



NEWSLETTER

Bringing Township High School District 211 News to the Community • July/August 2017

A message from the Superintendent ...

Introduction to grading improvements

Just for a moment, consider what you believe a report card grade should represent. Most of us can likely agree that a grade serves to communicate a student's performance within a given course. Though grading might initially seem uncomplicated and straightforward, opinions differ widely about characteristics that should or should not factor into a final grade. Complexities associated with grading continue to merit extensive interest and study in countless articles, books, and professional seminars.

Input gathered during the community engagement sessions led us to thoroughly review our grading practices. Throughout the last school year, many people worked extensively to identify how we could improve and ensure the meaningfulness, consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of our grades. Each semester, we issue approximately 360,000 final grades, totaling about 720,000 official grades per year. Individual grades for daily homework, quizzes, and tests all factor into these final semester grades, bringing the total number of grades assigned each year easily into the many millions.

We must ensure that students and parents can understand a student's performance through the grades we assign. Earlier this summer, I sent a message encouraging you to watch for upcoming communications about our grading improvements and in this column, I will briefly introduce some of the improvements we will implement in the upcoming school year.

Consistent Grade Reporting System

Recognizing that each student's teachers might use a different reporting system in the electronic gradebook – for example, some use points or percentages while other use letter grades – all teachers in the same school will use the same grade reporting system. This consistency will make it easier for parents and students to read and understand the grade information found in Infinite Campus.

Timing of Grades

Rather than assigning grades every nine weeks, we will now issue an in-progress grade

continued on back

Mandatory pre-season meeting

Each student, along with at least one parent or guardian, must attend a mandatory pre-season meeting prior to participating in High School District 211 athletics or competitive activities. The mandatory team meetings are hosted by each program's head coach or sponsor. During this meeting, the head coach/sponsor will communicate team policies, procedures, and expectations, as well as District 211 and IHSA academic and athletic eligibility regulations. In addition, each coach/sponsor

will explain the District 211 Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct and the consequences associated with violating the Code of Conduct.

If a student or parent fails to attend, that student will be restricted from competition until a makeup session can be scheduled with the coach/sponsor. **Individual schools and teams will notify** team members of dates, times, and locations for team meetings. Information also is available in athletic and activity offices and on school or team websites.

Adult education evening and weekend courses popular with District residents

For over 65 years, the High School District 211 Continuing Education program has provided lifelong learning opportunities to community residents. The program, designed for adults in the community 18 years of age or older, offers more than 200 adult education evening and Saturday classes. Course catalogs will be mailed to District residents at the end of July, and are available online at the District website. Classes are scheduled to begin the week of September 5, 2017.

Adults may register for courses, beginning August 14, 2017, during regular business hours Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Registration is accepted by telephone at (847) 755-6820. When registering by phone, please have the class registration information and a Visa, Discover, MasterCard, or American Express ready. In addition, registration may be done by mail, by fax (847) 755-6867, or by walk-in at the Administration Center, 1750 S.

Roselle Road in Palatine.

Online registration can be completed by visiting the District 211 website at adc.d211.org. Click on the "Continuing Education" menu tab, and follow the instructions to the secure registration service. Consult the course catalog for complete registration instructions.

Be sure to look for new courses that are offered. Some popular listings include courses in business, investments, self-help, personal finances, language, and sports and exercise programs. Full course descriptions for these and other course listings can be found in the course catalog on the District 211 website.

Classes in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) and literacy are available free of charge to all adults.

For more information, contact the Continuing Education Office at (847) 755-6820 or visit the High School District 211 website.

New calendar/handbooks to be mailed

The 2017-2018 calendar/handbook will be mailed to all District 211 families in early August. The calendar/handbook provides easy access to policies, procedures, and important dates. Please plan to review its contents with your child to become familiar with school expectations.

If you do not receive a calendar/handbook by the start of school, you may call Director of Community Relations Tom Petersen at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center, (847) 755-6631, to request a copy. Additional copies of calendar/handbooks also are available at each school and online at the school and District websites.

Reminder: School begins Monday, August 14, 2017
A copy of the 2017-2018 school calendar is available at:
<http://adc.d211.org/information/calendars>

Did you know ...

The High School District 211 Foundation is sponsoring its annual 5K Fun(d) Run/Walk on October 1, at 8:00 a.m. Register online at <http://www.roadracing.rocks/d2115k>.

Grading ...

continued from front

report stating the student's current letter grade status in each course at the 6-week and 12-week points of each semester. We will no longer have the 9-week quarter grades or the 4½-week mid-term progress reports. Eighty percent of the final semester course grade will be based on performance throughout the 18-week semester. As in the past, 20% of the final grade will be based on the semester exam. This semester grading system is similar to the typical collegiate grading system.

Improved Progress Comments

Teachers recently created improved performance comments for the 6- and 12-week in-progress grade reports and semester report cards so the statements are more meaningful to students and parents. The improved progress comments describe academic behaviors as well as communication skills, attitude, work ethic, timeliness, problem solving skills, teamwork, and flexibility demonstrated in the classroom. These "soft skills" are frequently required in employment settings and are helpful habits and skills to practice during high school.

