

BARBERS HILL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Barbers Hill

Summer 2024



VISION STATEMENT

Barbers Hill ISD envisions academic excellence characterized by goal-driven, college/ career ready graduates who are responsible, accountable, contributing members of society.

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It's All A's At BH... Any Way You Slice it!

I have a confession to make... I'm addicted to ellipses. A reader of anything I've published in the last two decades at the helm at Barbers Hill indicates a propensity to use those three dots to connect a message. The dictionary suggests ellipses are sometimes used informally as a stylistic device to catch a reader's attention. For example, one of our mottos is "Excellence... by any measure." I view ellipses as the equivalent of a drum roll, but the reality is in Barbers Hill ISD... our results speak for themselves! (There I go again.)



Dr. Greg Poole Superintendent

We were just notified the school district received an A and every campus earned an A on the state accountability system. Over 100 districts sued the Texas Education Agency because they said the test was too challenging, but it's all A's for BH! We were academic UIL district champs for the 27th year in a row, and we had seven athletic teams advance to regionals. It appears we will also have a top 10 finish in the Lone Star Cup which is the culmination of the results of all of our academic, athletic and fine arts competitive endeavors.

We are one of the few, and possibly only, school districts to successfully pass three financial elections in a single school year, a feat made even more remarkable by an average 80% passing rate by the voters.

We have given our employees 4% to 5% raises for two decades, yet we have lowered the tax rate and have one of the lowest tax levies in the Houston area. Seventy-eight percent of our over-65 residents pay no school tax at all and our board of trustees gives all residents the strongest exemption by law they can give by only taxing 80% of the homestead's value!

Our education foundation has grown to a national leading \$160 million and 100% of the proceeds benefit our district. We continue to be one of the fastest growing school districts in the Houston area because people want their children in a district that has the highest expectations in all things.

Indeed, the facts do speak for themselves without any dramatic ellipsis use. Perhaps I will eventually refrain from ellipsis use... but, I doubt it. 😊

However, I will not refrain from singing the praises of the finest school district in the state of Texas!

Our August back-to-school convocation theme is "Generations of Greatness" and we have a remarkable 87 students who are fourth-generation Barbers Hill Eagles. We even have a few who are fifth-generation Eagles.

Our district does have a remarkable track record of success over almost a century of existence. Whether you have deep Barbers Hill roots or you moved here this year...

you are part of something that is singularly special!

Trustees re-elected in May to three-year terms



Becky Tice



Fred Skinner



Eric Davis



Meet the trustees

Not registered yet?

The final session for new and returning student registration is from July 29 to Aug. 2.

Please note that this will be done through the new platform (Skyward Q) and will look completely different than what the district has used previously.

Online applications must be submitted by Aug. 2 and all required documents uploaded and approved by Aug. 9 in order to be eligible to start school on Aug. 14 (the first day of school).

For more information, please visit the Student Services tab under Departments on the district website or scan the QR code.



The Barbers Hill High School Class of 2024 started their freshman year wearing facemasks and sitting behind plastic shields amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Four short years later, the Class of 2024 – all 435 students strong – received their Barbers Hill diplomas in front of close to 8,000 spectators.

Salutatorian Hudson Reves urged his classmates to keep exploring: “Whether it is new friends, new travels or new knowledge, explore it all!”

Valedictorian Stella Hunt encouraged her classmates to find their passion and pursue it wholeheartedly. “Be confident Class of 2024 in who you are and what you want to be. Your future is completely in your own hands now!”



The Top 10 graduates from the Barbers Hill High School Class of 2024, from left, are Stella Hunt, Hudson Reves, Victoria VanCleave, Asia Menard, Elena Bub, Peyton Dagley, Brian Guo, Graycen Clements, Ryland Davis and Jaden Alleman.



Voters show district unprecedented support

Once again and in record-setting fashion, Barbers Hill ISD constituents demonstrated the community support that has made the school district the state leader it is.

Never has the “We” in our motto of “We Can, We Will, We’re Barbers Hill” been more on display than in the three elections held during the school year – each passing with overwhelming margins.

In November, the School Funding Election had a state record 88 percent passing rate. The vote allows Barbers Hill to annually keep more local tax dollars at home for students.

In May, voters also strongly supported a \$378 million bond to pay for two new campuses and district-wide improvements as well as a Barbers Hill branch college proposition. Those measures were approved by 82 percent and 78 percent margins, respectively. On top of all that, Barbers Hill ISD taxpayers will see no tax rate increase as a result of the three elections that build a foundation for educational programs for generations to come.

We Can, We Will, We’re Barbers Hill!

STATE TRIPLE JUMP CHAMPION

Barbers Hill High School junior **Jayden Thrower** is the Class 5A state champion in the triple jump. Thrower’s winning jump of 47 feet, 7 inches was nearly a foot better than the runner up. Thrower became the district’s first state track champion since Emily Gunderson won the pole vault in 2014.



