



# District Dispatch

Winter 2023-2024

## A Letter from the Superintendent: Preparing Students for Success



Dr. Loughead

### Dear Hampton Township Community,

In November, HTSD proudly launched our “Portrait of a Talbot” video, which we believe showcases the dynamic spirit and values of our exceptional school district. Through student and teacher voices, alongside scenes of engaging learning spaces and innovative practices, the video illuminates how collaboration, communication, empathy, perseverance, critical thinking, and a learner’s mindset are nurtured within our schools. We are confident that these real-world skills will empower our students throughout their lives, paving the way for a successful future.

We are committed not only to upholding the Portrait of a Talbot competencies but also to demonstrating their practical application in our students’ educational journeys. This issue of the *District Dispatch* will highlight how our schools are actively integrating these competencies to prepare students for a diverse and ever-evolving world. At Hampton, we firmly believe in the importance of a well-rounded approach to education, and we continue to celebrate the achievements of our students across academics, the arts, and athletics.

Additionally, the video captures some of our new innovative learning spaces, such as the high school’s Library Media Center, the middle school’s Learning Pavilion, outdoor learning spaces, and maker studios.

If you have not had the opportunity to watch the video, I encourage you to visit our website at [www.ht-sd.org](http://www.ht-sd.org). The Hampton Township community has been passionate about education for generations, and thanks to your continued support, we’re keeping that Tradition of Excellence strong, paving the way for bright futures for all of our students.

As I write this letter, Hampton schools are starting the second semester, and I’m proud to say the year has been off to an amazing start. This fall, our elementary schools hosted a heartwarming Hampton Heroes program, honoring seven local veterans for their service and sacrifice. We’ve also been delighted by the musical talents of our students, showcased in numerous wonderful concerts. Hampton’s middle school and high school Drama Clubs delivered fantastic shows in November, with the high school’s

production of “Puffs, or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years in a Certain School of Magic and Magic” receiving 15 nominations in the Prime Stage Drama Awards!

Let’s also extend a huge congratulations to Hampton’s fall athletics: the Boys Cross Country Team for winning both the WPIAL and PIAA State Championships, the Girls Volleyball Team for capturing their first-ever WPIAL title, and the Boys Soccer Team for finishing runners-up in the WPIAL final.

On March 5-6, Hampton will celebrate its fine arts programming during a two-day exhibition at Hampton High School. In this issue, you will read more about this exciting opportunity to witness the power of the arts first hand. As a community, we look forward to the coming months filled with achievements in academics, the arts, and athletics.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael R. Loughead  
Superintendent  
Hampton Township School District



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<i>The District Dispatch is published four times annually as part of the Hampton Magazine.</i>	

# Hampton Teachers Bring Portrait of a Talbot to Life

The Portrait of a Talbot competencies aren't just buzzwords at Hampton Township School District – they're threads woven into the very fabric of the curriculum. Hampton teachers have been diligently embedding these competencies into their instruction, sparking students' ability to collaborate, communicate, think critically, empathize with the world around them, embrace a learner's mindset, and persevere.

## Science in Action

Christine Ruffner led her 9th grade biology students through a three-day exploration of enzymes, focusing on lactase, while integrating key Portrait of a Talbot competencies. The first day emphasized foundational knowledge and collaborative learning through an engaging video and a lab activity interpreting data. The second day involved hands-on experiments comparing glucose content in regular and Lactaid milk, encouraging perseverance and critical thinking. The final day focused on empathy and a learner's mindset, prompting students to consider the experiences of lactose-intolerant individuals. The lesson culminated in a Claims, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) chart activity, showcasing a holistic educational approach in line with the Portrait of a Talbot competencies.



