



AHS Parent Newsletter: Friday, Sept. 15

Principal's Message

As I've mentioned in previous letters and at Back to School Night, Alameda High opened this year with a positive feeling that felt like pre-COVID time. The students are eager and engaged and ready to learn for the most part. We have, however, developed some bad habits over the past 3 years that we are working to address this year. I'm talking about attendance and getting to class on time. We are implementing standards, expectations, and consequences around these two expectations. We made sure that all these expectations were detailed in the parent/student handbook that you received electronically and indicated with electronic signature that you received. I also listed the expectation and consequences for failing to meet those expectations in my August 25, Friday letter. We also held four, first time, grade level assemblies to outline to students the expectations and possible consequences. And now, I am, somewhat obnoxiously, sending emails out through Parent Square as soon as a student earns 5 – 9 tardies so that parents and student can be informed. All this is because:

1. Attendance and being on time is important; and
2. Students exceeding 10 tardies in a semester are then on a 3-month suspension from all extra-curricular activities including sports

This week, I had to inform two students who reached 11 tardies of their 3-month exclusion from the extra-curriculars. For one student, that meant missing tryouts for one of our winter sports. The second student is a spring athlete but was told that should this pattern continue than they were running the risk of missing out on their sport.

Tardies/Detention

In passing, I have spoken to multiple students, primarily athletes and leadership students, about their tardies and most are somewhat dismissive about the whole thing. The student that I had to exclude yesterday resulting in no tryouts for winter sports and their parents felt very different. I say all this so you can counsel your child, check their attendance on AERIES, and hopefully, we will not be having to inform any more students of bad news.

Multiple parents have asked if there can be a warning. I contend that there was: in the handbook, in the assemblies, in the Parent Square emails. Once a student exceeds 10 tardies, they will have a 3-month exclusion from all extra-curriculars. Knowing that the first two weeks of school can be chaotic with balancing classes and starting of blocks, we will not be counting any tardies that occurred between August 14 and August 25. Outside of that, any tardy earned will be counted as one of the 10. Also, this system will reset second semester and we will only count tardies earned in that semester. No tardies earned between August and December will count in the second semester totals. If any of this is concerning to you then you must instill in your child, the importance of getting to class on time. I appreciate you working in partnership with us on this.

There are a few other things that can impact your child's eligibility for extra-curriculars that I listed in my August 25 letter, and I am including those again below.

- Failure to serve a detention or the one-time, make-up detention given as a result of a tardy
- More than 10 tardies in a semester
- Less than 90% positive attendance to all classes (this number changes depending on the number of days into the school year). Subject to review by an administrator upon request.
- Students with more than one truancy letter in a semester
- 2nd and 3rd violation of the academic integrity expectations (No cheating, plagiarism, or AI work)
- School suspension
- Multiple incidences of vaping or controlled substances
- Use of hate speech or acts, and ongoing bullying

Avoiding all the above qualifiers will leave a student in good standing and with the option to participate in athletics and other co-curricular activities in school.

Progress Reports

Next week, progress reports for this quarter will be posted on AERIES. Progress reports and report cards are no longer mailed home. I will send a robo-call late next week when grades are posted on AERIES. Teachers are expected to complete and submit those reports by the end of the day on Wednesday. On this first round of progress reports, many teachers will provide you with a mark of a "P" if your child has a "C" or above. Otherwise, you should see an A-F mark for your child's progress thus far this quarter. If your child earned a "D" or "F" please take this seriously. You need to sit down with him/her and make a plan to remedy this situation. If your child did well then, by all means, celebrate it. High School is not easy. In addition to all the academic challenges, they are navigating their development towards adulthood. Think back to those times for your own childhood and think of what supports you can give to your child to assist them in this time of growth.

Counseling – Senior Presentations

This week all parents of senior year students shall receive a letter from their student's counselor. This letter will provide information about the student's academic standing in terms of meeting the Alameda Unified School District's graduation requirements. If your student is applying to 4-year college, there are additional requirements that need to be met. A copy of your student's transcript will be attached to the letter. Please review this letter carefully and contact your student's counselor if you have any questions or concerns.

On September 19, 20 and 21 counselors will be visiting all 12th grade English classes to present information to our seniors. These presentations will cover important information in regard to meeting the Alameda Unified School District's graduation requirements and the 4-year colleges A-G requirements. The college application process, requirements for community college applications and 4-year college applications will be reviewed as well. This presentation will be posted on our website under 'Counseling Office Grade Level Curriculum'. If your student is absent during these presentations, please have them check in with their counselor.

