

AUGUST 2020

the Central Scoop

Back to School Edition

From the Desk of: Dr. Amy Kern



Important Dates

August 19: Homeroom teacher assignments accessible by end of the via Infinite Campus

August: Transportation/Bus information accessible via Infinite Campus: TBD

August 19: New Student Orientation for new students entering grades 1-5 at 11:00 am and Kindergarten Tour AM 1:30-3 and PM 3:30-5:00

August 20: Faculty and Staff First Professional Development Day

August 27: Students with last name of A-K First Day of School and Kindergarten Orientation

August 28: Students with last name of L-Z First Day of School and Kindergarten Orientation

Welcome Back!

The first day of school is quickly approaching. I hope all our students and families are having a great summer despite the impact of COVID. The summer has been very busy at Hampton and Central planning for this unique school year. We hope our hard work ensures that our school environment is positive, safe, welcoming, and enjoyable for all our students. We have examined every aspect of our program to align with the District COVID Health and Safety plan that can be found on the District website [here](#). Please read page 6 to learn more about what this will look like at Central. We will also have several opportunities to help our student's transition back to school. They are outlined on page 3.

Save the Date!

PTO Meeting

**Sept. 24, 7:00 pm
Via Zoom**

Learn about PTO and Volunteer training immediately following.

Let's Get Acquainted (LGA)

**September 2 from 6:00-7:00 pm Grades K,1,2
September 3 from 6:00-7:00 pm Grades 3,4,5**

Parents are invited to meet with grade level faculty and learn about the curriculum, classroom procedures, and expectations. At this point, we are uncertain if this will be done virtually or in-person.





Technology: 1-1 Devices

We will continue with the next phase of the student device initiative by providing iPads to incoming 2nd graders and HP laptops to incoming 4th graders. Families in grades K and 1 will receive Chromebooks. All students in grades K-5 will now have personal devices for school work. All students who have a District device should bring it to school on the first day. Students in grades K, 1, 2, and 4 will receive their new devices in school. Additional information about device registration, acceptable use policies and insurance will be sent to parents in a separate communication. All grade level classrooms have a projector and a Smartboard. Each Kindergarten and grade 1 room will have six-eight iPads for center work or can be combined for class lessons.

Common Sense Media

We are excited to announce that we are again recognized as a Common Sense Media school. This honor recognizes our efforts in teaching digital citizenship to young people and engaging the entire school community in this important discussion. The recognition acknowledges our commitment to creating a culture of digital learning and citizenship. This honor is provided by Common Sense Education, part of a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in a world of media and technology.

Also, parents are encouraged to review the resources available from [Common Sense Media](#) to help them understand and monitor student technology use.

PLEASE REVIEW

Review the following documents and forms found on Central's website, click Parent Resources:

- ✓ Parent Handbook
- ✓ Behavior Expectations
- ✓ Official Note to Central Elementary
- ✓ Travel Form
- ✓ Cafeteria online payment and menu information

Parent/Teachers Conf Days

Please sign-up for a conference on your Let's Get Acquainted evening. There will sign up sheets in the front lobby. The schedule for November parent/teacher conference days are:

Thursday, November 12: Student Early Dismissal at **12:30 p.m.** and Conferences scheduled in the afternoon and evening.

Friday, November 13: No School for Students and Conference scheduled all morning.



WELCOME BACK

We ask for one parent/guardian to attend with their student(s) and please wear a face covering/mask for each of the events below.

New Student Orientation, August 19 @ 11:00 a.m.: For new to Central incoming students entering grades 1-5. Students and families will have the opportunity to learn about Central, tour the school, and meet other new students. **Half will tour the school first and half will meet in our cafeteria where we will have chairs set up for social distancing. We will switch at approximately 11:30 a.m., upon entry you will receive your schedule.**

Kindergarten Tour: On Wednesday, August 19 come to tour Central at your leisure anytime from 1:30-3:00 p.m. for AM Kindergarten and from 3:30-5:00 p.m. for PM Kindergarten. The building will be open and kindergarten teachers will be in their rooms for a casual meet the teacher. A packet of information will available upon entering the building through the front doors.