## Through an Animal's Eyes

Sheree Lucas and Mary (Davis) West's 6th-grade reading classes participated in a culminating activity for their unit, "Through an Animal's Eyes." The activities included online games focusing on identifying point-of-view, reviewing plot elements, and vocabulary terms. Additionally, students read and responded to an article debating the ethics of zoos, worked on developing arguments for a Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA), engaged in a personification matching activity, researched exotic animals, mapped their locations, and wrote fun facts. They also applied their understanding of plot elements to the short story, "The Cormorant in My Bathtub," created subheadings for a nonfiction article about "SuperCroc," and clustered vocabulary terms. This comprehensive lesson aligns with the Portrait of a Talbot competencies of collaboration, empathy, and communication, as students collaborated across teams, communicated respectfully, listened, and offered help. Moreover, the lessons emphasized perseverance, learner's mindset, and critical thinking, requiring students to use higher-order thinking skills and apply the skills and topics they learned in new ways.



## Reading Takes Flight

Shanna Struble's second-grade class at Central Elementary began with the ELA Wonders series story, "Little Flap Learns to Fly," serving as a foundation for developing key ideas and details in storytelling. Mrs. Struble integrated the Portrait of a Talbot competencies, turning the lesson into a holistic reading experience. Utilizing Central's Learning Courtyard, she assigned unique personas to various birds, such as Mindy Mindsey and Caleb Collaboration, aligning them with the competencies and making them central characters in captivating stories. Students, working collaboratively in small groups, identified birds based on textual clues, recorded their findings in Mystery Bird Journals, and reflected on which bird they most related to, fostering empathy and self-awareness. The lesson culminated in naming a special Hampton bird, "Hardy Hampton," embodying the spirit of capability and excellence.



These are just a few examples of how Hampton Township School District is integrating the Portrait of a Talbot competencies into its curriculum, creating a learning environment that equips students for future success!

# HTSD Schools Give Back to the Community During the Holidays

This past holiday season, the halls of Hampton Township Schools were filled not only with festive cheer, but also with an outpouring of compassion and dedication to bringing joy to those in need. Throughout the year, but especially during the holidays, students and staff across the District consistently demonstrate their commitment to giving back and making a positive impact in the community.

Wyland Elementary School's Helping Hands Club collected nearly 100 toys for North Hills Community Outreach, ensuring that local children and families had a brighter holiday. Poff Elementary School's #BeTheKindKid Club followed suit, bringing over 160 toys to children in need, while the Kids Care Club at Central Elementary School collected much-needed arts and craft supplies for Preferred Home Health Care. Fifth-graders at Central also made

blankets for the residents of Concordia at Rebecca Residence and crafted cards with cheerful holiday messages for the residents.

Middle and high schools also stepped up to the plate. They organized successful food drives for Inspired Hearts and Hands during Thanksgiving, ensuring local families had the resources they needed for a joyful holiday. Additionally, students and faculty at Poff collected and packaged food for the North Hills Food Bank.

"We are incredibly humbled and inspired by the overwhelming generosity and participation in these drives," said Dr. Michael Loughead, HTSD Superintendent. "Throughout my years here, I've consistently witnessed the incredible acts of care and support our students, families, and staff display, especially during the holiday season. This tradition of giving back is truly ingrained in the fabric of our school community."



Wyland Elementary School's Helping Hands Club



Poff Elementary School's #BeTheKindKid Club



Central Elementary School Fifth Graders

The Hampton Township School District Newsletter, *The District Dispatch*, is published four times annually as part of *Hampton Magazine*. Its purpose is to keep Hampton residents informed of events, achievements, issues and opportunities concerning the District and its stakeholders. Letters, comments or article suggestions may be sent to the following address:

Hampton Township School District Communications  
4591 School Drive • Allison Park, PA 15101  
Email: [communications@ht-sd.org](mailto:communications@ht-sd.org) • Phone: 412-492-6312



## Hues & Harmony: 2 Days of Celebrating Art & Music at Hampton

Celebrating the transformative power of the arts is a core value at Hampton Township School District. This spring's Hues & Harmony event will showcase and promote the District's fine arts programming during a two-day exhibition at Hampton High School on March 5 and 6.

