

NEW HOPE-SOLEBURY HIGH SCHOOL
New Hope, PA 18938

“Thought, Civility and Joy!”

November 23, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We had a very successful first marking period and already are well into the second. The year is passing quickly. Thanksgiving is upon us! I trust that the holiday will be a joyous time for you and yours. I know that the students and staff welcome a break. They have all been working hard!

First Marking Period Academic Performance

Below you will find a chart detailing the aggregate performance of our students relative to honors attainment and course failures. As you can glean from a cursory review of the data, our students did very well. The variation in performance among the grade levels is consistent with past patterns. I attribute this to the more challenging curriculum in the upper grade levels and the decreased motivation of a minority of our older students. Finding ways to keep our students fully engaged throughout their four years remains an area of interest for the faculty and me. For your part at home, please continue emphasizing the value of schooling as a means of personal development and preparation for the future.

First Marking Period Performance, 2009-2010								
Grade	Students	High Honors	Honors	Total	% of Class	Students w/Failures	Total # of Failures	% of Class
9	135	23	60	83	61%	3	3	2%
10	114	8	39	47	41%	1	1	1%
11	118	7	40	47	37%	4	4	3%
12	107	6	32	38	35%	13	16	12%
Totals	484	44	171	215	44%	21	24	5%

NHS CARES/NHS High School D&A Survey

Enclosed you will find a summary of the survey our students and parents/guardians completed on drug and alcohol issues earlier in the year. I met with the class officers last month to review these findings and will share the results with students at upcoming grade-level meetings. Please take some time to share the results with your child and to discuss these important issues. A more

detailed summary prepared by Bill Reilly, President, NHS CARES, will be forthcoming. Once that summary is available, I will have it placed on the high school webpage for easy reference.

Parent Teacher Forum (PTF) Fund Raiser

The leadership of our PTF would like to remind you of an opportunity to assist them with their fundraising. This message is from them:

*Remember to take advantage of Holiday Shopping in support of the New Hope - Solebury Parent Teacher Forum (PTF). From December 5 through December 13 be sure to mention New Hope Solebury PTF when you shop in Peddler's Village. You'll be asked to fill in a voucher and the PTF will receive **10%** of most purchases. This is a great way to support our students, school and the local economy. Another simple way to help the PTF is to utilize www.GoodShop.com for internet shopping. Simply select New Hope - Solebury High School PTF as your charity and shop online as you always do.*

Parent Initiative – Careers in Science

Mike Daley, parent of one of our sophomore students, is interested in planning a forum for students interested in exploring careers in science. Mike presented his concept to the NHS CARES group at a recent meeting. I appreciate his interest and certainly want to be supportive. You will find enclosed an introductory letter from Mike that outlines his interest.

With best regards,

Stephen B. Young, Ed.D.
Principal

Bringing the Passion Back into Science

ALL NHS School Parents,

I am in the process of organizing a program to try to stimulate more interest in careers in the sciences. As with all good programs we have an acronym to launch the campaign, Stimulating Your Science, Engineering, and Mathematic Students, S.Y.S.T.E.M.S. program. The objective is to introduce high school students to adult role models that are working in science careers, and provide a forum for introducing them to the diverse career opportunities in the sciences. The forum will be 3-4 speakers that will briefly introduce themselves, what they do, how they originally got interested in science, how they explored and developed their career, and what they find stimulating, rewarding and challenging. Essentially this is a forum to expose the students to the passion that allured many of us to science careers.

The Parent Teachers Forum (PTF) has agreed to sponsor this pilot program, but in order to successfully execute this plan I will need the help of the parents of New Hope Solebury High School, the faculty and community. I will need SYSTEMS Team volunteers that are presently working in a science career that would be willing to give a 15 minute presentation and commit to 1-2 programs for the second half of the school year. We'll need scientists such as engineers, healthcare professionals, computer specialists, mathematicians from industry, academia, non-profit or government organizations. We'll hold 1-2 preparatory meetings before the sessions and provide presentation templates for the content. Even if you can't make any of the sessions we're also trying to coordinate the program with the HS Culminating Project and provide students with a list of potential mentors for their projects.

