



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

100 School Lane, Blairsville, PA 15717

Mr. Michael Leasure, Principal



August 19, 2023

Dear Senior:

It has finally arrived... your senior year of high school! Your senior year is a very important year for postsecondary planning. We understand that although this is an exciting time, it may also be filled with questions and uncertainties about the future and what that looks like for you. It is our goal to assist you in making this year as smooth and successful as possible. We are asking that you please thoroughly read this letter and keep it in a location where you can easily refer to it. This will ensure that you are taking the necessary steps toward post-secondary planning.

**River Valley High School Program of Studies:** <https://hs.rivervalleyisd.org/academics/program-of-study>

**\*\*Please review the list of categories/items that may apply to your future plans\*\***

**Students who are unsure of their future career goals or are entering the workforce directly out of high school:**

**Interest Inventory:** All students will take the Smart Futures<sup>(R)</sup> Interest Inventory in their History class. We use an online career interest inventory called **Smart Futures** <https://www.smartfutures.org/>. It can be accessed from any computer that has internet capabilities. The results will provide you with a RIASEC code to help identify your individual strengths, interests and values. If you are wondering what your students RIASEC score is please contact the Guidance Office.

The **STEAM Academy** offers the following programs.

Automation Engineering	Biomedical Technology	Cybersecurity/Esports
Electrical Occupations & Powerline	Pathways to Health Professions	Rising Educators
Sports Medicine & Rehabilitative Therapy	Welding	

### **Military Services:**

**Federal Service Academies:** Students interested in applying to a Federal Service Academy should see Mrs. Faulk or Mrs. Evans immediately as the application process is rigorous. The colleges operated by the U.S. Federal Government are referred to as the Federal Service Academies are:

United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado

United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut

United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York

United States Military Academy, West Point, New York

United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland

**\*For enlistment in the US Armed Forces:** Please see Mrs. Faulk or Mrs. Evans to set up a meeting with a recruiter.



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

100 School Lane, Blairsville, PA 15717

Mr. Michael Leasure, Principal



## **For students planning to attend college or pursue further postsecondary education:**

**Campus Visits & Job Shadowing:** You may receive five excused absences from school to make postsecondary campus visits. Most campus visits can be set up online through individual school websites. To set up visits online find your postsecondary institution of choice and click on the link to admissions. If possible, we encourage parents/guardians to go along on these campus visits. At times, a campus visit may be impossible (for students planning to go out of state). In this instance, we recommend that the student do a thorough search of the school's website, and set up a phone interview through the admissions department. *Virtual College Visit Websites:* <https://www.youtube.com/c/theartofcollege> and <https://www.appily.com/virtual-college-tours>.

**Meetings with College Representatives:** Many admissions representatives from different colleges and universities will visit River Valley throughout the school year. Students can gain a wealth of information regarding those colleges, their specific scholarship opportunities, admissions requirements and much more through attending these meetings. Students should listen to announcements and sign up to meet with admissions reps in the Guidance Office.

**Scholarships:** Please see Mrs. Faulk or Ms. Evans for questions regarding scholarships. Many local and national scholarships are advertised directly through the Guidance Office. This year you will be responsible for obtaining and completing scholarship applications. We will give reminders to you to be diligent about checking the scholarship page weekly. In addition, scholarships will be updated on a weekly basis and can be found on the River Valley Scholarship Document (students will be sent this document via their RV email), on the River Valley [Guidance Website](#), and on the Scholarship Wall outside of the Guidance Office. Although we advertise many scholarships through the Guidance Office, it is impossible for us to have knowledge of specific scholarships that are offered through individual colleges and universities. Please visit the website of your prospective postsecondary institution for more information regarding scholarships. Additionally, there are thousands of other scholarships available on the web. It's a good idea to do a scholarship search online to access some of these additional scholarship opportunities. **A scholarship is like a job... you can't get one unless you apply. Please don't let free money go to waste!**

**Financial Aid:** Students who are planning to attend a postsecondary institution should plan to attend the scheduled Financial Aid Night & FAFSA Completion Workshop. The FAFSA is the form that drives any financial aid that may be granted to you by the government.

