Brookline High School's



Welcome Book

Important information and resources for new *and* existing community members.

115 Greenough Street, Brookline, MA 02445
617-713-5000
https://bhs.brookline.k12.ma.us/

Dear Brookline High School Students, Staff, and Families,

I am excited to share the *Welcome Book* with you in advance of the school year. In this book, we lead by sharing some of the values that guide our efforts with students, the most important humans in the very human work we do at Brookline High School. We also share important resources, roles, and available supportive structures.

I suggest you review what is contained within the *Welcome Book* and know that you can return to it throughout the school year. You should also take a look at our school website, which has updated calendars, schedules, and the like. Finally, parents/caretakers, please consider signing up for the *PTO Weekly Blast*, a weekly newsletter from the Brookline High School Parent Teacher Organization.

Most of all, we welcome back our returning students, and we welcome for the first time our incoming ninth graders and all students who are new to BHS. Brookline High School is a tremendous place with many opportunities to become involved, seek challenges, ask for help, make friends, and have a positive impact on the school community. I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Take care,



Anthony Meyer
Head of School

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How this book is structured

At Brookline High School (henceforth BHS), we have a set of values centered around learning and community culture that we have phrased as mantras. The word mantra literally translates to “a tool for the mind.” Thus, our mantras serve as tools to remind our community members of our shared values and practices.

Our school mantras are

- Every student is a scholar, citizen, and caretaker.
- This is hard. You can do it. We will help each other.
- We are not done yet.
- Freedom *AND* responsibility.
- We create the culture we want.

Most information in this ***Welcome Book*** for both parents/guardians of new and existing Warriors (as our school mascot is the BHS Warrior, we often refer to members of our community as Warriors) and Warriors themselves, is organized by mantra. For each mantra, we explain the value it represents. We describe supports within the school that embody and support the spirit of the mantras, and highlight selected school policies related to the mantras that are in the BHS Handbook. The BHS Handbook contains the constitution and entirety of rules governing the school community. We strongly encourage students and parents/guardians to familiarize themselves with all the rules included in the BHS Handbook. The Handbook is updated annually and can be found on the homepage of the BHS website.

This book will also reference the Aspen Portal. Both students and caregivers have access to the Portal which contains scheduling, attendance, and grading information. For more details on the Portal, see page 10.

For those of you who are accessing this book online, links to resources are embedded in the text. For those of you who are utilizing a printed copy of this book, the final section includes website URLs and QR codes to access all referenced resources.

Mantra 1: Every student is a scholar, citizen, and caretaker.

Value statement:

At BHS, we believe that all students are scholars capable of high achievement on their own merit, that the school is stronger when students are actively engaged citizens in the community and their classrooms, and that all students play a role in maintaining the physical spaces of the school so that all community members feel safe and welcome.

This mantra is, in part, embodied in common practices by community members such as:

- *Taking care of each other by greeting passersby in the hallway and introducing ourselves when asked.*
- *Composting and recycling appropriately in the cafeterias and common spaces.*
- *Cleaning up after ourselves in classrooms and common spaces, such as the cafeteria.*
- *Staying present physically and intellectually for classes.*
- *Coming to school ready to learn.*
- *Reserving use of elevators for those who physically need them.*

Mantra 2: This is hard. You can do it. We will help each other.

Value statement:

At BHS, students are held to high expectations in their classes and in community spaces. We know that learning new material and navigating social interactions are both challenging. We also know that all students can rise to these challenges and we have support systems in place to help all students achieve. We believe that both learning and personal growth are partnerships between faculty, students, caregivers, and support staff. Together we will help each other succeed.

This mantra is embodied by the support systems in place. Adults (teachers, counselors, social workers, deans, program coordinators) are available to help students work through academic and emotional challenges. Students support fellow students when they are asked for help and understanding.

Mantra 3: We are not done yet.

Value statement:

At BHS, we embrace a growth mindset for all community members. We believe that everyone (students, faculty, staff, administration) is a lifelong learner, both academically/intellectually and personally.

This mantra is embodied by community members committing to bringing their best selves to school every day and asking for help when they need it.

