

September 24, 2018

TO: ALL Parents and Students at *Tooele High School, 2018-2019*

FROM: Jeffrey D. Hamm, Principal, *Tooele High School*

Dear Parents and Students:

We are off and running again! Hard to believe that it is already mid-term of the first quarter!! It's been a busy--and rewarding--inaugural five weeks! From Back-to-School Night to our "Howdy" Assembly; from School Pictures to our first Fire Drill; from our first Makeup Monday to Homecoming week . . . our school year is off to a FANTASTIC start!!!

Attached you will find your child's mid-term grades for first quarter. Remember that we no longer mail hard copies of mid-terms home to parents--only final report cards at the end of each quarter. So please review these with your student(s)--including accessing the fuller, more detailed report on the *SIS (Aspire)* grading system--and then contact your children's teacher(s) if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding their grades. We would also ask you to review your student's attendance periodically--and consistently--with them so that there are not any surprises at the end of the quarter (or year) with "UA's" and/or any other potential truancy issues.

***Coming Together:** Last **Friday, September 14** was a whirlwind of emotions as we went from devastation @ 7:00 a.m., when we quite literally showed up to a field of blue in our football stadium; to satisfaction by 7:00 p.m. when we had mostly restored order and gotten everything purpled back up. It was a humbling experience to watch our school and community come together throughout the day to get everything cleaned and fixed up. Curiously enough, there really wasn't any complaining or stone casting; just everyone working together to solve the problem and make things right prior to kickoff. Special thanks to ALL the students, Teachers, parent volunteers, custodians, and District maintenance staff who simply rolled up their sleeves, went to work, and made it happen. We truly appreciate ALL involved more than we could ever express in this simple email, and we will be forever grateful for everyone's help and support. Buffalo pride is alive and well!

***ACT Practice Test Day:** This year, we have hired a company out of our Trust Lands funds--*Strategic ACT Prep*--to work with our students on improving their ACT scores. Part of this plan includes administering full-length, paper-pencil, practice ACT tests to ALL our students (Grades 9-12) at *THS* on **Tuesday, October 2**, according to the following schedule:

- Warning Bell: 7:55 am
- Practice ACT Test: 8:00 am-Noon (**students report to their 6th-period classes**)
- Combined Lunch: 12:00-12:35 pm

- 6th-Period: 12:40-1:00 pm
- 7th-Period: 1:05-1:25 pm
- 8th-Period: 1:30-1:50 pm
- 9th-Period: 1:55-2:15 pm
- 10th-Period: 2:20-2:40 pm

It is important to note that this is our only plan for that day. In order for us to facilitate a practice *ACT* opportunity for all our students, we had to utilize *ALL* our resources in terms of facilities and staff to make this happen. So, we have no alternative activities planned for students on this day; if they are at school, please plan on them being active participants in this practice *ACT* opportunity. Parents will need to call and excuse their student(s) on this day if they are not here, as we will be holding 20-minute classes at the end of the day for Teachers to touch base with their students and to disseminate any assignments or instructional materials they may need at this time.

One of the cool things about this particular practice *ACT* opportunity is that once our students have taken the test, as soon as we get their results back, they will have access to their data in a corresponding *Canvas* course--tailored specifically to them--that will review their right and wrong answers with them. Specifically, video tutorials will be provided in *Canvas* with detailed explanations of each answer on the test--for students to review at their convenience. The plan is to disseminate the data through our faculty to the students, in order to give them a chance to access *Canvas* and review their practice tests.

As we have already instructed our Teachers, it is important for parents to note that they should be having different kinds of "test talks" with their students prior to participating in the practice *ACT*, depending upon grade level, as follows:

- ✚ **Freshmen and Sophomores:** For Freshmen and Sophomores, the talk should revolve around "exposure" and "risk-free opportunity." It is quite possible that these students will see some things on the practice *ACT* that they have not yet been taught. All the better, because it will give them more time to recognize and understand what they are up against when their time comes to take the real *ACT*, which should enable them to look ahead in their studies and learn what they don't know before their scores really do count.
- ✚ **Juniors:** Obviously, the biggest beneficiaries of participating in the practice *ACT* test are our Juniors, who get the same risk-free practice opportunity described above before taking the actual test on **Wednesday, February 20 (2019)** at *THS*. Having access to their post-test data in the *Canvas* course should prove to be an invaluable resource to study their responses--both right and wrong--to better familiarize themselves with the logic behind the test and to prepare for the one that counts in February.