Experience the fusion of Hampton's visual and musical arts, showcasing an array of art displays, musical performances, and engaging art and music-making activities. Visit [www.ht-sd.org](http://www.ht-sd.org) for the full schedule of events.

"The festival aims to highlight the great music being made by our Hampton students throughout the school year," said Music Teacher Sean Desguin. "Faculty and students are looking forward to showcasing performances by a wide variety of musical ensembles beyond the traditional larger band, chorus, and orchestra groups with which the community may be more familiar."

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear a variety of musical performances by Hampton's elementary, middle, and high school students.

On March 5, families may also create their own percussion instruments out of everyday materials at the "Found Sounds" drum circle and play them with other community members.

"We will also showcase several of our extra-curricular music ensembles such as the Talbot Chamber Orchestra and Jazz Bands from the Middle School and High School," said Mr. Desguin.

In addition to musical performances, a variety of student artwork will be on display in various areas of the high school. Attendees can anticipate live demonstrations by students at pottery wheels and

easels. There will be hands-on art activities available for families to engage in creative artmaking together. These offerings are provided to give the community a glimpse into the daily wonders experienced in the art rooms at Hampton.

Families may also choose to pursue a scavenger hunt through the art displays, enjoy a coloring page, draw a mini-artwork for a larger collection of masterpieces, create an origami piece or even screen print their own T-shirt. Hampton art teachers and student volunteers will be on hand to guide the activities.

"The Hues & Harmony event is truly a celebration of our Hampton artists," said Art Teacher Lisa Woods. "We love seeing students proudly show their artwork to families and friends. It's also a wonderful opportunity for everyone to view artwork made by students in other grades and other schools."

The HTSD art curriculum encourages students to explore ideas through a wide variety of media. Paintings, drawings, prints, and other two-dimensional works will be showcased in the main lobby area. The new library area will feature displays of ceramics, sculptures, and other three-dimensional pieces. After departing from the library, additional art installations can be found near the Busy Bean, which will remain open during the event, where students will also have the opportunity to perform as soloists or in small group duets or trios.

"We are excited to utilize the updated spaces at HHS to make the Hues and Harmony event even better," said Mrs. Woods. "Our goal is to exhibit great artwork that will inspire questions, conversations, and even more creativity!"

# Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers: College Credit Now Offered in HHS Early Childhood Education Program

Shaping well-rounded graduates equipped for successful futures is a core mission at Hampton High School. This year, that commitment to preparing students for their future has taken a step further: a new Early Childhood Education program that bridges the gap between high school and higher education through a partnership with Carlow University.

For the first time, students who enroll in the course can elect to earn college credit through Carlow University, thereby expanding their educational opportunities.

Melinda Jackson has been teaching the Early Childhood Education course (previously called "Child Development") at Hampton since 2008. The new program continues to provide students with an understanding of how children grow and learn, equipping them with knowledge and skills that can be applied in various settings such as parenting, education, and childcare.

In the fall, Mrs. Jackson took the Early Childhood Education class on a field trip to Carlow University where students were able to explore the different preschool programs and attend educational workshops. Hampton has aligned its curriculum with Carlow's, allowing students to partake in a college-level course within the regular school day.

Early Childhood Education students experience the opportunity to apply their child development knowledge and teaching skills, and will be engaged in a variety of settings. In addition to classroom activities, students learn the industry and state standards for infants, toddlers, and preschool age children.

"During the first semester students learn about options for classroom set up, classroom procedures, and handling different behaviors," said Mrs. Jackson.

Students gain deep knowledge of child development from birth to age five, through psychology-based units and practical sessions like lesson planning and preschool supervision.

"We cover school psychology, specific theorists, and their application to our current preschool class," said Mrs. Jackson. "We spend time learning about different methods to teach children and practice using role-play scenarios."

High school students also participate in the Wellness courses and have the opportunity to be certified in First-Aid and CPR as part of their classroom curriculum.

