

NORTH HILLS PREPARATORY Newsletter

Panther Pause



Volume 12, Issue 5, June 2009



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North Hills Prep Ranked # 9 in the Nation

Congratulations teachers, students, and parents for a job well done. North Hills Prep has been ranked as the 9th best school in the nation according to Newsweek Magazine. Read the story at <http://www.newsweek.com/id/201160>.

Additionally, the 2009 TAKS results are in and North Hills Preparatory is Exemplary K – 12. **CONGRATULATIONS** are in order to **ALL**.

Attendance Means More Than You Think

North Hills Preparatory is a school of choice by families that have a commitment to education. Families desire a community that shares this dedication by students, parents and educators. Attendance is clearly an element of that commitment. Studies and common sense show that a child's success in school is directly related to the child's time in class. A parent must teach the importance of education and community by sending the child to school everyday possible.

There is more than a good education tied to your child's attendance. A large part of the State of Texas' funding to public schools is directly based on attendance. Funding that pays for better salaries for teachers and acquires facilities and supplies for a better education. TEA's coveted "Exemplary" school ranking has high attendance expectations. Grants awarded and contributions made from large corporations scrutinize attendance rates before making their decisions. The financial health of NHP is at risk.

North Hills Preparatory in the previous 12 week period had an average absence rate of 46 students a day. That is over \$1800.00 per day lost from the state's funding. Please understand we are not expecting families to send a sick student to school. But as the year winds down and your child complains they are tired, overworked, irritable, mildly injured or their homework isn't done, please send them to school anyway. As summer approaches, a time for relaxation, camps and vacations, plan accordingly and do your part to gain as much money for North Hills, support the community and most importantly show your children the importance of being in school.

Remember school begins August 13th. See you here.

Nancy Lee and Lisa Smith

North Hills Parents Descend Upon the Capitol in Austin

Several parents visited the Capitol to show their support for our school. Our bus left at 7:00 am. It was truly a wonderful effort by our community. There could not have been a more energetic, focused and committed group. We are so lucky to have their support.



Even bad weather can't stop our wonderful parents

An Eventful Year in the NHP Academic Counseling Office

Last fall, we achieved our goal of setting up a College Counseling Library. Students use the library to research colleges as well as work on their applications and resumes for their colleges. In addition, we were able to bring in Sonya Barron to be our third Academic Counselor for the Upper School. Sonya has been a significant addition to our staff.

Our seniors have had a very successful year. Almost every one of our 87 seniors has been accepted to at least **one** college. Even the three seniors who have chosen the military have been accepted into colleges. The seniors listened to us when we told them it was imperative that they submit their college applications as early in the fall as possible. It paid off in a big way for 42 of our 87. **42** of our graduating seniors received over **\$5.4 M** in both merit and need-based **scholarships** this year from the colleges that offered those letters of acceptance. We are very proud of these students.

Most all of our seniors have received acceptances from more than one of their top choices. We have students accepted to out of state colleges such as Cornell, Middlebury, Emory, Carnegie Mellon, University of Southern California, New York University, Fordham, Washington University, University of Michigan, Tulane, University of Miami, Syracuse, Rhodes College, and Brandeis. We also have many of our students accepted to the top schools in Texas, including Rice, Southwestern, Austin College, TCU, SMU, Baylor, UT, UT Dallas, Texas A&M, UD, UNT, Texas State, and Texas Tech. Our students who were given such great choices were able to select their undergraduate choices, not only on the location of the schools and the majors they are interested in, but also on the amount of money offered by the schools. Many of the highly selective schools like Cornell, USC, Middlebury, Emory and Carnegie Mellon are charging upwards of \$50,000 each year to attend. We also have students who received full scholarships from UT-Dallas, UT-Austin and Texas A&M.

We are so proud to have been a part of our seniors' success. They have worked hard and diligently to achieve their successes at NHP. We all need to congratulate them when we see them. We want to remind the underclassmen at NHP that this is what happens when you organize and prioritize your college planning process. Getting your applications submitted in the early part of the fall semester of your senior year will help you get the most money available from the schools you apply. We are looking forward to helping the students in the class of 2010 achieve their dreams for the future!

Catherine, Marcia and Sonya

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Foreign Language—French

Results for the National French Contest 2009 are in, and our students were OUTSTANDING!