Course Syllabus

Each teacher will provide every student with an informative course syllabus that conveys the expectations and requirements of the course.

We all get better when we work together. To help ensure that every student and parent fully understands the improvements in our grading practices, you will continue to receive information through additional communications leading up to the start of the school year.



Daniel E. Cates

Superintendent

Dates to Remember

- August 7 IHSA football begins
- August 9 IHSA fall sports begin
- August 10-11 Teacher Institute —
No Classes
- August 14 Opening day of school
- August 17 Board of Education meeting
(7:30 p.m., G.A. McElroy
Administration Center)
- August 22 Student Late Start Day
- August 31 Parent Open House
- September 4 Labor Day — *No School*
- September 5 Student Late Start Day
- September 19 Student Late Start Day
- September 22 End of 6-week grading period

Note: Board meeting dates may be changed by vote of the Board of Education.

 If you require assistance while visiting the G.A. McElroy Administration Center, please contact Matthew Hildebrand, director of administrative services, at (847) 755-6626.

For individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, please access the following TTD/TTY telephone number at the G.A. McElroy Administration Center: (847) 755-6654.

Note athletic and activity eligibility rules

General eligibility requirements for participation in any school-sponsored athletic or extra-curricular activity are to be made available to all students and parents. Additionally, students who express a desire to participate in a specific sport or activity shall receive detailed eligibility requirements and related information.

In order to be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored athletic or extra-curricular activity, a student must satisfy both the Illinois High School Association and District 211 eligibility requirements. Failure to meet these requirements will result in athletic and extra-curricular probation or ineligibility until specific academic criteria are met. Students placed on probation must adhere to specific academic interventions to continue to compete in athletic or extra-curricular programs.

Many activities – including Auto Club, BPA, Chess, Debate, Flags, Math Team, Model U.N., National Honor Society, Pom Poms, Scholastic Bowl, Science Bowl, Science Olympiad, Special Olympics, Speech, Student Congress, Student Council, Worldwide Youth Science & Engineering, and Varsity Club – require that participants meet the same academic eligibility rules as student-athletes.

In addition, student-athletes must have a valid physical examination on file with the school nurse.

Physicals are valid for 13 months. Therefore, students planning to participate in athletics are advised to schedule physical examinations annually prior to expiration of their previous physical to ensure eligibility throughout the following school year. Student-athletes participating in fall sports must complete physicals before practice begins on August 9, 2017 (August 7, 2017 for football). Adhering to these dates will ensure athletic eligibility during the school year.

A final requirement for all students interested in athletics or competitive activities is to participate in a mandatory "Meet the Coach/Sponsor" team meeting, which addresses participation policies and procedures in addition to coach/sponsor expectations. Rules and regulations regarding drug and alcohol use and abuse as well as prevention and interventions are reviewed. Additional information about this meeting can be found on the first page of this newsletter. Times, locations, and dates for these meetings are scheduled by the coach/sponsor and are publicized through athletic and activity offices and on school websites.

Additional eligibility information will be available in the 2017-2018 calendar/handbook prior to the start of the school year and at "Meet the Coach/Sponsor" team meetings throughout the school year.

Mass Communication system

In order to improve communication with parents and enhance the District's ability to respond to major events, High School District 211 uses a mass communication system. This system provides the ability to deliver thousands of messages simultaneously via phone call, email and/or text message for a variety of purposes, including emergency and school closing information. To participate, parents are encouraged to maintain current contact information for phone numbers and email addresses with the school. To add, update, or verify contact information, please log on to the Infinite Campus Parent Portal and review household information and family members. The link to access the Infinite Campus Parent Portal can be found on the District or school websites. Please contact your school's Technology office if you need assistance in accessing Infinite Campus.

Food Service prepayment and free or reduced-price meals available

Meal applications for school year 2017-2018 will be made available in mid July, and the link to complete the online meal application will be emailed to all District families. Families interested in qualifying for free or reduced-price school meals must apply each school year.

Students at all District 211 schools have the option of prepaying for food service purchases by check or credit card. Parents can submit an online prepayment with a credit card through their Infinite Campus account or by sending a check or cash prepayment to the school cafeteria.

For more information about these programs, please telephone Stacy Lenihan, director of food services, at (847) 755-6681, or view materials online at <https://adc.d211.org/operations/food-service>.



"Township High School District 211 serves the educational needs of the community inspiring all students to successfully contribute to the world."

Adopted by the Board of Education; August 18, 2016

TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 211

1750 S. Roselle Road • Palatine, Illinois 60067-7336 • Telephone: 847-755-6600

Daniel E. Cates, Superintendent

Website: adc.d211.org



The Superintendent's Newsletter is published every 4½ weeks throughout the school year for persons interested in James B. Conant, William Fremd, Hoffman Estates, Palatine, and Schaumburg High Schools and Higgins Education Center and North Campus alternative schools.

