

Hamden
Collaborative
Learning
Center
2023-2024

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(203) 407-2010 • Fax (203) 407-5861
www.hamden.org

A Message to Students and Providers

Welcome to the HCLC Program. We believe that an essential ingredient of our program has been our close working relationship not only with our students, but with their families and service providers.



Students who attend HCLC often have a history of school problems and have experienced a great deal of discontinuity in their learning. HCLC offers the caregivers of our students a step toward renewed commitment and on-going collaboration with a supportive team.

Many of our students have had school and community experiences which have led to challenges in their educational progress. We work to help high school students assess their past and present behavioral patterns, set new goals, and make a commitment to make positive changes. We emphasize the development of good social judgment, and we work with students to help them make constructive life decisions and to move closer to fulfilling their potential in academic areas.

We have seen students make progress and we have learned a great deal over the years from our work with students and their families. When we have been the most successful, it has been because the loop of students, parents, guardians and service providers have worked closely with us to close the circle of support, offering valuable insights and feedback. We seek to develop a meaningful home/school/community partnership in order to most effectively meet the needs of our students. Please keep in touch with us – do not hesitate to call with your questions, concerns and suggestions. We welcome and appreciate your involvement!

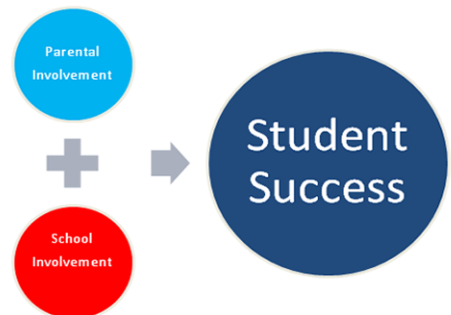
Please remember to refer to the Hamden Public School website (www.hamden.org) frequently in order to stay on top of district news and information.

All the Best,

Darce DeCosta
Coordinator



S STUDENT
P INVOLVEMENT




Hamden Collaborative Learning Center

The **Hamden Collaborative Learning Center (HCLC)** is a district-based alternative education program for students, grades 10-12, who have not achieved success in the larger school environment. Students attending HCLC experience a smaller learning environment, with emphasis upon developing meaningful connections with adults and producing quality work that will equip students for graduation and beyond.

Our curriculum is aligned with district and state standards for student performance. Learning experiences are tailored to meet the unique needs of each learner. Student-teacher relationships, parent involvement, and community connections are essential in order to foster academic success and better prepare students for success in post-high school learning or employment opportunities. To this end, students can maximize their potential for academic, social and emotional success.

Students attending HCLC are assigned classes based upon their instructional level and needs. Students attending HCLC remain connected to their home school, with high school students working toward a Hamden High School diploma based upon satisfactory completion of all high school distribution and graduation requirements. To maximize the potential for student success, HCLC offers:

- A smaller, flexible, supportive learning environment;
- Classes with instructional support from a teacher and paraprofessional;
- Curricula that is aligned with district and state learning standards, modified to meet the individual learning needs of each student;
- Student Chromebooks to support classroom instruction;
- Work study or work experience;
- School and community-based Internships;
- Individual and group counseling to promote the social, emotional and behavioral development of all students;
- Elective course options taken at Hamden High School;
- Virtual Learning/On-line courses/Credit Recovery Courses;
- Assistance with planning for post-secondary education, training or employment.

