



THE EAGLE'S NEST

Administrative Parent Newsletter



A Note From the Principal

HOME OF THE BALD EAGLES

AMERICAN HISTORY HIGH

As we enter the second half of the school year, I address you with a sense of pride and elation. Due to the resilient efforts of the Class of 2012, American History High School is now ranked amongst the highest achieving schools in the state of New Jersey based on our October HSPA results. Currently, 100% of our Seniors have achieved proficiency or advanced proficiency in the area of Language Arts Literacy. 96.5% of them have achieved proficiency or advanced proficiency in the area of Mathematics. While we are proud of our progress as a school, we also realize that there is room for growth and improvement.

The mission of American History High School remains to instill in all of our graduates, *the social and academic skills needed to attend and graduate from an institution of higher learning.* The mission drives our work and is interwoven throughout this newsletter. While we revel in our successes in this issue, we will also share vital information about our grading policy, new programs, and ways you can support your child in their

journey towards higher education.

January 19, 2012 proved to be another historic day at American History High School as we became the first school chosen by Mayor Cory Booker to host the City of Newark's 24th Annual Sing in Praise of King Observance Ceremony. Our selection was largely due to our success as a school and the phenomenal work of our school's chorus under the direction of Mrs. Keresse Burton-Dorcely. Mrs. Dorcely proved to be an ambassador for our school and all teachers in the city of Newark as she worked diligently with individuals in the mayor's office to plan and coordinate this event. During the program Mayor Booker announced that our city needs more schools like American History High School and gave our school a proclamation for its high levels of achievement and excellence.

I am pleased to announce that an American History High School student graced the stage at the City of Newark's 175th Inaugural Celebration and delivered a powerful speech about the significance of Newark in the history of

our great nation. Madina Ouedraogo won first place in an essay contest sponsored by the 175th Inaugural Celebration Committee and delivered her speech with the poise and eloquence of the dignitaries with whom she shared the stage. Madina is ranked #1 in the sophomore class (Class of 2014) and has also been recognized for academic achievement and community service at the Newark Public School's December Advisory Board Meeting and at a breakfast hosted by Progressive Achievers: Women of Distinction.

Moreover, I am pleased to announce that Mr. Lockhart, our AP English Teacher and Drama Club, and National Honors Society Advisor, was one of 25 teachers in the Newark Public Schools to be awarded a grant from the Foundation for Newark's Future otherwise known as "The Facebook Money." Mr. Lockhart's project focuses on students conducting authentic historical research and creating a filmed play/documentary.

It's always a pleasure sharing the achievements of our staff and students. They are the stars on our flag and continue to define Excellence, as the standard at American History High



A. Robert Gregory
Principal

School.

Mark your calendars. On February 23, 2012 we will host our first Family Empowerment Night. This event will provide parents and guardians the opportunity to hear and have input in my vision for American History High School over the course of the next 5 years. We will also have special performances and a guest speaker whose topics will cover ways you can support your child and our school. My goal is that we unite as a community to ensure our students are successful. I truly believe the voices of parents and students need to be heard and look forward to your attendance as we begin our school improvement efforts.

In closing, I hope you find this edition of the Parent Newsletter helpful and encourage you to stay involved. Please feel free to call the school and/or check our website for upcoming events and other pertinent information. We are a family and must always remember the important role we play as the architects of our legacy.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY NEWARK: AHHS STUDENT SHINES

New Jersey's largest city, Newark, celebrated its 175th anniversary as an incorporated city on November 12, 2011 at the Newark Museum. First founded by Puritans in 1666, Newark was incorporated as a city in 1836. Since its early beginnings, Newark has gone through cycles of prosperity, decline, and rebirth. Newark's story is that of many urban areas across the United States, and on its anniversary the event organizers wanted all in attendance to recognize Newark's historical significance.

Why is Newark Important? Dr. Alexander Price, Board of Gover-

nors Distinguished Service Professor of History at Rutgers University, Newark, posed the question to Newark high school students as part of the essay contest, in which the winning essay would be read during the official celebration at the Newark Museum.

Tracing the history of our city was no easy task, and textbooks ignore the rich local history of New Jersey. If our students were to craft well-researched essays, they would need to explore a variety of texts and sources.

With the collaboration between our National History Club advisor, Mr. Hohmann, and the Gilder Lehrman



Madina Ouedraogo: Ranked #1 in the Class of 2014 and Winner of the Newark 175th Inaugural Celebration Essay Contest



AHHS STUDENT PLACES FIRST PLACE IN ESSAY CONTEST (con't pg. 1)

THE NIGHT OF THE CELEBRATION, MUSICAL GUESTS MELBA MOORE SANG "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL," FOLLOWED BY THE READING OF THE ESSAY WINNER. WITH IMPECCABLE POISE, MADINA READ HER AWARD WINNING ESSAY WITH HER PROUD PARENTS AND OLDER BROTHER, IN ATTENDANCE.

