

“B-CC 101” - A Parents Course

SEPTEMBER: Transition/Settling In

Classes are in session. Teachers have spelled out what they will cover, the textbook they will use and how grades will be determined. As parents, you too need to come prepared to B-CC to make the grade. Your assignment during this month is to make sure that you become familiar with some of the different resources that are available to you. Take notes and visit the sites often.

Visit and add to your Favorites - the Montgomery County School and the BCC web sites.

Both sites offer “Parent” tabs and should answer most of your frequently asked questions.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org>

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs>

Join PTSA, PTSA List-Serves, and Edline.

PTSA – for \$30, you get your own “textbook” for the year- the Student Directory.

PTSA supports many activities at B-CC that benefit parents, teachers and students.

You can find the PTSA site by going to

<http://www.bccptsa.org>

You can register for membership online.

www.pay4schoolstuffonline.com

PTSA List-Serves:

BCC NET is an online forum where those affiliated with B-CC can share information on school events, share ideas, and discuss off topic (OT) issues. **BCCANNOUNCE** is a simple distribution list that delivers school announcements from the administration, teachers, guidance office, PTSA, as well as sports music, drama, and booster clubs. **NEW2BCC** is sponsored by the PTSA and run by the Welcome and the International Connections Committees for those who are new to the area and dealing with a new school system, a new state or even new country. You can join all three by going to:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs/parents/listserves.aspx>

Edline -allows parents to go online to monitor student’s classes. You can gain access to the grade book information for each class such as scores for individual assignments and assessments (class quizzes and tests), and communicate with teachers. If you have not received an activation code please contact

[Jonathan A Brammer@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Jonathan_A_Brammer@mcpsmd.org).

You can access Edline from the BCC site, or add to your favorites:

www.edline.net/pages/montgomery_cps.

Parent tips for the month of Sept:

- Set the alarms early this month - most buses pick up b/w 6:30 a.m. - 6:45 a.m. - YES most freshman and sophomores ride the buses - upperclassmen prefer to get rides from friends
- When driving student (s) to school our “kiss and ride” entrance is off Chelton Street.
- Visitor parking is available. Cars parked in the bus lanes by the tennis courts must be cleared by 1:00 pm – on an early release day, they must be removed by 10:30 am - or they WILL BE TOWED. Make sure to sign in with the front office with your name and make/model of your car.
- Send attendance notice to Ms.Taffo within 3 days of an absence- if your student is absent from a class/or school do expect a recorded message at home, and an email giving you notice of the absence.
- It is students responsibility to hand in early dismissal notes before your student leaves the building/late arrivals must report to the attendance office to report in- Student handbook has more info.
- Plan transportation for extra curricular activities. After school buses do not run for High School- the Bethesda Metro is a few blocks away, and the Ride On system offers students passes for a low fee.

- The health room is located on the first floor, B136, down the hall from the main office, on the right-hand side across from the school store- medication may only be dispensed with a signed form on file – signed by both the doctor and the parent
- Student IDs are provided by the school
- Student lockers are assigned. However, don't be surprised if your student doesn't use it – many students do not. Instead, they opt to carry books and coats with them all day, or work out arrangement with teachers or coaches.

OCTOBER: Getting Involved

High School life is on. Students have settled in to class routines and social life is active. New friends emerge – freshmen may be in class with seniors, and yes, they may be getting rides with upperclassmen. You hear about open lunch, football games, sports, clubs, homecoming,... You soon learn that your student has many interests and talents, and BCC offers opportunities for all to develop and expand them, and to participate actively in school life.

Parents too can become active members of the B-CC Community. We say the best way to know the school, is to be in school. Volunteer, attend school events – get involved!!

Homework assignment: Find out what activities your son/daughter is involved in. What has sparked his/her interest and get involved with them by volunteering to help that group/club/sport. Go to the BCC web site. Sports related – go to Athletics, click on All Sports Booster link; Theatre and Media Arts – go to Activities, click on B-CC productions link. Not sure where to volunteer – go to Parents, click on Volunteer now link.

Parent tips for the month of Oct.

-B-CC has an open lunch policy after 4th period - from 10:54-11:34 am - students can elect to leave campus or eat in the school cafeteria - YES, lunch is served in school and you can make prepayment at www.myLunchMoney.com - you will need your student's ID number -and NO, not all students eat out every day and many do pack lunch. Most students say they eat on school grounds (on the lawn, in classrooms with teachers, or with their club). A-1 deli across from BCC is a popular spot, fast and convenient. Some students with cars might drive out to a favorite lunch spot.

- Students will have a chance to join “clubs” during the Activities Fair- held usually end of Sept. This is when every club has a table set-up outside, along the tennis courts, for students to come and learn about the club and sign-up if interested. A list of clubs may be found on the BCC website.

-Fall musicals generally have lots of openings and can usually accommodate everyone who is interested either on stage or back stage. Encourage students to check for notices on auditions.

- Homecoming is an all school dance and football game that occurs in Oct. It is usually preceded by spirit week – which is planned by the Student Government- each day may have a theme and games to earn classes “spirit points” YES you may see a student leave home in pajamas or dressed up in fairy costume...it's all good – The past ritual of “painting” freshman is discouraged and fast becoming out-of-vogue.

- The homecoming football game and the dance are held at BCC - game is on Friday and dance is on Saturday. Tickets are sold during lunch during spirit week – they are not sold at the door. Student does not need a date to attend homecoming; in fact, most kids will go with a group of friends. - Dress for homecoming: Not formal, but dressier than school clothes.

