

FOCUS

BHHS NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 35, NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 2023

WELCOME TO THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR!

“Creating the leaders of the next generation!”

“FOCUS” THE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FOCUS is the high school newsletter which is published twice monthly on the first and fifteenth of each full month of school. Only one edition appears during months with major school holidays. The first edition of the month includes articles of interest, important announcements about academic and extracurricular activities, school counseling information, and a monthly calendar that is specific to the high school. The second edition of the month provides a calendar update and important announcements. We urge parents to review the article titles each month and read relevant sections so that they remain informed about high school life and activities.

The current edition of the FOCUS newsletter can always be found using the Navigation Menu on the high school homepage or by clicking the following link: <https://www.byramhills.org/focus>. We will be sending an email blast containing the FOCUS each time a new edition is posted. If you wish to receive a printed copy, please contact the principal's secretary, Ms. Lisa Fanelli, at extension 273-9200 x4910.

STUDENT/PARENT PORTAL

The Student/Parent Portal is an important communication tool for our students and their families. The portal can be accessed by going to the Byram Hills Central School District homepage located at www.byramhills.org. Select “Schools” and then Byram Hills High School. The portal tab is located at the top-right portion of the webpage. The portal can be accessed outside of normal school hours. The portal is closed during the school day to promote meaningful dialogue between students and teachers.

MORNING DROP OFF/AFTERNOON PICK UP PATTERN

Last year, our parking lot was widened to allow for an easier flow of traffic through the campus. We will once again utilize the three lanes to ease the flow of traffic during our busiest times. The morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up location will still be in the Athletic Circle. Parents who are dropping off students in the morning should enter directly into the Athletic Circle. Parents who are picking up students in the afternoon should line up through the parking lot. The buses will utilize the middle lane for arrival and dismissal. Please remember to always follow the directions of our personnel as they are directing traffic on campus.

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE DISTRICT HOMEPAGE

One way Byram Hills High School is supporting our district’s sustainability goals is by reducing the amount of paper we produce. The FOCUS, Community Handbook, College Planning Guides, Course Selection Booklet, District Code of Conduct, and many other important documents are now available through the district’s homepage, www.byramhills.org. Please visit the high school homepage often for valuable news and updated information.

ORIENTATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Orientation for New Students to the District:

All students who are new to the district are welcome to attend the orientation on Monday, August 28th at 10 AM. Students will meet their counselors in the College and Career Center. New students will be given an orientation from the Assistant Principals, School Counselors, current students, and our Social Worker.

Additional Orientation for New 9th Graders:

Freshmen orientation will take place on Tuesday, September 5th during Office Hours and first period with their mentor class. All 9th grade students will be met by their senior mentors as they enter the building on September 5th beginning at 7:45 AM. All 9th graders should arrive at school by 7:45 AM on the first day in order to meet for an extended time with their mentor class.

WIFI AND BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE POLICY

With the successful integration of WIFI access and Chromebooks into BHHS, the Board of Education developed a *Bring Your Own Device* policy for students and faculty. The district policy (#5695), which spells out rules and procedures for proper WiFi usage in the school building, is listed as Appendix C in our "Community Handbook" and can be found on the high school's homepage. Students will be welcome to bring their personal electronic devices to be used in the classroom and the common areas; however, the district is not responsible for lost or stolen devices. Please advise your children to put their names on their devices as many of them look similar. We will review the details of the policy and its implications for students during the first few days of school. Please read the attached [Byram Hills 1:1 Chromebook Agreement 2023-2024](#) carefully about the change in protocol with respect to Chromebooks in the district. Whether or not families exercise this option, [this form](#) must be completed by August 23rd.