PSAT

Every year, AHS offers the Practice Student Aptitude Test (PSAT) for students who want to experience an SAT type test prior to taking the actual test. This year's PSAT will be administered on Saturday, October 14. We acknowledge that many colleges and universities are no longer requiring the SAT but a few still are and the PSAT is also used for Juniors who are applying to the National Merit Scholarship program. We ordered 250 tests, and they are available on a first come first serve basis. The price for the test is \$30.00. Starting Tuesday, September 19, students may come to Door C 108, just west of the Kofman lobby to submit their form (attached) and payment for the PSAT. We will accept sign-ups September 19 – September 22, from 8:00 am – 8:25 am, and again from 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm for any junior interested in taking the test. On September 21 – September 22 during the times listed above any sophomore interested in taking the test may come to Door C 108 with the sign-up form and check. A check made out to Alameda High School in the exact amount of \$30.00 or exact cash will be accepted along with the completed half sheet form attached to this letter or you can come by the main desk and grab a sign-up sheet on Monday or Tuesday. If using a check, place the student's name and PSAT in the memo line. We only ordered 250 tests so only the first 250 people to register will be eligible to test on Saturday, October 14.

This year the PSAT is all digital. This means that students will need to bring their Chrome book fully charged for the test administration. We will not have loaner Chrome books and students will not be able to use their personal device since the test requires an app loaded on the device in order to access the test.

Safety – Dropping Off Students

For families who drop their child off at school and for parents of students who drive to school, I want to put out a plea about speed and safety especially around the perimeter of the school. Because we do not have the luxury of a drop off lane, safety can be an issue here at Alameda High School. Due to the large number of cars in the mornings and afternoons, in combination with all the cyclists and pedestrians coming to campus, I want to implore you to use caution. If you can drop your student a block away that might lessen the congestion around the perimeter in the mornings and afternoons.

On a similar note, please do not pull into the parking lots to drop off or pick-up students in the 30 or so minutes on each side of the start and end of the day. With a singular ingress/egress to both parking lots, it creates problems when this is done.

Graduation

Seniors it's never too early to know; each graduating senior receives 5 tickets for graduation. Children two years of age and under do not require a ticket. AHS does not make exceptions to the 5 ticket rule. Small bundles of tickets are provided to booster organizations, the senior class, and one or two other groups to auction off to earn money for projects that benefit the school. If you are going to need more than 5 tickets, then keep your ears open for those auctions that generally start in the winter and carry into the spring. You can also start to review any and all seniors that you know who may not need all 5 tickets and strike a deal with them. What you shouldn't do is make a plea to the principal because he gets dozens of pleas and has to say no to them all. We are

limited in the capacity of Thompson field by the fire department and that is what limits our tickets. We have explored other venues but have found them all cost prohibited.

PTSA Meeting

A quick reminder that PTSA will be holding a meeting this coming Tuesday, September 19. Meeting starts at 7:00 pm and below is the Zoom link for the meeting.

<https://ucsf.zoom.us/j/97358059069>

I hope that you enjoy your weekend. If you have any questions or concerns you may email me at rithurnburn@alamedaunified.org or you can call the school at (510) 337 – 7022 and I will try to address them.

Robert Ithurburn
Hornet Pride!



ALAMEDA HIGH SCHOOL

Monday, September 18

Periods 0-6

8:30-9:12am

Meaningful Monday

2nd period classes

Tuesday, September 19

Period 0,1,2,5,SMART,6

Lunch

Smith College

College Career Center

SMART

University of Chicago

College Career Center

4:00pm

Women's Water Polo JV vs Castro Valley

Encinal Swim Center

4:30pm

Women's Volleyball Freshman vs Piedmont

AHS New Gym

5:00pm

Men's Water Polo Varsity vs Castro Valley

Encinal Swim Center

5:30pm

Women's Volleyball JV vs Piedmont

AHS New Gym

6:00pm

Women's Water Polo vs Castro Valley

Encinal Swim Center

6:30pm

Women's Volleyball vs Piedmont

AHS New Gym

7:00pm

Men's Water Polo JV vs Castro Valley

Encinal Swim Center

7:00pm

PTSA Meeting

Zoom

Wednesday, September 20

Periods 0,1,3,4,6

3:30pm

Women's Golf All Levels vs Multiple Schools

Redwood Canyon

3:30pm

Women's Tennis JV vs Mt. Eden

AHS Tennis Courts

4:00pm

Women's Volleyball Frosh vs O'Dowd

BOD Knauss Gym

5:00pm

Women's Volleyball JV vs O'Dowd

BOD Knauss Gym

5:15pm

Cross Country All Levels vs Multiple Schools

Hayward HS

6:00pm

Women's Volleyball Varsity vs O'Dowd

BOD Knauss Gym

Thursday, September 21

Periods 0,2,3,4,SMART,5

SMART

Boston College

College Career Center

6:30pm

Women's Flag Football vs Tennyson Thompson Field

Friday, September 22

Periods 0-6

3:30pm

Women's Tennis JV vs Berkeley

AHS Tennis Courts

5:00pm

Football: Island Bowl AHS vs EHS

Encinal High School

Go Hornets!