- Football games are well attended by adults. Security is present at all games
- There is an admission fee to attend athletic events – adults \$5, students \$3 with ID. Season passes/ yearly passes are available for purchase
- Remember, students have to complete 75 SSL hours for graduation – it’s never too early to start
- Lost and Found/ lockers issues may be addressed with the BCC security department.
- A school open- house is held for parents on Columbus Day to give parents an opportunity to “quietly” sit in on student’s classes

- NOVEMBER: Making the Grade

Students may be stressing. With 1st quarter report cards coming out, class deadlines, and extracurricular activities, many may find it hard to balance academics with activities.

How you can help:

Encourage student to meet with teacher. Teachers are normally available during lunch and after school to help students. Students are asked to let teachers know they would like to meet with them, and they can schedule an agreed upon time. Most students will tell us that teachers are very accessible and willing to meet with a student. And they tell us that participating in class is also a good way to get teacher’s attention. Bottom line is that as parents, we need to encourage our student to show initiative either by participating in class or seeking out the teacher outside of class.

Encourage student to attend TAP-Time for Academic Progress is an after-school program at B-CC for all students who seek to do better in their courses. With funding from the BCC High School Educational Foundation, BCC teachers provide students with a structured place to work after school. TAP is available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 2:15 to 3:15pm, in English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Additionally, evening sessions at the Gwendolyn Coffield Community Center in Rosemary Hills are available on Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00pm, in the 2nd floor conference room. The computer lab is available for school projects.

Encourage student to meet with counselor. The Counseling Department is dedicated to helping your student reach his/her full academic and personal potential. Students can go to the counseling office to see their counselors on a walk-in basis during lunch. They can make appointments to see their counselors during the school day with Mrs. Goltz, the counseling secretary, before school, after school and during lunch.

Find a BCC Tutor: The National Honor Society provides tutors every Thursday during lunch in Room B226

Review Edline- stay informed of students progress.

Parent tips for the month of Nov.:

- Log in to Edline when updates are posted - check grades periodically and talk to your student about how things are going –

- If your student tells you the teacher has not updated grades on Edline, give him/her the benefit of the doubt and don't look at it for a few days - YES it does happen that a D can miraculously turn into an A over night.
- Communicating with High School teachers is no different than communicating with Elementary and Middle School teachers - send them an email via Edline, they DO respond
- Let your student express his/her concern with the teachers. If concerns are not met, you may contact the Resource Teacher (department head) first to discuss your concerns and then the Counselor.
- Students will tell us that it can be tough to balance extracurricular activities and sports with academics. It can be tough to keep up with school work, but most coaches and teachers help to make sure that students are keeping up or getting the help they need. Some sports have designated study times and bring in teachers to assist during those times. For some students, having a busy schedule means that they will have to use their time more effectively.
- Distractions such as Facebook, texting, ipods, do occur – but it depends on the student. For some students it can be very distracting and time-consuming. Parents may want to encourage students to log off or do their homework away from the distractions. However, parents shouldn't take away all communication tools as sometimes they can be helpful. For example, students can text friends about homework questions.
- Students tell us that the best way to help is to be supportive. Know when to help push along, but also learn to back-off. Arguments about schoolwork can make matters worse.

DECEMBER: Planning ahead

First semester exams will occur mid-January, after the Holidays. Most classes will have final exams- exam week is posted on the B-CC web site -

For Parents, it's never too early to help your student plan ahead and to seek information on what is available. It's best to be proactive and not reactive.

Honors/AP/IB – any student can take these rigorous and challenging courses as long as he or she has met any prerequisites for that course. Students do not have to test into the IB Diploma Program at B-CC. Both AP and IB courses require payment of fees for taking exams, (financial assistance is offered) – and are considered college-level work. These classes are weighted higher into the GPA by one point up to a grade of C.

Thomas Edison High School of Technology. (TEHST) is an application-only high school that offers half-day professional career and technology education (CTE) programs to students enrolled in all MCPS high schools. Students attend Edison every day for three class periods (2 ½ hours), earn 1 ½ credits per semester, and transportation is provided. <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/edison/programs.html#cluster3>

Testing – Prep for the Test / Practice SAT/ Practice ACT/HSA

B-CC offers a class in SAT Preparation. The course requires the student to have successfully completed Algebra 1 & Geometry. **MCPS offers free online SAT Prep Course** http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/hsi/SAT_page.shtm

Montgomery College offers SAT Prep Classes that meet after school, evenings, or Saturday mornings at various MCPS high schools. There is fee for these classes.

Maryland High School Assessments (HSA) are rigorous end-of-course tests in Algebra 1/Data Analysis, Biology, English 10, and NSL Government. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has designed the tests to measure student achievement and school performance. Students can prep online for these tests by going to <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/hsa/>

Internships-The program lasts an entire academic term (18 weeks), or preferably, two terms, and may necessitate longer hours than a student would ordinarily spend in the classroom. Successful completion of the semester will earn 1/2 academic (elective) credit. <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs/academics/internships/index.aspx#about>

Parent tips for the month of Dec:

-During finals, students are required to attend school only if they have a scheduled exam. There are usually at most, two exams per day.

- The cafeteria offers a study hall during exams

-MCPS buses run at the normal morning and afternoon times during the final exam period, so students who choose to arrive late or leave early because they don't have a scheduled exam must provide their own transportation.

- The Media Center (library) is open 7:00am to 3:15 pm Monday – Friday

-Quarter grades are very important. Parents should encourage student to do well through out each quarter, not just on the final exam. Once the semester is over, that semester grade is posted on the student's transcript.

-Many students may have new teachers in the second semester. While a second back-to-school night is not held, there is usually an opportunity to visit the classroom and meet your teachers during an open house.