

Parents and Guardians,

As we kick start into February, we wanted to share some key items with you. Please check out the below.

Student Led Conferences

Our spring student led conferences are coming up soon. Information on the SLC times for the different grade levels is below. Parents are expected to participate. If after the SLC, you would like to come back on a different day and have a conference with a particular teacher or teachers, you can set that up through the front office.

9th and 10th Grade Parents

The student led conference will include your son/daughter, you, and a STEM faculty member. Please contact Amy Robinson, robinson_amy@hcde.org, to reserve your 20 minute time slot.

—Tuesday, Feb 28th: 8am, 8:20am, 8:40am, 9am

—Wednesday, Mar 1st: 8am, 8:20am, 8:40am, 9am

—Thursday, Mar 2nd: 4:40pm, 5pm, 5:20pm, 5:40pm, 6pm, 6:20pm, 6:40pm

11th and 12th Grade Parents

The student led conference will include your son/daughter and you, and your son/daughter will take you from class to class. You can come anytime between 8am and 9:15am on Wednesday, Mar 1 OR between 4:40pm and 7:00pm on Thursday, Mar 2. Teachers will be in each room as you move from one room to the next with the student leading the activity. This is a required student led activity for all 11th and 12th grade students. You do not need to sign up prior to coming.

ACT – 11th Graders

The ACT test date and time is ready to go for our 11th grade students. On Wednesday, April 19th all 11th grade students at STEM will take the official ACT test. This date is state funded, so there is no charge to the students. Testing times for this day are different than normal. Our test will start exactly at 9am, as this is the latest we can feasibly start for a proper testing situation (normally the ACT begins at 8am).

It is VERY IMPORTANT that all students are here by 8:40am that day. If there is an issue with the 8:40am time, the parent must contact the administration at least two weeks prior to the test date.

State Testing

This year's state testing will last approximately three weeks. Most of the state tests have multiple parts, some as many as four subtests over multiple days. We will do our best to make the testing times as unobtrusive as possible, but there is no good way to eliminate the impact it

has on our daily schedule. State testing will begin on Tuesday, April 18th and conclude Friday, May 5th. Unlike last year, the testing does matter to students. The state requires the test to be 10% of the student's final grade. We will be emphasizing to students of its importance to their final grade and status for course credit.

House Bill 262 on State Testing

On January 31 State Representative Sheila Butt introduced House Bill 262 for consideration. This bill would allow schools to use the ACT and ACT Aspire tests in lieu of TCAP, TNReady, and EOC testing. I have reached out to our representatives and expressed my support of this bill. If passed, we would no longer have to use the state tests (and three weeks) for testing. We could replace this testing with ACT Aspire tests for 9th and 10th grades (think pre-ACT type of test) and only test 11th grade using the ACT. The main reasons I am in favor of this bill is that our students could be tested in the ACT framework, which is the test that matters for college entrance. We would be able to focus our time better on ACT preparation for students and I know this would positively impact their performance. The state tests are simply not aligned to the type or format of the ACT. A secondary plus... it would reduce our testing time and disruption to the school schedule.

I highly encourage you to also contact your local state representatives. I was given the impression that they had not received very much input on this bill since its introduction on January 31. Contact information for your representatives can be found on the following website: <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/legislators/>.

Thank you for your support!

Dr. Tony Donen
Principal