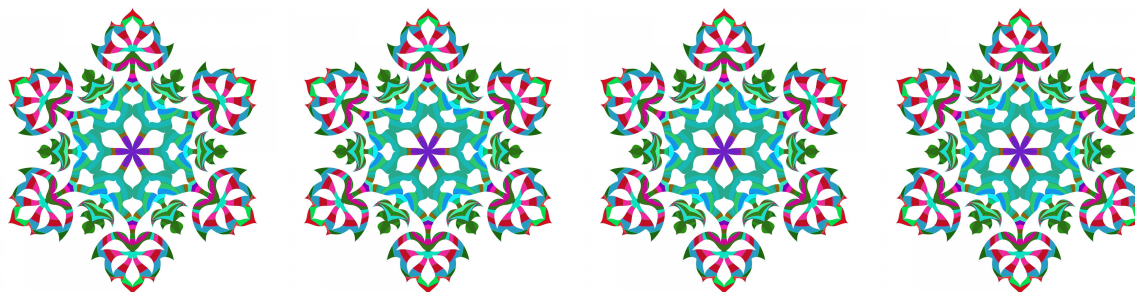


## Buffalo High School Winter Counselor Connect



**We're here and we want to help! Remember, School Counselors can help you and your student with academic concerns, scheduling and registration, post-secondary (college & career) planning, personal and social challenges, and access to resources.**

### **Counselor Contact Update:**

Our Google Voice numbers will be discontinued in the days ahead. We want students and guardians to know that the best means of communication is our email address or office phone number.

Mark Jones- Last Names A-F <a href="mailto:mjones@bhmschools.org">mjones@bhmschools.org</a> 763.682.8107 (office)	Shanlee Braun- Last Names G-K <a href="mailto:ssbraun@bhmschools.org">ssbraun@bhmschools.org</a> 763.682.8054 (office)
Christina Cox- Last Names L-Ri <a href="mailto:ccox@bhmschools.org">ccox@bhmschools.org</a> 763.682.8075 (office)	Jennifer Blair- Last Names Ro-Z <a href="mailto:jblair@bhmschools.org">jblair@bhmschools.org</a> 763.682.8139 (office)



### **Student Services is now on Instagram**

In an effort to get information out to students, we have started an instagram account. We can be found under the handle: @bhs.studentservices

### **Time to check in on your students**

Parenting during a pandemic has created new challenges we never knew existed. Adolescents face this same concerning newness with less life experience and connections than we have as adults. Experiencing stress, sadness, and frustration during this time is normal. For some students, however, it may cause high levels of consistent stress.

**Please check in on your students.** Many are struggling and they may not know how to communicate the strength of their emotions. As School Counselors, it is difficult to maintain the closeness of our relationships to students during distance learning. Take time as caregivers to

create open conversations about how they are feeling. Check in on their mental well-being. Take steps to grow their circle of support if they are feeling isolated or overwhelmed.

This [linked article](#) titled “Tips for Communicating With Your Teen” from Child Mind Institute provides ideas for how to have conversations with your adolescent. Additionally, here are some excerpts taken from [How to Help Teens Cope During the Pandemic](#), created by the Children’s Hospital Colorado.

**Check in on your teen’s mental health.** Without hovering or pressing your teen too much, regularly see how they are doing mentally. Look for changes in their mood. Be empathetic and understanding of how much their world is changing. Don’t leave them to figure out this new reality entirely on their own.

**Questions to ask your teen.** It can be hard to know how to spark conversation with your teenager or what questions will actually let you know how they are doing. Our Youth Action Board members told us what they want their parents to ask them. Remember- just asking lets them know you care about them.

- How are you feeling today, really? Physically and mentally.
- What’s taking up most of your headspace right now?
- How have you been sleeping? How do you want to improve your sleep?
- What have you been doing for exercise?
- What did you do today that made you feel good?
- What’s something you’re looking forward to in the next few days?
- What’s something you can do today that would make you feel good?
- What are you grateful for right now?