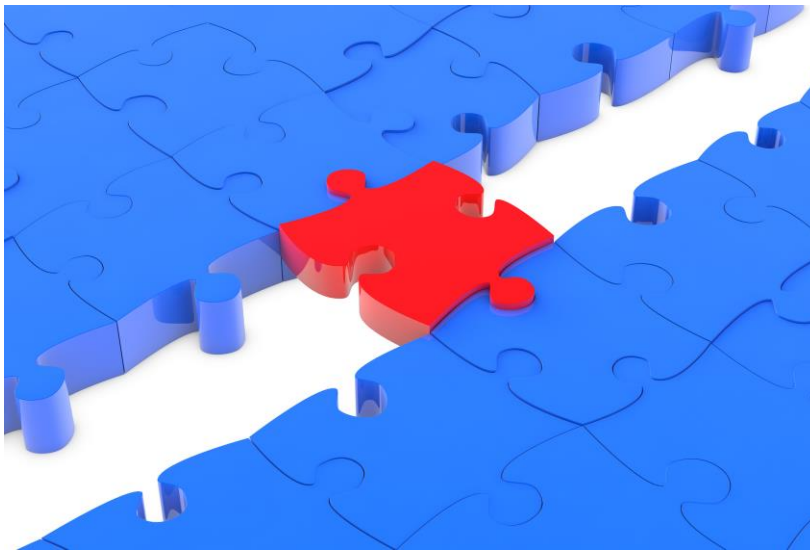


***Hamden
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Transition

In addition to their academic program, all students at HCLC participate in transition activities. The transition component helps students prepare for their future by exploring the areas of post-secondary education/employment, independent living, and community participation.

Internship opportunities are available for students who qualify based on their academic record, behavior, interests, motivation, and future plans.



Service learning opportunities are also incorporated into the school program. Students may elect to participate in activities that support charitable causes.

Grade 12 students complete the credit and course distribution requirements for a high school diploma. Seniors are required to take a Careers course exploring the areas of vocational skills, life skills, and post-secondary opportunities.



Electives

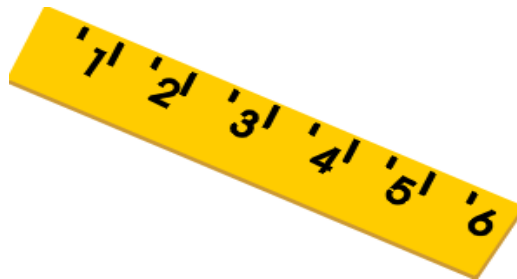
Students attending HCLC may be eligible to take elective courses at Hamden High School with shuttle service available between the two locations. The number of classes students take is based on readiness, performance and credit needs.

Some examples of elective offerings are:

- Digital Art
- Music Tech
- Musical Theater
- Sports Marketing
- Multicultural Art
- Harmony and Theory



- Music Composition
- Exploring Theater
- Foods and Nutrition
- TV/Video Productions
- Intro to Wood
- Piano Lab
- Home Repairs
- Drafting
- Intro to Electricity
- Photography
- Personal Finance
- Business Math
- Computers
- Spanish/Italian/French



HCLC Program Guidelines

- HCLC adheres to and enforces the Hamden Board of Education Policies regarding smoking, drugs and alcohol, bullying and sexual harassment. For more information on this and other information on student discipline, see the Hamden Board of Education District Policies on the school website: www.hamden.org > District Policies > Students (Series 5000).
- **Cell phones and electronics must be turned off during class time unless instructed differently by staff. See the new school policy below.**
- Students may not leave the school building or grounds without following proper procedures. Parents and proper authorities will be contacted.
- Students 18-years of age or older are NOT allowed to leave premises during the school day. Attendance is a critical component to earning credit toward graduation. Absences for leaving school grounds are **unexcused** regardless of age, notifying staff or signing out.
- Students must stay in assigned areas unless given specific permission by a staff member.

Cell Phone Policy

- HCLC staff understands the need for each family to have a clear line of communication with their child. We understand the desire for students to possess cell phones. However, Board of Education policy dictates that students should turn off all cell phones upon entering the building and secure cell phones within their bags during the school day. Texting is not permitted. Student cell phones should never be

seen nor heard during the school day. **If a cell phone is confiscated, a parent will need to retrieve the phone from the grade level administrator.** HCLC is not responsible for lost or stolen phones, iPods, game devices, MP3 Players, etc.