This is the 6th year that students from North Hills Preparatory have participated in the *Grand Concours*, which is the National French Contest sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF). Students who participate in the Grand Concours are evaluated for their proficiency in listening, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and culture. Students are then ranked on the national level.

This year, over **101,000** students from across the nation in grades 1-12 participated in the Grand Concours. Students scoring in the National Top 20th percentile of their respective levels are honored with the *Certificat d'Honneur*. This year, **27 middle and upper school students from North Hills Prep received this honor.**

Level 01:

- ♦ Lorraine Cruz
- ♦ Zanir Habib
- ♦ Tabitha Hoover
- ♦ Laura Howard
- ♦ Nidish Lokesh
- ♦ Riddhi Rane

Level 1:

- ♦ Nidhi Gotgi
- ♦ Sheila Husin
- ♦ Nene Mulukutla
- ♦ Jerry Nelluvellil
- ♦ Emma Rodin
- ♦ Arvind Sivakumar
- ♦ Wassiq Nadeem

Level 2:

- ♦ Emma Achatz
- ♦ Ebin Neduvellil
- ♦ Nandini Persad
- ♦ Hiba Shahabuddin
- ♦ Natalia Suarez
- ♦ Marie-Claire Wharton

Level 3:

- ♦ Hayleigh Elmore
- ♦ Arina Favilla
- ♦ Ashley Neduvellil
- ♦ Lana Schommer
- ♦ Aurmon Sororian
- ♦ Sudhish Srikanth

Level 4:

- ♦ Aline Favilla
- ♦ Sébastian Perez

In addition to the *Certificat d'Honneur*, the top-ranking students on the national level are honored with the National French Contest's highest and most prestigious award, *Lauréat National*. To receive this distinction, students must place in the National Top 10 of their level. These students are honored with a Gold, Silver, or Bronze medal, based on their ranking. I am proud to announce that this year **North Hills Prep has 14 National Medalists in the National French Contest—a school record!!!!** These students' names will be announced and they will receive their medals at awards ceremonies.

I am so proud of all our students' hard work preparing for the National French Contest. Félicitations! Special thanks to all of the teachers for their dedication to their students including Sabrina Ryder, Heather Pereira and Nicolas Pereria.

Heather Perierra
French

Looking to Purchase Pictures – Look online!

Do you want pictures of the High School Graduation, the 8th grade walk, the Austin trip, the Panther Dad's lunch, and much more? Visit Steve Riley's website at http://www.steverileypictures.printroom.com/event.asp?domain_name=steverileypictures&group_id=14 for more information.

Save the Date!

August 1st	New Family Picnic
August 3rd-5th	Girl's Volleyball Tryouts
August 8th	Pancake Breakfast
August 10th-11th	MS Panther Camp
August 12th	PS Meet the Teacher
August 13th	First day of school
August 26th	MS Meet the Teacher
August 27th	US Meet the Teacher

Foreign Language—Spanish

SPANISH HONOR SOCIETY INITIATION CEREMONY

The North Hills Preparatory had the honor of establishing the Spanish Honor Society Chapter name Pablo Neruda. The purpose of this Society is to promote cross-cultural acceptance and understanding in students, and to encourage service in the school and community. All students of High School Spanish are invited to join this new society.

- ◆ In order to become members, students must meet the following requirements:
- ◆ They must be enrolled in level 3 Honors or above
- ◆ They must have an A in their foreign language class at the time of enrollment and have maintained an A average for two consecutive semesters.
- ◆ They must have a GPA of 85 in their other subjects
- ◆ They must continue their foreign language study past level 3 Honors

This Spanish Honor Society was founded by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese in 1953. The Spanish Honor Society recognizes and fosters achievement of students who excel in High School Spanish. Members wear the distinguished honor cord of their society at graduation, and are eligible for travel awards and scholarships.

NHP Spanish Honor Society chapter name is "Pablo Neruda." Pablo Neruda; was born in Chile, and was one of the greatest Spanish poets of the 20th century. Our motto is "All Together" ("Todos a Una"). Our colors are red and gold. Our insignia and seal are those of the mother association.