FOOD SERVICE PROVIDER 2023-2024

CHARTWELLS will continue to be our food service provider for the school year. CHARTWELLS is committed to the District's goal of providing healthy, nutritious, and appealing meals to our school community. Meal prices will remain at \$3.25 for lunch and 50 cents for milk for all students. If you have any questions, our Food Service Director can be reached at 914-273-4250, Ext. 3970. CHARTWELLS has a system that will allow students to pre-order sandwiches. The form will accept responses starting at 1:30 PM on the day before the order to 9 AM on the day of the order. The sandwiches will be packaged and ready to be picked up in Bobcat Hall each day. The form can be accessed by clicking on the following link: [Byram Hills High School Daily Lunch Ordering Form](#)

2023 – 2024 FREE AND REDUCED MEAL PROGRAM

The Byram Hills School District participates in the National School Lunch Program, which enables families to obtain free meals or meals at a reduced cost if certain income criteria are met. The details from the New York State Education Department associated with the program and an application can be viewed and printed from our district website www.byramhills.org. Application forms can also be obtained from the main offices of each school building and from the district office. Completed application forms should be mailed to the attention of Ms. Susan Palamarczuk, District Treasurer, Byram Hills Central School District, 10 Tripp Lane, Armonk, NY 10504.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

We will be holding two Back to School Nights this year. The first one will take place on Thursday, September 14th for the parents of students whose last names end with the letters A through M. The second one will take place on Wednesday, September 20th for the parents of students whose last names end with the letters N through Z. Parents with multiple students in the high school may attend both of the sessions. Teachers will be sharing the same information at both sessions.

SAT AND ACT EXAM DATES

SAT and ACT examination dates can be found on the district calendar and online at www.collegeboard.com and www.actstudent.org. Please be sure to check the testing websites often as they are updated with relevant information regarding testing protocols. Please reach out to your child's counselor if you have any questions about either of these exams.

HOMEcomings/SPIRIT WEEK 2023: October 2nd through October 8th

Spirit Week will run from Monday, October 2nd through Saturday, October 8th this year. A complete schedule of Spirit Week events will be sent out prior to October 2nd. The members of the Grade Activity Board will meet during the first week of school to decide on the themes for each day of Spirit Week.

PRINCIPAL'S COFFEES

One of our most successful communication structures is the informal gathering of parents and the principal, called "Principal's Coffee." The purpose is to provide an opportunity to meet and foster parent-school communication. Your child is the beneficiary of these meetings as we work together to improve academic, social, and emotional growth for all students. Each Principal's Coffee will be recorded and emailed to all parents through the Media Center.

The following dates have been set for the "Coffees" which will usually be held in the Library Computer Lab. The first two Principal's Coffee meetings in August are for the parents of incoming Freshmen and will now be held in the high school library. Coffees are also noted in the district calendar and the monthly FOCUS calendar:

PARENTS OF INCOMING FRESHMEN:

THURSDAY	AUGUST 24, 2023	-	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
MONDAY	AUGUST 28, 2023	-	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

ALL PARENTS:

TUESDAY	SEPTEMBER 19, 2023	-	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	OCTOBER 24, 2023	-	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	NOVEMBER 14, 2023	-	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	JANUARY 23, 2024	-	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	MARCH 19, 2024	-	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	APRIL 30, 2024	-	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
TUESDAY	MAY 14, 2024	-	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT AND DRESS CODE

Our revised district-wide Code of Conduct was adopted by the Board of Education on May 29, 2012 following a collaborative process involving all members of our school community. The Code of Conduct is available on the district website, as are all Board of Education policies, under the Board of Education link. As the new school year approaches, parents are urged to partner with the school in promoting a distraction-free learning environment. Please review PART III of the Community Handbook with your student before the start of the school year.

ACCESS TO STUDENT INFORMATION BY MILITARY RECRUITERS

School districts are required by law to make available to military recruiters the names, addresses, and phone numbers of high school students. The law also stipulates that schools may withhold such information if parents so request. If you would like your child's information withheld from military recruiters, please send a brief email to Mr. Walsh at cwalsh@byramhills.net.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES

The Board of Education policies are available online at www.byramhills.org by selecting the link to policies on the Board of Education pull-down menu.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This district's attendance policy requires that a student be present for 85% of class meetings in order to receive credit for a course. Ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders will lose credit for a full credit course upon 20 absences and for a half credit course upon 10 absences. For Physical Education, students in grades nine through eleven will lose credit on the 12th absence. Seniors will lose credit for a full credit course at 17 absences and for a first semester half credit course at 10 absences. Due to the short second semester for seniors, they will lose credit for a second-semester half-credit course at 8 absences and PE at 10 absences. **Both excused and unexcused absences count toward the policy.** Students who have long-term absences for serious documented medical conditions are eligible for home instruction. It is important to note that when students miss more than 13 minutes of a class, they are counted as absent for the purpose of this policy. The full Board of Education policy can be reviewed in Appendix A of the Community Handbook.