Kindergarten Orientation: Students with last name beginning A-K is on August 27 and L-Z is on August 28. Due to COVID we ask that one parent and their child plan to attend the timeframe your child is assigned to attend kindergarten.

9:15-10:15 Morning Kindergarten
1:15-2:15 Afternoon Kindergarten

First Day of School: Students with last name beginning with A-K is on August 27. Students with last name beginning with L-Z is on August 28. We spend the first several days of school assisting children to become acclimated to the location of their new classroom and other important spaces in the building. Due to COVID, transportation will arrive beginning at 8:15 a.m. Students will disembark from their bus/van and go directly to their homeroom. We will board each bus/van and escort students to their correct homerooms on the first day. It is helpful if students know their assigned homeroom teachers name. Don't worry if they forget, we have rosters to help us organize everyone. Homeroom teachers will teach students the first day how to find their homeroom each morning thereafter.

Let's Get Acquainted (LGA): Please note the date of your child's grade level information night on page one. The homeroom teachers will provide a brief overview of the curriculum and their expectations. We will also have some key support personnel available so that you can become familiar with the services in place to support student success in the classroom. **We ask for one parent/guardian to attend per Central student. At this point we are uncertain if this will be done virtually or in-person.**

We look forward to working in partnership with you to achieve a successful school year for all of our children. I hope you and your family enjoy your final days of summer.

Elementary ONLY Early Release Dismissal Days

Please note that elementary students will be dismissed at **1:30 p.m.** on the following days as noted on the District calendar and website: **A.M. Kindergarten = 8:30-10:30 a.m. P.M. Kindergarten = 11:30-1:30 p.m. Please note that if the Learn at Home/Learn at School model continues the Early Release Day will switch to the Wednesday of that week. For example September 16 will replace September 18.**

September 18 (Fri.)	October 9 (Fri.)	November 25 (Wed.)	December 22 (Tues.)
January 15 (Fri.)	February 11 (Thurs.)	March 11 (Thurs.)	March 31 (Wed.)
			May 14 (Fri.)

New This Year...

Sensory Hallway

Thank you to Highmark for awarding us a grant to create an indoor Physical Activity Sensory Path and an outdoor sensory area in our new Nature and Sensory Garden (a.k.a. front courtyard) for students to utilize when they need sensory stimulation, brain breaks, or extra movement when they are transitioning between classes. Both will provide students opportunities to: incorporate physical movement on a daily basis and meet physical sensory stimulation needs of young learners. A committee of faculty decided the Nurse's Hallway was the best location for the indoor path.

Courtyard Renovation

Thank you to HAEE, Spectroscopy Society, Central PTO, and Highmark for their generous donations toward the renovation of both Central courtyards. The back courtyard (Outdoor Science and Engineering Learning Lab) was completed last Fall. Despite some financial obstacles that Central PTO has graciously helped with, we have moved on to renovate the front courtyard into the new Nature and Sensory Garden. Construction is on track for the opening of school. Some highlights are: the design is connected to our cut glass mural, decorative sensory concrete slabs, many fun nature themed places to sit or walk on, sensory plants and more!



Reporting Absences

On both Learn at School and Learn at Home days you must report absences. Dial 412-486-6000 and listen to the directions for reporting a student absence. Please leave a voicemail message including the following information: child's name, teacher's name, and reason for absence.



K-2 Science and ELA

ASSET Science discontinued offering schools their Science kits. Last year Grades 3-5 transitioned to Smithsonian Science for the Classroom by Carolina Biologic. Grades 1-2 will follow this year with the same transition.

Hampton Elementary faculty and administration will be researching ELA programs and piloting the potential selection later this year. At the moment we have it narrowed down to two programs. Stay tuned for more on this exciting transition.

Communication Venues

It is our desire to keep families informed of the plethora of timelines, activities, opportunities, and general information that occur over the course of a school year. We use many different venues to communicate this information.