During the second semester, students become teachers themselves, coordinating the free Hampton High School Preschool program for children aged 3-5 (January 9 to May 24). Meeting three days per week, the preschool routine includes circle time, arts and crafts, story sessions, and games. Additionally, children focus on practicing practical skills to prepare for school such as walking in a line, fostering independence in hanging up coats and bags, and collecting items from bins.

"High school students plan all units and lessons for the program, receiving approval before implementation," said Mrs. Jackson. "They put in an extreme amount of time and energy into creating



activities that they think the kids will enjoy, that also align with the Pennsylvania Pre-K standards."

For Mrs. Jackson, this class is the highlight of her day. "Their realization that they impact actual children is heartwarming," she shares. "The preschoolers brighten everyone's day."

As Hampton High School expands career-based learning opportunities, this program is ideal for students interested in working with children, including elementary education and pediatric nursing.

"This class helps prepare students for careers more than before," Mrs. Jackson noted. "It shifted from a parenting-based focus to a career-based one, discussing what a teacher would do in various job situations."

For HHS senior Hailey Meyer, the course is helping to prepare her as she intends to attend Slippery Rock University next fall majoring in Early Childhood Education. Having also taken the course last year as a junior, she says the coursework provides her with practice in creating lesson plans and one-on-one experiences in teaching children.

"I feel like when I get into the real job I will be less nervous because I will have already had practice teaching," Miss Meyer said.

Mrs. Jackson added that the Early Childhood Education course is crucial for high school students because they learn skills applicable in various life situations, emphasizing communication, empathy, collaboration, and perseverance. Additionally, students actively share best practices and observations through weekly debriefs, allowing everyone to learn and improve their future child interactions.

With "seamless teamwork and clear communication shining through," Mrs. Jackson said, "they support not only the children but also each other, even when things get tough."

# Student-led HMS Mural Installation Inspired by Kindness and Joy of Learning

Inspired by kindness, curiosity, courage, and the joy of learning, students in Hampton Middle School teacher Lisa Woods' 8th-grade "Draw, Paint, Print" class conceptualized, designed, and installed a brand-new mural in the HMS cafeteria.

The images in the mural—such as butterflies, flowers, a dog, and a fawn—represent the Portrait of a Talbot and what Hampton Middle School stands for. The 8th-grade elective students played a key role in leading the project, taking charge of the drawing and painting process.

"I wanted them to have a really meaningful experience that would empower them to create something for our school that brings joy and is going to be a part of our school for years to come," said Mrs. Woods.

Students in the class worked with California-based artist Amandalynn to brainstorm and develop the mural's design. This process involved communication, collaboration, and perseverance as students worked together through various iterations of the design during visioning sessions with the artist. Students displayed leadership as they provided critical feedback on each design in deciding what imagery would be included in the final design representing the competencies.

"The students were the ones who really had ownership of the project," said Mrs. Woods. "The project itself unfolded as a great example of all the skills the Portrait of a Talbot encompasses."

The 24 students in the "Draw, Paint, Print" class worked together with Dr. Melissa Survinski (Enrichment Facilitator) to create an

artist's statement describing their interpretation of the Portrait of a Talbot:

The **butterflies** symbolize curiosity, which we have the freedom to explore at HMS.

The **dog** represents the joy of learning, because we are the Hampton Talbots.

The **hands** in the center symbolize our openness to communicate with each other and a tolerance to appreciate diverse perspectives.

The **book** represents how we need to keep an open mind and grow a learner's mindset.

The **grasshopper** stands for the courage and confidence we need to keep trying and persevere.

The **fawn** represents kindness and empathy, because these are important to show to others.

The **flowers** are all different colors, but growing together in the same place, to show collaboration among our students.

The **bee** presents happiness and harmony, and the sun represents peace and calm.

"Every part of the mural represents the things we love about our school," the students said. "We are proud that so many students helped design and paint this mural, because it shows how much we cared to make our school a happier place. We did something that we did not think was possible, and we hope this mural reminds everyone that our school has many different people in it, and we all need to work together to make the world a kinder place."



