

April Newsletter



2017-2018 Schedule Update

We will be sending out regular messages to students and parents about meetings and communications related to the high school instructional programs and potential changes. This last week, administrators held meetings with students from all grade levels to answer questions and hear their ideas. We will hold more meetings with students next week. Many students have asked to have a “mock schedule” run for them with the current bell schedule and with the proposed bell schedule, so they can see what both class schedules would be.

We will then hold small group parent meetings to follow the student meetings. These are expected to be held during the last week in March or first week in April. Please contact [Toni](#) or [Tina](#) at the Central Office if you wish to be included in one of these meetings. We want to make certain that we improve our communication to parents and students and stakeholders.

Parents, HVRHS Needs Your Help

One of the most rewarding aspects of the scheduling discussions has been to see our students' parents taking an active interest in their education. As you may or may not know, school will undergo an accreditation review in 2018. Part of the paperwork we need to submit to the regulation committee includes a survey from parents. We need your input to do this; if you haven't already filled in the questionnaire, please go to the [Endicott Research Center Website](#) and enter the following survey code: P2068895 and click GO.

Keith Hawkins: A Day of Understanding



On March 21 & 22, motivational speaker Keith Hawkins spoke to the student body as a whole about acceptance and understanding. The first day consisted of a full-school assembly, and the second day consisted of a powerful series of exercises conducted by Keith and a group of fifty student facilitators that went a long way toward healing injuries that in some cases went back to elementary school. During one extremely meaningful portion, students were given the opportunity to thank deserving people, apologize for harms inflicted, and make amends for transgressions. 200 students participated in the experience (along with the fifty facilitators), and many of them had extremely positive reports from the day.

Thank you, Keith, for all you did to make Housatonic a more caring, positive place!

Bonn Voyage to the 2017 HVRHS China Group

This year's travelers depart April 1st for a two-week tour of China; they are being accompanied by John Lizzi and Lisa Carter plus twenty students from Litchfield. We wish them all safe, happy, and interesting travels.

Mark your calendars for 6PM, April 26th, when the 21st Century Fund for HVRHS will host a reception for our "globetrotters" in the Mahoney-Hewat Center. All are invited! Come hear the student and mentor stories, share their experiences, learn their impressions, and see their photos. The evening will be a wonderful opportunity to remember what it's like to see things for the first time, as well as get into how much our students understand and take away from these "eye opening" opportunities.

HVRHS Alumni Provide an Intimate History of Region One to Honor Students

Students in ECE United States History (History 11H) are researching the Region One community in the 1950s. As part of this project, students will be conducting oral history interviews with graduates of Housatonic between 1950 and 1964 on May 12th at the high school. Please contact Pete Vermilyea, Social Studies Department chairperson, at pvermilyea@hvrhs.org for more information. A special thanks to Judith Monachina of Berkshire Community College and the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area for their help with this project.

Richard T. Scott's Art Work to Hang in Monsell Gallery

Next month, the Monsell Gallery in the school library, is hosting an exhibit of Richard T. Scott's work. Mr. Scott, who is known for his post-contemporary figurative paintings, delivered some of his works from his latest show in Paris, he met with three of the art departments interns - Bethany Conti, Ella Matsudaira and Tianna Togninalli - to hang his work. The collaborative effort provided a wonderful opportunity for our students to work hand-in-hand with a professional artist.

More Ways Your Child Can Showcase Their Interests and Talents

- **Bringing Poetry to the Fore**

Student admissions for this year's Wordfest are due April 7th. Submissions can be original works or poems which have inspired them; selectees will read their poems at the Wordfest on April 18th at 7PM in the cafeteria.

- **Poster Contest Win \$100, \$50 or \$25**

Students should challenge the natural optimist within them to come up with an inspiring poster on the Natural Highs that get them turn yukky days into good ones. Submissions are due May 5th and the winners will be announced on May 10th during Matt Bellace's assembly.

- **Battle of the Bands – April 29th**

Now in its 14th year, the Battle of the Bands showcases the talent and dedication of the Northwest Corner's "garage bands". Bands compete for cash prizes in four categories: 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place, and People's Choice. This year, we've received generous sponsorship from the Northwest Corner Prevention Network. To register go to HYSB.org.

