

Great Things are Happening at Signal Mountain Middle / High School

Working Hard Together: HCDE, PEF, Signal Mountain

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

- Principal **Tom McCullough** and assistant principals **Lisa Huskey** and **Patty Lane** collaborate with other Hamilton County principals in regular meetings and annual leadership institutes.
- Ms. Huskey** and teachers **Jennifer Agan**, **Jeff Barlew**, **Rachel Bryant**, **Laura Houston**, **Joy Ludwig**, and **Kristy Myhan** have gained leadership skills through the Leadership Fellows program.
- As a result of HCDE/PEF's middle school reform initiative, college access coordinator **LeAnn Welch** and instructional coach **Dorothy Hallman** work hard to boost student success at Signal Mountain.
- Through the reform initiative, members of Signal Mountain's leadership team have visited high-performing schools to observe effective practices; teachers have developed events to help students transition into middle school and high school; and students, parents, and teachers have had input into the reform process through surveys.
- With funding from PEF, Signal Mountain educators have formed a book club to hone effective teaching practices. They will be discussing *The Art of Teaching Reading* and *Units of Study for Teaching*.
- Ms. Myhan** has also participated in the Osborne Fellows program to earn a Master's degree in urban education.

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.

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

2009 Report Card

Highlights:

- 80.5% of middle school and 88.5% of high school students scored **advanced** in math.
- 68.6% of middle school and 85.7% of high school students scored **advanced** in reading.
- 8th grade EXPLORE test results for 2009-10 show predicted college-readiness of 90% in English, 68% in reading, and 74% in math – up from 2008-09 scores of 84%, 61% and 59%, respectively.

K-8 Achievement (NCLB)

	Proficient & Advanced		Advanced	
	School	District	School	District
Math	97%	89%	80.5%	44.8%
Lang Arts	98%	90%	68.6%	39.3%

9-12 Achievement (NCLB)

	Proficient & Advanced		Advanced	
	School	District	School	District
Math	100%	89%	88.5%	42.9%
Lang Arts	100%	96%	85.7%	63.1%

	School	District
ACT 3 yr composite	N/A	19.5
Graduation rate	N/A	72.6%

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HCDE and PEF: Partners for Strong Schools

The Public Education Foundation (PEF) is a local non-profit organization 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.

Reinventing Middle School Education

Since 2005, Signal Mountain has benefited from PEF and HCDE's middle school reform initiative, an \$8.5 million program involving all county middle schools. Funded by the Lyndhurst Foundation, this initiative focuses on helping each school develop its own individual plan to help as many students as possible score "advanced" in literacy and math.

Visit Signal Mountain online at www.signalmountainhighschool.com

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 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, 70% of 2008 graduates from Hamilton County public schools enrolled in college the following fall. For more on Signal Mountain High, go to www.pefchattanooga.org/SignalMountainHigh.

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