Education Foundation distributes thousands to teachers

The mission of the Barbers Hill Independent School District Education Foundation is to generate and distribute resources to assist the Barbers Hill Independent School District in enhancing its educational programs and processes.

Mission accomplished, again.

With smiling faces and noisemakers, members of the Barbers Hill ISD Education Foundation and administrators, accompanied by cheerleaders, boarded yellow school buses to award innovative teaching grants to teachers throughout the district. This year, the Education Foundation distributed \$291,176.20 - a record amount for one year. Forty-nine grants awarded for the 2023-2024 school year to teachers and staff for innovative ideas that benefit student learning and wellness.

Established in 2010, the Barbers Hill ISD Education Foundation has distributed nearly \$2 million to teachers since its inception.



The BHHS Girls Swim Team won the District 17-5A title. All the swimmers on the team qualified for regionals.



The BHHS robotics team competed in the VEX Worlds Competition, and finished with a final world ranking of 30th out of 2,820 teams. The team is now ranked 19th in the United States, and officially in the top 5% of all teams.



The Eagle Educator Interns had five national qualifiers from the 2024 Texas Association of Future Educators State Competition. From left are Bryce Kirsch, Jaci Trevino, Madi Gray, Kenna Poole and Kennedy Cox.

The BHHS Eaglettes earned several awards this contest season, most notably a pair of Academic Awards of Excellence, Best in Class, Best Overall, Sweepstakes Awards, and numerous officer and solo awards – just to name a few.



Barbers Hill achieved its first ever Area track championships for our Boys and Girls teams with 25 athletes qualifying for regional competition.





Congratulations to **Audrey Calzoncith** for making the All-State Choir and **Pepper Belt and Lauren Whitaker** for making the All State Band.



BHHS held its first formal military signing with six students signaling their intention to join the U.S. armed forces in front of families and friends. From left are **Landon Salazar** (Navy), **Caleb Isaac** (Marines), **Darius Caddy** (Navy), **Felipe Hernandez** (Army), **Jake Watkins** (Navy), and **Hayden Paul** (Army).



BHHS One Act Play, *"The Awakening of Spring,"* earned third place at the state contest.

The winners at the 2nd annual Unified Show for lamb, from left, are Grand Champions **Abigail Wells** (buddy) and **Kaylea Roach**, and Reserve Champions **Austin Green** and **Samuel Johnson** (buddy).



Musicians, **Miriel Baron**, left, and **Kayah Trejo** each earned an Outstanding Soloist award, which is basically a "Best in Contest" given at UIL State Solo & Ensemble for each of the different instruments. Baron earned her state gold medal for her marimba solo "Strive to be Happy," and Trejo earned her state gold medal for her Alto Saxophone solo "Brilliance."



New athletic districts for new year

For the past two falls, Barbers Hill played football in District 8-5A-1 with Crosby and all three Goose Creek CISD teams.

For 2024-2025, there are changes and some long road trips.

After UIL district realignment, District 9-5A-1 will include Barbers Hill, Sterling, Port Arthur Memorial, Beaumont West Brook and Beaumont United, Lufkin and Galveston Ball. Mont Belvieu to Lufkin is a 117-mile trip while the trip to Galveston Ball is a 56-mile trip, about the same drive time as runs to Port Arthur.

For volleyball, Barbers Hill landed in District 19-5A-3 with Baytown Lee and Sterling, Beaumont United and West Brook, Nederland, Port Arthur and Port Neches-Groves.

Boys and girls basketball and soccer, track and field, cross country, softball and baseball will also compete in District 19-5A-3 in the next two school years.

Also, new for the 2024-2025 school year, Barbers Hill will be adding boys and girls soccer teams at both middle schools.



New principals: Billeaud at ISS, Gonzalez at ECC

Barbers Hill ISD has named two new principals for the upcoming school year: **Donna Billeaud** takes over as the new principal at Intermediate School South and **Fatima Gonzalez** is the new principal at the Early Childhood Center, succeeding Billeaud.

Billeaud previously served as principal for two years at ECC, assistant principal for five years (four at Elementary South and one at Barbers Hill High School), and taught sixth grade in Barbers Hill for 14 years before entering into administration.

This fall, Billeaud will start her 27th year in education. Billeaud earned her bachelor's degree from University of Houston-Clear Lake and holds a master's degree from Lamar University.

Gonzalez joined Barbers Hill in 2010, serving initially as a mentor and substitute before transitioning to teaching in 2011 at the original primary school. Over her 13-year educational career, she has taught various grade levels from first to fourth, encompassing general and bilingual education.

Gonzalez earned a bachelor of science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies EC-6 Bilingual Generalist from the University of Houston-Clear Lake and a master's degree in Educational Administration with an EC-12 Principal Certification from Lamar University.



