

January 20, 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians of HHS,

We are responding as a school to student and parent survey results, achievement data and the need for increased individual instruction with a change in our learning model expectations.

Beginning Monday, January 25 students will be required to attend class Zoom meetings 2 times each week. This will be on Monday's and Thursday's in a typical five-day week.

Tuesday's and Friday's will return to teacher-directed flexibility, options and choices for students to support their learning in groups and individuals. Wednesday's remain a FLEX day.

A team of students from our senior class and staff members met together to review our building goals, practices and data. Our site goals are to increase student engagement and wellness and mental health for both students and staff members. At the end of December, the district sent a survey to students and parents/guardians on a variety of issues including school work load, frequency of Zooms, time spent on school work, communication from the district and access to mental health. In addition, students created a survey designed to help inform teachers about "what works" for their learning and recommendations from their perspectives as learners.

Important considerations that were considered in this change:

1. Students completed semester 1 classes and the current achievement data indicated that over 92% of grades in classes received credit. Students, parents and teachers are working hard to be successful.
2. 98% of students responded that 2 Zooms per week are most beneficial to their learning. More zooms is reported to reduce flexibility and less independence in student learning.
3. 5% of students responded that they would prefer more Zooms with their teachers, yet 37% of parents responded that they would prefer more Zooms for their child. As a school, we can give those students more needed and individual attention on Tuesday's and Friday's.
4. Guidance from the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Department of Health is allowing learning opportunities for students in specialized instructional spaces like shops and labs. Tuesday's and Friday's allow for the scheduling of these activities without conflicting with required Zooms.
5. Flexible time for teachers to work creatively with groups of students as well as having time for individual student intervention is important.

We will continue to communicate, advocate, listen, survey and support as we respond with learning model changes and the needs on behalf of all students. We are grateful that the student voice at Hastings High School is sincere, caring and considerate of all students. Even in trying times like COVID - they understand that tough decisions have to be made, they care about their school and they want to do anything they can to keep this a great school!

Additional Parent-Teacher Conference Day Added

Hastings High School conferences will be added on Thursday evening, February 11 for class periods 1, 3, 5 & 7. We will continue to host conferences Thursday evening, March 4 and Friday morning, March 5 for class periods 2, 4, 5 & 6. Just like Fall conferences, they will be virtual and scheduled online through PTCFast. Specific conference information will be sent.

THANK YOU for your continued support! Mike Johnson - HHS Principal