

the Bridge

FRESHMEN NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2024

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Welcome Class of 2028

As you immerse yourself in BVT's culture of respect and high expectations, you'll begin to bridge the gap between where you've been and where you're going. Embracing this change will be rewarding and challenging, but you will find your new friends, teachers, and mentors supporting you along the way. From the first day of school and Freshmen Exploratory to extracurricular activities like our Homecoming Weekend and the Color Run, your time at BVT marks the beginning of an exciting journey. Are you ready?

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick – Superintendent-Director

For life's journey to take us to the places we long to go, we must stop building walls and start building bridges.

Teaming up with your classmates through interactive, inquiry-based learning under the watchful eyes of your vocational instructors and academic teachers, you will begin to build your bridge's foundation. Along the way, you'll develop these skills and strategies to help you succeed:

Reflective Action – Learning to take action is not about reacting or trying to fix the situation. It's about stopping, taking time to absorb, and listening to others.

Grounded Values – Knowing what you stand for and who you are allows you to communicate your ideas better. You'll also be open to other viewpoints and diverse perspectives.

Curious Exploration – Practicing the art of asking questions that strengthen your capacity to study, comprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential.

Concerted Confidence – Building self-confidence is knowing who you are, and being the best you can be, all the while acknowledging those areas where you need growth or help in order to accomplish your dreams.

Courageous Engagement – Taking chances and finding the courage to show up and stand out while sharing your story with the world.

Interdependence – Recognizing that others are a part of your success opens you up to creative collaboration where the outcomes develop organically and are less limiting.

Cultivate Freedom – Breaking away from old barriers to learn new skills, embracing your talents, and working with more passion, energy, and meaning.

In the end, our primary goal is to help you find your voice, to chart a course that will ignite your passion, and guide you on your journey to a successful career.



Wednesday, August 14th

Freshmen Cookout – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 15th

Freshmen Orientation Day 1

- Full day of school.
- Complimentary lunch will be served.
- Student Council welcoming activity.
- Meet administrators, faculty, and staff.
- Meet vocational teachers.
- Review exploratory schedule and visit their seven exploratory shops.
- Practice bus routine. Bus routes will be posted on our website by mid August.

Friday, August 16th

Freshmen Orientation Day 2

- Full day of school.
- Meet academic teachers.
- Walk through their academic schedule.

Monday, August 19th

1st Day of Classes for All Students



**Blackstone Valley Regional
Vocational Technical High School**

65 Pleasant Street, Upton, MA 01568
508-529-7758

www.valleytech.k12.ma.us

ADMINISTRATORS

Our administrators and their support staff are always here to help. Let us introduce you...

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick
Superintendent-Director

Mr. Anthony E. Steele II
Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal

Mr. Matthew Urquhart
Ms. Skye Bomba
Assistant Principals

Mr. Edward Evans, III
Academic Curriculum Coordinator

Ms. Kerri Baltramaitis
Dr. Matthew J. Connors
Ms. Michele Denise
Vocational Directors

Ms. Yvette Normandin Martin
Director of Student Services

Ms. Nicole Ferguson
Business Manager

Mr. Robert Dolegiewicz
Facilities Manager

Mark Conley
Technology Coordinator

Ms. Kathy Pichel
Ms. Stephanie Dunham
School Nurses

Technology at Their Fingertips

Technology has the power to transform the way we live, work, and play, but like many things in life, it is constantly changing. To help our students achieve a school-life balance and stay up-to-date on the latest technology, we've gathered several learning tools and resources they can easily access, whether on campus, at home, or on the go.

Our Laptop Program

Laptops are a necessary learning tool that provides access to curriculum materials, essential resources, schedules, assignments, and student work. That's why we've implemented a 1:1 Laptop Program that provides all our students with a Dell laptop and charger they can use in their classes and at home to do their assignments. With this opportunity comes the responsibility to keep their school-issued equipment in working order from the start of school as freshmen through the last day of senior year. For more details, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/laptopprogram.



Freshmen Exploratory

Our Exploratory Program is an exciting opportunity for your teen to immerse themselves in a different vocational program every other week from late August to early December. Each week-long shop exploration is an immersive experience that provides our students with a general understanding of the curriculum, workload, and future career opportunities within that vocational program.

We encourage you to keep an open mind and a willingness to challenge any assumptions you might have regarding our vocational-technical offerings. Your teen will be trying new things for the first time. So don't be surprised if they are happy one week or frustrated another, or fall in love with a shop that was not among their initial top-three choices; this means the Exploratory Program is working.

