how the new grading system will work.

Kindergarten and Grade 1 Performance Assessment

Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Dr. Jacquelyn Removcik said for Kindergartners and first graders, pass/fail translates into meeting or not meeting expectations. During a normal school year, there is a lot of one-on-one feedback and interaction. Since the schools are currently closed, the teachers are taking the following steps to ensure accurate assessment and communication of that assessment with families and next year's teachers:

- At the suggestion of the committee, schools will provide first- and second-grade parents with information on fourth-quarter learning goals in the near future. Committee members who have children in this age group said this step could help parents prioritize the skills they help their children focus on during the remaining days of the school year.
- Teachers will give parents specific feedback on their child through virtual parent-teacher conferences this spring.
- The year-end Kindergarten assessment that teachers usually give each Kindergartner to help guide first grade teachers will be given to this year's Kindergartners at the beginning of first grade.

Remote Learning

Committee members praised teachers and the administration for the hard work of transitioning to remote learning. They said they and other parents feel they have been well informed of the situation as it developed and evolved.

Committee members also noted differences in the needs, strengths, and struggles for students at the high school, middle school, and elementary levels – as well as for their parents.

- The majority of high school students and middle school students are managing distance learning on their own or with relatively little help. Some are even using this learn-at-home time as an opportunity to take on new independent learning projects and explore special interests.
- Elementary students require much more hands-on help from parents or older siblings, so remote learning requires more of a whole-house time commitment.

Dr. Loughead highlighted a few ongoing and upcoming action items including the following:

- The District has been loaning devices to families who do not have them at home, and is now working to get iPads to first graders who need them.
- The District is also working to connect families who lack internet access with providers.
- The Technology Department has been assisting families with tech issues as needed.
- Since elementary students need parental help with technology, the District will provide parents with links to Google Classroom tutorials.
- In response to committee comments about the amount of time it is taking some elementary students to finish some assignments at home, Dr. Loughead said the District could establish completion time guidelines. After the time-on-task expired, students would not have to continue working toward completion. This step would echo a practice that has been followed for homework when school is in session.

When to End Instruction

Dr. Loughead reported that the Administration is exploring the possibility of ending new instruction for students other than seniors on May 29. Seniors would, as usual, end new instruction on May 22.

- Ending new teaching and assignments would give teachers the extra time that will be needed to analyze student work for the pass/fail grading program.
- The early end to new instruction recognizes the enormous lift of transitioning to online learning for the entire Hampton Township School District community.
- The remainder of the school year would consist of enrichment activities.
- Committee members urged Dr. Loughead to make the enrichment activities optional. He said that attendance would still be taken, but that students and families could make individual decisions about which enrichment days students would attend without penalty to their grades.

Attendance

- The District was required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to create an attendance plan. Dr. Rebecca Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent, said the District's goal was to craft a simple plan and it seems to be working.
- When a student is absent, parents use a link to email why the student is not able to participate for that day.
- The attendance percentage has remained in the mid- to high 90s.
- At committee members' request, the link will be posted in multiple, prominent locations on the District website.

District Budget

- Dr. Loughead said the coming budget will be challenging due to the economic impact of the coronavirus.
- The School Board is committed to maintaining educational quality. The Board is also trying to keep the high school renovation project moving forward.
- The financial picture will become clearer in the next several months. For that reason, it is possible that the final budget approval vote may be moved from early June to late June.

Open Meals Program

- Starting April 22, The District began offering free, to-go breakfasts and lunches for all children 18 years old and under, including preschoolers and toddlers, regardless of income and residency. The program is a way to help families who may be struggling financially.
- Community members and faculty members were complimented for making masks for every food service worker.

State Grant Application

The District has applied for a state Equity Grant that would cover some of the costs of technology.

Rotary Scholarship

The local Rotary Club has extended the deadline for scholarships for this year's high school seniors. Committee members were encouraged to spread the word about the scholarships to senior students and families. Information can be found on the high school's webpage.

Rotary Donation

The Rotary also donated \$2,500 to District families in need, in the form of twenty-five \$100 gift cards to Aldi. This generous donation will make a huge difference to the families, Dr. Loughead said.

Teletherapy

Family Behavioral Resources, the District's school-based mental health services provider, is offering teletherapy and video therapy for District families. There is a sliding fee scale for those who do not have insurance. District counselors are spreading the word and families can contact their school counselor for additional information.

Porch Concerts

The District's music program has coordinated a weekly Porch Concert in which students and their families play instruments or sing together on their front porch. The program has received very positive media coverage and families are also sharing their performances on social media.

Extended School Year

The District's administrators are exploring how and when to hold the Extended School Year summer instructional program. Options include using remote learning to offer courses online, or perhaps holding in-person classes later than the usual timeframe. A decision on ESY is expected in the next few days and will be posted on the District's website. *(Note: Since the Key Communicator's meeting, Camp Invention, the Summer Program, and the Title I Reading and Math program have all been cancelled for summer 2020. Families who already registered for Camp Invention and the Summer Program will be contacted regarding a refund or return of their registration check).*

Celebrating Seniors

The high school Parent Teacher Organization has purchased lawn signs for each senior, which will be placed in the students' front yards. Families are also encouraged to decorate their front doors to celebrate and highlight their senior's post-high school plans for a May 1 "Light Up Night."