Infinite Campus: Hampton uses this system to communicate information such as teacher assignments, attendance calls, grades for students in grades 2-12, and outreach/emergency information. If you have not received information to **set up your Parent Account, please call** Central Elementary, 412-492-6320. **Please note:** If you have older children and have already activated your Parent Portal account, you do not have to do it again. Your account, once activated, is your account for all of your HTSD children. If you previously activated your account, but forget your user name and/or password, please contact Karen Wheeler in Administration at: Wheeler@ht-sd.org or 412-492-6321.

Scoop (Weekly Packet): Central's online weekly communication with all updated information and calendar changes. It is published on Central's website every Thursday. Go to Central's webpage, on the right click on Weekly Packets to see current and past editions of our Scoop. Each Thursday, Central will use Infinite Campus to send the link to the current Scoop. If there is a flyer that would need sent home in paper form, we typically send these home on Thursday's.

Wall Calendar: They are mailed to all families with District information and events that are similar to all three elementary schools. Always refer to the Scoop or our website in the event a change has been made.

Central Calendar Dates List: Central specific event dates provided at the beginning of the year. Also, found on Central's website.

Email Addresses/Phone Numbers:

Please don't hesitate to call/email if you have questions or concerns. Email addresses and phone numbers are found on our website.

PTO (Parent Teacher Organization): Information regarding PTO membership, opportunities and meeting schedule will come home the first week of school.

Student Safety

Changes: The safety for our children is always paramount. Arrival and dismissal is the busiest time of day on the property. It is paramount that you help us by sending all transportation changes in note format or call Central's main office in the morning but no later than 2:30 p.m. We send out all dismissal changes to teachers by 2:45 p.m.

Visitors: With COVID, visitors are limited; however, just a friendly reminder that we use School Gate Guardian as our visitor tracking and badging system. For entry into the school, visitors will have their driver's license scanned so please remember to bring your driver's license with you if entering the building.

Drills: Student safety always remains our top priority. Students participate in monthly fire drills, semi-annual ALICE/lockdown drills, evacuation, and severe weather drills each school year. ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training will be explained and noted in the Scoop prior to practicing.

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

The elementary schools worked together to create a Positive Behavior Support Program which we named PAWS. This is a matrix of behavioral expectations that will be taught and reinforced. More information can be found on the website under Behavior Expectations and at Let's Get Acquainted.

PAWS

Personal Best

Act Responsibly

Work and Play Safely

Show Respect

Covid Mitigation Plans

Please know we have worked throughout the summer to create a plan that uses the PDE/CDC Reopening School Guidelines. In addition to the FAQ's published by the District, below are some of the general adjustments that we will use to start school, but as you know the impact of COVID-19 is continually changing and we will adjust as directed by PDE/CDC.

General Mitigation Efforts:

*Students will be taught how to social distance, appropriate hand washing techniques, and how to sneeze/cough into the elbow. Reminder signage will be posted throughout the building. Reminders to adhere to mitigation strategies will be made throughout the day.

*Student traffic will be staggered during transitions and locker visits. Hallway posters will remind students and faculty of traffic flow.

*Face coverings are expected inside and outside when physical distancing is not possible. PDE explains that face coverings include, "a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face." PDE and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have stated that face coverings, "can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and can include a plastic face shield." Masks, face shields, and gaiters all meet the criteria for face coverings as described by PDE and the Commonwealth.

*Self-standing portable clear desk shields that we will call student "**offices**" will be issued to every student for use in the classroom. "Offices" fit on top of a student desk for extra protection.

*Use of outdoor courtyards and playground spaces will be used for instruction as much as weather permits.

*All large group indoor events will be modified or postponed until we can ensure the safety of all.

*Families are asked to complete a COVID-19 symptom check prior to sending children to school. In addition, homeroom teachers will take student temperatures before they enter the homeroom. Students with a temperature above 100 degrees will be sent to the school nurse.



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Face Coverings:

It is our goal to encourage children to wear a face covering based on PDE/CDC regulations. The regulations indicate that children may have breaks from wearing a face covering. Teachers will provide opportunities for face covering breaks or students can request a break throughout the day. We request medical documentation for all students who are unable to wear face coverings.

Classrooms:

All desks/tables will be arranged at least 3 ft to 6 ft apart and facing the same direction. Teachers will promote frequent handwashing and/or sanitizing. There will be minimal sharing of materials between students. If sharing cannot be avoided, students will wash their hands before and after.

