

www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com

HUDSON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BLUEHAWK NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2

ISSUE 3



**Hudson Senior High School
Hudson Junior High School
M.C. Smith Intermediate School
John L. Edwards Primary School**

**THE BLUEHAWK E-NEWSLETTER IS A PERIODICAL FROM THE
HUDSON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT.
IT OFFERS A LOOK AT ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS GOING ON IN
OUR BUILDINGS. IN ADDITION, THERE WILL BE REGULARLY
FEATURED ARTICLES FROM DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS
THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT COVERING A VARIETY OF TOPICS.
PLEASE LOOK FOR THE LINK ON OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE:**

www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



SUPERINTENDENT: MARIA SUTTMEIER

SECRETARY TO THE SUPERINTENDENT: DAWN McDONALD EXT. 2101
HUMAN RESOURCES SECRETARY: BONNIE DYKEMAN EXT. 2108



Dear HCSD Community:

Providing a safe learning environment for students is our number one priority. We are always asking ourselves if we are doing everything we can do to keep our children safe.

Unfortunately, tragic school events have led to heightened safety measures in schools across the nation. We are in the process of installing improved security cameras on our premises, have door locking systems with greeters on every campus, and have upgraded our public address system to insure that proper communications are in place. Periodically, we engage in drills to prepare both students and staff for emergency situations. Additionally, we have two experienced, retired police officers who serve as school safety officers at both the elementary and secondary campuses.

Our safety plans are reviewed on a regular basis and we work to build strong relationships with local law enforcement. The New York State School Board Association (NYSSBA) recently reported that, “just over 17 percent of New York State districts chose to add School Resource Officers (SRO) as the most potentially helpful measure a district could take, but more than 40 percent of those who hadn’t added officers said they couldn’t afford the expense” (Woodruff, 2013).

We are extremely fortunate and grateful in Hudson to have both the Columbia County Sheriff and Hudson Police Departments offering SRO services at no charge to the district. At the February 24th Board of Education meeting, Sheriff David Bartlett announced the opportunity for Hudson to split a full-time SRO with a neighboring district beginning this semester. Likewise, Chief Edward Moore of the HPD has generously offered full-time services to our district at no cost beginning next school year.

The addition of SROs is purely for proactive measures in light of our changing world. This decision is in no way an expression that our district or our neighboring districts have any imminent safety concerns internal or external in nature. In fact, with the recent drop in Hudson’s overall referrals and suspensions, this is the perfect time to introduce these members of our community into our schools.

SROs are an invaluable and very welcomed resource to the school team. In addition to being good role models, they are also a friendly face and an added assurance to our students, staff and families that our schools are a safe place to learn.

The HCSD family of educators thanks our local law enforcement agencies for recognizing that our children’s safety is paramount and a worthy return on the investment of their time and effort.

Woodruff, C. 2013. *On Board*. Dec. 16, 2013. Vol. 14, No. 20, www.nyssba.org

http://www.nyssba.org/clientuploads/nyssba_pdf/Reports-Newtown-Safety-Report.pdf

COORDINATOR OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

COORDINATOR OF
SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT:
APRIL PRESTIPINO

LEAD EVALUATOR:
STEPHANIE FORSYTH

SECRETARY:
MARY JANE AMES
EXT: 2134

Hudson City School District Prepares for PARCC Field Testing



Since 2001 all students in grades 3-8 have been required to take an annual state assessment in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Traditionally pencil-paper tests, many states across the country, including New York, are preparing to shift from the traditional to computer-based tests. The participating states have joined together to form the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) consortium. PARCC will provide ELA and math assessments to measure student progress on the Common Core State Standards and the readiness path for college and careers. These new tests are scheduled to be implemented in the 2014-15 school year.

In preparation for PARCC the Hudson City School District has a specific agenda.

Technology

-To ensure that our computers and network are ready and capable of handling large numbers of students testing at the same time in addition to our everyday traffic.

Transition through Practice

-Students will need to make the shift from reading comprehensive passages on paper to reading them from a computer screen.
-Hand written answers will now be typed answers. Accurate and timely keyboarding skills will replace the paper and pencil.

These skills are already being developed at the primary level and we will continue to cultivate them district wide over the years to come.

Field testing is a “hands on preview, measurement and learning tool” in regard to PARCC testing. The potential questions measure the validity of the question itself – does it actually measure the knowledge and skills it was designed to? Results will be utilized to determine if the questions are accurate and may be used on actual tests in the future. In the spring of 2014 Hudson has been asked to field test items in math and ELA. This experience will be a trial run that helps us to pinpoint the preparation areas that need work and ensure a smooth transition for our students.