Over the course of two days in November, students helped paint the background, sketch the design, and install the mural. Any students in grades 6-8 with an interest in the project had the opportunity to sign up and contribute to the painting.

This mural was generously sponsored and funded by the LIGHT Education Initiative—which aims to inspire, prepare, and empower students. Dr. Marlynn Lux, HMS Principal, says that the middle school partners with the LIGHT Education Initiative to provide students with leadership opportunities to empower them to cultivate positive initiatives that bring joy to the school community.

“Giving middle school students leadership opportunities is vital to their growth and development,” said Dr. Lux. “Oftentimes people underestimate what young teenagers can accomplish, and I was blown away by this project in what our students were capable of accomplishing.”

Mrs. Woods added that it’s important for students to have these types of experiences in school that “are beyond being in the regular classroom setting.”

“Those are the real strong memories that they are going to carry with them,” she added.

HMS also worked with the LIGHT Education Initiative on the “Butterfly Project” which began last year. In this project, 8th-grade students, during their Holocaust unit in English Language Arts, created ceramic butterflies to honor stories of children who passed away during the Holocaust. The ceramic butterflies are part of a permanent display at HMS which serve as a reminder of the importance of standing up for others and fighting against hatred.



## Living Wall Brings Life to HHS Art Room in Memory of Student With a Passion for Art

Research has shown that incorporating elements of nature into built environments reduces stress and anxiety, while enhancing creativity and mood. The recent installation of a living wall inside the art room of Hampton High School is aiming to do just that.

To celebrate the artistic spirit of their daughter, Abbey Todd, who passed away in 2020, the Todd family has gifted the stunning living wall to the art room — serving as a symbol of joy that Abbey brought to the school community. Abbey's family, knowing her passion for art, chose a living wall as a way to connect her love for nature and art permanently with the school.

Abbey graduated from HHS in 2019, where she was the art club leader her senior year. Kate Owens, art teacher, said one of Abbey's projects involved creating small terrariums containing succulent plants.

"Abbey talked about how plants were a life-giving thing for her and how they made her feel better," Ms. Owens said. "We wanted to bring plants into the art room as a way of keeping Abbey's spirit going here, as plants can provide a soothing and healing effect to students struggling with mental health."

During the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Hampton Township community demonstrated remarkable empathy, joining together to raise over \$32,000 for the Abbey Todd Memorial Fund. Abbey's challenges with mental health and chronic illness inspired a collective community effort to raise funds.

The outpouring of community support helped to fund contributions

to the Hampton Middle School's Wellness Studio, including the "Reading Nook" and "Memorial Tree". The additions to the Wellness Studio, a space that helps students cope with stress and anxiety and improve their emotional well-being, and the Living Wall are the latest contributions of the Abbey Todd Memorial Fund.

The 4-by-10-foot living wall features a vertical structure containing living plants. Three seniors in the high school's Engineering Design class, instructed by Ryan Scott, were involved in the research and planning of the project. Kiera Palmer, Lily Stalewski, and Anna Stroud led the research and planning, conducting market research, taking measurements, and investigating the criteria and constraints for the living wall.

"Being in the class helped us learn about the engineering design process and how we can apply that to everyday things like our living wall!" said Stalewski.

Miss Stalewski said budget constraints were the main challenge of the project's design phase. Their original vision included the creation of three plant walls encircling the central pillar in the art room. They adjusted the design to cover one side of the pillar, but Stalewski said "it still serves the purpose of 'living art,' providing dimension, color, and life to the art room."

The students conducted research on companies and systems available in the market. Through the help of John Walsh, Director of Facilities Management, they selected Plantscape, Inc. to install the living wall in the art room.

## HTSD Hosts Allegheny Valley Honors Band Festival

HHS band director Chad Himmler observes that while school districts often find themselves in competition with each other, music is one area where school districts can unite as a team to accomplish something greater — an experience that can only be achieved by working together. This sentiment resonated profoundly during the 70th Annual Allegheny Valley Honors Band Festival, an event proudly hosted by HTSD on January 4th and 5th.

