



211 NEWSLETTER

November/December 2016

From the principal:

Recipe for Success

I love success stories. I enjoy hearing students tell how they achieved in a class, on a project, or in a game or match. I like listening to people tell "how" they have excelled, and what or who influenced them along the way. A favorite success story was shared with me by one of my colleagues; "recipes" is the story of Debbi Fields, the owner of Mrs. Fields' Cookies. As we approach the festive holiday season of parties and special treats, sharing this success story seemed especially appropriate.

As a young girl, Debbi Fields had confidence that her chocolate chip cookies were the best she'd ever tasted. As an adult, she still felt that way. She decided to go into business. At the end of opening day, when she hadn't sold any cookies from her little shop, she took her cookies out on the streets and started giving them away. She told people, "If you like these cookies go back to my store and buy some." They did.

There were many things Mrs. Fields could have done during the low moments at the start of her venture, but she chose to think creatively and look for solutions. Passing out samples became the key to her marketing plan: Let people try your product!

Today there are more than 600 Mrs. Fields Cookies stores selling many kinds of cookies in seven countries. Her business continues to grow. When asked to list her keys to success, Mrs. Fields says the following:

1. Be passionate. Love what you do.
2. Realize that the greatest wealth is family and friends. Enjoy their love.
3. Every day is special; make it the best it can be.
4. "No" is unacceptable. Go for "yes."
5. Celebrate excellence. Make people feel important.
6. Know that the greatest failure is not trying. When you find yourself dreaming, make yourself wake up and "do" something instead. Make your dream happen.

During this holiday season, make your dreams happen! Make the most of time with family and friends. Celebrate your successes. And most of all, don't pass up those chocolate chip cookies!

Gary Steiger
Principal



Student course selection begins soon

In the coming weeks students will be selecting their courses for the upcoming year. I want to take a moment to encourage all of our families to have a serious and careful conversation about what classes our students select this upcoming year. As a school and a district we have a goal to insure that all students graduate and are college and/or career ready. That means that students take full advantage of our courses and the wide variety of elective classes we offer. In addition we hope to have as many students graduate with as many college credits as possible, you may have heard about the Power of 15. The Power of 15 is the challenge we have that all of our students graduate from high school with at least 15 credits at the college level. Students may earn college level credits in a variety of ways, through Advanced Placement or AP classes: through dual credit classes, which are available in many of our departments or through credit by exam in a few of our classes. Students should also explore our many career ready classes that offer them an opportunity to earn industry or professional certifications in a variety of fields based on student interest. There is something available for everyone and students should challenge themselves to take the most advanced course work they can while also exploring as many of our electives as they can. Students should talk to the teachers and counselors to explore their options and don't forget, it is never a bad idea to enjoy yourself by staying in your music or art class while you take that AP English or Math class. Challenge yourself and make the most out of these opportunities, you never know where it may lead.

Semester Exams are December 21, 22 and 23 Final Exam Information

Final Exam Schedule

	Wednesday, Dec. 21	Thursday, Dec. 22	Friday, Dec. 23
8:15 – 9:45	Period 1	Period 6	Period 4
9:55 – 11:25	Period 2	Period 7	Period 5
11:35 – 1:05	Period 3	Period 8	

- Morning buses will run at the normal time.
- Return runs will leave school at 11:33 and 1:13.
- There will be no late or activity buses on exam days.
- Exams will not be given early.
- Students with three exams in one day may rearrange their exams by seeing their administrator the week before finals.
- Students may use the café or SSC for study during exams.
- Students may also use the gym or go off campus during their free periods.
- PE and study hall will not meet during exam periods. Unless otherwise noted, all other classes will meet. Truancy to a final exam results in an automatic failure.

All obligations must be met before students will be allowed to take exams. Students in semester long classes will be expected to return their textbooks on exam days.

Second Semester begins on Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Attn: Freshmen

Applications for the Harper College Promise Scholarship Program must be submitted by December 15.

For more information, please visit

goforward.harpercollege.edu/about/promise

or contact your child's school counselor.

Planning a Vacation?

As the holiday season is approaching, this is a reminder that if you are planning a vacation which will affect your student's attendance, please call the school at 847-755-1600 at your earliest convenience to pre-arrange absence(s). A pre-excused pass will be issued and the student can pick up the pass the following morning. The student must procure signatures of all instructors and return the signed pre-excused pass to the attendance office at the end of the same school day.

PALATINE HIGH SCHOOL

dates to remember

- Nov. 29 Winter Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.
Nov. 30 Social Studies Movie Night, 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 2 Winter Choral Concert, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 14 Incoming Freshman Curriculum Night, 6:30 p.m.
Dec. Semester
21-23 Exams
Dec. 23 Winter Vacation (end of the day)
Jan. 10 School Resumes – Second Semester
Jan. 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
No School

PHS Pirate Boosters



Happy Holidays! We hope that you're enjoying this holiday season. We have some updates we would like to share with you:

Craft Fair, chaired by Jean Choi, was a big success! Many thanks to the volunteers, vendors and patrons. Great job!

With the holidays approaching, our Ways and Means Chairperson, Donna Schneberger, has been busy arranging Dine and Share nights, "2Clicks" purchase rebates and other fundraising programs. Many people holiday shop online, and if you use "2Clicks" (you can access it through the link on our phspiriteboosters.com website), the Boosters will receive a portion of the profits. We are all going to shop during this holiday season and this is an easy way to assist the PHS community.

