



Hastings-on-Hudson Public Schools

Office of the Superintendent
27 Farragut Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706
tel: (914) 478-6205 fax: (914) 478-6209
www.hohschools.org



William S. McKersie, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
mckersiew@hohschools.org

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Dear Hastings Community,

Last week, drawing on two Ben Franklin phrases, [I wrote about how we learn best when listening to others](#). My examples were within the district, notably recent conversations with student leaders. Today, I extend the listening theme beyond our schools.

I turn back inside the district to feature our fifth graders and highlight what promises to be a significant couple of days for high school theatre and athletics. My final word pertains to the *Portrait of a Hastings Learner*.

Listening to Village, Parent and Community Leaders

Each month, I sit with Village, parent and community leaders to gather their input and make sure we are well coordinated. Typical of each month, the last week involved meetings with Mayor Niki Armacost and Village Manager Mary Beth Murphy; Chief David Dosin, Hastings Police Department; and, PTSA/SEPTA Leadership.

I regularly meet with other parent and community leaders to share ideas. For example, this week I met with the Hastings Yellow Jackets Booster Club to reflect on the fall season and look ahead to the winter and spring. I meet quarterly with Hastings Faith Leaders, as a way to check in on the well-being of students and families. To that end, I will be looking to confer periodically with Village social service and youth agencies.

These varied meetings provide me the opportunity to speak openly with a diverse set of leaders about ways to build on our successes with necessary improvements and adjustments. I come away from each discussion with a keener sense of “the truth” and a set of action steps essential to our students and staff.

Fifth Grader Well-Being

The Fifth Grade Team, led by Shannon Gray, hosted its annual Wellness Day for Grade 5 today. Events began with a safety presentation by the Hastings Police Department. The rest of the day was filled with a [variety of workshops](#) on health and wellness led by Hastings teachers. Thanks to the PTSA, there was a movement workshop with an outside company.

The Fifth Grade Team is spot on to devote a full school day to well-being. Especially for our newest middle schoolers, creatively designed and structured time to learn about and consider ways to maximize their health is essential. Ringing true is the Ancient Greek concept of learning—mind and body must be attended to foster growth and knowledge. A tall thank you to the Fifth Grade Team for the extra effort, which the energy across Farragut today told me was a big hit.

Big Weekend for Theatre

The Hastings Theatre Program is presenting the play, *The Outsiders*, [tonight and tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium](#). Dr. Melissa Szymanski and I watched the dress rehearsal last evening. Hastings is known for taking theatre, music and the arts seriously, and stretching artists and audiences. Last evening underscored that Hastings deserves the laudatory reputation. The production is a serious handling of a serious play, addressing themes and questions that challenge and ultimately inspire.

The cast and crew are pleased to have a virtual *Playbill* (maybe first-ever for Hastings), which they agreed I could share [here](#). I hope you can make time to take in the production.

Big Weekend for Athletics

Our Fall teams are headed into a busy phase with Sectional playoffs. Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Field Hockey, Girls Swimming & Diving, Boys & Girls Cross Country and Football have their [post-season schedule set](#). Volleyball is still in the regular season, with Sectional details to follow shortly.

Athletes and coaches have worked exceptionally hard this season, bringing joy and spirit to the entire district and community. Let's Go Yellowjackets!

Final Word: Portrait of a Hastings Learner Survey – Deadline Extended

Thank you for the high rate of response to the *Portrait* surveys. Nevertheless, we want to give as many people as possible a chance to share their voice. We have extended the submission deadline to Monday, October 24 (9:00 a.m.).

Below are links to the role-specific surveys for district personnel, parents/families and community members. (Student surveys for 5-12th grade were distributed in classes.) If you have not yet participated, please click on the link below and follow the path to your survey.

- [POHL Personnel Letter](#) (Link for all district employees.)
- [POHL Family Letter](#) (Link for all Hastings parents.)
- [POHL Community Letter](#) (Link for Hastings residents, without children in schools.)

Be well.

Bill

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