The festival featured both a Senior High and a Junior High Honors Band, culminating in an evening concert on January 5th in the Hampton High School Auditorium.

The Senior High Honors Band consisted of 100 students in grades 10-12, and the Junior High Honors Band consisted of 108 students in grades 7-9. The Allegheny Valley Band Association includes nine school districts: Avonworth, Northgate, North Hills, North Allegheny, Pine-Richland, Shaler Area, Hampton, Fox Chapel Area, and Riverview.

Thirty-five Hampton students earned positions in the Allegheny Valley Honors Band. To earn a spot in the festival, each student prepared a solo instrumental piece and faced blind auditions in front of a panel of judges in November. About 500 young musicians auditioned for the Allegheny Valley Honors Band.

"It is an honor to host this festival as it is a way to showcase the power of music-making to the Hampton community," said Mr. Himmler. "It's a beautiful thing to experience students from different school districts, with a very diverse set of beliefs and backgrounds, decide to work together and support each other in the pursuit of creating meaningful, emotional, and exciting music at the highest levels."

The Senior High Honors Band was conducted by Dr. Jason Worzby, Professor of Bassoon and Adult & Community Bands Director at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The Junior High Honors Band was conducted by Dr. Zach Cheever, Assistant



"We hope the living wall will continue to grow and flourish for many years to come, serving as an inspiration to students, and a reminder of who the wall commemorates," said Miss Stalewski.

The vision for maintaining the living wall involves collaborating with the Horticulture class, with the intention of identifying students who are interested in plants to commit to routine upkeep. These student volunteers would take turns watering, pruning, propagating the plants as needed, and pest control.

"Our hope is that students will be engaged in the maintenance of the living wall for many years to come," said Ms. Owens.

The living wall was installed just before Hampton dismissed for winter break, but already students are noticing the benefits of the new space.

"The students are talking about how it feels brighter in the space, more lively and more positive," said Ms. Owens. "Our hope is that it is a place that will enrich the art room and also uplift the spirits of students."

The Hampton High School living wall is a testament to the power of nature, art, and community. It is a living reminder of Abbey's spirit, and a source of inspiration and well-being for students and staff alike.



Music Professor and Athletic Bands Director at IUP, where he leads the Symphony and Marching Bands.

Hampton students in the Allegheny Valley Junior High Honors Band included Logan Brady, percussion; Mabel Buben, flute; Oliver Clark, trumpet; Joy Dakin, tuba; Gab Duarte, bass clarinet; Grace Girard, clarinet; Lucijan Huckle, percussion; Richard Ma, alto saxophone; Jordyn Moyer, horn; Sydney Osborne, trombone; Catie Parker, clarinet; James Parker, trumpet; Aiden Rauso, trombone; Jinwon So, trumpet; Celia Vitiello, bass clarinet; Meredith Wallace, percussion; and Liam Webb, horn. Hampton students in the Allegheny Valley Senior High Honors Band consisted of Jason Andrews, trumpet; Meghan Armstrong, clarinet; John Bianco, bari saxophone; Aidan Casey, trumpet; Paul Dakin, trombone; Molly Ehman, flute; Brady Fanuele, tuba; Drew Girard, percussion; Branson Himmler, percussion; Braylee Himmler, trombone; Anna Houpt, clarinet; Tim Madden, trumpet; Samantha Nicely, clarinet; Tanner Paczan, tuba; David Poirier, tuba; Peleh Shaltes, trumpet; Nolan Smith, clarinet; and Jinho So, clarinet.