Spanish Honor Society new members:

Sophomores

1. Andrews, Angela
2. Aranda, Christine
3. De Fex Valentina
4. Gamez, Sarai
5. Godines, Elizabeth
6. Hayman, Alexander
7. John, Sheena
8. John, Sherin
9. Milhorn, Jarrod

10. Myoung, Erica
11. LeVan Richard
12. Reginald, Regi-
13. Thomson, Wesley
14. Valdez, Joachin
15. Walters, Zachary

Juniors

16. Ahmed, Zeshan
17. Grande, Alex
18. Palankar, Reema



19. Rodriguez, Isaac
20. Skertchly, Carolina
21. Isabel Tanco

Seniors

22. Butsko, Alexandra
23. De Fex, Valeria
24. Weeden, Daniel.
25. Shahabuddin, Amena
26. Yates, Timothy

Induction Ceremony

On April 27, 2009 a special Candlelight Ceremony was held for the induction of new members.

The ceremony was conducted by Mrs. Laura Hayman (Sponsor of the Spanish Honor Society and Spanish Club), Kelsey French (Spanish Honor Society member) and Caroline Hayman (President of the Spanish Club) As each new member's name was called the students stood up and lit their candles from a candle that was lighted with the "Madre Vela," which Mrs. Hayman held. This represents the light that comes to our lives through knowledge and the process of learning. Each standing member passed the flame onto the new member's which represented the continuing pursuit of knowledge and excellence. After all new members were called with their candles lit; they repeated the Spanish Honor Society pledge (Mi Juramento).

Seniors were presented with their official Honor Cords of the Society which they will wear at their graduation ceremony. After the ceremony, all new and old members gathered for pictures and cake

Amena, Shahabuddin
Alejandra, Butsko
Daniel, Weeden
John Taylor, Gabriel
Kelsey, French



Kiara, Collazo
Lasya, Challa
Raquel, Reyna
Saneeya, Islam
Sebastian, Armstrong

Valeria, De Fex
Timothy, Yates
Caroline, Hayman

Senior Honor Cords

Congratulations to all new and old members!
TODOS A UNA!

Sra. Laura Hayman
Spanish Honor Society and Spanish Club Sponsor



Primary School News



Primary Library

The Primary Library was the “place to be” this year. The high circulation of books proves that our students are avid readers. Most students took the accelerated reading program seriously and have grown in terms of reading comprehension skills. Great job Panthers!

Most importantly, the students have learned to become independent while browsing and selecting books. They have had mini lessons on the Dewey Decimal system, different genres, research, bibliographies, nonfiction, periodicals, and even creating poetry using literary elements.

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who have served the library this year. As you know, I am in need of some more help with year-end projects. Please contact me via e-mail and I will provide details. Otherwise, remember the primary library as you set-up volunteer hours next year. Have a great summer and remember to visit your local public libraries.

Liz Nied
Primary Library

North Hills Preparatory PAC Saturday

North Hills Preparatory held their 1st PAC Saturday on April 18th. New students and parents for the 2009-2010 school year in Primary and Middle School arrived for their Pre-Attendance Conference. The families were greeted by Student Ambassadors and directed to the Primary cafeteria to begin the process of registration.

Parents and students then met with a faculty member to learn about the mission of NHP, our curriculum, and the expectations for new students.

After the individual conferences the students and parents visited various stations in the cafeteria which included – Annual Fund, Panther Dads, TMG/Spirit Gear, Parker Uniform, After School Care, ESL, and Special Services.

Delicious refreshments were provided by our Volunteers in Partnership (VIP).

PAC Saturday was the perfect opportunity to welcome new families and give them the information needed to begin their North Hills journey.

Primary Fine Arts Festival

Bravo!

The Primary Fine Arts Festival was truly a success. Our students' performances and artwork were outstanding. Despite busy sports schedules (and even a Girl Scouts all-nighter at Texas Stadium), the North Hills' students and parents came to participate and support the students' creative musical and artistic abilities. The warm sunny day served as the perfect backdrop for all the singing, artwork, and street musicians.

We want to extend our thanks to the volunteers that helped with setup, concessions, and cleaning. NHP primary extends a warm thank you to Cassandra Byerly for her dedication; from the Fine Arts Festival t-shirts to helping raise money to support the fine arts.

NHP uses the fine arts as an tool to teach children creativity, respect, commitment, cooperation, and curiosity. These attitudes are crucial to success in all walks of life. In addition, fine arts are a highly effective way to teach interdisciplinary concepts such as science, math, history, and language arts. In 2002, the National Association for Music Education states the following about the correlation between fine arts and SAT scores (<http://www.menc.org>).