We will be sharing information with the grade level students as it becomes available. Please visit <http://www.parcconline.org/> for more information on PARCC testing, including sample test questions you can try for yourself.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office at 828-4360 ext. 2134 with any questions.



SCHOOL BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

**SCHOOL BUSINESS
EXECUTIVE:
ROBERT YUSKO, JR.**

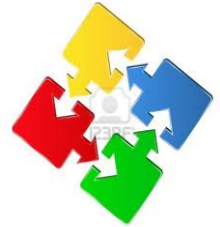
**SECRETARY:
FRIEDA VANDEUSEN
EXT: 2100**

**TREASURER/TAX
COLLECTOR:
FLORENCE STICKLES
EXT: 2106**

**PAYROLL:
KELLY McDONALD
EXT: 2116**

**ACCOUNTS
PAYABLE:
BARBARA ELLIOTT
EXT: 2114**

Budget time is here once again and as of today, the Hudson City School District (HCSD) is facing a preliminary budget deficit of \$1,573,713. It is important to note that this is a preliminary estimate and the numbers right now are very fluid. Much information has yet to be hashed out at the State level and the District level. Many tough decisions will have to be made while we go through the budget process and the community must be involved. We feel it is imperative for members of the community to remain informed about what challenges their school district is facing. Please take the time to come out to the Hudson City School District "Community Conversations" at the John L. Edwards Primary School on March 12, 2014 and March 26, 2014 from 6 pm-7 pm.



2014-2015 Tax Cap Calculation

Of course, one piece of information in the forefront of all taxpayers' minds is the tax levy. For the 2014-2015 school year, the Hudson City School District has a maximum allowable tax levy increase by law of **2.26%**. This means that unless HCSD intends to receive 60% or more voter approval, the maximum increase to the tax levy will be **2.26%** - the lowest annual increase to the tax levy since 2008-2009 representing a dollar increase of \$466,687.

Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)

The gap to which the title "GEA" refers is the difference between budgeted State expenditures and the revenue available to support those expenditures. Below you will see a table representing the GEA amounts specific to the Hudson City School District dating back to the 2009-2010 school year, when the GEA was known as the Deficit Reduction Assessment (DRA). If the GEA amount proposed by Governor Cuomo is enacted for 2014-2015, the HCSD would have had \$11.84 million taken back since 2009-2010! When we look back on the amount of positions that were cut and the taxes were increased over the years, this is particularly outrageous. It is time for the State to fulfill its constitutional obligation to the HCSD and eliminate the Gap Elimination Adjustment. Please aid us in our efforts to lobby our local officials and state lawmakers for the elimination of the GEA immediately!

<u>School Year</u>	<u>GEA Amount</u>	<u>Dollar Change in GEA</u>	<u>Percent Change in GEA</u>
2009-2010	\$ 1,676,274*	-	-
2010-2011	\$ 2,057,091	\$ 380,817	22.72
2011-2012	\$ 2,666,803	\$ 609,712	29.64
2012-2013	\$ 2,437,263	(\$ 229,540)	-8.61
2013-2014	\$ 1,641,396	(\$ 795,867)	-32.65
<u>2014-2015</u>	<u>\$ 1,362,911**</u>	(\$ 278,485)	-16.97
TOTAL	\$ 11,841,738		

GEA Amount = The amount of aid taken back from the HCSD by New York State

***Deficit Reduction Assessment (DRA)** = Name for Gap Elimination Adjustment prior to 2010-2011

****Proposed Budget**

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES



DIRECTOR OF
STUDENT SERVICES:
KIM LYBOLT

SECRETARIES:
HEATHER BROWN
EXT: 2111

DOLORES DEBOER
EXT: 2112

COURTNEY
MCDONALD
EXT: 2113



**Do you have a 4 year old child,
or one who will be 4
years old on or before
December 1st, 2014?**

**Do you live in the
HUDSON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT?**

If you answered YES to both of these questions
We will soon be accepting applications for the

2014 - 2015

“UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM.”