## REQUEST FOR RECORDS POLICY

**Student Records Policy:** Hampton Township School District maintains a cumulative student record for each child. Such information assists staff in the day-to-day operation of the District's educational program, some of which is required by law. The student's record includes student identification and attendance data, information on schoolwork completed, and examples of achievement and standardized group tests. Records of all standardized tests completed voluntarily by secondary students (usually for college entrance purposes) also are part of the student's record. If a child transfers to another school system, the District will forward the record when a parent-initiated written request is sent from the new school. A high school student's transcript may be released to post-secondary or prospective employers with written permission from the eligible student or the parents. The District's policy on student records guarantees that parents and eligible students shall have the right to review and obtain a copy of the record, challenge its contents, refuse individual consent where permission is needed for releasing certain information, and file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20201. This policy complies with the Pennsylvania State Board of Education's regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. Parents or students may request a copy of the District's student records policy from the building principal. A listing of the types and locations of educational records maintained and the title and address of the officials responsible for these records also may be obtained. To view your child's records, please contact the principal for an appointment.

**Release of Information Policy:** According to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), non-confidential information about students may be included in publications such as sports programs, newspapers, radio and television news reports, newsletters, award and graduation programs, yearbooks, musical and play programs and other school publications. This information may include the student's name, address, study interests, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weights and heights of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, awards received, and other similar information. Parents who wish to exempt their children from the release of such information should do so in writing to the principal.

**Child Find and Special Education Services for Exceptional Students:** According to state and federal special education regulations, an annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. Hampton Township School District is required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 PA Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence. This notice shall inform parents throughout the Hampton Township School District of the child identification activities and the procedures to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. Children ages three through twenty-one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe their child may be eligible for special education, they should contact Dr. Sharon Smith, Director of Special Education, at 412-492-6306. Identification procedures ensure that eligible students receive an appropriate educational program consisting of special education and related services that are individualized to meet student needs. These services are provided at no cost to the parents, in compliance with state and federal law, and are planned to ensure educational benefit for student progress. Screening activities are conducted on an ongoing basis to identify students who may be eligible for special education. Screening activities may include hearing, vision,

physical, and speech/language screening; and a review of group-based data (cumulative academic records, aptitude and achievement test scores, enrollment records and health records, as well as parent and teacher responses to questionnaires) by the building-level Child Study or Response to Intervention & Instruction Team. When screening results suggest that a student may need special education services, HTSD will, with parental consent, conduct an Evaluation. Children aged three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need Special Education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) the child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional, and self-help. For additional information, you may contact Dr. Sharon Smith, Director of Special Education, at 412-492-6306.

**Potential Signs of Risk Factors:** Your child may be eligible for special education if he/she has a disability as defined by 22 Pa Code 14.101 and requires specially designed instruction. Your child must meet both criteria to be eligible for special education. Some indications that your child may have a disability that meets the first part of the two-part definition are: has difficulty learning to read even with intense instruction; has difficulty communicating; exhibits a lack of interest or ability in age-appropriate activities; has difficulty seeing or hearing that interferes with the ability to learn or communicate; has health problems that affect educational performance; or exhibits an emotional disturbance over a long period of time that affects his/her ability to learn.

**Services for School-Age Students with Disabilities:** HTSD provides a free, appropriate public education to eligible students. To qualify as an eligible student, the child must be of school age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities, as outlined in Pennsylvania State Regulations: Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, or Visual Impairment including Blindness. Information regarding the appropriate developmental milestone descriptors for infants and toddlers may be found at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov> or The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY) website at <http://nichcy.org>. For additional information regarding the signs of developmental delays or other disabilities, please contact Dr. Sharon Smith, Director of Special Education, at 412-492-6306.