As the seven exploratory cycles conclude, you will help your teen complete an online Decide Survey, ranking their top seven shops. Final placement is determined by student request and performance in accordance with our state-approved admissions policy. More information about final placement and rubric/scoring guide: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/freshmenexploratory.

Exploratory T-Shirts

Our incoming freshmen receive a complimentary t-shirt (*size was submitted with your teen's online registration form*) and safety glasses at Freshmen Orientation. These exploratory t-shirts must be worn each day during the exploratory cycles, in all shop areas. Purchasing additional shirts is not required, however, if you wish to order additional t-shirts, you can do so by visiting: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/exploratorytshirts. Orders must be placed by **July 15th**, which will be mailed directly to you or can be picked up at the Freshmen Cookout.



Peer Mentor Program

While attending BVT is fun and exciting, we also realize that the transition to a technical high school can be challenging at times. That's why we've established a Peer Mentor Program to support our new students as they embrace this change.

Over 100 juniors have volunteered to be peer mentors, to welcome our freshmen, and to assist them throughout their first year. As a member of the Class of 2028, you can expect conversation, programming, and access to mentors both informally and formally in vocational shops, academics, athletics, and extracurriculars. Mentors will answer questions, help problem solve, and provide fun activities. Our mentors are well trained to support, encourage, and inform new students about the numerous opportunities BVT has to offer them on their path to future success!



Fueling Your Teen for Success

The Director of our Food Services Program, Chef Eric Carlson and Martha Pellegrino, our Nutrition Educator believe that access to nutritious meals promotes student learning and lifelong healthy eating behaviors. Our goal is to fuel your teen's mind and body through high-quality breakfasts and lunches that contain fresh, nutritious ingredients. You can access our monthly lunch menu by visiting: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/lunchmenu.

We're excited to offer you "My School Bucks." It's a convenient, easy-to-use, and secure online payment system (www.myschoolbucks.com), where you can set up an account to prepay for breakfasts, lunches, and any a-la-carte items (bottled water, snack items, or second meals), and monitor your teen's eating. Alternatively, you can make an online deposit (www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/paymentoptions) or bring cash/checks to the Business Office before or after school. On the night of our Freshmen Cookout, you can set up and deposit money into your teen's account. A representative from our Business Office and Food Services will be onsite to assist you.

Meal Prices for 2024-2025 School Year

Pricing is subject to change based on Federal USDA Paid Lunch Equity Calculations.

- Breakfast: \$1.25
- Lunch: \$3.15
- Reduced Breakfast: \$0.30
- Reduced Lunch: \$0.40

Free & Reduced Meals

As of August 1st, you can log on to www.valleytech.school lunchapp.com to see if your teen is eligible for free or reduced meals. Simply select MA and Blackstone Valley SD, then complete the School Year 2024-2025 application. It's fast, easy, and the application status is available within 24- to 48-hours. **NOTE: We also waive the athletic fees for students that qualify for free and reduced meals.**

School Based Health Center

For over 22 years, the Milford Regional Medical Center's School Based Health Center, located in our Health Suite, has been collaborating with our School Nurses and Counselors to treat and prevent health and social problems. This free service is a complement to your health insurance; it only requires you to enroll your teen to access this amazing resource. Before the start of school, take a moment to complete all the health forms at: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/healthforms.

CALENDAR 2024-2025

To help keep you up-to-date on the most important school information, visit the Important Dates page of our website at: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/importantdates.

Aug 14	Freshmen Cookout – 5:00 p.m.
Aug 15	Freshmen Orientation Day 1
Aug 16	Freshmen Orientation Day 2 Football Tryouts Begin
Aug 19	1st Day of Classes for All Students Fall Sports Tryouts
Aug 21 & 22	School Pictures
Aug 30	NO SCHOOL
Sept 2	Labor Day – NO SCHOOL
Sept 4	Teacher In-Service – 7:45 a.m. Student Late Start – 10:30 a.m.
Sept 18	Academic Curriculum Night for Grades 9 & 11 – 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Sept 23-27	Spirit Week
Sept 27 & 28	Homecoming Festival Weekend
Oct 2	Teacher In-Service – 7:45 a.m. Student Late Start – 10:30 a.m.
Oct 14	Columbus Day – NO SCHOOL
Nov 11	Veterans Day – NO SCHOOL
Nov 15	First Trimester Ends
Nov 20	Vocational Curriculum Night for Grade 9 – 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Nov 27	Early Release – 11:00 a.m.
Nov 28 & 29	Thanksgiving Break – NO SCHOOL

NOTE: All dates are subject to change.



Translation Request

If you would like a translation of this newsletter, contact Student Support Services at: **508-529-7758 x3013**.

