

Great Things are Happening at Hixson High School

Working Hard Together: HCDE, PEF and Hixson

Hamilton County schools and the Public Education Foundation are strong partners in providing training for teachers, helping principals become more effective school leaders, improving literacy in elementary schools, and improving secondary education in Hamilton County. Hixson has made great use of this partnership:

- Principal **Christine Couch** collaborates with other Hamilton County principals in regular meetings and annual leadership institutes.
- **Ms. Couch** and teachers **Stacey Schaudel, Roger Vandergriff, Rebecca Aslinger, LeAnn Bellamy,** and **Julia Gaines** have gained leadership skills through the Leadership Fellows program.
- As a result of HCDE/PEF's high school reform initiative, college access coordinator **Brenda K. McEntyre** works hard to boost student success at Hixson.
- Through the high school reform initiative, Hixson developed a Math, Science, & Health Occupations Academy, a World Interest & Leadership Development Academy, a Business, Bank, and Finance Academy, and a 9th grade academy to make learning more engaging.
- A love of learning has led teachers and administrators to form a book club focused on honing their craft as educators. Shared book titles include: *The Global Achievement Gap*.

Good News! Tests will be harder!

Why is that good news? Because the state is raising its academic standards as part of the Tennessee Diploma Project (<http://tn.gov/TDP/>) beginning with tests taken in spring of 2010. Test scores are likely to dip at first, but they will rise quickly to meet the new standards, and Tennessee's students – your children – will be better prepared to compete for good jobs in our global economy.

2009 Report Card

Highlights:

- 85% scored **proficient or advanced** in math – up from 75% in 2003.
- 95% scored **proficient or advanced** in language arts – up from 90% in 2003.
- The graduation rate increased to 78.8% - up from 67% in 2003.

9-12 Achievement (NCLB)				
	Proficient & Advanced		Advanced	
	School	District	School	District
Math	85%	89%	36.9%	42.9%
Lang Arts	95%	96%	50.5%	63.1%

	School	District
ACT 3 yr Composite	19.6	19.5
Graduation Rate	78.8%	72.6%

There are excellent teachers in every school in Hamilton County. Read about 20 of them, visit their classrooms, and tell your own story at www.pefchattanooga.org/ExcellentTeachers.



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HCDE and PEF: Partners for Strong Schools

The Public Education Foundation (PEF) is a local non-profit that partners with the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) to improve student achievement by improving public schools.

PEF contributes:

- Research into best practices
- Training for teachers and school leaders
- Opportunities for educators to share great ideas
- Fundraising to support this work

Together, HCDE and PEF are changing education in Hamilton County, and changing students' lives. Learn more at www.HCDE.org or www.pefchattanooga.org.

“Hamilton County’s public high schools have made considerable progress in the last five years as measured by a variety of important yardsticks.”

- *Chattanooga Time Free Press* editorial, September, 2007.

Visit Hixson at: www.hcschools.org/hhs

New Initiatives

Teacher Residency - Like a medical residency program that provides “on-the-job training” for doctors, teacher residents will spend a year working with a master teacher in the classroom while also taking classes to earn a master’s degree and a teaching certificate. Recruits will specialize in math, science, or other hard-to-fill subject areas.

Principal Leadership Academy – It’s not easy being a principal! This year, HCDE and PEF will provide a series of half-day workshops for 15-20 assistant principals to help prepare them to move smoothly into the responsibility of being a principal. HCDE, PEF, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and UT Chattanooga are currently developing a full-scale Academy that will provide more intensive training, mentoring and support for assistant principals who are likely to become principals.

College Begins in Kindergarten

PEF has recently merged with the local College Access Center – a long-standing partner in our college access work. With help from the Hamilton County Department of Education and the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, we have placed part-time college advisors in every high school in Hamilton County, and are working to encourage students to start thinking as early as middle school about post-high school college or technical training.

Partly as a result of this work, the number of graduates from Hixson High who enrolled in college the following fall increased from 70.6% in 2004 to 73.3% in 2008.

Get info on helping your child go to college at www.pefchattanooga.org/CollegeAccess

