



**HIGHLAND PARK  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HIGH SCHOOL**

102 N 5th Ave, Highland Park, NJ 08904

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**February 5, 2021**

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

**Quarter 2 Report Cards** for the 2020-2021 school year are now available through the Parent and Student Portals of Genesis with links on the left side of our high school webpage <http://hs.hpschools.net/>. Please log in to review the teachers' comments about your student's grades for this marking period and semester 1 courses. The 2020-2021 school year has been filled with challenges we never could have anticipated. As you may know, the district has been evaluating our current grading process especially considering an increase in failing grades during the pandemic. To address this issue, our Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Kristina Nicosia met with a committee of administrators and teachers from the High School and Middle School to develop a plan moving forward. The committee reviewed and discussed research on grading practices and focused on grading based on student mastery. In other words, a student's grade should reflect that the curriculum material covered in our courses was mastered by the student, and not whether the student complied with submitting all the classroom assignments. Based on the recommendations of this committee, the High School and Middle School has made the following adjustments to student grades in Genesis:

**Marking Period 1:**

- All F's were changed to I's (incompletes) and all D's were changed to P's (passing)

**Marking Period 2:**

- Teacher's did a reflection task and gradebook audit to identify assignments that were graded for compliance.
- All 0's for the assignments that were determined to be graded for compliance were excused, which carries no weight.
- All F's were changed to I's (incompletes) and all D's were changed to P's (passing)

**Marking Period 3 and 4:**

- Students will no longer be graded on compliance or submission. All grades will be related to a standard.
- No student will score below a 50.

**Semester/Final Grades:**

- Students will have the option to change any final or semester grade to a P (passing). Just as we did last year, students will be allowed to contact their counselor - Ms. Hayes (mhayes@hpschools.net), Ms. Peterson (dpeterson@hpschools.net), or Ms. Gore (jgore@hpschools.net), to request their final grade for semester 1 classes be changed to a P. This process will be repeated at the end of the year as well.

**Incomplete grades:**

- The committee is still developing a plan for students who had F's converted to I's to be able to earn passing grades for MP1 and MP2. As soon as this task is completed, students will be notified, and we will review the process in detail.

Reforming grading procedures and policies is a challenging process. Our district is committed to this process being thoughtful, research based, and reflective of our students' needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced everyone to look at many aspects of our lives we have taken for granted and to approach them with new perspective. Education and the ways we assess student learning is an area that we need to look at with fresh perspective. Our students and our educators will all benefit from this work!

***This time of year requires that our teachers not only complete grades but also course recommendations for next year as well! In Genesis are the teacher recommendations for students***

*in grades 9 – 11 that should appear under the Scheduling tab in the parent and student portals. Please review these prior to our counseling department's scheduling meetings with students. Recommendations and course requests for students who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) will not be finalized until IEP review meetings occur.* If you need assistance logging in, please contact the High School Main Office at the phone number above.

**Scheduling for 2021-22 will begin this month and continue through March.** Our high school counselors, Ms. Hayes, Ms. Gore, and Ms. Peterson will meet with all students in grades 9, 10, & 11 individually to discuss recommendations and course selections for next year. **These meetings will take place via Zoom in break out rooms during students' Physical Education class periods.** Juniors in Teen Pep and Option 2 will be invited to attend the Period A Personal Health & Fitness class. The counselors will coordinate meetings with the Child Study Team case managers for students with IEPs. **The Program Planning Guide is available on our high school website on our drop down menu of Family Resources under Program of Study and at this link: [HS Program Planning Guide 21-22](#).** Printed copies are also available in our counseling office.

**Students will be required to complete Course Selection Forms, which will be shared by their counselors via email from the counselor's Google Classroom, prior to meeting with their school counselor to plan their schedules according to the following timeline:**

- **The Class of 2022: February 8 - 11, 2021**
- **The Class of 2023: February 16 - 19, 2021**
- **The Class of 2024: February 22 - 26, 2021**

**We have several events planned for our school community in the coming weeks:**

- **February 12 & 15, 2021:** School closed for Presidents' Day.
- **February 12 - March 26, 2021 - [Horizon Education](#) online SAT preparation testing window for 10th and 11th grade students - More information will be shared via a guidance letter with the details for accessing the student assessments.**
- **March 4, 2021:** Incoming Freshman Orientation at 7PM via Zoom for the Class of 2025
- **March 16, 2021:** Parent Teacher Conferences 5PM - 8PM
- **March 21, 2021:** Spring Musical Showcase
- **March 29 - April 5, 2021:** School closed for Spring Break.

We will be using the Parent Portal in Genesis for spring conference scheduling. Instructions for how to complete this process will be sent out in a few weeks. Please make sure you can access the Parent Portal in Genesis to expedite this process. If you still do not have access, please contact the high school main office.

Should you have any concerns or questions, please call your student's counselor at 732-572-2400 (ext. 4006) or the main office administration at 732-572-2400 (ext. 4001).

Sincerely,



CC: Dr. Scott Taylor, Superintendent  
Mr. Jason Richardson, Assistant Principal