• **SPANISH:** Si usted desea una traducción de este folleto favor de comunicarse con la oficina del Principal al **508-529-7758 x3013**.

• **PORTUGUESE:** Se voce precisar de uma tradução desta agenda por favor entre em contato com o escritório do director no telephone **508-529-7758 x3013**.

Additional language translations available upon request.

Summer Reading

Summer is the perfect season for fun-in-the-sun activities like swimming, hiking, and biking. It's also a great time to relax and curl up with a good book. Summer reading not only fosters a love of reading, but it also has rewards. How so? This year we're mixing things up by inviting all students, grades 9-12, to participate in our Summer Reading Challenge by reading a book of their choosing. The reward? This assignment is optional and incentive-based. To learn more, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/summerreading.



Athletics

Whether your teen likes to swing a bat, work up a sweat on the basketball court, or cheer our athletes on to victory, there are many opportunities for them to participate in sports. Athletics gives our students a chance to be part of a team, support each other, and develop a strong sense of focus, commitment, and determination. Our athletic teams have grown over the years to be regular contenders for state and national championships and titles. We encourage you and your teen to peruse our extensive list of athletic programs below and see for yourselves the many ways our students have fun and continue to learn well past the final bell.

FALL

- Cheerleading
- Cross-Country
- Field Hockey
- Football
- Girls & Boys Soccer
- Girls Volleyball
- Golf

WINTER

- Alpine Skiing (Co-op w/Nipmuc)
- Boys & Girls Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Boys Ice Hockey
- Girls Ice Hockey (Co-op w/Ashland)
- Swimming (Co-op w/Grafton)
- Wrestling (Co-op w/Bellingham)

SPRING

- Baseball
- Boys & Girls Lacrosse
- Boys Volleyball (Co-op w/Nipmuc)
- Softball
- Track & Field



To participate in a sport, simply register online at: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/sportsregistration.

FALL SPORTS TRYOUTS

August 16th

- Football
- Golf

August 19th

- Cross-Country
- Fall Cheerleading
- Field Hockey
- Girls & Boys Soccer
- Girls Volleyball

WINTER SPORTS TRYOUTS

December 2nd

- Alpine Skiing
- Girls & Boys Basketball
- Girls & Boys Ice Hockey
- Swimming
- Winter Cheerleading

SPRING SPORTS TRYOUTS

March 17th

- Baseball
- Boys Volleyball
- Girls & Boys Lacrosse
- Softball
- Track & Field

NOTE: Sports Late Buses leave our campus at 5:45 p.m. daily during sports seasons.

Equal Opportunity

BVT welcomes and is open to all students, and offers equal opportunities in all approved programs and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, homelessness, or disability.

We also provide a sports late bus during sports seasons that departs daily at 5:45 p.m. Once our transportation provider completes and posts our bus schedules, they will assist in answering any questions or concerns you might have. For the most up-to-date school bus, late buses, and sport bus schedules visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/busroutes throughout the year.

Activities & Clubs

Whether your teen likes to hit the wintry slopes of New England, is passionate about art, or wants to run for class office, BVT offers numerous extracurricular activities. Drama, Art Club, Chorus, and the Fashion Club give students the opportunity to follow their passion and flex their creative muscles. By joining groups like the National and Technical Honor Societies, LEO Club, and Student Council, students can serve their community and lend their neighbors a helping hand.



Check out the activities and clubs below and see the many ways our students get inspired, connect with like-minded people, and showcase their talents.

Art Club	LEO Club
Aviation Club	Math Team
Band	Model United
Bass Fishing	Nations
Bird Watching Club	Motor Sports Club
Chorus	Movie Club
Class Officers	Multicultural Club
DECA	National Honor Society
Drama	National Technical Honor Society
Fashion Club	SEA Club
FIRST Robotics	Ski & Snowboard Club
Foreign Trips	SkillsUSA
Friends of Rachel	Spiritual Club
Gaming Club	Student Council
Good News Club	Unicef Club
GSA	Walking Club
Helping Hands	Yearbook
Homecoming	
Humanities Scholars	

Join the Conversation

In addition to this newsletter and our robust website content, our social media sites provide you another opportunity to connect and engage with us. Follow us on X: [@BVTHighSchool](https://twitter.com/BVTHighSchool) and Instagram: [@bvt_highschool](https://www.instagram.com/bvt_highschool) for updates on important dates, school events, program highlights, and student success stories.



Bus Schedule

Transporting your teen safely to and from school continues to be a top priority. Getting them involved in after-school activities and clubs is made easier with our late buses that depart campus at 3:15 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the school year.