Dear Parents and Students:

Please accept the following in response to concerns raised by members of the public at the May 2, 2018 Hanover Park Regional High School District Board of Education meeting regarding the Cheerleading Program at Hanover Park High School.

In the wake of the try-outs for the 2018-2019 Cheerleading Squad, the high school administration received multiple appeals from several parents concerning the selection process for the cheerleading try-outs. These concerns led to an investigation by the Principal.

It is our understanding that the selection guidelines indicate that to be a member of the Black Squad, a person trying out would have to score an “87 or better” using the designated rubric. At the conclusion of the selection process, a total number of six students based on this criteria were eligible for the Black Squad. In order for the advisors to put together a viable squad, the score was arbitrarily lowered to a “78” thereby allowing for the addition of five cheerleaders. Principal Callanan determined that the process was invalid due to the lowering of the cut-off score to “78.” The high school administration decided to be more inclusive and not penalize any student from making the squad that did not achieve a score of “87 or better.” Therefore, the structural change was made so that the five students with the scores of “78 – 86” were not removed from the Black Squad. This structural change not only gave the five students a placement on the Black Squad, but it also allowed for more students an opportunity to participate. The high school administration consulted with the cheering advisors who indicated that this change would not create an undue burden on the program or their ability to properly supervise the students.

Besides finding this practice aligned to our District’s core values and similar to our sister school, Whippany Park High School, the Board of Education feels that Principal Callanan made the best decision for our students by having the Hanover Park Cheerleading Program be more inclusive. As per the cheerleading guidelines for Hanover Park High School, “The emphasis of cheerleading within the Regional High School District shall be upon group involvement rather than featuring the performance of a single or select individual or individuals.” Therefore, for the 2018-2019 school year, the Hanover Park Regional Board of Education supports the structural change as follows:

- Grades 11 and 12 Cheerleaders will make up the Black Squad
- Grades 9 and 10 Cheerleaders will make up the White Squad

Sincerely,

Hanover Park Regional High School District Board of Education

CC: Carol Grossi, Superintendent of Schools
    Hanover Park High School Administration
    Dennis McKeever, Esq., Sciarrillo, Cornell, Merlino, McKeever & Osborne, LLC