



It is great to be a Hornet!

Our school slogan for the year is, “Continue the Legacy!”

This is both a powerful and fitting slogan as we’ve worked very hard to be one of the top schools in the nation. With that, we need to safeguard that we consistently support all students along their three year journey through EHS. A dear friend framed the meaning of school for me by asking a simple question; “Is your school a **crowd** or a **community**?” In a crowd, you have a group of people with no focus or direction, who are unconnected with no support for each other. In a community, the opposite occurs. We are on the same page, working for a common good (a great education) and we provide support for each other along the way. I sincerely believe we are the latter, a community of students, who work hard to **support one another with the good of our school driving our behavior**. If you don’t feel connected to something in our school, I urge the students to examine all the clubs, groups, and programs offered at EHS and attend a meeting or practice and get connected.

Communication Connections....

As technology continually evolves, communication protocols and options evolve. With that, we wish to keep our communication meaningful and easily accessible for you as parents/guardians. As a result, we will offer the following communication tools.

“**Hornet Headlines**” is a weekly high school bulletin provided electronically via the Edina High School website. It provides information on upcoming events as well as pertinent information needed to navigate the high school. Pam Berling does a magnificent job managing and updating “**Hornet Headlines**” and keeping the site fresh and fun to read! The link is <http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/edinahigh/pdfs/headlines.pdf>. Please bookmark this link as a “favorite,” as soon as possible!

Parent Council will produce a monthly video on happenings at Edina High School. The content of the videos serve two purposes: first, to introduce our mini-grant program and all the wonderful items the grant program supports and second, to keep parents updated on the many great things happening at our school. You should receive the first video link in late August via email and should be as simple as a point and click to initiate the video. Stay tuned! Our Parent Council is an outstanding organization that provides assistance to our school in so many purviews. Last year alone, they provided nine grants funding teacher and student requests (which otherwise would not have happened). I urge you to become a member of this group. The entire \$30 membership fee goes back to funding the mini-grants. More information on Parent Council can be found at <http://www.ehsparents.com>. Again, please add this bookmark to your computer as well.

“**Doc Loc’s Hornet Happenings**” is the latest addition to our communication toolbox. I will blog this year as a part of a pilot program to enhance school to home communications. The intent of the blog is to provide information on upcoming events, but also to share thoughts on educational issues, teaching and learning, and other pertinent information. I have toiled over the best way to provide on-going communication with students and parents over the past several months. Facebook, while a great tool, seems to cross a personal line. I have respect for your privacy and only wish to get information to you around upcoming events and educational issues, thus the need for this information to flow only one way... to you. I think we have found the answer, a blog: <http://ehs.posterous.com/>. It may seem a bit “old school” but this provides a one way conduit for you to get information surrounding events at EHS. When you click on the site, it takes you to my blog. Please sign up in the “Get Updates” section. If you need assistance, just ask your son or daughter, they are always helpful in areas of technology!

Finally, I am debating a monthly “**Open Dialogue Time**” for parents to drop in for casual discussion in a setting around coffee or tea to discuss the direction of our school. Much lies ahead for EHS and our young people. It behooves us to be in front of the curve in education. We are a great school with many wonderful things going on, but we can always get better. As I land on dates and times I will let you know. Stay tuned!

Celebrations....

As noted earlier, many wonderful things are happening in our school. Following are but a few examples, certainly not a comprehensive list.

1. **Edina High School ranks 76th in Newsweek's Best High Schools in America.** While I am not one to boast, this is a tremendous honor for our school, students, staff and community. To compile the 2011 list, Newsweek surveyed over 10,000 public high schools across the country, with 1,100 schools considered for the final list of 500 schools. Edina earned the rank of 76 by achieving a graduation rate of 99%, college matriculation rate of 94%, average SAT score of 1887, and average AP test score of 3.7. The figures used in the rankings were based on the data from the 2009-2010 school year. The entire list of the top 500 high schools can be seen in June 27, 2011 issue of Newsweek and online. This is proof of our students hard work, commitment and dedication to their studies. It is the students and our wonderful staff that allows us to perform at a very high level nationwide!
2. **Graduation 2011:** Target Center was home to our 2011 graduation ceremony. The ceremony went extremely well as we bid farewell to 604 graduates. The Class of 2011 was indeed a special group, leaving a strong legacy of continued academic excellence. We expect many things from the classes of 2012, 2013, and 2014!
3. **Newsweek Top 100:** The list, compiled every year by Newsweek, was revamped this year to include a new research methodology focusing on a wider range of criteria to reflect the overall level of preparedness for college and beyond. To compile the 2011 list, Newsweek surveyed over 10,000 public high schools across the country, with 1,100 schools considered for the final list of 500 schools. The final rankings are based on a Newsweek composite score comprised of six components: graduation rate (25%), college matriculation rate (25%), AP tests taken per graduate (25%), average SAT/ACT scores (10%), average AP/IB/AICE scores (10%), and AP courses offered (5%).
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4. **Advanced Placement Testing:** 1,003 students completed 2,103 exams with 84% of our students scoring 3 or better on completed exams. Again, an unbelievable job by our students and special thanks for the work of our AP teachers in preparing students for these examinations. Congratulations and thank you for your help with this test and all the variables that go into making it a success.
5. **Curriculum/Delivery Model Retooling:**
 - a. Our Special Education Department was hard at work last year evaluating our program and readying for some academic changes for the 2011-2012 academic year. We are moving toward a model of skill development in areas cited by the IEP.
 - b. Gifted/Talented is in discussion around a class that would focus on problem based inquiry as a learning tool. More meetings are planned this year.
 - c. Science and language arts both are in the midst of curriculum discussions. Thank you to these departments for their work! More to come!
6. Our intervention programs continue to lead students to graduation by keeping them in our building and providing a rigorous and relevant educational experience.
7. Equity work last year allowed for some of the best staff development I have been part of in my entire career. Gladly we will trade staff meetings for this time!