So please if you are interested or know of someone that would be interested please have them attach a copy of their resume, fill-in the following information and return it to me at michaeljdaley@comcast.net. The deadline for responses will be December 15th.

(over)

SYSTEMS Team Member Information

Name:

Degree(s) & majors:

Alma mater(s):

Company:

Title:

Present Field of Specialty:

Contact Phone:

What days of the week would you be available: M T W
 Th F Weekends

What time of the day would you be available: before school (6:45-7:45AM)
 LUNCH AFTER SCHOOL EARLY EVENING

Would you be willing to be a mentor for the HS Culminating program? YES
 NO

Thanks for your help and look forward to meeting you all!

Mike

Mike Daley

Sr Director Clinical & Medical Affairs US

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NHS Cares Survey Summary

2009

The NHS Cares Drug and Alcohol survey was distributed on September 24th to both students and parents. The student survey focused on the perceptions and self-reported behaviors of students regarding substance use in the community. The parent survey focused on the parent's perceptions of his/her child's pattern of behavior and that of his/her friends. 406 students completed the survey. This is a response rate of 84%, an increase of 26% from last year. 71 parents completed the survey at our annual Back-to-School Night event. This is a 60% decrease in responses from last year.

Student perceptions of friend's behavior:

A summary of friends engaged in smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana and using prescription medication illegally has decreased from last year.

- 50% of high school students consumed alcohol within the last year
- 44% reported smoking marijuana
- 13% reported abusing prescription medication
- 31% reported smoking cigarettes

Student conversations regarding the survey results indicated that they believe that the alcohol consumption and marijuana use was accurately reported.

Parents beliefs of child's friend's behavior:

A summary of the child's friends' use from the parents perspective showed that parents felt there has been a significant increase in substance use.

- 62% of friend's were reported smoking cigarettes
- 94% of friends engaged in consuming alcohol
- 49% of friends reported smoking marijuana

Parents beliefs of their own child's behaviors:

The information reported shows that parents believe their children's use is consistent with last year with the exception of alcohol consumption. Parents report on their children's use:

- 19% of children smoke cigarettes
- 17% smoked marijuana
- 38% consumed alcohol

Student's personal behaviors:

The student's self-reported use was less than what they reported for their friends.

- 17% reported smoking
- 44% reported drinking alcohol
- 16% reported smoking marijuana
- 5% reported illegally using prescription medications

Conversations with students regarding the results indicate that they believe the numbers were under reported. They also felt that drinking alcohol occurs regularly on weekends and not during the week, whereas smoking marijuana occurs on a more regular and frequent basis.

Decisions regarding influence of drugs and alcohol and driving:

Students responded to questions regarding their own decisions about driving or riding with others after using substances.

- 20% of students reported being aware of friends driving under the influence
- 2.5% reported personal use followed by driving
- 11% reported being a passenger in a vehicle where the driver was under the influence
- 8% report that they engaged in at risk behaviors after use

Student conversations suggest that there is a larger number of students smoking marijuana and driving than drinking alcohol and driving. Along with this, survey results showed that 58% of students reported the most significant reason for not calling for a ride home after a party where they were under the influence of substances was the fear of “getting in trouble” by their parents.

Reflections on the conversations held with the student government leaders:

The students feel confident their school is a drug free environment. They feel safe in school with no fear of drug use occurring in the building, bathrooms, locker rooms or common areas. They also feel confident that the possession, sale or transfer of drugs does not occur during the school day. The primary drug issues facing the students of NHSD occur after school or on weekends. These activities are limited to smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, and smoking marijuana. Hard or illicit drugs such as heroin are not present in the community. The students also feel that there is no real peer pressure to engage in drug or alcohol use from others and that everyone respects each others decisions to abstain. The availability and use of drugs in the New Hope Solebury School District and community are considered manageable when compared to other schools districts in the area. The students feel sheltered from the “serious” drug situations present in other areas such as heroin and cocaine. The students feel that there will always be those who engage in drug activity, but most are able to make personal decisions to avoid controlled substances.