Book Club advisor, Ms. Klein, after school club meetings comprised of various readings by prominent historians like Kenneth Jackson video clips from Dr. Price's documentary, *The Once and Future Newark*.

After a series of writing workshops, revisions and rewrites, the final entries were submitted. For the panelists it was not an easy decision, but one essay stood out above the rest.

Madina Ouedraogo, a Super Honor Roll student from the Class of 2014, submitted the winning essay. Mr. Gregory was honored to notify Madina that she had in fact won the essay contest and would be reading

her essay before invited guests and prominent dignitaries.

The night of the celebration, musical guests Melba Moore sang "America the Beautiful," followed by the reading of the essay winner. With impeccable poise, Madina read her award winning essay with her proud parents and older brother, in attendance. At the conclusion of her reading, Madina, along with Martina Harris, an Honor Roll Student from the Class of 2013, who received honorable mention for her essay, were showered with gifts and well-wishes by Dr. Price and local dignitaries.

Following the program, Madina and her family, along with AHHS students, Martina Harris and Rafiki

Johnson, joined Mr. Gregory, Mr. Hohmann and Ms. Crespo at the reception.



City of Newark Celebrates its 175 Birthday

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IS IMPETETUS TO CHANGES IN THE GRADING POLICY



During the 2009-2010 school year Principal Gregory attended the College Board's Annual National Conference entitled, "A Dream Deferred." While attending this 4 day conference, Principal Gregory had the opportunity to meet with admissions counselors from colleges and universities throughout the country. One common universal theme drove home, **60% of a student's admissions into college is based on their G.P.A and the courses they've enrolled in throughout high school.**

Principal Gregory and his staff worked effortlessly to increase the amount of rigorous courses the school offers while enhancing the G.P.As of the student population.

This year the staff has adopted what Jim Collins, in his book from *Good to Great*, describes as a "Big Hairy Auspicious Goal." That goal is that 50% of the students who attend American History High School will maintain a Grade Point Average (G.P.A) of a 3.0 or better.

In an effort to reach this goal and ensure students obtain mastery of curricular objectives the staff reviewed their current grading practices and ways they can improve.

Their investigation revealed that far too many students were not given an opportunity to enhance their grades in a given marking period/cycle. At times students were not aware of their current average in classes and the work that needed to be done to improve their grades.



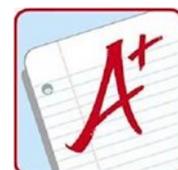
As a result, the staff, along with the administrative team agreed upon several practices as follows:

- Students will be provided a bi-weekly Grade Report that reflects their current overall average along with their assessment, homework, and classwork grades.
- Once a student receives their Grade Report, they have two weeks to make up any assignments they may be missing

(homework/classwork) thus impacting their grades.

- If a student receives less than an 85% on an assessment or quiz they can retake it, as long as they attend at least two afterschool tutorial sessions aimed to support them.
- All students must retake assessments and make up work within two weeks from the time they receive their grade report.

Parents your support is needed. To the left of this article you will find the dates your child should be able to show you their grade reports. They should receive a bare minimum of 6 every two weeks. Please review them and ensure if your child is missing work and/or would like to retake a test that they adhere to the aforementioned guidelines.



GRADE REPORT DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE
3rd Marking Period/Cycle

2/17/12
 3/2/12
 3/16/12
 3/30/12
 4/13/12

PARENT'S CORNER: HELPING YOUR TEEN SET GOALS

Goal-Setting is a great way to help your teen reach his or her full potential in school and life! When setting goals with your teen:

BE SPECIFIC: For example, if your teen wants to do better in school, a goal might be to raise his or her biology grade from a C to a B.

BE REALISTIC: Be sure your teen chooses goals that are challenging but not impossible. Otherwise, your teen may be setting his or herself up to fail. For example if your teen is failing English, raising the grade to a C may be more realistic than raising it to an A. M.

MAKE THEM TIME BASED: Encourage your teen to have short, medium, and long term goals. Short term goals could refer to things your teen wants to accomplish within a few days. For example, your teen may want to get a B on the next math quiz. Medium term goals could refer to things your teen wants to accomplish within a few months. For example, your teen may want to bring his or her math grade up to an A. Long term goals could refer to things your teen wants to accomplish within a few years. For example, your teen may want to graduate from high school and go to college.

MAKE A PLAN: Once your teen sets a goal, help him or her plan ways to reach it. For example, if

your teen's goal is to get a B+ on his or her Spanish midterm, the plan might include: attending a midterm study session, meeting with the Spanish teacher once a week, reviewing Spanish vocabulary on the bus ride to school each day, completing all assigned Spanish homework, reviewing one chapter per night from the Spanish textbook.

