Instructional Affairs Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 8, 2026 6:00 PM Eastern

Board Room
3000 Donallen Dr
Bensalem, PA 19020

Rodger Allen:	Present
Rachel Fingles:	Present
Stephanie Gonzalez Ferrandez:	Present
Leann Hart:	Present
Deborah King:	Present
Rebecca Mirra:	Absent
Heather Nicholas:	Present
Kate Pascucci:	Present
Karen Winters:	Present

Present: 8, Absent: 1.
The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Committee Chair Karen Winters with eight Board Directors in attendance.

Administrators in attendance:
Dr. Victoria Velazquez, Interim Superintendent
Dr. Brian Cohen, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Services
Dr. Donna Minnigh, Acting Assistant to the Superintendent for Teaching & Learning

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Announcements to the Audience
3. Public Comment #1
4. Instructional Affairs
   - 4.A. Holy Family University Educational Partnership Agreement
5. Discussion Items
   - 5.A. Grades 9-12 Grading Framework
   - 5.B. Chromebook Fee Letter
   - 5.C. G&T Curriculum
   - 5.D. Common Assessments
   - 5.E. High School Finals
   - 5.F. Field Trip Permissions and Procedures
   - 5.G. Co-Curricular Discretionary Units
6. Public Comment #2
7. Adjournment

Educational Partnership Agreement

Between

Holy Family University and

Bensalem Township School District

Purpose **DATE: July 2026**

• Whereas both organizations share a common commitment to educating students by empowering them to assume life-long responsibilities to society and self in order to become well-rounded, life-long learners; and

• Whereas both organizations strive to educate and nurture students to develop their potential as responsible citizens of integrity through personal growth, learning, and service to others;

• Bensalem Township School District and Holy Family University agree to enter into an Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA) so that both institutions can continue to advance their shared institutional mission, core values, and beliefs.

Admissions and Scholarship Agreement

Holy Family University (HFU) and Bensalem High School (BHS) enter into this Admissions and Scholarship Agreement (ASA) to facilitate the seamless enrollment of their students to HFU upon earning their high school diploma.

HFU will guarantee admission and a four-year renewable scholarship to graduates of BHS who enroll full-time at HFU within one year of high school graduation.

> To qualify the student must have a 2.50 GPA (on a 4.00 scale). Students who meet these criteria will receive at minimum a $19,000 four-year award with a total value of $76,000 with a **maximum award of $25,000 with a total value of $100,000 (awards for fall 2026).**
>
> The student must maintain an appropriate, pre-determined GPA based on the value of the scholarship in order to renew annually. The award can only be received for four years in total. The HFU Scholarship is not transferrable to other institutions.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of this Admissions and Scholarship Agreement, HFU will:

1. Provide personal admissions advisement for students and parents;

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2. Provide general college search and financial aid information to students and parents;

In accordance with the terms and conditions of this Admissions and Scholarship Agreement, Bensalem High School will:

1. Publicize the agreement to the students and parents;

2. Provide access for HFU Admissions representatives to visit BHS and meet with prospective students including at least one Instant Decision Day.

Academic Programs

- HFU will provide a list of eligible courses for BHS students to take at HFU's campus. BHS students will be charged an agreed-upon price of **$300 per course**. Students are responsible for any additional course and book fees.

BHS students will not be limited in the number of classes they take at HFU. Students who earn a C or higher will be awarded college credit. BHS will promote these classes as part of class registration. BHS will assist their students in completing HFU's dual enrollment application and process. BHS has full discretion on which students are eligible to take these classes (including quality students not yet in their designated year). Classes for each year will be confirmed the previous January.

Collaboration

- HFU will provide possible career readiness and financial literacy sessions for BHS students and families in conjunction with HFU's Career Development Center.
- HFU will provide athletic, career, and academic panels to expose BHS students and families to career pathways and opportunities as agreed upon with at least 4 months' notice, facilitated by HFU faculty and experts.
- HFU and BHS will explore partnerships with eSports and opportunities to host BHS competitions at HFU's facilities.
- Bensalem Township School District (BTSD) will host HFU masters in counseling students for practica and internships.
- BTSD will host HFU education students (undergraduate and masters level) for student observations, practica, and student teaching.
- Shared facilities usage will continue under other agreements already in place.

Bensalem Township School District Educational Discount:
As part of this agreement, Holy Family University will offer up to a **15% tuition reduction** for qualifying programs for employees associated with the Bensalem Township School District.

All educational programs are eligible for a discount, with the exception of:

- Applied Computer Science
- Business Analytics
- Cybersecurity and IT Management
- Cybersecurity Administration

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- Healthcare Administration
- Nutrition
- Professional Sales and Marketing
- Radiological Science (AS) only
- Supply Chain Management
- Doctor of Psychology in Counseling Psychology (Psy.D.)