Challenges....

As shared last year, our schedule is extremely tight. The past two years, we have experienced major cuts district-wide. Our class sizes will be larger and worse yet; we have little wiggle room for schedule changes. Our counselors have worked diligently to optimize student schedules as much as possible. So, an advanced warning, any schedule change requests may not happen. We apologize in advance, but this is a stark reality for this school year.

Another challenge is staying ahead of the curve in education. We are literally preparing students for a future that does not exist yet and one that is laden with change. Often, this is defined by futurists as the “new normal.” As you have ideas of real life connections for our students, please pass them along as this is a challenge we will continue to face together.

Think About....

As a new school year begins, invariably, there are many items to ponder. Following are but a few.

1. An examination of the Edina Scholar Program to ensure the bar is set at the appropriate level for our Edina Scholars and should the grades be examined as weighted or un-weighted as we define these guidelines?
2. A pre-advanced placement program to ready students who are often defined as “in the middle” for study in advanced placement courses. We are starting a program known around the nation as AVID this fall. There are rigid screening criteria in order for a student to be selected for this program; ranging from the application to an interview. It begins this fall for the sophomore class.
3. Time ... advanced placement tests, conclusion of the year, May Term is there a way to make the conclusion of the year optimal for all?

We are excited for another year; another wonderful year waiting to unfold into a wonderful academic experience for our students. “The Legacy Continues” at EHS!

Thoughts on 2011-2012

As the school year progresses, please think about the following, where you best fit, and what you can do to ensure your success.

1. **Academic Excellence:** Our goal is to continue to improve academically. Often, the most difficult challenge is not reaching the top, but staying at the top. How do we do this? First, stretch yourself academically. If you haven't taken an AP class but feel it would challenge you, sign up for one and give it a try. One thing is certain, we have some of the best teachers in the world leading our courses and they will help you navigate the AP experience. Second, plan your work and work your plan. If you are not organized with a study and homework schedule, Edina High School can be difficult, so establish a plan of study and stick to it. Finally, communicate with your teachers. Let them know where you need assistance. It is difficult for our staff to assist if you don't communicate your needs.
2. **Get involved:** Last year we had over 90% of our students involved in fine arts, athletics, and clubs. Please continue to find ways to get involved with EHS as it makes a positive difference academically.
3. **School Cleanliness:** The cleaner our school, the better we feel. The better we feel, the better we do. Over the past three years, students have shown a willingness to step up and help keep our school clean and we're hopeful to do even better this year. The number of custodians we have has **decreased over the years while our square footage has increased.** Please continue to do your part.
4. **Leadership:** There are multiple ways for students to become engaged in positive leadership at EHS. Please see me if you want to become more involved in a difference-making activity for EHS.

I am eager for our senior leadership to guide our new year. As I often share, as the senior class goes, so goes our school. Class of 2012, this is your time to leave a positive legacy for Edina High School. It is your year to define, to create moments and times that define your class. The baton is passed. Class of 2012, your challenge is to leave a

legacy that improves our school and moves us from “crowd” to “community!” We expect big things from you. Remember, “To whom much is given, from whom much is expected.” At EHS, we are lucky to have the teachers, the programming, and the school we do. However, it is up to you to ensure this excellence as we move into what I consider, “Your Time!”

I believe our school is in good hands with the Class of 2012 at the helm. I have had the opportunity to work with many seniors throughout the summer and have heard their dreams for our school and their plans to achieve those dreams . . . so buckle up and prepare for an awesome ride, EHS!

Yours in Hornet Pride!

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