HCLC Program Approaches

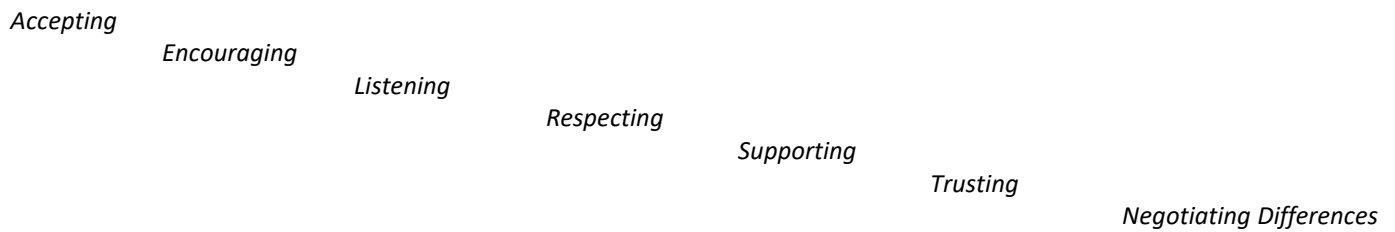
- **Restorative Practices**

Building community and relationships is the key to a positive school climate. In instances when harm is done, such issues are addressed through restorative practices that involve all parties affected to convene and devise a plan to move forward using this fundamental hypothesis:

Human beings are happiest, healthiest and most likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in authority do things *with them* rather than *to them* or *for them*.

- **Choice Theory**

Students will become familiar with the tenets of Choice Theory which embody Caring Habits of:



Schedules

HCLC Regular Schedule
1. 7:50 - 8:35
2. 8:35 - 9:20
3. 9:20 - 10:05
4. 10:05 - 11:20
LUNCH
5. 11:20 - 12:05
6. 12:05 - 12:50
7. 12:50 - 1:35

HCLC Early Dismissal Time
10:50

Transportation	For Students:
7:30 - Home to HCLC	starting day at HCLC
8:10 - HHS to HCLC	taking one AM class at HHS
9:00 – HHS to HCLC	taking two AM classes at HHS
9:50 – HHS to HCLC	taking three AM classes at HHS
12:05 – HCLC to HHS	taking two PM classes at HHS
12:55 – HCLC to HHS	taking one PM class at HHS
1:35 – HCLC to Home	ending day at HCLC
1:50 – HHS to Home	ending day at HHS

Grading and Eligibility for Incentives

Grading is based on classroom performance that incorporates work output, progress, participation, behavioral expectations and attendance.

Students are expected to monitor their grades via PowerSchool access. Grades for work completion and participation are recorded each day by teachers.



Incentives are received when students have a C+ or better for grades in all HCLC classes. Incentives include field trips, extra social and activity time and nutritional rewards.

Field Trips

All students are encouraged to participate in subject-related or incentive-driven field trips. They are experiences that provide exposure to the community and give students the opportunity to learn how to conduct themselves in a variety of settings. Field trips are not only fun, they serve as educational chances to build social skills. Participation in special field trips may be contingent upon current student grades which must reflect a C+ or better in all HCLC classes. Most field trips are sponsored by HCLC and free of cost to students. All program rules apply and students must take bus transportation provided to and from field trips.

ALPS/Student Support Services



There are times when a student may require a temporary change in setting. **ALPS** (Alternative Learning Placement Site) is a short-term intervention. It is an opportunity to process concerns that affect the community. Issues are resolved in this safe place so students return to the classroom where further teaching and learning takes place. An HCLC Interventionist supervises ALPS and facilitates in this capacity.

Student Appearance

All students should be dressed and groomed in a neat, modest, and appropriate manner as determined by staff and social norms.



Office Hours

All classroom teachers have office hours once a week from 1:45 to 2:30. Based on need, teachers often make themselves available more often than this as well as during lunchtime. There are times when a student may be required to attend teacher office hours to address academic and/or behavior concerns.

Attendance

For **ALL** absences parents/guardians must notify HCLC at (203) 407-2010. For students attending AM classes at HHS, call (203) 407-2040 also. HCLC staff will call parents and students directly by 9:30 to determine a cause of non-attendance. The school day at HCLC begins at **7:50 AM** and begins at



7:20 AM at Hamden High School. If students arrive up to 10 minutes late to their class, they will be considered tardy. In excess of 10 minutes late is considered an unexcused absent for the class.

For medical issues, the direct number for the school nurse is (203) 407-3101. Only written documentation of appointments will be considered as evidence for an excused absence.

Oversleeping, a parent phone call, written notes, and missing the bus are not deemed excusable. A parent phone call before the school day will be marked as PCA (parent called absent). All other non-documented absences will be marked UNX (unexcused). Credit may be lost in classes if absences exceed 10 per semester.