Please mark your calendars for March 3, 2017. That is the date of the 33rd annual PHS Pirate Booster Dinner and Auction Event. This event takes place from 5:30-11:00 at The Cotillion Banquets in Palatine. Visit our website at www.phspiriteboosters.com to learn more and purchase tickets!

With a New Year approaching, consider a resolution to get more involved with the PHS Pirate Booster Club. Together, we form friendships while working towards our goal of enhancing all PHS students' school experience. To learn more, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Joan Scovic, at volunteer@phspiriteboosters.com and she will find a role that suits your talents, interests and schedule.

During this holiday season, we can't help but reflect on all the good work we've done. This makes us hopeful and excited to see what the rest of this school year brings! **GO PIRATES AND GO PIRATE BOOSTERS!!**

John Helminski
President
PHS Pirate Boosters



If you require assistance while visiting our school, please contact the principal's office at (847) 755-1610.

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ACADEMIC CORNER –

Finding the Sweet Spot and Supporting Struggles

Daniel Coyle attacked what he calls the "talent myth" in his book, *The Talent Code*. He argues that innate talent may give a person early success, but continued success will only come through a repeated cycle of practice, feedback and revision. Coyle's second book, *The Little Book of Talent*, crystalizes the concept into 52 concrete strategies for how to do this.

Tip #13 in *The Little Book of Talent* is about finding what he calls "the sweet spot" which exists between the "comfort zone" where work seems effortless and the "survival zone" where a task feels completely overwhelming. When we're in this sweet spot, we're *trying our hardest to achieve* but the task is *still just beyond our reach*.

As humans, though, we often shy away from the sweet spot because, as Coyle notes, it causes feelings of "frustration, difficulty, and alertness to errors." In fact, many people in the thick of these emotions often misread them as signs of failure. Coyle addresses this in Tip #17, which reminds us that we must learn to "embrace struggle" because it is *in these moments of challenge where our brains learn best and our skills improve the most*. Once we learn that this is a natural and necessary stage, we are better equipped to both endure it and maximize our potential.

This knowledge can help us as parents and educators, too. When we hear kids make comments such as "Mr. Jones is a hard teacher," a certain class "is really difficult" or that a paper or project is "impossible," we should recall Coyle's research and ask important questions to determine what to do next. Are students truly doing all they can to achieve? Are they seeing teachers for additional help, utilizing the Student Success Center, studying with friends or seeking opportunities for increased learning? If so, then we should remind them about the sweet spot and encourage them to keep reaching and growing. If not, then we should encourage them to meet the challenge with these kinds of proactive strategies rather than with ineffective ones like complaining and blaming.

This approach also calls for us to support the struggle rather than seek to correct it or minimize it. This can be hard for us and for our students, but ultimately, teaching our children to persevere through challenges is the most important lesson we have to teach – one that will outlast the walls of any high school classroom.

Technology at Home and in the Classroom

We are committed to integrating technology into the classroom curriculum using research-based instructional methods and ongoing professional learning. To date, our 1:1 Learning Program has equipped 13,000 of our students and staff with an iPad tablet. District 211 understands that students are also using personal and household devices to enhance their learning. We believe connected, digital technology is essential to supporting the modern learner.

At school, content filters, and restricted access measures, are in place to help keep academic endeavors prioritized on the iPads. Freshmen and sophomore iPads are academically focused. Meaning students don't have access to games, social media apps, and the app store. Underclassmen who complete their Digital Quest, an online digital citizenship course, and successfully complete their freshmen year of high school in good standing become eligible to have restrictions reduced during their sophomore through senior years of school. We typically do not install controls on the upperclassmen students' iPads, however we have heard from several parents that they would like to know what their options are for reinforcing positive behaviors using Apple's Parental Controls. If interested in this type of support, please contact your child's administrator for assistance.

In an effort to help parents, District 211 has developed the following list of strategies to support a safe digital learning environment at home.

- Have a family discussion about digital devices and come up with expectations for timely and appropriate use. Suggestions might include: "technology free" mealtimes; device used only for learning activities during the week; video games only allowed on weekends; limited social media use during "family time".

- Set guidelines for appropriate social media use. Inappropriate or misguided use of social media and the Internet can have long-term unintended consequences. Encourage your child to provide access, namely passwords, to their social media

accounts and help guide the posting of appropriate information.

- For younger family members, the iPad allows for enabling an option called Guided Access. This "locks" the device into a single application of the parents' choice keeping younger children focused on a single task as well as preventing the ability to get into any other app until the Guided Access is removed or modified. More information on Guided Access can be found here:

<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT5509>

- Additional limitations can be placed on an iPad through the use of Restrictions (parental controls). This feature is built into iOS and can be accessed through the iPad Settings app. The Restrictions feature can limit the ability to install apps and make in-app purchases, as well as enabling rating controls on websites and media content. More information Parental Controls can be found here:

<http://support.apple.com/kb/ht4213>

- Disable/restrict wi-fi access through the family internet router. Many wifi routers have the ability to setup automated access "timeframes" for wireless access to the internet. The wi-fi router then turns on and off internet access according to that schedule. Other options would be to simply change the wifi password and only provide the new one when deemed appropriate and necessary. Consult the wireless manufacturer's or Internet providers support site for information on whether the wi-fi router owned is capable of setting up automatic Internet access timeframes or for instruction on changing the wifi password/key.

- Parental control solutions are available for parents to manage internet access on the home network. Such solutions can give parents the ability to filter Internet content to all devices that connect to the home network. There are free versions and paid services that will provide more robust control. A good place to start is with your internet provider.