

January 24, 2024

Update #121 from Dr. Derek Arrowood, Superintendent, Hamilton Heights School Corporation

I recently had the opportunity to attend a meeting that was focused on the future of Northern Hamilton County. I use the word “meeting” loosely because it felt more like a gathering among friends and neighbors with a shared vision – how we can work together to make our district the best place possible to serve students. The group consisted of school and local government representatives in Adams and Jackson Township, the Town of Cicero, the City of Westfield, and OneZone Chamber of Commerce who are deeply invested in all things Northern Hamilton County.

Among some of those individuals in attendance were Mark Heirbrandt, Hamilton County Commissioner, Dan Strong, former Cicero Town Council member, Robyn Cook, Jackson Township Trustee, Dr. Dave Mundy, Superintendent Sheridan Community Schools, Jack Russell, Executive Director, OneZone, and Westfield Mayor, Scott Willis. I left the meeting feeling more informed, enlightened, and excited about the future. The bottom line is we all basically want the same thing [strong schools and strong communities] and are committed to working together, much like we have done in the past, to ensure that happens.

Speaking of partnerships and the future, Hamilton Heights School Corporation has a long and proud tradition of collaborating with the community to plan for the future. The Ford Next Generation Learning (NGL) Portrait of a Graduate effort is another example of this approach. Heights is in the midst of a comprehensive, district-wide strategic planning process to define the characteristics, attributes, and skills we want our students to possess by the time they graduate from Hamilton Heights High School. Our goal is to provide an educational experience designed to help each student learn and master academic content, form meaningful relationships, and develop the skills, aptitudes, and characteristics important to successfully maneuvering through life’s challenges as a productive member of their community and a global society.

At our first Master Planning Day earlier this month, we assembled a team of some 50 individuals including educators, administrators, students, parents, and community members. These will be the individuals working behind the scenes to get us to the finish line. The highlight of the day was the presentation by nine middle school students who spent the last few months creating our Portrait of a Graduate (POG). While the students had the support of our staff, classmates, and a hands-on working session at OneZone with Jack Russell, the result of this student-driven effort knocked it out of the park! See a video snippet of their presentation [here](#).

I want to give a shout out to a couple of our students and sports teams on their recent accomplishments. The Lady Huskies basketball team won this year’s Hoosier Conference title. The boys swimming and diving team placed second overall at the Hoosier Conference meet in West Lafayette. Senior divers’ Nathan Cox finished 1<sup>st</sup> and Ethan Swart finished 2<sup>nd</sup> with Nathan setting a conference record. Sophomore Aiden Clarke won the 100 butterfly. Sophomore Karson Herrell bowled his way to become the first HHSC Boys Bowling Sectional Champion! Sophomore Kendall Moe won the Girls State Wrestling Championship title in the 100 lb. weight class for the second year in a row. Indiana University-bound senior Peyton McQuinn won first place with a personal-best clearance at 16’-2” at the National Pole Vault Summit in Reno, NV.

At the middle school level, our 6th grade Boys Basketball team won this year’s Husky Invite, our 7th grade Boys Basketball team brought home the Mid-Indiana Conference (MIC) Championship for a third year in a row, and the wrestling team won the Lebanon Tiger Invite. Congratulations to these and all our student athletes who shine inside and outside the classroom.

In recognition of National Mentoring Month, I want to take this opportunity to thank the many mentors (students and adults) whose supportive, one-on-one relationships help enhance the educational experience at Hamilton Heights in inspiring and life-changing ways. You make a difference!  
#WeAreHuskies