



January 25, 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are almost a month into the new calendar year, and I hope that you and your families are having a happy, healthy start to 2023. As always, we thank you for your continued cooperation with keeping your children home when ill, getting them tested, and reporting positive cases of COVID-19. We have come a very long way since March of 2020, and together we will keep moving forward.

Here are a few important items to share, including an upcoming safety presentation February 7:

### ***Safety Presentation February 7***

School safety is a top priority, and a topic that is very much on the minds of all of us. To that end, the district will be holding a **School Safety Presentation and Discussion on Tuesday, February 7, at 6 p.m. in the Horseheads High School Auditorium**. District administration and representatives from our local police and fire departments will be on hand to share information on safety procedures. All district parents and guardians are welcome to attend.

### ***Calendar Update***

With Wednesday's closing due to weather, the district has now used three of the four closing days built into the calendar. We have several weeks of winter ahead with just one snow day remaining. In the event we use the remaining day, we will be moving to flexible/remote instruction for any subsequent snow days. This will allow us to keep Spring Recess as is and still meet the state's requirement for days of instruction. We will be sharing more information on connectivity and flexible/remote instruction in the very near future.

### ***Family Resources Questionnaire***

Connectivity is important to today's educational practices. The state requires districts to gather data on connectivity. If you have not already, we ask that you help us meet this requirement by completing a questionnaire for each child in grades K-12. You can access the questionnaire by logging in to your Parent Portal account and [following the instructions here](#). If you have questions, please contact your school office or email us at [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com). If you do not have a Parent Portal account, [click here](#).

### ***District Image Entries due January 31***

There is one week left to submit an image to represent the Horseheads Blue Raiders. As we reported in our last update, as we continue to update our facilities, the Board of Education also wishes to update the image we use to identify ourselves as the Blue Raiders. Students, staff, alumni, and community members are welcome to submit designs for our new image. Submissions are due no later than 3 p.m. January 31. After this date, we will hold a district-wide vote of finalists in May. For more information and the design submission form, [please click here](#).

### ***Please Help in the Effort to Provide Universal School Meals***

Districts across the state are urging the state legislature to enact universal free school meals for all public school students. During the pandemic, a federal benefit allowed schools to provide free meals to all students, but this federal legislation has expired. Providing universal school meals would increase the number of students being fed during the school day, reduce the stigma for families unable to afford meals, and assist districts with increasing meal charge debt. We ask that you help us urge our legislators to take action and include free school meals for all students in the state's budget. Click here to send letters to our legislators:  
<https://www.voterveice.net/NYSSBA/Campaigns/98175/Respond>.

*continued*

### ***Board of Education Meeting***

The next Board of Education meeting is Thursday, February 16 at 6 p.m. in the High School Multi-Media Center. At this meeting, the administration will begin presenting information on the 2023-24 budget, including a State of the Schools presentation. Board meetings are open to the public, and they are live streamed at <http://ideas.gstbooces.org/hhds/>.

### ***Reminders:***

- **Conference Day January 30.** Monday, January 30 is a Conference Day for all schools in the district. There will be no school for students on that day.
- **Upcoming Census.** The district will be doing a formal census in order to revise our elementary boundary lines to prepare for the move to three elementary schools in the 2025-26 school year. This process will begin in the coming weeks, and we ask that every resident complete this census so that the district can establish balanced attendance boundaries for our new elementary zones.
- **Children who are not yet school age.** If you have a child who is not yet school age and have not informed the district, please contact us so that we may send you information when your child becomes school age. Send the child's name, date of birth, parent(s)' name(s), email addresses, address, and phone to [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com).
- **Moving within the district.** District residency is required for students to attend our schools. If you have moved to a new address within the district, please contact your school to provide your new address and proofs of residency.

Again, thank you for your cooperation, and thank you for your support of our children and our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Douglas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "D".

Dr. Thomas J. Douglas  
Superintendent of Schools