How we support mantras 1-3:

- **Canvas**
  Canvas is our on-line learning platform. Most teachers use Canvas to post assignments, weekly agendas, and resources used in class (slideshows, supplemental readings, extra practice, etc.). Students can use Canvas to keep track of due dates and to access helpful study materials.

- **Faculty office hours**
  Every teacher has official office hours. These are typically stated in the course expectations/course syllabus documents that each teacher gives out at the beginning of the school year (or semester for classes that start in the spring). These office hours are a great time for students to ask questions and receive one-on-one extra help.

- **Academic help centers**
  Academic help centers are staffed by either faculty members or students in advanced courses. These are places where students can get extra help for a particular subject, in addition to getting extra help from their teachers. Typically, there are help centers for math, science, some world languages, and English.

- **Library**
  Our librarians are an excellent resource for students who need help with research, book suggestions, and obtaining supplemental materials. Additionally, the library maintains a number of on-line databases and other research tools. The library website has many resources to explore.

- **School counselors**
  Counselors can help students chart an academic pathway and find student clubs or other activities that help build social relationships outside of the classroom. In most cases, students have the same counselor for all four years of high school. A student's assigned counselor can be found in the Aspen Portal.

- **Student clubs**
  There are MANY (50+) clubs for students to explore ranging from academic to social to activism-focused clubs, school government, and beyond. Clubs are a great way to make new friends and build community. All clubs are supervised by a faculty or staff advisor. Students can find a list of active clubs on the BHS website.

Selection of related policies in the BHS Handbook:

At BHS, we are striving to maintain an environment of scholarship and collegiality. The Student Code of Conduct (BHS Handbook) has a number of rules that support these goals:

- Rule 1.3, ***No Academic Dishonesty,*** describes the BHS academic honesty policy and consequences for students who have been found to have committed plagiarism or any act of cheating.
  - Cheating is unauthorized having, giving, sharing, taking, seeking, receiving or presenting information and/or material that could benefit a student. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to: passing of information in any manner during an assessment, having access to and/or utilizing unauthorized material and/or technology during an assessment, passing and/or sharing of information about an exam from one class or section to another, and submitting work that is not one's own.
  - Plagiarism is using the words, data, ideas, or opinions of someone else without giving credit to that person in the form of footnotes or references. This includes exact language, paraphrase, or re-wording, as well as submitting work that is not one's own.

- Rule 2.3, ***No Disruption of School or Classes,*** prohibits the disruption of school or classes. Students do not have the right to interfere with the education of other students.

- Section 3, ***Academic Policies,*** details minimum course requirements to graduate from BHS. These requirements ensure that students receive a broad liberal arts education while also having the opportunity to more deeply explore subjects and arts that they are particularly interested in. Section 3 also details how grade point averages are calculated.

Mantra 4: Freedom *AND* responsibility

Value statement:

With an open campus and the possibility of unscheduled ("free") blocks, students experience much freedom at BHS and must take responsibility for their actions and their effects on others in our community.

This mantra is embodied by students attending all scheduled classes, arriving to those classes on time, and staying present in scheduled classes to fully participate in learning.

How we support the mantra:

- **Open campus**
  All students will earn the opportunity to enjoy campus common and outdoor spaces during their free blocks or lunchtime. Upperclassmen have the freedom to leave campus during free blocks or lunchtime. This freedom is paired with the responsibilities of getting to class on time and respecting the learning environment of the school.

- **Supervised common spaces**
  The STEM Commons at the main building of campus and the main floor of the 22 Tappan building were designed as spaces for students to gather for work and socializing. While those are student-centered spaces, they are staffed with adults to ensure that students are using the space responsibility.

- **Regular attendance and timely arrival to class**
  Excellent student attendance promotes learning for all students in all classrooms. The BHS attendance policy is designed to improve student learning and enhance the learning environment in all classrooms. BHS expects parents/guardians and students to discuss the importance of good attendance. Students are responsible for work missed when tardy or absent. Daily student attendance concerns will be shared with parents/guardians via a phone call or email.

Selection of related policies in the BHS Handbook:

- The ***Student Rights and Responsibilities*** section of the Handbook details what rights students have in regards to freedom of speech, dress, etc. and details limits to how they may behave in school.

