



# November 2017 Newsletter

*78 years of encouraging students to grow to their potential, respect different learning styles, solve problems, think analytically, and communicate effectively.*

## Learning from Your Feedback

Preparing for the upcoming NEASC Accreditation Visit is a daunting but informative endeavor and we thank everyone who completed the parent survey. One important insight the results gave us, is that only 41% of you believe we provide adequate information about available supports such as guidance, library, medical, health and special education. Please know, we heard you and are taking steps to rectify this. We hope you will find this parent newsletter a positive first step in that direction.

## Available Library Resources

The Stoddard Library at Housatonic has a wealth of ways for students to access various materials for research, study or maybe even some fun from home. For a complete list of what we offer, click on the Library page, found in the [School Resources](#) tab of the school website.



The **HVRHS Library Catalog Search** link takes you to our holdings, including eBooks and audiobooks, downloadable through students' Overdrive app.

The **Edsel Ford Library Catalog** allows our students to also access materials from the library at Hotchkiss School. A student who would like to borrow from Hotchkiss need only ask our library staff and we will go get it for him or her and check it out. They lend to us for a month at a time.

We have two online encyclopedias- **Encyclopedia Britannica and Scholastic Grolier Encyclopedia**. We also have a link to Britannica's Annals of American History, a database of primary sources from US history. Citations for these sources are available there, too.

The **Connecticut State Library** site, [research IT](#), is free to all state residents. It is the most robust collection of data bases we have and includes everything from newspaper articles to peer-reviewed academic journal articles.

**Gale Engage** is a collection of databases specifically for secondary school students covering all disciplines.

**Points of View** is another powerful database for students that is organized to provide two or more perspectives on controversial topics.

**Science Online** is focused on science topics of all kinds.

**ABC Clio** is comparable to an online world atlas, with data, cultural information and maps.

With high-speed internet access, **Infobase Video** on Demand offers thousands of documentary films for scholarship on all sorts of subjects to stream or download.

We also provide links to **Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL)**, an exceptionally user-friendly and comprehensive site for all aspects of writing and citing sources; **ProCon.org**, a free source offering perspectives on controversial topics; and **Khan Academy**, which offers brief instructional videos on practically any topic, from how to master a mathematical algorithm to studying for the SATs.

The Paul Stoddard Library is not just a room, it is a resource for scholarship and study available wherever you have internet access! Many of these sites require students to set up accounts, if your child has any problem with the staff in the Library is happy to help.

### **The HVRHS Leadership Team**

The HVRHS Leadership Team is comprised of administrators and teachers who are committed to improving the impact of student learning by facilitating and shepherding our community's ability to make "good and thoughtful" decisions that are based on objective data and demonstrated needs.

The team plans professional development and support for teachers, supervises instructional practice as well as developing and implementing changes to positively impact student and school culture. The team also assists with evaluation of school programs and their impact on student learning and achievement.

Lastly, the team is responsible for communicating to parents, students and the community at large the progress being made on the **School's Improvement Plan (SIP)**, the goals and objectives detailed above, and other relevant district information. Our commitment to creating a transparent dialogue is real and sincere. To learn more, we encourage you to attend the partnership meeting described below.

### **School Community Partnership Meetings**

Because the Leadership Team believes the best way to serve and support our students, teachers and community is through open and respectful dialogue, all Region One schools are initiating **School Community Partnership Meetings**; at HVRHS this is a natural extension of the Parent Partnership Meetings we started in 2014. The meetings provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have input into the SIP, which reflects the vision, mission, goals, policies and procedures adopted to improve the educational experience of our students. The SIP is the foundation for our long and short-range planning. The involvement of parents and community members will help us better assess school needs and set appropriate goals.

Please join us for our first meeting on **Monday, November 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00 pm**. The spring date will be set later, but it will be after the NEASC accreditation visit in March. If you miss any meetings, the notes and handouts will be available on the *Latest News* page of the school website.

### **Next Generation Science Standards**

The HVRHS Science department has been working for the last few years to update science teaching and curriculum to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Connecticut's approved frameworks for K-12 science since November 2015.

NGSS is designed to engage students in Science and Engineering practices as they investigate science content and concepts. Curriculum is sequenced around the study of real-world phenomena, around which students pose questions, design experiments, and develop and share models to fully explain the phenomena.

Additional information about the standards is available at <https://www.nextgenscience.org/>, and pictures of classes at work are frequently posted on the HVRHS Twitter feed. Parents and members of the community are also invited to attend the November 6 Region One Board of Education meeting to learn more about the process used in engaging students in learning about science at HVRHS.