Donna Billeaud



Fatima Gonzalez

Barbers Hill baseball coach inducted into Texas Athletics Hall of Honor



High School baseball coach David Denny was inducted into the Texas Athletics Hall of Honor. Denny took over as baseball coach at Barbers Hill in 2010. After numerous deep playoff runs, the Eagles won the school's first UIL Baseball State Championship in 2021.

The University of Texas baseball record holder for career hits, doubles and runs batted in, Denny put together one of the most accomplished hitting careers in program history from 1982 to 1985.

Denny racked up hit after hit, helping lead the Longhorns to four-straight College World Series appearances and the 1983 National Championship.

District's Relay for Life fund-raising eclipses \$100,000



Barbers Hill ISD has chosen to make the American Cancer Society and Relay for Life its district service project. This year, BHISD had the privilege of hosting the Bay Area Relay for Life event that celebrates cancer survivors, remembers loved ones lost to cancer and raises funds to improve the lives of people with cancer and their families.

Barbers Hill is proud to announce that over \$102,000 was raised (a record!) for Relay for Life. BHISD is currently ranked No. 2 in the nation in these fundraising efforts.

Barbers Hill ISD is a Gold Together Team meaning that all funds raised are earmarked for Pediatric Cancer Research to help end childhood cancer.

Led by District Team Captain Stormy Thibodeaux, school staff and students organized many fun events, competitions and activities to raise funds and unite the BH community in a fun and engaging manner.

Since 2017, Barbers Hill ISD has raised more than \$500,000 for the American Cancer Society through their Relay for Life efforts.



Barbers Hill awards first Mills scholarship

Barbers Hill High School senior Katelyn Sanchez is the first recipient of the Mills Family Scholarship, an annual \$10,000 award from the Barbers Hill Education Foundation for any K-12 Barbers Hill student who wants to pursue a degree in the oil and/or petrochemical business.

Sanchez hopes to pursue a petroleum engineering degree next year, and work in Texas after her college graduation. Both her parents work in the oil and gas field locally.

The scholarship is named after longtime Barbers Hill ISD ambassador, supporter and Barbers Hill Class of 1959 member Al Mills who passed away in 2022.

Mills was best known as the longtime chairman and master of ceremony of the Barbers Hill Sports Hall of Honor.

"Al Mills gave so much of his time, energy and resources to this fine school district and it's only fitting that Barbers Hill children are still benefitting in his name," said Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole.

Barbers Hill ISD established the Mills Family Scholarship in 2022 with the intent to award an annual \$10,000 scholarship for any K-12 Barbers Hill student who wants to pursue a degree in the oil and/or petrochemical business.

Congrats to our 2024 Teachers and Principals of the Year!



Elementary Teacher of the Year (ISS)
Laura Brumley



Secondary Teacher of the Year (HS)
Shelia Taylor



Secondary Principal of the Year (MSN)
Matt Barnett



Elementary Principal of the Year (ECC)
Donna Billeaud

A Salute to Our Retirees



Mike Cofresi
Maintenance



Suzanne Cofresi
Intermediate School South



Lockwood Cox
High School



Cathy Dolan
High School



Laura Dyer
Intermediate School South



Stephanie Farner
Elementary School South



Cindy Harber
Middle School North



Juanita Hatfield
Elementary School South



Stali Hutton
Middle School North



Michelle Johnson
Elementary School South



William Locke
Transportation



Joyce Lowery
Assistant to Superintendent



Pamela McClinton
Intermediate School South



Suzy McDonald
Intermediate School North



Veronica McDowell
Intermediate School North



Melody Mendez
High School



Selena Ramsey
Middle School North



Robbie Reamy
Intermediate School North



Buddy Reaves
Maintenance-Grounds



Kellie Rogers
Intermediate School North



Caroline Russell
School Nutrition



Angie Sarria
Intermediate School North



Liz Stripling
Transportation



Virgie Viverette
Planning & Operations



Lisa Watkins
High School



Miki White
High School



Cathy Whitehead
Early Childhood Center



Juanita Whittington
Elementary School South



LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER



Back to School August 14th!



Boys basketball coach notches 600th victory

Barbers Hill High School boys basketball coach Chris Pennington, surrounded by family, players and former players, earned his 600th career win in 2024 when the Eagles defeated Port Neches-Groves.

"I feel very fortunate to get to work for Barbers Hill ISD. This has been my home for nine years and we have built a boys basketball program to be proud of," Pennington said.

Pennington has an overall mark of 609-322, which includes boys and girls high school basketball teams in Texas and Arkansas. He is 205-104 at Barbers Hill.

In Pennington's fourth season, the Eagles

clinched its first district title since 2007. The Eagles followed up that district title by qualifying for the playoffs every year since.

"Six hundred wins is a milestone very few basketball coaches achieve," Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole said. "What's equally impressive to the win total is the leader of men that Chris is. Coach Pennington's charges will be winners long after their final basketball game."