

August 3, 2022

Back To School

Hello everyone. It is always a great time to be a Blue Bomber! This summer was certainly a little different than the last few years when we had a number of active construction projects. We do, however, have one major improvement at the high school. Our new tennis courts should be ready to go by the start of the school year. And we are also counting on COVID to remain far in our rearview mirror. While the virus may be in the news a little, it is not going to drive the education process at the high school. Good teaching, curriculum, flexibility, and positive communications will be doing that.

Communication with parents is an essential aspect of a successful educational process. The first formal opportunity for parents and guardians to get involved is our Back-To-School Night on September 8 at 7:00 PM. We will start that evening in the auditorium. Please mark that date on your calendar as we are looking forward to seeing you there. Our freshman orientation and new student orientation program is set for August 8. The invitations were sent to the appropriate students several weeks ago.

Arrival at School

Our first day of school is Monday, August 29. It is really hard to believe that this date is right around the corner. Please make note of some scheduling items for the first day of school. If you have a child in grades 10, 11, or 12, your child's schedule is enclosed. The grade 9 students will meet in the auditorium on the first day as they enter the building at 7:20 AM.

On that day, all high school students will report at the regular time for a full day of school. If students arrive prior to 7:10 AM, they should wait outside. Our doors will open at 7:20 AM to allow the students to enter the building. When the warning bell rings at 7:26 AM, the Grade 9 students should go directly to the auditorium. Students in the other grades should report to their first block class. Block 1 classes start at 7:30 AM. This year there will be no passes issued from the cafeteria for people eating breakfast. Students should plan accordingly. If they are eating breakfast at school, they should plan on arriving right at 7:20 AM. This will give them time to eat and make it to class on time.

Schedule Changes

You will have the opportunity to get a jump start on needed schedule changes. Please take note of the following dates / times when the guidance counselors will be available.

August 8 (12:00 PM - 2:00 PM)

August 10 (9:00 AM - 1:00 PM)

August 15 (10:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

For other dates / times, you will need to make an appointment with your guidance counselor. Please do not rely on e-mail requests for schedule changes. If none of the listed dates / times work for you, please schedule an appointment with your guidance counselor before the start of the school year.

Once the school year starts, schedule changes can be made by appointment only from August 29 through September 1. Students in grades 11 and 12 should meet with Ms. Vicki McHugh. During the summer timeslots to change schedules, Mr. Sodl, our assistant principal, will be handling the schedule changes for grade 9. I will be handling the schedule changes for grade 10. With the start of the school year, students in grades 9 and 10 will then have a new guidance counselor, Miss Annie Bleiler.

After September 1, no additional schedule changes will be permitted. Please note that schedule changes made after the start of school year must be made with the permission of the guidance counselor as well as the sending and receiving teachers.


Paperwork

On the first day of school, a great deal of paperwork will be sent home with your child. It would be much appreciated if you promptly read and sign the appropriate documents. As you complete this paperwork, please make sure that you note all of the appropriate telephone numbers where you can be reached. In case of any emergency, we need to know how to contact you. Again, we really need accurate contact information. **If your phone numbers should change during the school year, please let us know.**

Student Lockers

The majority of students will have their locker assignments noted on the top of their schedule. Others will receive that information on the first day of school.

Student Handbook

There have been a number of changes to the Student Handbook. Please review that book with your children. To identify updates / changes, a “” clipart image has been included.

Dismissal

The regular dismissal schedule will be in place on the first day of school. The first day of school is a full day of school. There is no school on September 2 or September 5 in recognition of the Labor Day holiday.

Pick Up and Drop Off

All students driving to school or being dropped off at school should enter the building on the west side driveway. This is the side closest to the stadium. When dropping off students, please loop around the lot and get in line. The actual drop-off point is along the curb closest to the building - five feet from the stop sign. As soon as the buses depart at 7:20 AM, you may also drop off on the bus lane in the front of the building.

Drop-offs and pick-up are not permitted on the Junior High School side.

Parking

Students may purchase parking permits in the main office from August 29 to September 9. Students must have a current driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance.

Parking regulations will be strictly enforced after September 9. The parking permit must be clearly displayed at all times. (If you switch vehicles one day, please swap the permit as well.)

Transportation

George's Busing provides our transportation. They have asked me to point out something important. Students must be alert at the bus stops. Phones, headphones, and earbuds can all serve as a distraction. Students should always be alert and watch traffic. Make sure a car has stopped before starting to cross the road. Drivers can also get distracted, so please pay close attention. Students should not assume that people will stop for them. Please take good care of yourself. That is important because, unfortunately, the world will not always do it for you. It is also recommended that in the dark of winter, students wear one or more pieces of bright clothing to increase their visibility. **Also, masking is optional on the school bus.**

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch will be provided on the first day of school. Your child's passcode for the cafeteria is the same one that was used last year. (This also applies to the incoming ninth grade students.) Please note that your child's account balance ... positive or negative ... will also carry over from last year. New students will receive their passcode for the cafeteria on the first day of school. You can have your child bring in a check to apply to their account balance or use the on-line service to add funds to their account. If you want to get a jump on things, please do this now.

The SSO program which enabled everyone to get free lunch and breakfast as a result of COVID is no longer in effect. Therefore, students must pay for both breakfast and lunch. The cost for breakfast at the secondary level is \$1.40 and secondary lunch is \$2.95. Milk is 55¢. Because it is a paid lunch, please remember to complete the free and reduced lunch form if needed. Please keep in mind these forms do not carry over from year to year. You must reapply every year.

Nurse's Office

The Pennsylvania Department of Health requires that all 12th grade students have a second dose of the MCV (meningococcal) vaccine or proof of religious, philosophical, or medical exemption prior to the first day of school. This meningitis vaccine has to have been given on or after the student's 16th birthday. You may e-mail or fax these medical records to the school nurse. (E-mail: lthomas@palmerton.org or Fax: 610-826-4929.) Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this requirement.

If you have a child that needs this meningitis vaccine, the related information is posted on our website. We also shared this information about this vaccine with an automated Connect Ed telephone message. If your child has not received the meningitis vaccine yet, they are not permitted to start school. If this is the case, they will not receive their school schedule unless they have the vaccine or an appointment to have the vaccine. This is a commonwealth / state requirement. In order to get an exemption to this requirement for religious, philosophical, or medical reasons, please see our website under the Health Services Department or contact our school nurse, Mrs. Laura Thomas.

Welcome New Staff Members

We welcome new staff members to the Blue Bomber family: Mrs. Kayla Field - Business and Technology, Miss Brianna Keiser - Art, and Miss Annie Bleiler - Guidance. We are confident that our new staff members will prove to be valuable assets to our already excellent staff. Hopefully by the start of the school year, we have a full contingent of teachers.

Final Note

I encourage you to take advantage of the fact that the start of a new school year is a great time to establish new family routines. Even though the excitement and change can make life somewhat hectic for the first few weeks, this is a great time to begin new and positive steps. I also ask that you encourage your child to get involved in school activities. We offer a number of clubs, activities, and sports for the students.

If you have any questions or concerns now or throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am available and happy to help in any way that I can.

Sincerely,

Paula A. Husar
Principal

cc: Dr. Jodi Frankelli - Superintendent