Congratulations to:

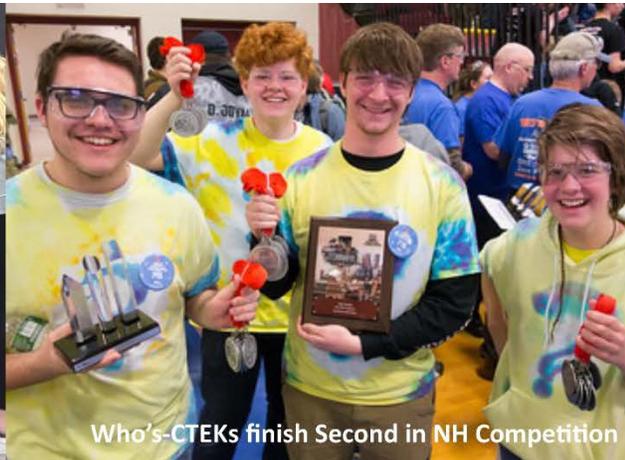
- **AG ED Department and the SGA(??)** for spearheading a school wide effort to package 12,000 healthy and delicious meals to give to the needy in the local area. It's wonderful to see when we work together as a community. Thank you to all who participated.
- The Cast of ***THE DROWSY CHAPERONE***. It was a great show and the HVRHS community is so appreciative of the talent and dedication of our students. We hope the students enjoyed the experience as much as we enjoyed watching them preform. BRAVO!!

- **The English Honors students** who received three of the nine Braindance Awards presented to high school students who present academic and art works that decrease the stigma of mental illness. Awards are given in three categories - academics, art, and mixed media. HVRHS students received three of the nine awards given and will present overviews of their work at a ceremony on April 27th in Hartford. The winners were:
2nd Place, Academics: Grace Lancto and Angela Tabor
2nd Place, Mixed Media: Eve Cullerton, Kyra Cullerton, Mari Cullerton, and Brooke Olownia
3rd Place, Mixed Media: Katherine McGuire and Katherine Starr
This competition encourages students to gain knowledge about psychiatric diseases and develop a more tolerant and realistic perspective of people with severe psychiatric problems.
- **Who'sCTeks**, the 2017 HVRHS robotics team for making it to the semi-finals in Waterbury and the finals in Southern New Hampshire. They'll learn next week if their scores will qualify them for the district championship in Hartford.
- **Eliana Calhoun** and **Julian Weisman** on their successful auditions at the state level. Eliana Calhoun was selected to participate in the CT All State Choir where she will be singing with a 200-piece choir composed of the best high school singers in CT. Julian Weisman was selected to play Jazz Upright Bass for the CT All State Jazz Band. This makes Julian the #1 high school Jazz bassist in the state of CT.
- **Lauren Segalla** for her award at the Kent Art Association Annual Student Art Exhibit.



- **Pete Vermilyea** who received a fellowship by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to study Lewis and Clark at the University of Montana in July. The program is led by Professor Elliot West of the University of Arkansas, one of the top US professors on the American West.

Around Campus



April Calendar

- 4/1-14 Students leave for China Trip
- 4/5 Marking Period 3 Ends
- 4/6 Marking Period 4 Begins
- 4/10-14 Spring Break
- 4/11-13 Recording Studio master class in the Mahoney-Hewat Center
- 4/18 Wordfest at 7PM in the Cafeteria
- 4/20 Report cards go home
- 4/21 Salisbury Forum: **Refuge from Conflicts** by George Rupp at 7:30PM in the auditorium
- 4/25-26 CT SAT make-up
- 4/26 Reception for China Trip participants and mentors at 6PM in the Mahoney-Hewat Center
- 4/29 Battle of the Bands, 6:30PM in the auditorium

Dates to Remember

May 5 th	Mr. Housatonic
May 13 th	Junior Prom
May 17 th	Ag Ed Open House and K-8 EXPO
May 30 th	Civic Life films screened at Noble Horizons
June 20 th	Graduation

Links and Other Thoughts for Your Consideration

Personalized Learning

- <http://er.educause.edu/articles/2016/3/personalized-learning-what-it-really-is-and-why-it-really-matters>
- <http://www.learningpersonalized.com/>

Parent-Teacher Communication

<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/11/17/what-can-be-done-to-improve-parent-teacher-communication/>

Acting Intentionally

To be “intentional” is to act purposefully, with a goal in mind and a plan for accomplishing it. Intentional acts originate from careful thought and are accompanied by consideration of their potential effects. Thus an “intentional” teacher aims at clearly defined learning objectives for children, employs instructional strategies likely to help children achieve the objectives, and continually assesses progress and adjusts the strategies based on that assessment. The teacher who can explain just why she is doing what she is doing is acting intentionally—whether she is using a strategy tentatively for the first time or automatically from long practice, as part of an elaborate set up or spontaneously in a teachable moment.