**Warning signs your teen may need help-** If you notice your pre-teen or teen showing any of the following signs for more than a few days, check in with them:

- Acting out
- Being irritable and tearful
- Seeking constant reassurance
- Changes to sleeping or eating habits
- Isolating more
- Feeling less motivated or not being able to get things done, like schoolwork or chores
- Not enjoying activities they would normally

If you are concerned about your adolescent or young adult (or an even younger child) ask how they are doing and about their mood and low moments. This is especially important if your child already had mental health concerns before the pandemic. Asking about depression, mental health or suicide does not create or intensify the problem.

If you have questions or feel your student needs additional mental health support, please reach out to their assigned School Counselor, a family doctor, or a mental health professional in the community.

### **Course Registration for 2021-22**

Registration meetings will take place a little different this year. Students will be receiving information through advisory from their school counselors on **January 8th**. Registration videos will be available to support students and guardians understanding of graduation requirements, course information, and the class registration process. Students are encouraged to have conversations with their teachers regarding future courses in their subject area. Students can begin to review their course plans in the Multi-Year Academic Planner (MYAP) in their student portal. MYAP is accessible now through the registration **deadline of January 29th**. Further details regarding registration will be emailed and posted to our Student Services website in early January. Please feel free to contact your student's counselor if you would like to meet and talk about the registration process.



### **Did you miss our Financial Aid Night?**

If senior families were unable to attend our FAFSA completion night on Monday, October 12th and still need some assistance, check out the links for more information. You can also contact your college's financial aid offices for direct support.

Here's the link to the FAFSA to get started: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>

Brief view on what you need and where to start: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fz9j-g1FIHQ>

### **PSAT Scores**

For those students that took the PSAT in October, scores were released December 7th. [CollegeBoard](#) has emailed instructions on creating an account and accessing scores when they become available online. Students will be able to get the paper score report from BHS mid-December. An email from Mr. Jones will be sent to those students that took the PSAT, with information about how to interpret the PSAT scores as well as what you need to do to pick up your score report.



### **ACT State Testing**

The ACT Plus Writing college entrance exam is scheduled to be given at Buffalo High School to current 11th grade students during the school day on **Tuesday, March 16th, 2021** (pending any additional COVID-related restrictions). There will be **no cost** to students for this exam and scores may be used for college admission testing requirements (at individual college's discretion). Students **should not sign up on the ACT website** to take the March 16th test at BHS. There will not be a make-up test date for this exam. Information about how to opt-into taking the State ACT will be emailed home to parents/guardians in the near future.

### **ACT Test Prep**

Students have been preparing for the ACT throughout their education and will be tested in the areas of English, math, reading, science, and writing. Some students may wish to do extra preparation before taking the ACT Plus Writing, if they have specific score goals. Preparation materials can be found through multiple vendors and publishers as well as at most public libraries.

- Free online prep course and 3 timed practice tests available through the Minnesota Career Information System ([www.mncis.intocareers.org](http://www.mncis.intocareers.org)) for all BHS students. See your counselor for details.
- Free flash cards, tips and strategies, and 7 timed practice tests available through March 2 Success ([www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com)).
- Free ACT prep guides in the Student Services Office
- Test prep courses through **BHM Community Ed** for a fee. Please contact **BHM Community Education** to find out more information on classes, dates, and fees.
- Free virtually proctored ACT practice test from local Academic All Star Tutoring on Saturday, January 16th. Students will be taking the main 4 sections of the test and then get a detailed score report. Students can register using this [link](#).

### **Upcoming National ACT Test Dates**

Some students may wish to take the ACT test more than once. If your student wishes to take an additional ACT test, they must sign up for a national test date. **For national testing only, students sign up at: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org). Buffalo High School code: 240-345**

**February 6, 2021** - Register by January 8th, 2021

**April 17, 2020** - Register by March 12th, 2021

**June 12, 2020** - Register by May 7th, 2021

**July 17, 2020** - Register by June 18th, 2021

### **Transcripts:**

All official Buffalo High School transcripts must be requested and sent using an online transcript ordering service at [www.parchment.com](http://www.parchment.com). *More information can be found on Buffalo High School website under the Student Services link: <https://www.bhmschools.org/transcripts> <https://youtu.be/xvpnyQgtDrs>*



**We wish you all the very best- know we are grateful for your support and partnership throughout your student's educational journey.**

