HAZLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent

Mr. Brian T. Uplinger, M. Ed.	*Mr. Anthony Ryba*	*Dr. Patrick Patte, D. Ed.*	*Mr. Daniel Rodgers*
Superintendent of Schools	Secretary/Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools	Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment K-12	Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools for Human Resources

Notice of Opportunity Scholarships

Please Read: Important Information Affecting Your Child

February 3, 2021

Dear Hazleton Area School District Parent or Guardian,

We would like to make you aware of the choices available to you based on the results of your child's school on the 2018-2019 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and/or Keystone Exams. The PSSA and Keystones are annual exams given to Pennsylvania students at various grade levels to measure their academic progress.

The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program (OSTCP) was created pursuant to Act 85 of 2012 (72 P.S. § 1701-G.1, *et seq*) and amended by Act 86 of 2016 (24 P.S. § 2001-B, *et seq*). This program enables eligible students residing within the boundaries of low-achieving schools to apply for a scholarship to attend another public or nonpublic school. A low achieving school is defined as a public elementary or secondary school ranking in the bottom 15% of their designation as elementary of secondary school based on the combined math and reading scores on the previous school year PSSA.

The Hazleton Area School District is on the list of the bottom 15% for performance on the combined Math and Reading tests on the 2018-2019 PSSA and/or Keystone exams. Pursuant to Section 2010-B of the School Code, 24 P.S. §20-2010-B, the Pennsylvania Department of Education ("PDE") is required to publish a list of "low achieving schools". PDE is also required to provide notice to school districts with low achieving schools. Under the authority of Act 13 of 2020, the required assessments that determine whether a school is low achieving were cancelled due to COVID-19. Despite the cancellation of the 2020 assessments, PDE must comply with publication and notification requirements for low achieving schools by Feb. 1, 2021. As a result, the list of low achieving schools for 2021 is based on the 2019 assessments; the most recent year that assessment data is available.

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The following are the schools within the district designated as low achieving:

1. Freeland EL/MS
2. Hazleton EL/MS
3. Heights Terrace EL/MS
4. Maple Manor El/MS
5. McAdoo-Kelayres EL/MS
6. West Hazleton EL/MS

Under the OSTCP program, the Hazleton Area School District must offer students the choice to transfer to another school district or nonpublic school. Please know that the staff at the Hazleton Area School District has a relationship with your child and wants to continue serving your child. However, if you feel your child will be better served in another school, you may request a transfer for your child to one of the schools participating in the OSTCP.

If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity for your child to attend another school, you must go to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) website www.newpa.com/ostc to review the list of scholarship organizations for the school districts and nonpublic schools that are participating in this program. DCED has information regarding the application process. Scholarships are contingent upon available funding.

Additional information is available on our school district website www.hasdk12.org and the

PA Department of Education website http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Opportunity%20Scholarship%20Tax%20Credit%20Program/Pages/default.aspx#tab-1

Sincerely,

Brian T. Uplinger
Superintendent of Schools

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