

# March Newsletter



## **HVRHS INTRODUCES A NEW SCHEDULE FOR FALL 2017**

As a part of its effort to improve student achievement, Housatonic Valley Regional High School has adopted a new bell schedule for the 2017-2018 school year that aims to maximize the amount of instructional time available to students during the school day. The new schedule is a modified “semesterized block” schedule, meaning that students would experience 75-minute blocks of instruction, allowing them to take up to four year-long courses in a single semester. The proposed schedule also includes some variations on that model, such as a number of courses that meet every other day for the full year. Thus, this “modified” semester block allows for year-long continuity in certain courses, while condensing others into a single semester. The schedule also features an Intervention/Enrichment (IE) period each day during which students can access extra help or enrichment activities. One IE period each week will be devoted to the Personalized Learning Portfolio (PLP) program that began this past fall, and another will be devoted to our traditional Activity Block.

Over four years, students will enroll in thirty-two courses, which is possible but uncommon in the current schedule. In addition, study hall periods will be replaced by the daily Intervention/Enrichment period. The increased amount of time in class allows teachers to design lessons that incorporate activities that involve students directly in their learning. Additionally, schools across the country that have made the move to a semesterized schedule report improved student behavior as a result of the reduction in the amount of non-instructional time (passing periods and study halls) during the day.

The decision to move to this schedule was motivated by the administration’s goal to improve student academic achievement, the desire to move to a more personalized learning environment, and the identified need to include intervention or enrichment time during class time and the school day. The school has been working with nationally-recognized scheduling consultant Dr. Robert (Lynn) Canady to develop the new schedule. Professional learning opportunities to help teachers become comfortable with instructional strategies appropriate for use in the new schedule will be provided prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, and much of the faculty’s meeting time between now and the end of the school year will focus on three main areas: grading practices, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEAS&C) accreditation work, and instructional and assessment strategies appropriate for use in the block schedule. *Please visit [www.hvrhs.org](http://www.hvrhs.org) for more information and resources.*

## **KEITH HAWKINS VISITS HVRHS**

Keith Hawkins is a motivational speaker who has devoted his life to helping teenagers develop relationships, empowerment, positive attitude and leadership. He believes building and understanding these skill sets will help students determine the person they will become. His creed is H.E.L.P. - honor, empower, lead and protect. On March 21-22, Mr. Hawkins will be talking to our community about bullying, abuse prevention, culture awareness, and diversity, including a full-school assembly on March 21, followed by a day-long training for 250 HVRHS students on March 22.

## **Parent Partnership Meeting**

Dr. Martinez’s Parent Partnership meeting (Topic: NEASC Accreditation) originally scheduled for 6:00 pm Thursday, February 16th has been canceled because of a scheduling conflict. A new Parent

Partnership meeting (Topic: HVRHS Schedule Discussion) has been added for Tuesday, March 21st, 2017. The meeting will begin at 6:00 pm and be held in room 133. Dr. Martinez will discuss characteristics of next year's master schedule.

## NEASC Parent Survey Open for Submissions

If you haven't already completed and submitted the survey, please do so now by going to the [Endicott Research Center Website](#) and entering the following survey code: P2068895 and then clicking GO. Your opinions, experiences and input matter.

## GET YOUR TICKETS NOW FOR *THE DROWSY CHAPERONE*

March 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>; support our students in this lively 2017 HMTS musical production. Visit [www.hmts.org](http://www.hmts.org) for ticket information.

## 2017 Beekeeping School

Interested in becoming a new beekeeper or brushing up on basic skills? Want to meet other new beekeepers or experienced bee keepers? [Click here for details](#).

## Survive the Drive

**WHAT:** Survive the Drive's Defensive Driver Training Clinic for all drivers with a valid driver's license or leaners permit

**WHEN & Where:** Saturday, March 11, 2017. 10am – 3pm at Lime Rock Park, 60 White Hollow Rd., Lakeville CT

**Details:** Course cost is \$299 per person. Learners Permits accepted. Students will be participating in their personal or family vehicle. Lunch, snacks and refreshments provided.

**REGISTRATION:** Pre-registration required. Seats are limited.

This will be Survive the Drive's only winter program for 2017. Call 860-806-3042, email [loriz@survivethedrive.org](mailto:loriz@survivethedrive.org) or register online at [www.survivethedrive.org](http://www.survivethedrive.org)

## Congratulations To:

**Jim and Karen Davenport** for receiving the 2016 National Dairy Quality Platinum Award for their meticulous cow care. The winning farms not only incorporate industry "best practices" but they also carry out science-based disciplines to ensure that their cows are well cared for and capable of producing safe, high-quality milk. In addition to this prestigious award, their farm, Tollgate Holsteins, has earned top milk honors every year since 1988 from the Agri-Mark Cooperative which produces Cabot and McCadam products.

**Scott Dignacco and Mari Cullerton** for being named by the CT Association of Schools (CAS) Scholar Athletes for 2017.

**Lauren Segalla** for receiving a soccer scholarship to University of West Virginia. Lauren has the school record for goals by a player in one season as well as career goals.

**Girls Basketball Team** for winning the league title for the first time since 1998! The team were co-Berkshire League Champions

**Kianjai (Kia) Huggan, Class of 2016**, for winning the Milton Fisher Scholarship for Innovation and Creativity. Kia was one of seven winners to receive the prestigious four year scholarship. She was selected for her work on an app to translate texts into an audio stream that is compatible with Braille

keyboards. She worked under the tutelage and mentorship of HVRHS alumni, Tayo Kaufman; the two were introduced by the Director of the Mahoney Hewat Science and Technology Center.

## Reading Corner

### Quote of the Month from FORBES MAGAZINE

“Learning how to effectively communicate your message never goes out of style.”

### The Power of Practice

January 2017 article in *Popular Science*

<http://www.popsci.com/study-brain-overlearning-to-master-skills>

### Tips and Strategies for Families

from the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

<http://www.p21.org/our-work/citizenship/a-parents-guide/tips-and-strategies-for-families>

## Calendar:

- 3/1-3/10 Portal for Course Requests open in PowerSchool
- 3/5 Boys Basketball Fundraiser Game in Gym 2-4PM
- 3/9 Hoops for Heart in Gym at 2:30-5:30PM
- 3/10 Dodgeball Tournament in Gym 2:30-5:30PM
- 3/11 Ag Ed Bee Symposium Room 133 from 4-7PM
- 3/14 Parent Meeting Athletics in Room 133 at 6PM
- 3/16 Meals for Hope Ag-Ed packaging meals in Cafeteria at 1:30  
Opening night of *The Drowsy Chaperone* at 7:30PM
- 3/17 No School - Teacher Workshop  
*The Drowsy Chaperone* at 7:30PM
- 3/18 *The Drowsy Chaperone* at 7:30PM
- 3/20 Student Orientation for New Fall 2017 Schedule
- 3/21 Parent Partnership Meeting in Room 133 at 6PM
- 3/21-22 School wide assembly and meetings with Keith Hawkins
- 3/22 Junior Parent Night with Guidance Department 6:30-8:30PM
- 3/28 Winter Sports Awards Night in Auditorium 6-8PM
- 3/30 Late Opening due to Professional Development Meeting
- 3/31 Last day of Marking Period #3

## SAVE THE DATES:

- 4/5 CAPT and SAT Testing Date
- 5/13 Junior Prom
- 5/17 Ag Ed Open House and K-8 EXPO
- 5/30 Civic Life Films at Noble Horizon