Educational programs that could be most beneficial:

- Master of Education General
    - Social, Emotional, Behavioral Wellness Endorsement
    - Autism Endorsement
    - AI Endorsement
- M.Ed. Education Leadership w/Principal Certification
    - Principal Certification Only
- M.Ed. Reading Specialist
    - Reading Specialist Certification Only
- M.Ed. Initial Certification – Special Education (Pre K-12)
- M.Ed. Special Education Add on Certification (Pre K-12)
    - Special Education Certification Only
- M.Ed. Special Education Advanced Practice w/Autism Endorsement
- M.Ed. TESOL w/ESL Certification
    - ESL Program Specialist Cert Only
- M.Ed. Initial Certification –Early Elementary Education (Pre K-4)*
- M.Ed. Initial Certification Secondary Education (Math, English, Biology, and Social Studies)*
- Ed.D. Educational and Organizational Leadership (concentrations: Organizational Leadership, Principal Certification, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Superintendent Letter of Eligibility)
- Superintendent Letter of Eligibility only

* Coursework is blended with on-campus meetings and on-line courses

UNDERGRADUATE ACCELERATED PATHWAYS

*Coursework for pathways is blended with on-campus meetings and on-line courses

- A.A. Arts in Education
- B.A. Early Childhood Pre K-4 (ECE Pathways)
- B.A. Early Childhood Pre K-4/Special Education Pre K-12 (ECE Pathways)
- B.A. Early Childhood Special Education Pre K-12 (ECE Pathways)

**Coming soon: Post Master's Supervisor of Special Education

Other important information:

- All interested students must apply to and be accepted into the academic program.

- A Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to be considered for a tuition discount. Additional aid may reduce the tuition discount. If students qualify for multiple discounts, they will only receive the highest, not all.
- Prospective Students must identify as affiliated with the partner organization during the application process. Applying using the appropriate school email address and notify gradstudy@holyfamily.edu as proof of employment/relationship.
- A request for a tuition discount must be submitted to the Vice President of Enrollment Management at least 30 days before the beginning of the semester.
- The student must make Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress to continue to receive the tuition discount.

Desired Partner Expectations to promote this benefit to employees:

In consideration of the mutual interests/benefits described above, the parties agree to promote the partnership as follows:

- Promote partnership and discount amount clearly on any educational benefits information.
- Periodically send electronic communication to notify employees of upcoming registration/semester starts or new program offerings (provided by Holy Family University).
- Provide information sessions and tabling opportunities when all staff are together.

Proposed Language for Job Posting:

Because of our unique partnership with Holy Family University (located in Northeast Philadelphia, Bucks County, and delivering programs online!), you can advance your academic career while employed with the Bensalem Township School District. You are eligible to receive a tuition reduction at Holy Family University. Featured programs include Education (associate's, bachelor's, certifications, endorsements, master's, and doctoral degrees), Business (MBA), MS in Counseling (with a School Counseling track), and MS in Applied Behavior Analysis.

Holy Family University can provide Bensalem Township School District teachers, administrators, staff, and employees the opportunity to enroll in HF adult undergraduate and graduate courses and degree programs.

HFU will:

- Waive application fees
- Provide program-specific enrollment advisement including program completion plans

BTSD will:

- Promote these opportunities to their staff.
- Facilitate staff development opportunities for HFU graduate admissions and program directors to visit BHS and speak with BHS employees

Revision, Renewal, and Termination of Agreement

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The representatives of Bensalem Township School District and Holy Family University and/or their designee(s) are responsible for identifying and communicating to each other changes in the policies, or requirements of their respective institutions that affect this Educational Partnership Agreement.

This Agreement is in effect as of the date of this signing and will be reviewed annually by the appropriate parties at each institution. The Agreement will be renewed automatically unless superseded by revisions, a new agreement, or formally terminated by one of the institutions.

Either institution may terminate this agreement with advanced notice. Should this agreement be terminated, it is understood that the termination will not apply to students already accepted to HFU under the terms of this agreement, but not yet enrolled in classes at Holy Family University.

Execution of Agreement

Bensalem Township School District and Holy Family University agree to enter into a collaborative Educational Partnership Agreement

The undersigned representatives of the parties have executed this agreement effective July 2026.

For Bensalem Township School Board:

_____

Deborah King, Ph.D.
School Board President

_____

Victoria Valazquez, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent

For Holy Family University:

_____

Anne Prisco, Ph.D.
President

_____

Edward P. Wright, Ed.D.
Vice President Enrollment Management

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9-12 Grading Framework
Effective 2021-22 School Year, updated 2025~~5~~6

All 9–12 teachers will follow this grading framework with the understanding that modifications and accommodations will be made for students who possess an IEP or 504 service agreement.