### **Monthly Newsletter from Housatonic Youth Service Bureau (HYSB)**

Last month, HYSB began issuing a monthly newsletter, *Mental Health Monday*, with helpful tips for Region One Parents. The first issue, distributed on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, contained tips for [talking to kids about tragedies](#). The newsletter will be distributed monthly through SchoolMessenger.

## Shrinking Our Carbon Footprint

Here at Housatonic, thanks to Krissy Galgano, Class of 2018, we are doing our part to reduce our carbon footprint. Through her diligence and dedication, we've gotten rid of Styrofoam plates in the cafeteria, and we're looking at metal cutlery and boxed water; the goal is to eliminate as much plastic as possible from our wastebaskets.

We're also using solar power to offset our fossil fuel consumption. [Click here](#) or on the image below to view real-time data on the energy being generated by our new solar panels!



If you or your student has a suggestion for improving life on the HVRHS campus, please bring it to us. We appreciate everyone's input; sometimes small changes can have significant impact. We believe the more input we receive the more creatively we can work to improve the Housatonic Experience for everyone.

## The Little Guild Project

Junior, Zoey Sosinsky, is motivating the HVRHS Community to actively engage with our local animal shelter, Little Guild in Cornwall. The Little Guild Project is hosting a donation/fundraiser in November for which they need washed blankets, clean towels or bedding as well as wet or dry dog and cat food, cleaning supplies, and paper goods. Donations can be put in the drop off box in the APO (Assistant Principal's Office).

Additionally, during the month of November, Zoey is encouraging the entire student body to help make toys and beds, which will be sold at Housatonic FFA's Holiday Sale. Proceeds from these items will also be given to Little Guild. Supply Donations for these toys and beds would greatly appreciated; they can use old (but clean) t-shirts, pillowcases and/or jeans. All donations can be dropped off in the APO, too. If you don't have anything to bring, cash donations will-be willingly accepted. Financial donations should left in the office for Ms. Christine Martin or Zoey Sosinsky.

## HVRHS Alumni Wall of Honor

On Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, the first nine inductees to the Alumni Wall of Honor. The Honorees were Geoffrey D. Belter, Class of 1999; Dorothy Winn Cecchinaoi, Class of 1947; Richard A. Gustafson, Class of 1959; Nathan H. Hart, Class of 1954; Edward M. Kirby, Class of 1945; John M. O'Hara, Class of 1947; Thomas F. Segalla, Class of 1961; Frederick T. Staples, Class of 1940 and Peter T. Susuki, Class of 1947.



## Announcements:

**Gretchen Hachmeister** has assumed the position of HVRHS German Teacher. Gretchen has taught at Yale University, Williams College and Sharon Center School; years ago, she also substituted at HVRHS. Gretchen graduated from Georgetown and has a PhD in German from Yale. She lives in Sharon with her family and sheep.

**Career Experience Program Coordinator**, Dr. Mary O'Neill, has been visiting other schools in CT and auditing HVRHS classes, while working with Region One and HVRHS administration, faculty and staff to clarify program objectives. This year's focus is on program design, career education, and job

shadows. Parents and guardians interested in helping can fill out a brief Google form by clicking [here](#) or emailing her at [moneill@hvrhs.org](mailto:moneill@hvrhs.org).

**School Messenger** is migrating its Contact Manager to the SchoolMessenger app. To learn more about the app and its capabilities, watch this [video for parents](#).

**Early Dismissal Exam Weeks are a thing of the past;** under the new grading system, all tests will be given during regular class time. Soon, you will receive a letter with more details on the new system.

**Drivers Ed classes** November 27<sup>th</sup>, if interested go to [www.thenextstreet.com](http://www.thenextstreet.com), or call 800-732-8090

## Around HVRHS . . .



## Calendar

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|-------|---|----------|--|
| 11/1  | Marking Period One Ends   | 11/22    | Early Dismissal for Thanksgiving Break       |
| 11/4  | SATs at Hotchkiss, Salisbury School and Kent School   | 11/23-24 | School Closed for Thanksgiving Break         |
| 11/6  | Lock Down Practice at 8:45AM  | 11/28    | Fall Sports Awards Night in Cafeteria at 6PM |
| 11/9  | Late Opening – Professional Development Meeting   | 12/1     | Ag Ed Holiday Sale Starts                    |
| 11/10 | School Closed for Veteran’s Day   | 12/15    | Winter Concert                               |
| 11/13 | Senior Picture Retakes in Librar<br>School Community Partnership Meeting at 6:30PM in the Library | 12/22    | Close for Winter Break                       |
| 11/17 | <i>Choices Matter</i> All School Assembly<br>Turkey Olympics<br>FFA Banquet                       |          |  |