PERSONAL PROPERTY PROTECTION

Unfortunately, we regret that every year a few of our students suffer the theft of personal valuables, including headphones, cell phones, jewelry, cameras, wallets, and even clothing items. In almost every case, these items are taken out of unlocked lockers or from unattended book bags in the halls or gym locker rooms. Please review with your high school student the need to secure valuables at all times. Students should report to school with their own lock for their lockers. Locker assignments will be assigned and shared on August 18th and posted to the portal. **Students who place a lock on a locker that is not assigned to them run the risk of having it clipped.** Students are discouraged from using lockers that are assigned to others.

CHEATING/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT BHHS

We continue to seek ways to address the problem of cheating which is an issue that continues to challenge our ability to achieve the mission of the district. One issue of particular concern is the number of students who "sign in" late or "sign out" early with parental permission to avoid a quiz, test, or presentation, thereby gaining an academic advantage. We seek the support of parents to help us eliminate this concern. We urge you to read the school rules about cheating in the Community Handbook, PART III, Code of Conduct.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION - LOCKS REQUIRED

All physical education students and athletes participating on sports teams must supply their own combination lock. Only a combination type lock is acceptable for this purpose. All students will be assigned a gym locker.

BELL SCHEDULE

Byram Hills High School runs on an 8-day schedule with (five) sixty-four minute class periods per day as well as a forty-three-minute lunch. To view the schedule, please click the following [link](#). The schedule can also be found on the district calendar. The link also contains information about one, two, and three-hour delay schedules.

CLOSED CAMPUS OR NOT?

District policy and school rules provide for a "closed campus" at BHHS. The reasons for this policy are important: maintaining an emphasis on academics and course work, the lack of nearby shops and services, preventing unnecessary driving to keep our students safe, and discouraging students from returning late for classes. As a result, the administration will exercise its right to keep students in school for the duration of their scheduled day, except in the case of an emergency, a doctor's appointment, or a similar need. Leaving for work, transporting siblings, picking up forgotten homework, attending to chores at home, and other such excuses will not be accepted. All excuses must be personally approved by an administrator. The secretaries have been instructed to refer these matters to the administration.

While these measures will seem obvious to most, they will be inconvenient to others. Nevertheless, we ask that you cooperate and communicate your support to your own child, if necessary. These efforts will create a more positive environment in school and allow us to better assure you that every student is safe and secure throughout the school day.

PARKING PRIVILEGES

The rules about student parking may be found in the Community Handbook, (PART III, vi, Code of Conduct). All students are reminded that parking is a privilege restricted solely to seniors. Juniors are not permitted to park in the student lot under any circumstances during the school day. Juniors can earn parking privileges when seniors leave for internships on April 29th, 2024. **Exceptions will not be considered for any reason. Parking applications can be accessed through the "Senior Parking Registration" link on the right-hand side of the Byram Hills High School homepage. It can also be completed on the first day of school through Ms. Bogren in the Assistant Principal's Office. Be aware that students must bring in a copy of their driver's license along with the form, signed by a parent, in order to receive a parking permit.** Parking passes given to current seniors during their junior year are no longer valid.

CHALLENGE SUCCESS

Since 2017, Byram Hills High School has partnered with Challenge Success which is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Stanford University Graduate School of Education. They partner with school communities to elevate student voices and implement research-based, equity-centered strategies that improve well-being, engagement, and belonging for all K-12 students. Byram Hill's Challenge Success committee is made up of students, teachers, parents, and administrators and has worked to positively impact the overall student experience. To learn more about the work of the Challenge Success committee and the organization, access the [Challenge Success](#) page on the high school homepage.

GREEN TIPS

Please remember to turn off your car's engine while you are waiting to pick up or drop off your student at the high school. An idling car wastes fuel, harms the engine, and emits large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Go Bobcats!