For more information please contact:

Nikki DeDominicis

828-4360 ext: 2103

Or

Heather Brown

828-4360 ext: 2111



JOHN L. EDWARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL:
STEVEN SPICER

SECRETARY:
ADRIANNE BLANKS
EXT: 4300

SECRETARY:
APRIL CARRASCO
EXT: 4317

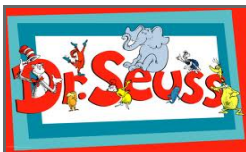


360 STATE STREET
HUDSON, NY



JLE Parents / Guardians:

We are having an issue with students being returned to the school because no one was at the bus stop to meet them. Please remember, we work in partnership with our bus companies to safely transport your children, and we work with you to agree to either be at the bus stop to receive your children or send a designated family member or babysitter. The majority of our children are met at the bus stop, but for a few there is often no one to meet them. This is very unsettling to our children and risks their safety, it delays the bus run when students have to be returned to the school and poses a problem for the JLE Office staff who have to find you and then wait (sometimes after their contractual day) for you to come and get them. Through the years, JLE parents have a proven tradition of responsibility that the school has come to rely on. We need this level of support to continue and improve; including our expectation of every child having someone to meet him or her at the bus.



The PTA is sponsoring a Read-a-Thon in honor of Dr. Seuss and his birthday. Beginning February 24 through March 7 students are asked to obtain sponsors and read as many Dr. Seuss books as possible. Students who read and turn in the most money from their sponsors will win a prize.

Please think of donating your gently used books for the spring book sale bargain table. They may be dropped off in the office book box.



On Wednesday March 12th from 6:00-7:30 pm JLE's Hudson Family Literacy program is celebrating its Clifford Night. This is a night of family fun activities. Clifford the Big Red Dog will be there! Don't miss the fun.

Registration forms must be completed and turned in by March 7th if you are going to join in the fun! Forms are available at the JLE main office.

We are sorry but only JLE students can attend.



JLE Parents and Guardians, do you have a child that is going to be 5 by December 1st, 2014? If you do, JLE is looking for them to enroll in our Fall Kindergarten class. Please contact the JLE office so that we can take your name and information to help us contact you when Kindergarten Screening begins in March.

Parking at JLE can be difficult at times. In order to best utilize the space we have, all parents should observe the following guidelines:

- Do not block other cars in.
- Never leave your car running.
- There is NO PARKING in loading zones, no-parking zones, the "Reserve" parking spaces or in the bus loop at ANY TIME if there are buses loading and unloading students.

Thank you for your cooperation.

M.C. SMITH INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL:
MARK BRENNEMAN

SECRETARY:
AMY LASHER
EXT: 1112

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR:
LIZ NOVINE

GUIDANCE SECRETARY:
MARSHA MOORE
EXT: 1117



102 HARRY HOWARD AVE.
HUDSON, NY



The entire M.C. Smith Intermediate School population was involved in planning and implementing a Read-A-Thon with an Olympic theme. Each of the 24 classrooms was assigned a country that would be participating in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia. On February 10th, the entire faculty, staff, and student body participated in an opening ceremony to kick off the inter-disciplinary project. Emceed by Mrs. Dolan and Ms. Hungerford, in true Olympic form, it was a celebration to remember. There was a "Parade of Nations" entering the auditorium as each student wore an olive branch crown (made by fourth grade classes), an Olympic bracelet (made by Mrs. White and Mrs. Hanley's loom clubs), and carried an American flag (donated by Kohl's). Each class also carried a flag of the nation they represented. Principal Brenneman carried in the torch to open the ceremonies. The program contained presentations by teachers and students, and an Olympic slideshow prepared by Ms. Blake. Some moments to remember were Mr. Acevedo singing "America", Mr. Vorwald performing a musical selection, Mrs. Curry and Mrs. Quinion tap dancing, Mr. Pratt juggling, and Mrs. Cox performing gymnastics with her gymnastics club! Students were also treated by listening to the sounds of the M.C. Smith jazz band, and the dancing of the M.C. Smith tap dancers. Perhaps the favorite part of the ceremony was the singing of the National Anthem with all students and staff waving American flags!



All funds raised from our recent Read-A-thon will be donated to our M.C. Smith HOPE organization to support M.C. Smith students!



HUDSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

**PRINCIPAL:
DEREK REARDON**

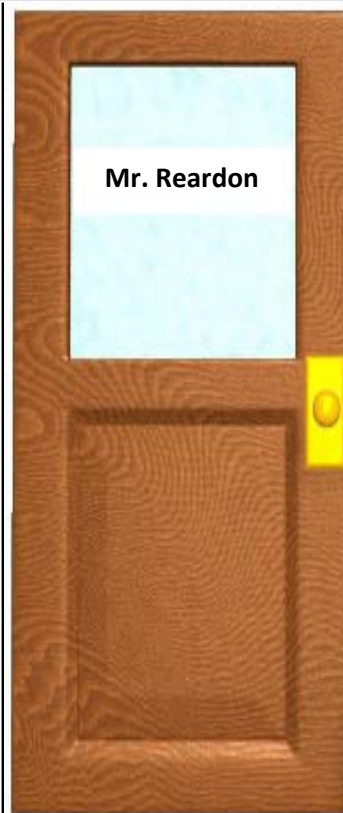
**SECRETARY:
LORRAINE DELLAVECHIA
EXT: 8100**