- **Financial Aid Night is scheduled for Thursday, September 26, 2024 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.** A representative from the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) will go over many important topics for securing Financial Aid for college.
- **The FAFSA Completion Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2024 from 6:00-8:00p.m. in the computer lab.**



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

100 School Lane, Blairsville, PA 15717

Mr. Michael Leasure, Principal



**SAT & ACT:** Students who plan to attend a 4-year college or university after high school should take the SAT or ACT. If you have not already done so, please schedule the SAT/ACT right away. You may sign up for SAT test dates offered at different locations on several Saturdays throughout the school year. Please visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for SAT test dates and registration deadlines, or [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) for ACT test dates and registration deadlines. Fee waivers will be available in the Guidance Office for students who receive free or reduced lunches. Eligible students will be provided with a code.

**Collegiate Athletics:** Any student who thinks there is even a slight possibility that they will play a Division I or II varsity sport while in college needs to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center online at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.com](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.com). There is a fee to register. PLEASE NOTE: NCAA legislation requires that students who wish to enroll in a Division I or II college and play collegiate level sports must send their ACT or SAT scores directly from the testing institution (such as the College Board) to the NCAA Clearinghouse. College Entrance Exam scores will not be accepted from the high school transcript.

**Applications:** Before Thanksgiving, you should complete applications for future schooling (this includes applying to colleges, universities, technical schools, trade schools, or talking with a military recruiter). Please pay attention to application deadlines for each postsecondary institution to which you plan to apply. We know this can be overwhelming, but it's so important to take the initiative and plan ahead. As always, the guidance staff wishes you a successful year! If you have any questions please feel free to reach out.

**Requesting High School Transcripts:** Students can request their high school transcripts by emailing the Mrs. Prohaska at [Prohaska.n@rvsdpa.org](mailto:Prohaska.n@rvsdpa.org). **Please include the name of the College or University and the email or mailing address where transcripts need to be sent.**

**The Challenge Program:** The Challenge program is a local program that connects each school with local community business partners. Each Fall there will be a kick-off assembly. A date of this kick-off assembly will be announced at the start of school. During the assembly the students will be introduced to 5 award categories: attendance, STEM, Community Service, Academic Improvement, and Academic Excellence. Students will have an opportunity to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a cash prize. Please see Mrs. Faulk or Mrs. Evans with any questions about the Challenge Program.

## **Important Guidance Reminders:**

**Guidance Restructuring and Office Relocation:** Mrs. Faulk will now be the High School Counselor, instead of splitting 6-12 counseling duties with Ms. Buffone; who will be the Middle School Counselor. Mrs. Faulk will tentatively be out from August 26th through November 15th on maternity leave. Chelsea Evans will serve as the High School Counselor during this time. We ask that you please email both Mrs. Faulk and Mrs. Evans moving forward. In addition to these changes, the Guidance Office will be moving to the High School Office area. This change will centralize services for students with college and career questions, scheduling needs, and counseling support.



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

100 School Lane, Blairsville, PA 15717

Mr. Michael Leasure, Principal



**Middle High School Office:** The Middle High School Office will now be located at the entrance of the Lower Gym. This area will be the primary point of contact for various administrative needs. Mr. Leasure and Mr. Westendorf will both be situated in the Middle High School Office area. Additionally, Mrs. Bouy will also be based in this section.

**Individual Senior Meetings with Guidance:** ALL Seniors will have a one-on-one meeting with the counselor to review their Senior Year Checklist. This will assure that each student has the needed information and plan to prepare for post-graduation. The following topics will be discussed during the check in: Plans for after High School, Graduation Pathway Requirement (Act 158), NCCA, College Planning/Applications, Transcript Review, GPA, and any other pertinent information for Seniors. At the end of the meeting students will be provided a copy of their checklist and anything that was discussed during then meeting.

**Senior Class Meeting:** Mr. Leasure, Mrs. Faulk and Mrs. Evans will meet with the Senior class on Friday, August, 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will be reviewing daily school rules, procedures and any other important Senior related information.

**Final Note:** The transition from High School to College can be a very challenging and emotional time. There is a trend being studied at higher education institutions about student resiliency to this change in life. Numbers of students with diagnosed mental health illness (such as anxiety and depression) is on the increase. Please remember that colleges and universities offer free counseling services to all students. If you begin to experience issues with life after high school it is important to seek professional guidance. Additionally, if you would like counseling services at any time during your senior year we offer a school-based counseling service through the Community Guidance Center. More information is available in the Guidance Office.

We are looking forward to a great school year! Please email with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Bethany Faulk*

Mrs. Bethany Faulk  
High School Counselor  
[Faulk.b@rvsdpa.org](mailto:Faulk.b@rvsdpa.org)

*Chelsea Evans*

Mrs. Chelsea Evans  
High School Counselor  
[Evans.c@rvsdpa.org](mailto:Evans.c@rvsdpa.org)