- The **Student Code of Conduct** contains many important rules and policies that all students should be familiar with, here are a couple that we would like to draw attention to:
  - Rule 1.1, ***Attendance Procedures***, details the attendance policy and procedures, here are some important numbers to remember:
    - An N (no credit) grade is received if a student is absent for 15% or more of class meetings;
    - An N is also received if a student has 6 AWOLs (unexcused absences) in a full-year course, 3 AWOLs in a semester-long class, or 4 AWOLs in a semester-long Wellness class.

  - Rule 1.2, ***The Policy on Alcohol, Tobacco, Nicotine, Vaporizers, and Controlled Substances***, states that the following materials are prohibited on school property: tobacco in any form, vaping materials, marijuana and other controlled substances, and alcohol. If students are found in possession of these substances, they are subject to consequences as described in the Handbook.

Mantra 5: We create the culture we want.

Value statement:

The culture of a community is shaped over time by its members. At BHS, We want to work together to make our school the place we want and need it to be so that all students and staff feel safe to learn, grow, and achieve.

This mantra is embodied by community members treating each other with respect and empathy. Students are expected to give their name to an adult faculty or staff member when asked. In such situations, the requesting adult will introduce her/him/themself to the student.

How we support the mantra:

- **"Days of"**
  Each year we have several days during which the entire school community learns and reflects together on important societal issues. These special days of school-wide assemblies and activities, which in the past have included:
    - Day of Dialogue which addresses LGBTQ+ issues,
    - Day of Racial Reform and Solidarity which celebrates our diverse cultures with a focus on anti-racist practices, activism, and empowerment,
    - Day of Change which addresses education and growth regarding topics of consent culture and healthy relationships, and
    - Ability Day which addresses ableism.

- **HUB/Advisory**
  Hub meets one time per week. The goals of the program include developing community at BHS and ensuring every student feels known, fostering social emotional well-being, promoting equity and empathy, facilitating reflection on the academic experience, helping students develop a sense of self as a lifelong learner, communicating BHS culture and values.

Selection of related policies in the BHS Handbook:

Trust is an important foundation upon which a community is built and nurtured. Community building also requires community members to be fully present and engaged. The following school rules and policies, found in the Student Code of Conduct, are integral for building trust and encouraging engagement.

- Rule 1.4, ***The Policy on Personal Electronic Devices***, covers personal electronic device (PED) use in classrooms and common spaces. The goal of this policy is to encourage engagement with classmates and peers away from screens. Below are some important points of the policy. ***In the spirit of developing engaged classroom communities, we encourage parents/guardians to limit contact with students' phones to emergencies only or before/after school hours.***
    - All electronic devices are prohibited from being used in classrooms, unless with the approval of the teacher.
    - Teachers may require students to put PEDs in a caddy or to stow them in a backpack.
    - Students using PEDs while in class without permission can have their PEDs confiscated by their teacher for the remainder of the period.

- There are also a number of rules that help us to maintain a safe environment:
    - School rules prohibit
        - fighting and violence (2.1),
        - weapons (2.2; we have a zero tolerance policy for weapons),
        - disruptive behavior (2.3),
        - verbal and written harassment (2.4),
        - inappropriate sexual behavior (2.5),
        - bomb scare or triggering false fire alarms (2.7),
        - stealing (2.8), and
        - hazing (2.9).

    - State and federal laws such as those related to bullying, discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment are described as well. Violations of these rules/laws will result in investigation and potential referral to law enforcement. Students who have been a victim of bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, or violence should report the incident to a trusted adult.

    - We protect and maintain the safety of the school environment by prohibiting vandalism, graffiti, destruction of any property, school or individual, (3.1), and littering (3.2).

Additional information

1. Attendance procedures and information

- Parents/guardians must call (or email) the appropriate secretary to report and excuse an absence, tardy, or early dismissal prior to 10am on the day to which the absence/tardy/early dismissal applies:
    - **Grade 9 & 11**→ Call (617-713-5190) or email Sabrina McIntosh (sabrina_mcIntosh@psbma.org)
    - **Grades 10 & 12** → Call (617-713-5035) or email Sharon Fagan (sharon_fagan@psbma.org)
    - **ACE & SWS** → Call (for ACE 617-713-5252; for SWS 617-713-5400) or email Christine Carruthers (christine_carruthers@psbma.org)

- Parents/guardians can and should use the Aspen Parent Portal (see below) to monitor their student's attendance. Note that there are limited allowable absences for each full year or semester course that, if exceeded, will result in no credit. If there is an issue around attendance, contact your student's Dean or Program Coordinator. (*A list of Deans and Program Coordinators can be found in the Additional Resources section of this booklet.*)

- Students may not be excused from a class or classes if they remain present in the school building.