“The College Entrance Examination Board indicates that there is a current trend in the SAT scores of students with a fine arts background: they consistently receive higher scores than students who do not have arts experiences. The scores show that as students receive more arts coursework, their scores continue to increase. In 2002, a student who had less than half a year of arts courses averaged a score of 484 on the verbal section and a 502 on the math section—a composite score of 986; students who had studied the arts for more than four years averaged a score of 535 on the verbal section and a 541 on the math section—a composite score of 1076.”

Your support in events like the Fine Arts Festival helps your child achieve his/her potential, so please take a moment to congratulate your child on a job well done!

Brian Hills
Primary Music Teacher

Middle Years IB Program

What is the Middle Years Program?

It is a program of international education designed to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world.

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) is designed for students in grades 6-10. This period, encompassing early puberty and mid-adolescence, is a particularly critical phase of personal and intellectual development and requires a program that helps students participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. Learning how to learn and how to evaluate information critically is as important as learning facts. The Middle Years Program (MYP) is one of three programs offered by the IB. North Hills Preparatory is authorized to offer the Primary Years Program (PYP) and the Diploma Program (DP). North Hills Prep is currently a candidate school for the MYP and will seek authorization in 2010. The MYP will prepare students for the DP.

What does the curriculum contain?

The curriculum contains eight subject groups together with a core made up of five areas of interaction. This is illustrated by means of an octagon with the five areas of interaction at its centre.

Students study subjects from each of the eight subject groups through the five areas of interaction:

1. Approaches to learning (ATL)-Through ATL teachers provide students with the tools to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, thereby developing an awareness of how they learn best, of thought processes and of learning strategies.
2. Community and service-This component requires students to take an active part in the communities in which they live, thereby encouraging responsible citizenship. Previous Community and Service projects at North Hills Preparatory include W.I.S.E.R., Water Is Basic, Canned food drives, New Student Mentoring (6th), Birthday Locker Decorating Committee, Birthday Boxes benefiting Captain Hopes Kids, and other projects surrounding the IB theme Sharing Our Humanity.
3. Human ingenuity-Students explore in multiple ways the processes and products of human creativity, thus learning to appreciate and develop in them selves the human capacity to influence, transform, enjoy and improve the quality of life.
4. Environments-This area aims to develop students' awareness of their interdependence with the environment so that they understand and accept their responsibilities.
5. Health and social Education - This area deals with physical, social and emotional health and intelligence—key aspects of development leading to complete and healthy lives.

What is the IB learner profile?

The IB learner profile is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century. The learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose.

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance.

In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with oth-

ers.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

How are students assessed?

Teachers organize continuous assessment over the course of the program taking account of specified criteria that correspond to the objectives for each subject. The MYP offers a criterion-related model of assessment. This means that students' results are determined by performance against set standards, not by each student's position in the overall rank order. Teachers are responsible for structuring varied and valid assessment tasks that allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the required objectives within each subject group. These may include:

- ◆ open-ended, problem-solving activities and investigations
- ◆ organized debates
- ◆ hands-on experimentation
- ◆ analysis
- ◆ reflection

Assessment strategies, both formative and summative, provide feedback on the thinking processes as well as the finished piece of work. There is also an emphasis on self-assessment and peer-assessment within the program.

Where can I find out more?

We invite you to visit <http://www.ibo.org> to find out more information on the Middle Years Program!



Athletics—Track

US Track Team Set for Regionals

Runners who run even when their legs feel like lead and their chests are burning are very special to a coach. My big idea was to have the already successful cross country team running all year in an attempt to build our program. It seemed like everybody wanted to be on the track team, but it was quite a task to make it happen. Meets were hard to find for a brand new track team with no equipment and no track to practice on. I called on some favors to get us to meets, the enrichment committee helped with some equipment, and coach Kunstadt, our athletic director, arranged for us to be able to practice at MacArthur.

Many of our runners had never even seen a track meet, much less run in one. Our meets seemed to all fall on the coldest and windiest days of the season, though none were colder than the meet at St. Marks. There were actually snow flurries at the coach's meeting that morning. Despite the uncooperative springtime weather, this was a great first team. We piled kids in my car and practiced at Mac, joking about how one day we will miss these "good ole days" when we have a track of our own. We went from 3 quiet girls in cross country to 13 dominating and outspoken girls on the track team. It was perfect to have such a balance of boys and girls.