If a student is not present for more than 50% of a school day, it is considered a full-day absence.

Rights

A “right” is something that belongs to you and cannot be taken away by anyone. Your classmates and teachers have the same rights:

You have a right to a safe school. This means that your school should provide safe classrooms, equipment and rules to ensure your safety at school.

You have the right to be respected and treated with kindness at school. This means that others should not laugh at you, make fun of you, or hurt your feelings.

You have a right to be an individual at school. This means you should be treated fairly whether you are tall or short, boy or girl, dress or talk differently or it takes you a little longer to get the right answer.

You have the right to work without being bothered. This means that others should not bother you as you responsibly make good use of your time.

You have the right to express yourself. This means that you may talk freely about your ideas and feelings when appropriate.

You have a right to tell your side of the story.....when asked of your involvement in a situation.

Responsibilities

There are some things you should do without being told. Some of these things you do for others and some of these you do for yourself:

You have a responsibility to come to school. This means that you come to school every day, on time, unless you are documented as sick or excused due to civic duty.

You have a responsibility to take care of property. This means observing all safety and classroom rules.

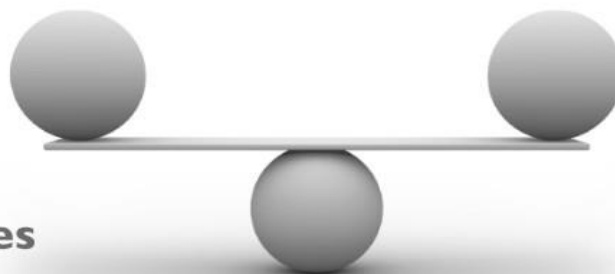
You have a responsibility to complete your classroom assignments. This means to do your best with your class assignments and homework, and submit them on time.

You have a responsibility to take messages home. This means that it is important for you to take all school messages to your parents/guardians.

You have a responsibility to practice good personal cleanliness. This means that you come to school clean and appropriately dressed.

You have a responsibility to help make school a good place to be. This means being thoughtful, respectful and courteous to others.

**Rights and
Responsibilities**



Transportation



First Student is the bus company for Hamden Public Schools.

Call **(203) 288-2887** for information regarding routes, times and any bus related issues.

First Student is your first option to resolve bus issues. **It is the responsibility of students and parents to contact them directly, not HCLC, to work out bus situations that may occur in the morning.** Students and parents may inform HCLC if a transportation concern persists over time.

AM bus schedule to HCLC:

Standard Arrival for 7:50, Period 1 – Bus will arrive at pick-up points between 7:00 and 7:45. Check website for bus number, detailed times and bus stops.

Adjusted Arrival for 8:45, Period 2 – Some students have a late arrival built into their schedule or may have missed the Standard Arrival bus. The pick-up point for a shuttle is 8:15 at Hamden High School on the parkway side of the building. Check website for detailed times and bus stops.

HCLC students assigned to an afternoon bus **MUST** take their designated bus home. Only students **18-years of age** or older have the right of transportation refusal in the afternoon and have the option to walk or use an alternate mode of transportation at the end of the school day.

As noted in the Guidelines section:

- Students 18-years of age or older are **NOT** allowed to leave premises during the school day. Attendance is a critical component to earning credit toward graduation. Absences for leaving school grounds are **unexcused** regardless of age, notifying staff or signing out.

A written note, phone call or e-mail from a parent/guardian does NOT authorize students under 18 to change buses, find another ride or walk off school grounds during or after the school day.

Students may be dismissed during or after the school day to only those individuals who are documented on their HCLC Student Emergency Information Form.

Students who possess a license and a vehicle must clear their driving status with school staff before being approved to drive to school. There may be contingencies placed on a student to be approved or to maintain driving status.

HCLC Mission Statement

Hamden Collaborative Learning Center engages staff, students, families and the community to create a nurturing environment of respect and acceptance.

HCLC encourages students to achieve their unique potential through academic rigor and personal challenge.

In this alternative setting, individual strengths and needs are addressed so that each student develops confidence and self-awareness – emotionally, socially, and academically – to be life-ready after graduation.

