

NEW HOPE-SOLEBURY HIGH SCHOOL
New Hope, PA 18938

"Thought, Civility and Joy!"

February 13, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians of New Hope-Solebury High School Students:

Our faculty and students did a wonderful job handling the PSSA testing conditions last week. Our juniors were very patient, approached the testing with the right spirit, and were extremely cooperative. We are proud of them and thank you for your support.

Please note the following regarding the course selection process for the next school year (2009-2010) and additional PSSA testing that is upcoming.

Course Selection for 2009-2010

I will be meeting with the respective grade levels on Thursday, February 19. Our counselors, Peggy Hanselman and Veronica Wierzbowski, will join me. At these meetings we will discuss the course selection process with the students and distribute to each student a copy of the Course Selection Booklet for 2009-2010 and a course selection sheet. Students will use the course selection sheet to declare their choices for next year. Teachers have been asked to prepare students for this process by discussing course sequences and prerequisites with them.

Students will leave at the end of the day on February 19 with the booklet and course selection sheet. We will instruct students to share the Course Selection Booklet with you. You should review this booklet and discuss your child's academic choices with him or her. Students should arrive to school on Monday, February 23, with the course selection sheet completed. You should sign the completed form. On Monday, February 23, your child's teachers will initial his/her choices in the core disciplines and for all Advanced Placement courses. Core disciplines are English, social studies, science, mathematics and world languages. Students will return to homeroom at the end of the day to turn the completed and initialed forms in to their homeroom teachers. Students who are absent from school on February 23 are to complete this process and submit their forms on the first day of their return to school.

Every student is to select a menu of courses that totals eight periods. Year long courses represent one period. Semester courses represent one-half of a period.

Homeroom teachers will forward the completed course selection sheets to the counselors following their collection on February 23. The counselors will then review each student's submission for errors and/or omissions. Counselors will meet only with those

students about whom they have a scheduling concern. Once the counselor is satisfied with the information on a student's course selection sheet, the student's choices for next year will be entered into our database.

Following the entry of data for all students, I will generate a tally sheet that reflects the numbers of students requesting each course that we offer. I will then sit with the superintendent to discuss staffing for next year. Once the staffing arrangements are confirmed, I will then build the timetable for the 2009-2010 school year. I will forward more information to you on this process later in this school year.

PSSA: Reading and Math

We will administer the mandated PSSA in math and reading to our **eleventh** grade students on Tuesday, March 17, Wednesday, March 18, and Thursday, March 19. Eleventh grade students will report to school at the regular time. Eleventh grade students will sit for two testing sessions each morning. Students in **grades 9, 10 and 12** are expected to report directly to their first class of the day at 11.30. Students in **grades 9, 10 and 12** may report earlier. The library and cafeteria will be open throughout the morning. Lunch will be served at 11.00 am for juniors and all other students who are present. Buses on these test dates will run at the normal times both in the morning and afternoon. This change in schedule does not affect attendance at MBIT for those students in grades 9, 10 and 12. Arrangements for eleventh grade MBIT students will be made directly with them and their families.

I will forward an informational flyer on the PSSA to the parents and guardians of eleventh grade students later in the month.

As noted in my earlier letter announcing the recent assessment for writing, the scheduling of the PSSA assessments is a challenge for all Commonwealth high schools. Although I regret the loss of instructional time each morning during the testing period, the faculty and I have come up with no alternative that better meets the needs of our students. Given the limited physical space in the building and the mixed nature of many of our classes (consisting of students from multiple grade levels), it is impractical to run our regular schedule during the testing period. We, therefore, like other high schools, find it best to modify our schedule such that there is no conflict between testing and other academic programming.

Please support our eleventh grade students as they sit for this state mandated assessment. Our students are strongly encouraged to make their best effort on each of the PSSA assessments. Their performance is important for them and us.

With best regards,

Stephen B. Young, Ed.D.
Principal