

**LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL
JANUARY, 2007**

Happy New Year and greetings from East Emory Rd. There are a few things that I want to inform you about including upcoming dates of importance.

We feel like we had a successful first semester, we scored very well on our Gateway exams in the core areas and our State exam scores are also very promising. I was very proud of our kids for their performance on these tests and, of course, it is a credit to their teachers for their efforts to prepare the kids for these tests. We are judged as a school by our results on these tests for the entire year, so we need to perform equally as well on the Spring exams.

We have two new teachers this semester. **Ms. Marta Rivera** has joined our staff to teach Spanish, while **Ms. Anne Bennett** joins us to teach Latin. I hope that you will join me in welcoming both of these ladies to Halls H.S.

You can meet these two, in addition to each of your child's teachers, on the evening of **January 18**. We will be hosting our Spring **Open House** from 6:00 until 8:00. I hope that you will join us.

Report cards will be mailed to your home address. We've had a glitch in the grade program, so the process has been delayed. We will get these in the mail as soon as possible.

The next State exam will be the **Writing Assessment** administered to juniors. The date of the exam, which tests the student's ability to write a six-paragraph essay in 35 minutes, will be given on **February 6th**. The grading scale on this test ranges from a 6 (the highest score), to a 1 (the lowest). The essay will be a persuasive essay and we work on this format across the curriculum.

Is your child enrolled in a particularly difficult class this semester? Please be reminded that we have tutoring available to students in English, Math, and Science. These sessions last for an hour, are held several days during the week, and are available upon request. Contact the office for more information on these sessions. A second possibility for assisting your student would be to **host a study group in your home**. I believe in the power of peers to clarify problems that some may be experiencing. Oftentimes what a student cannot understand coming from a teacher becomes clear from a peer's perspective. I ask that each of us become as engaged as possible in our child's education. Let's all make this as successful a semester as we can.

Mark Duff