- Further details on the Attendance Policy and related procedures can be found in the BHS Handbook.

2. The Aspen Parent Portal

The Public Schools of Brookline's Parent Portal in Aspen allows families to update student information, view and print Progress Reports and Report Cards and see student records. For guidance on how to use the Parent Portal, please visit the district website: https://www.psbma.org/students-families/parent-portal. If, after reviewing the guides to Portal access, you are having difficulty with Portal login, please contact datateam@psbma.org.

3. Interim progress reports and quarterly report cards

Midway through each quarter, an interim progress report (IPR) will be issued via the Parent Portal. These IPRs will contain brief, personalized comments by each teacher on the progress of individual students. Letter grades will only be included if a student is earning a D or E at that point in the quarter. Quarterly report cards are issued at the end of each academic quarter and contain a letter grade only. The report card issued at the end of the school year will include both a fourth quarter letter grade and a final letter grade for the course.

Both IPRs and quarterly report cards also include attendance information. Here are abbreviations we use to relay that information:

- EX: this is the number of excused absences for a course,
- UX: this is the number of unexcused absences for a course,
- Q: this serves as a warning that a student is nearing the attendance cap for a course. and is in danger of receiving an N,
- N: this means that a student does not receive credit for a course due to surpassing the attendance cap for the class.

We also closely monitor tardiness and time spent out of the classroom. While additional codes may be added to Aspen, you may see these two related to tardiness:

- TC: this refers to the number of times a student was tardy for a course,
- TX: this refers to the number of times a student was extremely tardy for a course.

4. Food services

Breakfast and lunch, served in the cafes of both 22 Tappan and 115 Greenough Street, is provided at **no cost** for all students. Students are only charged for lunch items if they take a second lunch portion. Check the PSB school food website for up to date menu options.

5. Health Services and medical procedures

- Parents/guardians of all students are required to complete **the "Student Contact Verification" workflow available in Aspen (X2) at the start of each school year. This will serve to update school nurses on any health changes from year to year.** If appropriate, the school nurses will complete an Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) for a complex medical need.

- If a student will take medication during the school day, both prescribed and over the counter, and either scheduled or as needed, the **Massachusetts Department of Public Health** (MDPH) requires BOTH the prescriber's order and a completed and signed parent(s)/guardian(s) permission form yearly. These authorizations are also required if a student will self-administer medications during the school day. (*Note: Medications should always be transported to and from school by parent(s)/guardian(s) and provided in a pharmacy-labeled container.*)

- Parents/ Guardians, please provide the following immunizations and physical exams:
    - New students - documentation of their child's completed immunizations before entry to school. (*Note: Medical or religious exemptions must be renewed annually at the start of each school year.*)
    - New students AND students entering grade 10 - a copy of a physical exam completed by a U.S. physician. A physical exam dated within one year is acceptable. (*Note: All BHS athletes, who participate in interscholastic sports, are required to provide yearly physicals directly to the Department of Athletics per MIAA regulations.*)
    - All students entering Grades 11 and 12 - documentation showing one dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine, MenACWY (brand names Menveo or Menactra) for school entry received on/after 16 years of age.

- **MDPH**-mandated programs:
    - Each student in Grade 9 will have hearing, vision, SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) and postural screening. SBIRT is done in collaboration with our guidance, wellness staff. Postural screening will be completed in collaboration with the Physical Education staff. If your child is under care of a physician for hearing or postural issues, please send a note from the physician to be exempt from screening.
    - Each student in Grade 10 has both a height/weight and BMI measurement.

6. Opportunities for caregivers to get involved at BHS and in the wider community

- The Brookline Education Foundation (BEF) is a nonprofit organization that supports innovative teaching, administrative leadership, professional development, and community participation.

