

February 27, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As you may know, a total solar eclipse affecting much of New York will take place on Monday, April 8. Like many districts along the eclipse's path throughout New York and the nation, the district will alter the school day to accommodate the conditions created by this event. **Monday, April 8 will now be a half day of school. We will dismiss grades 7-12 at 10:40am and grades K-6 at noon that day. PreK dismissal will be at 11:45am.**

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon moves between the sun and Earth. During this time, the sun is completely covered by the moon for a brief time. In our area, the partial eclipse will begin just after 2pm, reaching its maximum coverage around 3:20pm, and ending after 4:30pm. Eclipses to this extent occur rarely. Such a unique event can also draw additional people to our area.

**We remind everyone that the only safe way to view a partially eclipsed sun is with special purpose solar filters such as eclipse glasses.** Regular sunglasses are not safe to use to view an eclipse. Significant sight damage will occur without proper protection. For more information on eclipses and how to safely view them, [click here](#).

### **Community Capital Project Update March 12**

The district invites all parents, guardians, and community members to an update and open house on the districtwide capital project **Tuesday, March 12 at 6pm in the Horseheads High School Cafeteria**. Those in attendance will hear updates about our first and second referendums, learn about the next proposed referendum, and tour finished projects at the High School. There will also be a Q/A session with district administration and the project manager.

### **Budget Calendar**

The district and Board of Education have begun development of the 2024-25 Budget. The next meeting is a Budget Workshop this Thursday, February 29, at 6pm in the High School Multi-Media Center. All are welcome. Future meetings will be held during the next two months, with the Budget vote on Tuesday, May 21, from 7am to 9pm in the High School South Gym. Here is the schedule of meetings:

- Thursday, February 29 Budget Workshop, 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center
- Thursday, March 14 Regular Meeting, 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center
- Wednesday, March 27 Budget Workshop, 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center
- Thursday, April 11 Budget Meeting (if needed), 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center
- Wednesday, April 17 Special Meeting (Board Vote on the BOCES Administrative Budget), 7:30am, District Offices at Hibbard Road
- Thursday, April 18 Regular Meeting (Board adoption of the 2024-25 Budget), 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center
- Thursday, May 9 Public Hearing on 2024-25 Budget, 6pm, High School Multi-Media Center

All meetings are open to the public, live streamed, and recorded.

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### **ARP ESSER Fund and Smart Schools Bond Act**

At Thursday's Board of Education meeting (6pm, High School Multi-Media Center), the district will discuss the conclusion of two grant funds: the federal American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER) and the New York State Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA). The meeting is open to the public.

By law, ARP ESSER pandemic related funds require a budget amendment and the opportunity for public feedback. The district's amended plan for these monies will be introduced at tomorrow's meeting. Public feedback begins after the meeting and ends prior to the March 14 Board of Education meeting. For more information on ARP ESSER funds, [click here](#). If you have feedback on the current amendment to the ARP ESSER, please contact the district.

The district will also be reviewing the conclusion of its Smart Schools Bond Act investment plan at the meeting. The purpose of the SSBA is to enhance teaching and learning for students through the improvement of educational technology and infrastructure. The district has secured devices and servers with this funding source over several years. The final expenditures for this plan will include the acquisition of interactive whiteboards for elementary classrooms and laptop computers for high school students. Like the ARP ESSER Fund, the proposed SSBA plan will have a public feedback timeframe prior to adoption and submission to the New York State Education Department.

### **2024-25 Calendar**

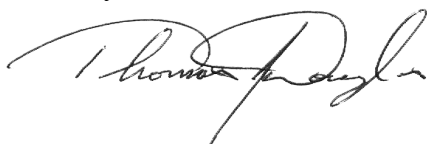
The 2024-25 School Calendar will be on the agenda at the Board of Education's February 29 budget meeting. We will share the calendar once it has been formally approved.

### **Conference Day March 18**

As a reminder, Monday, March 18 is a Conference Day for our staff. There is no school for students that day.

If you have questions, please contact your school's Main Office or email us at [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com). Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Thomas J. Douglas  
Superintendent of Schools