

August 7, 2023

## ***Back To School***

Hello everyone. It is always a great time to be a Blue Bomber! This summer was definitely a busy one for us. It turned out to be one with a lot more hirings than originally anticipated. We are slowly but surely filling our open positions. Currently, we would like to welcome the following new staff members: Mr. Matty Blanchard (Music), Mrs. Perla Javier Ortiz (Spanish), and Mrs. Amanda Kromer (Attendance Secretary). We are still looking for a few more teachers in Mathematics, English, and Social Studies along with an Instructional Aide. We are confident that our new staff members will prove to be valuable additions to our already excellent staff. Hopefully, by the start of the school year, we have a full contingent of teachers and staff members.

We also have some building improvement items at the high school. This summer, our Library is being renovated. We are going to have a new section with a Small Group Instruction (SGI) room and a Technology classroom with brand new computers. While the library will still be filled with books and other educational resources, the addition of these two rooms will allow us to provide additional learning opportunities for our students. We are also putting plans together for our new Field House. We hope to have this project completed by the Spring of 2024. While it is always nice to get new things, we fully realize that there is no substitute for good teaching, curriculum, flexibility, and positive communication.

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 13 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.

### **Arrival at School**

Our first day of school is Monday, August 28. 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 should be enclosed. The grade 9 students will meet in the auditorium on the first day when 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. It is imperative that each student in grades 10-12 bring their schedules to school on that first day or be ready to access it on PowerSchool. If you are a freshman or new student and did not attend our Orientation program, you will be given your schedule in the auditorium on the first day of school.

Please note that there will be no passes issued from the cafeteria for people eating breakfast. Students should plan accordingly. If a student is planning to eat breakfast at school, they should plan to arrive 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 16      12:00 PM to 6:00 PM

August 17      9:00 AM to 12:00 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 the listed dates / times above do not 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 9 and 12 should meet with Ms. Vicki McHugh and students in grades 10 and 11 should meet with Miss Annie Bleiler.

After September 5, no additional schedule changes will be permitted. Please note that all 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 the students. 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 any of your telephone 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. Also, there is no school on September 1 or September 4 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-ups are not permitted on the Junior High School side.

### **Parking**

Students may purchase parking permits in the main office from August 28 to September 8. Students must have a current driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance.

Parking regulations will be strictly enforced after September 11. The parking permit must be clearly displayed at all times. (If you switch vehicles one day, please swap the permit as well.) You are not permitted to park in someone else's spot and your privilege to park can be revoked if you are excessively late to school. Please see the Student Handbook for more details.

### **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 all cars have stopped before starting to cross the road. Drivers can also get distracted, so please pay close attention. Students should not assume that car drivers will stop for them. Please take good care of yourself. It is also recommended that in the dark of winter, students wear one or more pieces of bright clothing to increase their visibility. Riding the school bus is a privilege and it is a privilege that can be revoked for misbehavior on the school bus.

### **Breakfast and Lunch**

Breakfast and lunch will be provided to the students 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 carryover 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 cost for breakfast at the secondary level is \$1.40 and the 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 appropriate. Please keep in mind that 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 Grade 12 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 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. You may e-mail or fax these medical records to the school nurse. (E-mail: [lthomas@palmerton.org](mailto: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 several automated ConnectEd telephone messages. 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 just received the vaccine or have an appointment to get the vaccine. This is a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 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.

### **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