Encourage your teen to remember his or her goals by writing them down and putting them in a visible place, such as on the refrigerator.



NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY

Scholarship, Service, Leadership and Character are the tenants that the students of the American History High School Chapter of the National Honor Society have pledged to uphold. This year's National Honor Society Advisor is Mr. Lockhart our new AP English Teacher and Drama Club Advisor. Mr. Lockhart brings to the position a wealth of experience and will ensure students embark on activities revolved around the four aforementioned tenants.

The 8 current members of the National Honor Society are all seniors who were inducted at the end

of their junior year. These students possessed at least a 3.4 Cumulative Grade Point Average and were upstanding members of our Eagle community. In an effort to recognize Seniors who were not eligible for induction at the end of the 2010-11 school year, but returned to school this year and worked diligently to increase their G.P.A, the National Honor Society hopes to host an induction at the conclusion of the 3rd Marking Period.

In May of this year, there will be an induction for all 11th graders who have a 3.3 cumulative G.P.A. This *cere-*

mony of the roses is an opportunity for us to celebrate our Academic All Stars. For more information about the National Honor Society please visit www.nhs.us. We look forward to seeing you in the spring.



AHHS TO HOST FAMILY EMPOWERMENT NIGHT

On February 23, 2012 American History High School will be opening their doors to parents and students for an evening of celebration and planning.

Family Empowerment Night will begin at 5:30 P.M. with light refreshments being served and inspirational music sang.

At 6 p.m. Principal Gregory will lead our family in a discussion about the vision and mission of American History High School over the course of the next 5 years.

Parents and students will have the opportunity to share ideas and suggestions to ensure they have input. This event is being hosted in the midst of budget preparations for the 2012-2013 school year.

Both parents and students will have an opportunity to hear our award winning chorus perform. We plan on having a guest speaker whose topics will range from ways to support your child through their high school years and strategies for organizing an effective

PTSA that supports the school.

The evening will conclude with a nice dinner and more entertainment. Their will be an opportunity for families to win a prize.

We look forward to seeing everyone at this historic event.



**IMPORTANT DATES
3RD CYCLE**

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT	2/23
HSPA STATE ASSESSMENT	3/6 -
ACT EXPLORE TEST	4/24
ACT ACCESS GRADE 10	4/24
ACT TEST GRADE 11	4/24
REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION	4/25

WE'RE ON THE WEB
@
www.nps.k12.nj.us/his/site/default.asp

BRIDGING THE GAP IN ARTS EDUCATION

In conjunction with MSG Varsity, American History High School has launched its Video Production Program headed by Video Production Teacher Ayana Stafford and under the guidance of Principal Robert Gregory and Department Chair Elizabeth Crespo.

The Video Production Program described as "One of {his} last-minute bright ideas" by Mr. Gregory is a new addition to the school's already soaring academic roster. But like most last minute ideas, they lack pre-planning and funding.

In an effort to provide the students with viable video production education Ms. Stafford reached out to her former Film Professor from William Paterson University, Chriss Williams. Mr. Williams jumped at the opportunity to help out his former student.

Stafford and Williams decided to do a series of workshops where he and his students would visit American History High School to serve as film crew for the students and shoot their original projects. The first workshop took place on February 6, 2012. The students were ecstatic to see their words translated on film. The students described it as a "fun experience" and a great way "to see what it's like to actually be on a set". The second workshop is scheduled for February 13. The two workshops will be followed up with a trip to the University, TBA, so the high school students can edit their projects and be paired with college student mentors.

The partnership between American History High School and William Paterson University is a great way to revitalize arts education, create a relationship with high school stu-

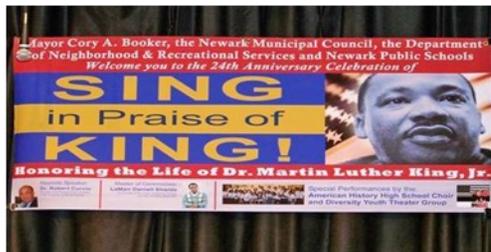
dents and their collegiate counterparts, and prepare them for their collegiate transition. Essentially, it is bridging the gap!



SING IN PRAISE OF KING HOSTED AT AMERICAN HISTORY HIGH SCHOOL



Keresse Dorcely and Principal Gregory receive Proclamation from Mayor Booker



Sing in Praise of King Banner



Mayor Booker Addresses Audience



AHHS Award Winning Chorus Performs for the 3rd Year in a Row



Master of Ceremonies Darnell Shield



Diversity Theater Group



Principal Gregory welcomes the community