- ✦ **Seniors:** Admittedly, many Seniors will have less to gain from the practice ACT than their younger counterparts; however, it depends on where they are at in the college application process and where they are planning to attend school next Fall. If they have already taken the ACT and scored 30+, this practice version probably isn't going to help them much. However, if their scores are in the low-to mid-20's range, and they are looking to improve by even a couple points to gain access to the college (and/or scholarships) they are applying for, then this practice opportunity--and the corresponding feedback in Canvas--could be just the nudge they need to push them over the top. At this point, for Seniors, this is a personal decision that they--and their families--will need to make together in weighing the relative benefits.

Additional resources provided from *Strategic ACT Prep* include access to ALL data and Canvas materials for students and Teachers, additional staff trainings on how to interpret the ACT data, and test-taking tips and strategies for Teachers and students. Hopefully, this will prove to be a really positive experience for everyone involved, and can evolve into an annual event.

*Senior Service: One last toot of the horn before I sign off. We have just wrapped up another super-successful Homecoming week, for which I want to thank our AWESOME SBO's and their advisors. But of ALL the wonderful experiences that happened this past week--from the Queen Contest to the Powder Puff football game; from the Student-Faculty softball game to the Chalk Fight; from the Pep assembly to the Parade; and from our resounding victory over Ben Lomond (63-21) to the Homecoming dance--I want to highlight the very beginning.

Specifically, this past Monday, we kicked off the week with our Senior day of service, where students had three choices to participate: 1) they could go up on the mountain and dress up the "T" as they have always done; 2) they could go out and read with younger kids in one of our five feeder elementary schools; or, 3) they could work with Tooele city to clean up various areas around our community. We had 60+ kids participate in each of these first two activities, with another 30+ participating in the community cleanup, and by all accounts, each activity was a mutually-rewarding success.

Again, it is so humbling to see the pride our students take in restoring the "T" and/or helping to beautify Tooele city; or watching a Senior kneel down on a colored rug to read to a group of Kindergarten students. Special thanks to the Principals at each of our feeder elementary schools--Middle Canyon, Northlake, Settlement, Sterling, and West--and to Tooele city for allowing our students to come and serve their communities. We believe that ALL involved are better off for these experiences.

Finally, please reference the attached dates of importance to keep up with what's going on at our school.

***Looking Ahead to October . . .**

- Freshman CCR's: **October 2018**
- Makeup Picture Day: **Monday, October 1**
- ACT Practice Test Day: **Tuesday, October 2**
- Columbus Day: **Monday, October 8**
- PBIS Summit @ THS (NO School for Students):
- NetSmartz (Dual Assembly Schedule): **Friday, October 12**
- Red Ribbon Week: **Monday-Wednesday, October 15-17**
- Region Pathways to Professions: **Tuesday-Wednesday, October 16-17**
- UEA Convention (No School): **Thursday-Friday, October 18-19**
- Makeup Monday #2 (3:00-4:00 p.m.): **Monday, October 22**
- 1st-Term ENDS (45 Days): **Thursday, October 25**
- Monster Mash (8:00-11:00 p.m.):
- TCSD Data Day (NO School for Students): **Friday, October 26**
- 2nd-Term BEGINS: **Monday, October 29**
- Flu Clinic @ THS: **Wednesday, October 31**

As always, we would like to thank you for your ongoing patience, understanding, and support as we have gotten everything up and running this year and, hopefully, gotten everyone working together on behalf of ALL our students. We appreciate the opportunity we have to work with you on behalf of your student(s) each and every day. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns; I can be reached at the enclosed email address and/or telephone number during school hours at your convenience.

Thank you for your interest in and continued support of *Tooele High School!!*

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Hamm, Principal
Tooele High School
jhamm@tooeleschools.org
(435) 833-1978