- The BHS Innovation Fund is a parent-led nonprofit organization that fosters a culture of innovation at BHS by supporting the development of teacher-driven courses and programs. There are many volunteer opportunities.

- The BHS Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) strengthens connections within the broad and diverse BHS community by facilitating home-school communication and raising funds to pay for learning-enhancing items and events. There are many volunteer opportunities.

- The Brookline Parent Education Network (B-PEN) helps parents navigate the social, emotional and developmental challenges affecting Brookline's teens and pre-teens. B-PEN is part of the Brookline Department of Public Health and Public Schools of Brookline Prevention/Intervention Programs for Youth.

- The English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) is open to parents/guardians of English learners (ELs) in Brookline. The purpose of the ELPAC is to promote and support the success of ELs. ELPACs are intended by law to advise the district and schools regarding matters that impact English learners including language acquisition programs, educational opportunities for ELs, and improvement plans as they relate to ELs.

- The Friends of Performing Arts (FoPA) is a volunteer parent group dedicated to supporting the school's rich diversity of performing arts activities. FoPA has many types of collaborative volunteer opportunities for parents where they can meet each other and work directly with faculty to support the BHS community.

- The Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a group that advocates to the Brookline School Committee and Public Schools Administration for issues affecting students on IEPs and 504 plans and their families, including equity, sharing information, connecting people and resources and providing a forum for meeting other families who share interests.

7. Deans and Program Coordinators

At BHS, there are two deans of students; one dean for grades 9 & 11 and one dean for grades 10 & 12. Each grade has also one or two associate deans. The deans stay with their students as the students move up grades.

- ***Dean of Students grades 9 & 10***: Summer Williams (summer_williams@psbma.org; 617-713-5218)
- ***Dean of Students grades 11 & 12*:** Astrid Allen (astrid_allen@psbma.org; 617-713-5267)
- ***Dean of Student Support**:* Brian Poon (brian_poon@psbma.org; 617-713-5788)
- **Associate Deans**:
    - ***Grade 10***: Jenny Longmire (jenny_longmire@psbma.org; 617-713-5043)
    - ***Grade 11***: Brian Poon (brian_poon@psbma.org; 617-713-5788)
    - ***Grade 12**:* Lisa Redding (lisa_redding@psbma.org; 617-713-5038)
    - ***Grade 9***:
        - Marisel Figueroa-Marrero (marisel_figueroa-marrero@psbma.org; 617-713-5799)
        - Brendan Kobus (brendan_kobus@psbma.org; 617-713-5701)
- ***Program Coordinators**:*
    - **ACE**: Amy Bayer (amy_bayer@psbma.org; 617-713-5256)
    - **SWS**: Dan Bresman (dan_bresman@psbma.org; 617-713-5401)
    - **Winthrop House**: Lilly O'Flaherty (lillian_o'flaherty@psbma.org; 617-879-5787)

13. Other important phone numbers

- Main office: 617-713-5000
- Health Clinic at 115 Greenough Street: 617-713-5147
- Health Clinic at 22 Tappan Street: 617-713-5433

14. Athletics at BHS

Brookline High School has a robust athletics department with varied opportunities for students to be part of a team. Students and caregivers can visit the Athletics Department page on the school website for information on seasonal sports offerings and team tryouts. Team sports can be a great way for students to develop a sense of community and meet new people, as well as develop both teamwork and leadership skills.

10. Helpful links/QR codes

Aspen Family Portal information:
https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/Page/1798

BHS website:
https://bhs.psbma.org

The most up-to-date BHS Handbook can be found on the homepage of the website. The website contains up-to-date information on pick-up and drop-off traffic patterns, school calendars and schedules, and contact information for administration, faculty, and staff. You can also find pages for Athletics, the Library, and student clubs.

BHS PTO:
https://www.bhs-pto.org/

Brookline Education Foundation:
https://brooklinefoundation.org/

BHS Innovation Fund
https://bhsinnovationfund.org/

Brookline Parent Education Network:
https://www.b-pen.org/

English Language Learner Parent Advisory Council:
https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/Page/2512

Friends of Performing Arts:
https://fopa.weebly.com/

Special Education Parent Advisory Council
https://www.brooklinesepac.org/

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