

September 14, 2006

Dear High School Parents and Guardians,

With the start of a new school year and with the intent to increase communication between the high school and its parents, bi-monthly newsletters are planned to be sent home throughout the year. Hopefully, it will keep you informed of what is going on in the high school as well as keep you abreast of upcoming meetings and activities. This is a new initiative for Ms. Gervais and me. On behalf of the high school, I hope you find these newsletters helpful and informative.

The year has started off with a positive and enthusiastic atmosphere throughout the building. We opened school with 319 students. Our athletic teams and marching band are in full swing, with season-opening games having already been played. 148 out of our 319 high school students are partaking in extracurricular activities this fall. This is an outstanding 48 % participation. Our new staff members have quickly settled in to their new teaching assignments and responsibilities.

We opened the first day of school with an extended freshman orientation schedule this year. The ninth graders arrived at 7:30 and after spending time with school administrators and advisors to go over general information, the students walked through an abbreviated schedule of their upcoming classes. At the end of their session, the students were given Old Orchard Beach High School t-shirts with "Class of 2010" printed on the back of the shirt. Administration and staff then met with sophomores, juniors and seniors in subsequent orientation periods with the seniors having pizza and soft drinks to close their afternoon schedule.

The high school would like to welcome Angela Devoid to our guidance staff; we are fortunate to have such a talented addition. The Guidance Department has gone through every senior schedule to ensure proper placement. We are trying to have students take 4 years of math, 4 years of science, 4 years of English, 4 years of history, and at least 2 years of a foreign language. Our students are also taking advantage of the programs at Biddeford Regional Center of Technology; we have 25 students attending at this time. We currently have two of our advanced science students taking Biotechnology and Human Body at Biddeford High School.

We once again are looking forward to guiding our students through the MELMAC initiatives: campus visits, PSAT and SAT testing, Choices computer program, initiating the Career/College portfolio through freshman advisors, "College Night" in November for parents, and individual counseling. October 18 is "Raising Aspirations Day" at the high school. All freshmen will be taking a tour of Thomas College in Waterville, Maine. Lunch will be provided by Thomas College.

All sophomores and juniors will be taking the PSAT's on Wednesday, October 18. This is a mandatory school requirement. Breakfast and lunch will be provided by the high school. Juniors will need to pay a fee of \$9.00 for testing by October 12 in the Guidance Office. If a student receives free or reduced lunch, or have any difficulty paying for the exam, please let the Guidance staff know. We have money available.

On Tuesday, October 17 and Wednesday, October 18, (after PSAT's) the Sophomore class will be participating in an anti-harassment, alcohol and drug education session sponsored by the Old Orchard Beach School Department and the Old Orchard Beach Communities for Children. Students will be bussed offsite for these educational programs and to the YMCA for outdoor team-building activities.

All seniors will be required to complete a community service activity or a college visit, pre-approved by their advisors on October 18. If a senior does not have a pre-approved plan, they will be required to attend school on that day. To note, the college admission rate continues to climb at Old Orchard Beach High School. The graduating class of 2006-2007 had an 84% college acceptance rate.

The High School Open House will be on Wednesday, September 20th beginning at 6:00 P.M. As parents you will have the opportunity to visit with each of your sons' and daughters' teachers. You will learn about each course, class expectations and general information concerning tests and projects. The program will begin in the cafeteria.

The weekend of September 22nd will be our Homecoming Weekend. A bonfire is scheduled, weather permitting, at 7:00 P.M. to start the weekend on Thursday night, September 20th. The field hockey team will be hosting Traip that day, while the boys' and girls' soccer teams travel to NYA. There will be a football game against Dirigo at 7:00 P.M. on Friday night and the Homecoming Dance is scheduled for Saturday night, from 7:30 to 10:30 P.M.

On October 4th, the high school will be hosting an evening event "Power School for Parents". Ms. Gervais, High School Assistant Principal, will lead parents through the high school's new initiative which will allow parents updated access to PowerSchool for student grades and progress. I hope that you can all attend. You will receive log-on information and passwords at this meeting. The program should last no longer than an hour. It will be held in the high school cafeteria.

On October 18th, Dr. Michael Kramer, a psychologist from Portland will be a guest speaker at the high school. His program will center on discussions about the challenges that parents and schools face in raising and educating today's high school students. If you have a particular topic covered, please call or send me an e-mail with your question or topic. As you can see, it will be a busy few months to the start of the school year.

Lastly, we would like to put a plug in for our OOB Boosters organization. Their contributions are extremely beneficial to the school in many, many ways. Any parents interested in becoming a member of the boosters should contact Mrs. Lord at the high school. She will provide you with the next meeting date and location.

Sincerely,

Rick DiFusco, Principal

Melissa Gervais, Assistant Principal