Teachers will continue best instructional practices that may include movement, partner work, and centers while maintaining mitigation strategies.

Specials Classes and Support Services:

With the hybrid model, students will move to those classrooms for instruction. Cleaning between classes will be conducted. Students will be expected to wear a face covering and take their desk offices with them. The Special class schedule will rotate so students in each Pod will have equitable in-person instruction.

Breakfast/Lunch/Recess:

District purchased breakfast and lunch will be in the cafeteria. Students will not use the keypad, they will say their name and a staff member will look up their account. Students will sit with their assigned homeroom, 6-feet apart to the maximum extent feasible. All students will wash their hands prior to lunch. Between lunch and recess we added transition time in the schedule for students to wash/sanitize hands. Shared recess equipment will be sanitized often during and after each recess. Students will wear face covering during recess; however, will be encouraged to maintain social distance so that they can enjoy the time without wearing a face covering.

District Transportation:

Students riding district transportation will be expected to wear a face covering. Elementary students will be assigned seats with siblings and/or by AM bus stop. Students will be socially distanced to the extent possible.

AM Arrival via District Transportation

We are minimizing the need for a Bus Room and have scheduled buses and vans to arrive after 8:15 a.m. so students can go directly to their homeroom class. **Please know the first few days of school Central Faculty will board buses and escort students to their homerooms.** The first day of school teachers will practice with students how to find their homeroom from buses or drop off. If a student arrives before 8:15, they will wait in the gym or cafeteria and be expected to social distance and wear a face covering.

Family Morning Drop-Off:

Due to increased traffic, please follow the instruction of the staff member who is assigned to expedite the drop-off process. If dropping off prior to 8:15, students will have to wait in the gym. Face covering and social distancing will be required.

PM Dismissal via District Transportation:

Students will remain longer in their homeroom and be called to their bus line for attendance in the order that buses/vans arrive at Central. Students will sit in their assigned seat.

Family Afternoon Pick-Up:

Students will wait inside the building and be socially distanced. Families are asked to park and socially distance outside while waiting. A staff member will dismiss students from the building and will keep record that they have been picked up. As always, please bring your ID, wear a mask, and socially distance while waiting for your son or daughter.

Back to School Packet

Look for the following information that will come home with your child the first day of school. Some of the items need returned.

- ✚ Additional Calendar Dates
- ✚ Authorization for Release Form
- ✚ Health Card
- ✚ Behavior Expectations Signature Page
- ✚ Free/Reduced Lunch Program Information
- ✚ Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
- ✚ PTO Family Packet (digital)



STAFF UPDATES: 2020-2021

The Elementary Administrative Team initially used the Applitrack system to screen over 600 applications for elementary contract and substitute positions. After those applications were screened and reviewed, about 50 were invited for an initial interview. Of those, a select group were invited back for a more extensive Round 2. A select few participated in Round 3 competing for a contract position at Poff, which was teaching a lesson to teachers acting as students and completing a writing sample. I am excited and proud to announce the prevailing candidates.

New to Central:

Elementary Nurse: Mrs. Dawn Gunnett
 Central Paraeducator: Miss Amanda Filutze
 Central Paraeducator: Miss Hailey Bartolomucci
 HOA/PM Kindergarten: Miss Brittany Wanamaker
 Enrichment Facilitator: TBD
 Central Building Substitute: TBD

Changes to Cental:

Grade 2: Mrs. Wilson moved from Grade 5
 Grade 4: Mrs. Zimmerman moved from Grade 3
 Grade 1: Mrs. Griffith returns from leave
 Custodian: Mr. Glock Retired
 HOA: Mrs. Fitzpatrick
 Elementary Building Substitute: Meghan Marcello

School Supplies

Central PTO has partnered with Office Depot to fulfill all of your school supplies needs at discount prices. There are three options: online, in-store or purchase on your own. All you need is to go online and create a personal account on Office Depot's website. Find grade level lists and instructions on Central's main webpage. Happy shopping!



Looking forward to a great school year!