Track runners are definitely not quiet. I encourage them to be confident, believe that they are "all that", and to be relaxed under pressure. In the end, we had success far beyond my expectations. Our team



has a special bond, encouraging one another even when it wasn't easy. Our team is smart, figuring it all out when there was so much to learn and so little time. Our entire team was competitive, made up of winners and great leaders. I want to thank our team captains (Monica Saunders, Cameron Edwards, and Keith Aranas.) and thanks to their leadership and the team's hard work, we made a vision a reality.

We had eight members of the team who went to Regionals May 15 and 16th in Stephenville at Tarleton State

University. Results will be posted in a fall 2009 newsletter. Our girls 4x100 team is one of the best in the district, comprised of mostly freshman (Naomi Idowu, Alexa Edwards, soph Rebecca Houston, and Alysia Price as anchor). Monica Saunders and Bella Khusal are the alternates. Individually, Malak Al-Dossari qualified for the 800 meter run as well as Cameron Edwards, who qualified in two events, the 800 meter and the mile. Each of these runners has the heart of a champion and going to Austin for the State Championships is certainly within our reach.

If you are interested in running either Cross Country in the fall or Track in the spring for grades 7-12th, contact Coach Oldham at soldham@uplifteducation.org.



Science and Math Initiative

Earlier this year NHP received a generous Foundation Grant which enables the school to make great improvements in math and science instruction and enrichment for all grades in primary, middle and upper schools. NHP is using the funds as follows:

1. Establish a Science and Math Summer Institute (SAMSI)
2. Purchase greatly needed Science and Math equipment across the curriculum
3. Develop Science, Math, and Computer Science Competition Teams.



With respect to Science and Math equipment, the grant provided funds to purchase greatly needed calculators and pads for the Math department. In Science, NHP has purchased a host of new equipment for primary, middle, and upper school classrooms. This equipment includes various types of microscopes, balances, plastic-ware, glassware, and storage cabinets.

For our Middle and Upper school teachers, NHP has purchased a complete data collection system from Vernier Software & Technology that allows students to measure many different quantities. This system allows students to collect data in the laboratory or in the field and then easily download the data to a computer or laptop for manipulation. Teachers and students are now be able to design practical investigations that measure basic quantities like temperature, pressure, pH, conductivity, light, voltage, motion, force, sound, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and heart rate. In addition, teachers are able to measure radiation, take EKG readings, and teach students about spectrophotometry. This system will truly assist teachers in integrating Science and Technology.

Students use the new equipment purchased with the grant money. Uplift Education and NHP leadership is continually seeking private funding from foundations and the business community to close the funding gap. As parents we must do our part as well to give the gift of superior education to our children. Please donate to the annual fund. The link is on the website.



Upper School Take Honors in Science and Drama

The North Hills Preparatory High School Science Team came in first place for the UIL 2A Science Competition. The team consisted of Lasya Challa, Gabriel Earle, Reema Palankar, and Hans Schmidt.

The overall individual awards went to Gabriel Earle (2nd place), Reema Plankar (3rd place) and Lasya Challa (6th place). Reema Palankar came in second for Biology and Gabriel Earle came in second for Chemistry.

Also, congratulations to Erin Eiler for being accepted into the UIL One-Act Play State Competition. Erin was in Austin for four days where she worked on the technical crew of 12 individual plays. What a great experience and what a great honor.

Cast and Crew of the One-Act Play Excel in Their Endeavors

After winning the Zone UIL One-Act Play Contest, the cast and crew moved on to the next level of competition, District. All of the schools competing were absolutely great. We were named Alternate Play, which means if another school can't make the area competition, we will go in their place. Our students received numerous awards. Sam Reed was named to the Honor Tech Crew, Hayleigh Elmore and Beth Beless were presented with the Honorable Mention All-Star Cast Award, and Matthew Watabe

Primary School Takes PSIA Honors

The four primary students that competed in the PSIA State Prose Interpretation Contest were sixth graders Arun Baskar and Shanze Noorani, Seventh Grader Arvind Sivakumar, and Eight Grader Sarah Rahimi. All four students competed extremely well and are looking forward to another successful year.

Panther Pause



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