

## High School Happenings January 7, 2020

### MHS Administration

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### News and Information

- **Happy New Year 2020!**
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Monday January 20:** All Methacton Schools will be closed on Monday, January 20, in observation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.
- **End of Marking Period Testing Cycle:** The end of the second marking period of the school year is January 24 (weather dependent). In order to prevent too many major tests being given on one day, the following schedule will be used when within **one cycle (6 school days) prior to the end of a marking period or the start of exams week.** The major test schedule will be as follows:
  - ACE- Science, English, Electives (excludes 3-day/cycle)
  - BDF- Math, Social Studies, World Language

The definition of Major Test and Minor Assessment are listed below. The following factors will be used for determining whether a testing instrument is a "test" or "quiz."

**Major Tests** - Given on a unit/chapter and include comprehensive material. All major tests will be announced at least two (2) days in advance to allow for maximum preparation by students.

**Minor Assessments** - Allow teachers to adjust instruction or re-teach concepts. These include announced or unannounced quizzes and do not need to adhere to the major test schedule.

**Exceptions to this policy may take place as determined and communicated in advance by building administration when such events as holidays, significant school-wide activities e.g. Halloween, assemblies, lab day schedules, or other special requests by teachers occur.**

- **Mid-Term Exams:** Comprehensive exams in the form of a mid-term exam and a final exam for yearlong courses and a final exam for semester-long courses are a component of most courses at MHS. The end of the second marking period (end of first semester) is approaching in January and the first of our twice-annual exam periods will take place. MHS will follow a special schedule during this period of end-of-semester exams. Please visit the following link for additional midterm information: <https://www.methacton.org/Domain/54> It is very important for all of our MHS families to be aware of this schedule and the manner in which the school day changes during the days of exams. It is also important for our MHS families to be aware of the academic significance of these exams. For most yearlong courses, the mid-term exam grade is averaged together with the final

exam grade to reach a score that comprises twenty (20) percent of a student's total course grade. For most semester-long courses, the final exam grade counts as twenty (20) percent of a student's overall grade. Thank you in advance for your attention to the modified schedule as you plan for January and for your support of these important exams.

- **Course Selection 2020:** During the week of January 27 to January 31, school counselors will be delivering presentations to 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in all Social Studies classes on course selection for the 2020-2021 school year. Current teachers will be making recommendations for 20-21 courses during the week of February 3 to February 7. ***These recommendations will be based on each student's current academic progress and will be guided by prerequisite requirements for courses.*** Teachers will input these recommendations into the PowerSchool portal and parents and students will be able to see these recommendations when logging into the portal. Course selection will take place in school during individual counseling sessions between students and their respective counselors sometime between February 10 and March 6 to allow for specialized confidential conversations between each student and his or her counselor. Students will receive a SmartPass from the Counseling Department when the individual session is scheduled. Parents will then have an opportunity to view these requests after they have been made. In advance of the period of course selection, please begin reviewing the Program Planning Guide (PPG) with your child so that he or she is prepared to engage in dialogue with the counselor.
- **Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment:** MHS offers a multitude of AP and Dual Enrollment courses. Please visit the following link <https://www.methacton.org/cms/lib/PA01000176/Centricity/Domain/112/AP%20Dual%20Enrollment%2019.20.3.mp4> to view a video about AP and Dual Enrollment courses as you begin to consider course selection for the 2020-2021 school year.
- **Program Planning Guide: Program Planning Guide (PPG):** The Program Planning Guide, or PPG, is the document that explains course selection in detail and outlines all the specific information regarding credit requirements for graduation, specific information relative to grade-level, course descriptions and prerequisite requirements. The PPG for the 2020-2021 school year is now posted on the MHS web page. Although actual course selection will not take place until February, parents and students are encouraged to read through the PPG together in advance and have conversations about course selection prior to the selection process in February. While discussing possible courses to select, please also make note of the **Waiver Policy**, mentioned in a previous Happenings email. Information regarding the Waiver Policy can also be found on the MHS website. Please visit the following link to view the PPG and Waiver Policy: <https://www.methacton.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=1136>
- **Transportation news:** Beginning on January 15, Methacton School District will offer bus transportation to students who have after-school employment at Shannondell. Our intentions for offering this service are to remove any potential

transportation challenges for students and to support student career and work experience objectives. If you are interested in enrolling your child, please complete and submit the [attached permission slip](#) to the main office for approval to ride the bus.

- **Handbook Corner: Working Papers** Students 14 to 17 years of age who are employed during vacation periods or have part-time jobs must obtain working papers. Application for working papers are located in the West Wing Main Office on school days. Working papers may be obtained and completed only during normal hours of operation: 7:30AM-3:00 PM Monday through Friday.