

Parents and Guardians,

I hope your January has been going well and you have been enjoying the t-shirt days. Maybe, just maybe, we'll have some snow (but not too much) make its way to Chattanooga before winter is over. Here is some information for you as we wind up January.

### **Tours and Visits**

As you may be aware, we have many visitors at our school throughout the year. We have prospective students and parents tour our school, educators from the Chattanooga area, and HCDE staff. What you may not know is that we also have educators, business leaders, and elected officials from not only the entire state of Tennessee, but also nationally. This week we will also be hosting a group from London, England who are putting together an international film on technology.

There are three main reasons for our school visits. First, our school is considered one of seven STEM platform schools in Tennessee that have a focus on innovating educational practices and, consequently, we open our doors to fellow educators to learn from our work. Second, these visits help our school gain positive recognition locally, regionally, nationally and internationally which helps our school attract project opportunities for students and ultimately also helps our students become sought after beyond graduation. Third, the visits provide our students continued practice in communicating with others and is a consistent reminder that what they do matters.

### **STEP UP Chattanooga Internships**

This year HCDE is partnering again with PEF, Benwood Foundation and BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee to create 150 paid summer internships so that students can gain hands-on experience working at Chattanooga's top companies this summer. STEP-UP Chattanooga is a high school internship program exclusively for HCDE high school students in grade 10, 11 and 12.

Last summer, PEF placed 76 HCDE students in 46 businesses in Chattanooga who collectively worked 12,000 hours and earned over \$100,000 in summer wages. The student application deadline has been extended to Tuesday, February 21st for this year's opportunities. The application can be found at <http://www.stepupchattanooga.org/student-application>.

### **Parent Superintendent Advisory Council**

Thank you to Ronna-Renee Jackson, our STEM School parent representative, for participating in the first Parent Superintendent Advisory Council in HCDE. The purpose of this council is to provide a mechanism for open communication and for the council to share and discuss issues that may be district wide. The forum does not discuss issues regarding any specific student, teacher or administrator, but is instead intended to discuss broader topics which may impact many schools.

Here are some items of importance from the first meeting:

- The School Board has recently met for their strategic planning session. Information on this strategic planning is posted on our District 4 School Board representative's (Tiffanie Robinson) Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/TiffanieRobinsonSchoolBoard/>
- Ronna Renee also wrote the following about Tiffanie: "For those of you that don't know Tiffanie, let me tell you we are lucky in District 4 to have such a committed school board representative. She is

accessible and posts updates to her site about school board meeting agendas and outcomes. Follow her.”

- Another important person that impacts our schools directly in District 4 is Warren Mackey, the county commissioner. Ronna-Renee shared the following: "The county commission is the body responsible for allocating money to the school board. The school board has no authority to set their own budget other than figuring out how they will use the money allocated to them by the commission. Currently, there is over \$250 million in deferred maintenance projects district wide. If you have children at other schools, you may be aware of some of these conditions. The school board cannot address these issues without more money. If you are interested in learning more about the school board funding, contact Warren Mackey."

### **Upcoming Dates**

Monday, January 30: Inertia and Dividend Day

--Inertia and Dividend Day for 9th and 10th grade students. Students will not be assigned any additional Edgenuity at this Inertia. It is a workday for students for past and current items.

Friday, February 3: House Competition

--There will be a House competition from 3pm to 4:30pm this day. Good luck to each house!

Monday, February 20: President's Day

--No STEM School classes that day

--College classes are in session and students are expected to attend their college classes that day

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen  
Principal