



Hermiston High School

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From the Dawghouse to your House

Character Strong

With an emphasis on relevance and real-world skills in the last several years, there has been a shift in what employers and higher education recruiters see as critical skills for their applicants. While academic performance is still a significant indicator of success, research tells us that it is only about 30 to 50 percent of what a student needs in order to be successful.

What used to be called “soft skills” are now the dominant skills sought after by employers and higher education recruiters as indicators of success. Those skills include:



- **communication**
- **resilience**
- **timeliness**
- **listening**

According to CharacterStrong (an organization set to share additional information with our teachers on March 22), “education should help to create young people who are not only competent in math, science, and reading – but also students who are compassionate, empathetic, and kind. Our character, like any other muscle in our body, can get stronger with **intentional**, consistent practice” (<https://characterstrong.com/>).

Additionally, the organization promotes the fact that humans were built to be relational, but in our current times, we are more isolated than ever. Only through the development of these skills can we reach our fullest potential as a society (and as a school community). Working to provide students with an education that is academically and socially strong will help to ensure success for each of our students as they move forward.

Point of Interest: Sympathy vs. Empathy

We must know when to offer sympathy, when to offer empathy, and when to offer both.

Being sympathetic is completely in order when someone experiences a tragedy and is feeling sad, hurt, sorrow, and loss. By being sympathetic, we encourage and promote the airing of their feelings and our own. Under those conditions, sympathy is supportive. However, if we have a depressed student dealing in doom and gloom from morning until night, we add to the debilitation by offering them **ONLY** sympathy. In such situations, sympathy merely promotes further depression because we are not offering anything substantial that the person can grasp and act on. This is an unhealthy kind of sympathy.

If we really want to help that person, we can approach them with **concerned empathy**--and **encourage their positive action** as well. Remember, empathy is the ability to put ourselves in the position of someone else. Through empathy, we feel and understand another’s pain. We should always help others to feel nurtured to grow from both the positive and the negative.

When dealing with students, we must balance our sympathy and empathy carefully and appropriately. Effective help requires both. Children and adults alike must be helped to understand they have choices--**do nothing and vegetate or choose a positive and productive road to move forward**. When we counsel students to arrive at such conclusions, their whole view of living and learning can change.

UPCOMING DATES

3.8.19: 8th Grade Elective Fair

3.9.19: Saturday Support

3.13.19: 10th Grade Assembly on Distracted Driving

3.14.19: Blood Drive

3.22.19: I/W Day, Character Strong Professional Development

3.25.19: Student Led Conferences, 4:00-8:00

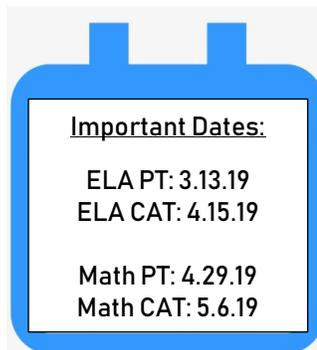
3.27.19: Student Led Conferences, 4:30-8:30

3.27.19: Senior Class Meeting

3.29.19: No School

OSAS Assessments Begin March 13

Hermiston High School students will begin taking the Oregon State Assessments (formerly known as Smarter Balanced Assessments) in English Language Arts and Math beginning March 13th. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning through performance tasks (PT) and computer adaptive assessments (CAT). State assessments offer a tremendous opportunity for all educational stakeholders to evaluate the academic progress of the Hermiston School District. Though we recognize that no single assessment can paint a complete picture of the learning and growth that each individual makes during his or her time in school, state assessments provide valuable data and opportunities.



OSAS Assessment Results help Students and Parents:

- Indicate mastery of key learning targets and assess readiness for college and careers
- Provide a clear path toward meeting Oregon Essential Skills, a vital component of meeting the requirements for high school graduation

OSAS Assessment Results help Teachers:

- Identify gaps in student learning so that teachers can adjust instruction
- Assess the effectiveness of instructional practices so that teachers can improve from year to year

OSAS Assessment Results help Administrators and Policy Makers:

- Review learning patterns annually to determine systems-level changes that might be required
- Make important policy decisions like where and how to invest in Oregon schools and how to hold schools accountable for the outcomes of those investments.

Tips for Test-Taking Success:

- Get plenty of rest. Research shows that most teenagers need at least nine hours of sleep in order to be their best.
- Eat a healthy breakfast. Breakfast is FREE for all students in the Hermiston School District beginning at 7:30 a.m.
- Have a positive attitude. This is an opportunity to celebrate your learning. The more you believe in yourself, the better you will do.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

As forecasting gets closer, it's time to consider registering for an Advanced Placement course next year. The AP curriculum consists of standardized high school courses that are roughly equivalent to undergraduate college courses. After completing an AP class, students can take the AP exam in that subject, which can earn college credits and accelerated placement in college. The best reasons to consider an AP course include:



- Being challenged. Advanced Placement classes are rigorous and demanding, offering an intellectual stimulation similar to that of college-level courses.
- Arriving at college better prepared. AP classes sharpen students' writing skills, teach them how to think critically, and improve their problem-solving abilities. AP students learn to navigate the academic expectations they'll encounter in college courses.
- Saving money. Students with AP experience and credits are more likely to graduate from college in four years. Extra semesters (or years) at college can put a heavy financial burden on families.

Enrollment in AP courses continues to grow at HHS; this year we have 273 students enrolled, with 184 students registered to take one or more AP exams. HHS currently offers 11 AP courses in multiple content areas, including:

- AP Biology
- AP Calculus
- AP Chemistry
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Government and Politics
- AP Language and Composition
- AP Literature and Composition
- AP Music Theory
- AP Physics
- AP Spanish Language
- AP Studio Art: Drawing