The District engages in identification procedures to ensure that eligible students receive an appropriate educational program consisting of special education and related services, individualized to meet student needs. At no cost to the parents, these services are provided in compliance with state and federal laws and are reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress. Screening activities are conducted on an ongoing basis to identify students who may be eligible for special education. These screening activities include a review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, report cards, ability, and achievement test scores); hearing, vision, physical, and speech/language screening; and review by a Child Study Team, Pupil Personnel Team, or Student Assistant Program (SAP) Team. When screening results suggest that the student may be eligible for special education services, the District seeks parental

consent to conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. Parents who suspect that their child is eligible for special education services may request a multidisciplinary evaluation through a written request to the Building Principal, the District Psychologist/Director of Student Services, or the Director of Special Education. Services designed to meet the needs of eligible students include the annual development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), bi-annual or tri-annual multidisciplinary re-evaluation, and a full continuum of services, which include Itinerant, Supplemental, or Full-Time Levels of Intervention. The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the IEP team and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and the level of intensity of the specified intervention. The District also provides related services, such as transportation, speech and language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, required for the student to benefit from the special education program. Parents may obtain additional information regarding special education services and programs and parental due process rights by contacting the child's Building Principal or the Director of Special Education at 412-492-6306.

**Evaluation Process:** Hampton Township School District has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. Contact the school your child attends for information about evaluation procedures. Parents of preschool-age children, ages three through five, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the intermediate unit staff. For more information, contact: Project DART, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, 475 E Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120.

**Consent:** School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice, which can be found on the PaTTAN website at [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net). Once written parental consent is obtained, Hampton Township School District will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

**Program Development:** Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and the parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program (IEP) team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, Hampton Township School District will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice (NOREP/PWN). The NOREP/PWN is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

**Confidentiality of Information:** Hampton Township School District maintains records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Hampton Township School District protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. Hampton Township School District maintains, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information. For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the FERPA at the following URL: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>. This notice is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. Contact the responsible entity listed below for more information or to request an evaluation or screening of a public or private school child.

Information, screenings, and evaluations for preschool-age children may be obtained by contacting the Intermediate Unit.

**Special Education Services for Students in Non-Public Schools:** HTSD special education programs and services are accessible to resident students attending non-public schools. These students are permitted to enroll on a part-time, dual enrollment basis in a program of special education operated in public school. Special education programs are accessible to non-public school students through dual enrollment following the evaluation and development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Parents of non-public school students who suspect their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request an evaluation by written request to the school principal.

**Services for Preschool Children with Disabilities (Act 212):** The Early Intervention Services Act, entitles all preschool children with disabilities to receive appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delay or physical or mental disabilities and their families are eligible for early intervention services. At-risk children are eligible for screening and tracking through The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Inc. (412) 431-1905. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool children (ages 3-5). For information, contact: Project DART, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, 475 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120, (412) 394-5942.

**Chapter 15, Services for Protected Handicapped Students:** In compliance with state and federal law, the Hampton Township School District provides services or accommodations to protected handicapped students. These services ensure equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. They are provided without discrimination or cost to the student or family. To qualify for services as a "Protected Handicapped Student," the child must be of school age and have a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Services and supports for protected handicapped students (Chapter 15) are distinct from those applicable to all students with disabilities (Chapter 14) enrolled or seeking enrollment in special education programs. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students, please contact Dr. Sharon Smith, Director of Special Education, Hampton Township School District, 4591 School Drive, Allison Park, PA 15101, (412) 492-6306.

**Chapter 16, Gifted Education:** Parents who suspect that their school-age child is gifted may request a Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE). Multiple criteria, including an evaluation by a certified school psychologist, are used to determine gifted identification. The GIEP team collaboratively develops annual goals and short-term learning objectives for the student. For further information, please contact Dr. Jacquelyn Removcik, Assistant to the Superintendent, Hampton Township School District, 4591 School Drive, Allison Park, Pa 15101 (412) 492-6393.

**Nondiscrimination Policy:** As an equal opportunity employer, HTSD maintains a policy of nondiscrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification, as applicable in its educational programs, activities, employment policies, and practices. Announcement of and adherence to this policy is required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sections 503 and 504, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and all other applicable state, federal, and local laws and ordinances. Please contact Dr. Rebecca Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent, Hampton Township School District, 4591 School Drive, Allison Park, Pa 15101, (412) 492-6305.

**All of the above information is available at [www.ht-sd.org](http://www.ht-sd.org).**