**GUIDANCE COUNSELOR:
ROSALIE CORNELL**

**GUIDANCE SECRETARY:
SUSAN PULVER
EXT: 8308**



215 HARRY HOWARD AVE.
HUDSON, NY



Junior High School Grade Promotion

After watching too many 9th graders struggle to earn credits, the staff at Hudson JHS decided to change what was clearly a failed policy. In the spring of 2011 teachers and administrators at Hudson JHS developed a plan modeled after the New York State high school credit system – but with an important twist. In September 2011 they implemented the plan that has since changed their former ‘path-of-least-resistance’ into one of the most demanding middle level promotion policies in New York State.

Junior high principal Derek Reardon describes just how and why their idea was developed. “We started off with a simple goal. We wanted a promotion policy that made all classes count for credit, just like high school. We wanted it to be simple, concrete, more challenging, and most of all, teachable. We wanted to create a policy that trained students how to successfully navigate the 22 credit high school graduation requirement - before they got there. We knew that for this idea to work, for it to be teachable, that we would have to award credits long before the school year ended. Awarding credits every 10 weeks is the key feature as we wanted short-term credit goals to help students stay focused and motivated. In putting this fairly radical policy into place, we’ve experienced nearly unanimous support from teachers, administrators, and parents. We realize there are no instant solutions, but after three years of implementation, we wouldn’t dream of going back to our old policy that was essentially a free ride for students.”

The Future of HJHS Students and the Common Core Standards.....

Amid the commotion and controversy swirling around the implementation of the new Common Core standards and the related testing, 7th and 8th grade students at Hudson JHS are quietly experiencing an engaging, innovative, and game-changing approach to learning. The staff at Hudson JHS have been implementing the new program and it has transformed the school climate, dramatically improved student attitudes and efforts in their classrooms, and has produced a quantum leap forward in terms of preparing 8th graders for the rigors of high school.

Guidance counselor Rosalie Cornell sums it all up: “Students have responded big time. They buy into it because the rationale makes sense to them, the credit requirements are demanding but doable, and the rewards [credits] are tangible – and timely. This program has exceeded even our wildest expectations. In fact, the policy is working so well that we are considering ramping up the credit requirements for next year. Our students have demonstrated that when the stakes are high enough and the goal seems attainable, they will rise to the occasion.”



HUDSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL:
ANTONIO ABITABILE

SECRETARY:
ELLEN MILLER
EXT: 3114

DEAN OF STUDENTS:
ROBERT LACASSE

SECRETARY:
JODI KEYSER
EXT: 3118

GUIDANCE
COUNSELORS:
JAY ARONSON
ROCKY PAYNE

GUIDANCE SECRETARY:
SHANNON HOOSE
EXT: 3111



215 HARRY HOWARD AVE
HUDSON, NY



HUDSON DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

HUDSON, NY – The Hudson Chapter of Dollars for Scholars officially launched a new website in December 2013 through a new software tool provided by Scholarship America®, Dollars for Scholars' parent organization. The website address is: www.hudson.dollarsforscholars.org

The new website will allow Hudson Dollars for Scholars to help students in the community access more scholarships. Through the website, students will have the ability to create an online profile, which allows them to apply for and be matched to multiple scholarships—on both the local and national level—in just a couple of clicks.

Hudson Dollars for Scholars was able to customize the website to meet its specific needs; including keeping the local community updated on chapter news, events and deadlines, providing information on what's going on in education on a national level, and giving students and parents a one-stop-shop for chapter scholarships, educational resources, opportunities, and events.

Jim Mackerer, President, stated: "Since we established the Hudson chapter of Dollars for Scholars just four years ago we have had much success in assisting our local students with financial resources as they continue their education after high school. In the past two years we have awarded over \$50,000 in scholarships. The new structure of the affiliation with Scholarship America will help us continue to expand this program of making higher education available to more of our local students."

Hudson Dollars for Scholars encourages students to begin developing their online profiles now, to assure they are alerted about scholarship opportunities in advance of deadlines. In addition to scholarships, students will also have access to exclusive volunteer and internship opportunities that may be available to them, as well as a wealth of financial aid and college success tools and resources provided by Scholarship America.