Marking Period Grade Category Framework (Assessment & Learning Activity)

ASSESSMENT - 80% of Marking Period Grade

- Assignments that fall into this category will have any point value with a maximum of 100 points.
- There will be a minimum of (6) six “Assessments” that fall into this category during a marking period.
- Weighting determined by point value of assignment. All assignments should be whole numbers within 1-100 (for Assessments)

  Examples of items included in this category:
  - Summative Assessments
  - Major Assessments and/or Major Projects
    - Eligible content needs to be assessed through major assessments and/or projects.
    - Project Based Assessments and/or Performance Tasks and/or Skill Demonstration may be administered/assessed in courses where pencil/paper assessments are not always feasible.
  - Minor Assessments and/or Minor Projects
    - Minor Assessments can include projects, labs, quizzes, performance tasks, and/or demonstration of a skill.
    - Examples include mini-quizzes and/or labs, and/or other mini-assessments should be administered during the course of a marking period. Mini assessments can be project based, skill based, performance tasks, demonstration of a skill, or alternate forms of assessment.

LEARNING ACTIVITY - 20% of Marking Period Grade

- Assignments that fall into this category will have any point value with a maximum of 25 points.
- There will be a minimum of (4) four “learning activities” that fall into this category during a marking period.
- Weighting determined by point value of assignment. All assignments should be whole numbers within 1-25 (for Learning Activities).

Examples of items included in this category:
- Classwork
- Homework (Grades 3-12)
- Independent Work
- Group Work

OVERALL GRADE CALCULATION FOR THE YEAR

MARKING PERIOD 1	22.5%
MARKING PERIOD 2	22.5%
MARKING PERIOD 3	22.5%
MARKING PERIOD 4	22.5%
FINAL EXAM	10%

Final Course Grade = (Average of MP grades × 0.90) + (Final Exam Score × 0.10)*
Each marking period grade is calculated as 80% assessments and 20% learning activities. The final course grade is then determined by combining the average of the marking period grades (90%) with a final exam or culminating project (10%).

Final Assessments/Exams - 10% of Course Grade

Final assessments are comprehensive assessments given at the end of a course to measure students' overall understanding of key concepts and skills. They serve as a culminating evaluation of learning and help determine readiness for the next course level. The final exam or culminating project will count for 10% of the overall course grade.
~~Please note that there is no grading floor (45%) for the final exam or project, and students' final grades will reflect the actual score they earn.~~
Students who make a good-faith effort to complete the final exam or project will receive a minimum score of 50%. Students who do not make a good-faith effort will receive the actual score earned.

Final Exam Exemptions:
Students who earn a 93% cumulative average or higher by the end of the fourth marking period will be exempt from the final exam; however, they may choose to take it if they wish.
Students enrolled in an AP course and registered for the corresponding AP Exam through the College Board are exempt from the assessment; however, they may choose to take it if they wish.
**If a student is exempt from the Final Exam, the final course grade will be calculated as the average of the four marking periods.*

Mark/Grading Policy:
Please note – no A+ in the grading table.

Alpha Grade	Low Number	High Number	Quality Points
A	93.00	100	4.0
A-	90.00	92.99	3.7
B+	87.00	89.99	3.3
B	83.00	86.99	3.0
B-	80.00	82.99	2.7
C+	77.00	79.99	2.3
C	73.00	76.99	2.0
C-	70.00	72.99	1.7
D+	67.00	69.99	1.3
D	63.00	66.99	1.0
D-	60.00	62.99	0.7
F	45.00	59.99	0.0
F**	0.00	59.99	0.0

**4th Quarter grade has no floor-students will earn the true numeric score.

Honor Roll (Middle):
There are three types of honors that students can achieve each marking period. Honor rolls are determined independently each marking period and use **unweighted GPAs** since students are not competing against each other to achieve an honor roll distinction.

Principal's Honor Roll requires a 4.0 minimum unweighted GPA for the marking period and student grades must be in the A range.
Distinguished Honor Roll requires a minimum of a 3.51 unweighted GPA for the marking period and student grades must be in the B- to A range.
Honor Roll requires a minimum of 3.0 unweighted GPA for the marking period and student grades must be in the C to A range.

AP Courses
Students who score a 4 or higher on an AP Exam will have their final grade for that associated course changed to an 'A' (excluding 12th grade students due to the timing of the released AP Exam scores).

Grades are subject to the discretion of the administration.

This framework was adopted in the 2021-2022 School Year, updated August 2025~~5~~6.