

Fall, 2021

Freshman Success Newsletter



We are BHS

We Believe

We Honor

We Succeed

And we DREAM BIG!

Congratulations class of 2025-you made it through an unusual 8th grade of COVID and the first quarter of your freshman year! It was great meeting those of you who attended Freshman Connection and Orientation. I look forward to seeing you in your classes and in the halls.

I am Ms. Dalesandro and am the Assistant Principal of Freshmen Success. My job is to make sure that every freshman is on track to graduate in 4 years. I also oversee PE, Health and AVID. I can set you up with tutors if you have challenges with coursework.

Freshmen on Track: Our goal is 96%-we are at 93.6%!!! Keep up the good work.

What does this mean?

Freshmen who are on track to graduate are those who have at least 10 credits by the end of 9th grade.

1st semester, students are **Off Track** if they are NOT passing 5 or more courses (based on State Course Code subjects of English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Life and Physical Sciences, and Social Sciences and History).

2nd semester (3 weeks in), students are **Off Track** if they are NOT passing 10 or more courses (based on State Course Code subjects of English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Life and Physical Sciences, and Social Sciences)

Why is this important?

If you fail one semester of a core course, you have to make the credit up. That means you will be behind your classmates academically, and possibly socially and emotionally. Staying on track freshman year is the biggest predictor of lifetime success. Studies have shown that being a “freshman on track” is a better predictor of high school graduation than the neighborhood where a student lives, race, income or prior test scores. Freshmen on track at the end of 9th grade are four times more likely to graduate high school than those who are off-track.

Let that sit for a minute. Whether you plan a career, military or college after high school, you will be one year behind your peers. That puts you behind them in education and income. Over a lifetime, you could be missing out on hundreds of thousands of dollars and benefits (insurance, paid vacation days, etc.), and experiences.

What can you do?

- Talk to your teacher. Tell them you feel lost, don't get it, please explain it again. This is easily done 1:1 before or after class, or by asking when the teacher is free to speak with you. They truly want to help and support you.

- Talk to me or your school counselor. Your counselor's name is on your schedule in IC.
- Talk to me! My office is in the Hawk Center (tutoring area) next to the Attendance office on the 1st floor. I can help you with tutoring, prioritizing and any general questions you may have.
- Get involved! There are so many clubs, activities and sports at BHS. We have something for everyone. If you don't see what you are looking for, or have an idea for a club, email Mr. Brawl at jeffbrawl@U-46.org and we will do our best to get a sponsor. Here is the [Clubs and Activities](#) link to the many ways you can be involved in high school. Studies show that involvement in extracurricular activities builds teamwork and leadership skills, as well as an opportunity to meet new people. These are life-long skills.
- Make friends with your classmates.
- Form study groups.

Please send me a picture of yourself with a sentence or two about your hobbies and what you are looking forward to at BHS.

What can parents/guardians do to help?

- Talk to your student! Have discussions about life skills, about being engaged in class discussions and coursework. Ask what they did in school, what they learned, how they contributed to class.
- Check their grades in Infinite Campus.

- Ask to see work they have produced.
- Ask if they need help-show them you are invested in, and value, their education.

What will BHS do?

We have a number of supports built into our classes and student services.

- Our freshmen teachers meet twice monthly to discuss students who may be having academic, social or emotional issues.

- **Academic support:** teachers, peer tutors or Peer Leader mentors

Your Peer leader mentors have emailed you and I am happy to see that 90% of you have responded back. If you haven't responded, please do so-they are here to help you navigate high school.

- **Behavior/social, emotional:** together with school counselors, Deans and social workers, we will support students to make positive choices in their academic and social lives.

- **Student Support Team:** (Counselors, Deans and Social Workers and me) that looks at data (behavior, academic and grades) and works with students, teachers and parents to

provide supports. We discuss you-the student-as a whole person, not just your grades.

- **Freshman Class Council:** Mr. Selvaggio heads this group up to get freshmen involved in school activities and fund raise. Please email him at vitoselvaggio@u-46.org if you want to become involved.

Overcoming “stage fright”:

You are in a new school. You may know a few people in class. The teacher seems nice, but...you don't add to the conversation or raise your hand or voice an opinion. DO IT! Be engaged in class. You matter. Your opinion matters. Your learning and your perspective matters. Ask the question that is probably on everyone else's mind. Be bold, be fierce-be the leader. You will be a better person for it and you may be helping someone else out.

Life Rules:

RESPECT: Yourself, teachers and classmates. Respect the learning and the work you are doing. Respect the perspectives of others.

VALUE: Yourself, others, the work, your place at BHS and your life.
YOU MATTER!

TRUST: Be consistent in your words and actions-don't talk behind someone's back or feel safe calling someone out. You expect that from others, so pay it forward.

SUPPORT: Give each other a hand. If you see someone struggling, or acting in an unkind way, step up. Be that person who helps, who shows they care, who empathizes with someone.

FOCUS ON RESULTS: Do your work-that's your job right now. Your reward is your diploma in 4 years! Do good things-for yourself and others.

BREATHE: Take a few minutes each day to sit in a quiet spot and just breathe.

As always, if you need anything, please reach out to me adeledalesandro@U-46.org or your counselor. Look in your email for a message from your Peer Leader mentor. Please email him/her back-that's common courtesy (another life skill!).



Freshmen Connection Pictures



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