



# RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

100 School Lane, Blairsville, PA 15717

Mr. Michael Leasure, Principal



August 19, 2024

Dear Class of 2026 Students and Parents/Guardians:

Your child's junior year of high school is a very important 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 your child. It is our goal to assist your child in making this year as smooth and successful as possible.

The majority of the steps you and your child need to complete for their post-secondary goals should be completed during this pivotal year. This letter is designed to provide you with information that you should find helpful in managing this process. 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 and your child 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 child's 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(R) 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



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## Military Services:

**Federal Service Academies** - Students interested in making application 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.

## **For students planning to pursue ANY further postsecondary education:**

**Campus Visits & Job Shadowing:** Your child may receive five excused absences from school to make postsecondary campus visits. **We strongly encourage students to visit each school that your child has a potential interest in attending during their junior year.** Please do not wait until your senior year to complete campus visits. Most campus visits can be set up online through college 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. *Virtual College Visit Websites:*

<https://www.youtube.com/c/theartofcollege> and <https://www.appily.com/virtual-college-tours>.

**Scholarships:** For questions regarding scholarships, please see Mrs. Faulk or Mrs. Evans. Many local and national scholarships are advertised directly through the Guidance Office. **Most of these scholarships cannot be completed until your child's senior year; however, we wanted to make you aware that next year your child will be responsible for obtaining and completing scholarship applications.** In addition, scholarships will be updated on a weekly basis and can be found on the River Valley Scholarship Page, 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 child's 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.

**Financial Aid:** Students who are planning to attend a postsecondary institution should fill out the FAFSA financial aid form during their **senior year**. The FAFSA is the form that drives any financial aid that may be granted to your child by the government. Although your child is a junior, it may be a good idea for you to attend Financial Aid Night this year so you can become familiar with this process. You will be invited



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to Financial Aid Night again next year. **Financial Aid Night is scheduled for Thursday, September 26, 2024 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium.**

**PSAT/NMSQT-** (Practice-SAT): Given at River Valley High School. It's a cost-effective way to prepare for the SAT. **This test will be given on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 8am.** More information regarding the PSAT will be sent out once the school year begins. Please contact Mrs. Evans with any questions about the PSAT.

**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 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 of your child's senior year, your child 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 and your child 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 email address or mailing address and College or University name for where the transcript needs 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.



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## **Important Guidance Reminders and Updates:**

**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.

**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 Junior Meetings with Guidance:** ALL Juniors will have a one-on-one meeting with the counselor to review their Junior Year Checklist. The purpose of the junior meeting is to cover some very important steps that your child should take towards planning for his/her future. 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 Juniors. At the end of the meeting students will be provided a copy of their checklist and anything that was discussed during then meeting.

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

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

Sincerely,

*Bethany Faulk*

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*Chelsea Evans*

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