The Hudson Chapter of Dollars for Scholars is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization formed to assist graduating students within the Hudson City School District achieve their educational goals in a post-secondary education. For more information on the Hudson Chapter of Dollars for Scholars or the application process, please visit the website www.hudson.dollarsforscholars.org or the Hudson Dollars for Scholars page on Facebook.

THE POWER OF PEACE

Over the course of six days, November 5th - 13th, 65 Hudson High School students and 6 teachers participated in the Youth Voice Center's Power of Peace Workshop. The Youth Voice Center was founded by Executive Director and Creator Michael Arterberry, who has a long and successful history working with youth in the area. The Program will be returning on February 25th - 26th and on March 18th - 19th to work with another 70 students. For more information, see the full story on our district website.

BOARD OF EDUCATION



BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS:

RACQUEL (KELLY) FRANK,
PRESIDENT

TIFFANY HAMILTON,
VICE PRESIDENT

JOSEPH CARR

JERI CHAPMAN

DAVID KISSELBURGH

CARRIE OTTY

PETER RICE

WILLIAM GLASSER, STUDENT REP.

DISTRICT MEMBERS

MARIA SUTTMEIER, SUPERINTENDENT

ROBERT YUSKO, JR.,
SCHOOL BUSINESS EXECUTIVE

FRIEDA VAN DEUSEN, CLERK



BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING SCHEDULE

March 24 Regular Meeting HHS Library 6:00 p.m. (Budget Workshop)

April 3 Special Meeting HHS Library 6:00 p.m. (Exec. Session only-negotiations)

April 7 Special Meeting HHS Library 7:00 p.m.

April 22 (Tues.) Special Meeting HHS Library 7:00 p.m. (RCG BOCES Budget & Board Vote)

May 12 Regular Meeting HHS Library 7:00 p.m. (Public Hearing for Proposed Budget)

May 20 (Tues.) Special Meeting JLE 9:00 p.m. (Budget Vote & Board Election)

June 9 Regular Meeting MCSIS 6:00 p.m. (Curriculum Workshop)

June 23 Regular Meeting HHS Library 7:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY-BUDGET MEETINGS

March 12 Community Conversation HHS Library 6:00-7:00 p.m.

March 26 Community Conversation JLE 6:00-7:00 p.m.

SNOW MAKE-UP DAYS

The district had two scheduled snow days this school year.

As of this publication we have used three days.

Therefore, schools will be open on

April 21, 2014.

If a fourth snow day is needed, schools will be open on

April 14, 2014.

If a fifth snow day is needed, schools will be open on

April 15, 2014.



ELECTRONIC COPIES OF THE "BLUEHAWK NEWSLETTER" ARE AVAILABLE ON
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITE:

www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com

DIRECTORS & DEPARTMENTS



**SUPERINTENDENT OF
BUILDINGS
&
GROUNDS:**

**GEORGE KEELER
EXT: 2131**

School Closings, Delays and Early Dismissals

Making the decision to close, delay or dismiss school early is done with one focus in mind and that is student and staff safety.

It is not a decision made hastily or without the details relating to several factors.

Multiple weather forecasting sources are used to track the time, temperature and duration of the of the system. Road conditions, progress made by local highway departments in the many towns that encompass our district, law enforcement information and NOAA weather alerts are all taken into consideration.

We live in the Northeast—snow, ice and cold temperatures are normal for this time of year.

District maintenance / custodial staff, transportation contractors and drivers plan their work schedules for that day based on these decisions - please respect the fact that they are doing what they are instructed to do in the time frame they have been given.

If you have questions or concerns please contact the H.C.S.D.

**DIRECTOR OF
TECHNOLOGY:
TERRY HARCLEROAD
EXT: 2118**

**NETWORK
ADMINISTRATOR:
BILL CLARK
EXT: 2119**

**DIRECTOR OF FOOD
SERVICES:**

CATHERINE DRUMM

**SECRETARY:
DIANE
KONDERWICH
EXT: 2105**

Winter Sports

The 2013-2014 winter sports program in the Hudson City School District was an exciting one this year !!

The Boys Modified Basketball team finished the season undefeated with a 13-0 record.

The Girls Basketball team finished second in the Patroon Conference with a 15-2 record.

The Boys Basketball team participated in Sectionals.

The Bowling team participated in Sectionals.

The Boys Volleyball team participated in Sectionals.

If you have any questions or would like your child to participate in Spring Sports, please call Athletic Director Gerry Wood at 828-4360 ext: 2115

**DIRECTOR OF
TRANSPORTATION
&
REGISTRAR:**

**NIKKI DeDOMINICIS
EXT: 2103**