



ROLLING HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Home of the Bengal Tigers

August 2023 Parent Bulletin

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Hello Bengals,

Wow, it's been a whirlwind! We hope you found Bengal Day organized and helpful; it's always one of my favorite days of the year. We are so excited to kick off the 2023-2024 school year. Since it's our Silver Jubilee, we're ready to party like it's 1998, the year we officially opened our doors on this campus!

This bulletin has a lot of information about school policies. Please be sure to read its contents carefully. I promise subsequent bulletins won't be as detailed!

We've spent the summer reading parent surveys, doing research on best practices, and continuing to think about what we can do to continue the trend of 25 years of excellence in education. One of the small areas that kept coming up is in terms of cell phones. We've noticed that kids struggle with eye contact, quiet spaces, and social interactions without the safety net of their cell phone. Though we've always had a no cell phone policy, we're really going to be enforcing it strictly this year.

Through our research, we know there is a definite connection between increased cell phone use and emotional well being as well as academic struggles. Schools who have eliminated cell phones during school hours have noticed an increase in relationships, grades and test scores, positive mental health, as well as a decrease in cyberbullying and misbehavior in the classroom. We want to be part of this trend. If you're interested in learning more, please review this [website](#), which contains lots of resources for parents and information about why this decision is important in the development of the whole child.

Therefore, we are reminding families and students that we are a cell phone-free school during the school day. As per our handbook, students are to keep their phone off and away from the first bell to the last bell. Students are allowed to use the phone before or after school. Of course, with any emergency or need, they may always let an adult know, and the adult will direct them where to go to use their cell phone without getting an infraction. Technology violations will have consequences and be returned only to the parent.

It is our hope that this decision will benefit our students and result in happier, healthier students, though we also know we'll have lots of grumbles about it initially. We're ready for that challenge because we truly believe it'll help them in the long run. Our families, students, and staff are a team dedicated to educating all students and we appreciate your continued support in this endeavor.

As always, if you have any questions, feel free to contact the main office at any time.

Now, bring on this school year! Can't wait to see everyone on my favorite day of the year, the first day of school, August 9, 2023. Remember, since it's a Wednesday, dismissal is at 1:10.

Sincerely,
Debbie Bowers, Principal
Sean Gallagher, Assistant Principal

HOW CAN I STAY INFORMED? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS...

1. **SCHOOL WEBPAGE** (<https://www.buckeyeusd.org/rhms>)

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bell Schedules | ESchools Access Center | Online Payments |
| Bulletins (Student/Parent) | GATE Info | Sports Info and Schedules |
| Calendar (School year) | Handbook | Supply (suggested) List |
| Calendar (Student Events) | Homework Access | Transportation Info |
| CJSF Info and Forms | Menus Breakfast/Lunch | Tutoring Info |
| Dress Code | Online Book Resources | |

2. **MONTHLY PARENT BULLETIN**

Bulletins are sent electronically each month via email at the beginning of the month. Please make sure you enter your email address on your child's Emergency Card in order to receive the bulletins. If you do not receive them in your inbox, please check your spam folder. If not there, please contact us.

3. **WEEKLY STUDENT BULLETIN**

The student bulletins are a single page of important information for the week that is sent via email each Friday. Though the bulletin is meant for students, parents have found them very helpful.

4. **FACEBOOK**

This is a fun way for us to share photos from day to day activities and other events. [RHMS Facebook](#)

5. **BLACKBOARD CONNECT**

These emails contain important information and, in the case of an emergency, will be our primary means of disseminating information. You want to be sure we have your current and main email on file. Please don't be alarmed if, during an emergency, the call is from someone other than our staff. We delegate that task during an emergency so we can focus our attention on the kids.

NOTICES

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| OFFICE HOURS: | 7:00 am – 3:30 pm | |
| LIBRARY HOURS: | MON/TUES/THURS/FRI | 7:00 am – 3:30 pm |
| | WED | 7:00 am – 1:30 pm |
| STUDENT HOURS | MON/TUES/THURS/FRI | 7:50 am – 2:04 pm |
| | WEDS - EARLY RELEASE DAYS | 7:50 am – 1:10 pm |
| | MINIMUM DAYS* | 7:50 am – Noon |
| | *9/25 – 9/29, 1/26, 3/1, 6/4 | |
| | 6/3 is a late start 9:50 am -2:04 pm | |

2023/2024 CALENDAR is available on our school website [here](#).

EVENTS

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: The first day of the 2023/2024 school year is Thursday, August 9, 2023. School starts promptly at 7:50 am every day. Dismissal is 2:04 pm.

7th/8th GRADE BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT will be held on Thursday, August 17th, from 5:15pm to 7:00 pm. This night is intended for parents only, so please plan childcare accordingly. You will receive a schedule to follow on Bengal Day, and a copy will also be available on Back-to-School night outside the front office.

6th GRADE BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT will be held on Thursday, August 24th, from 5:30pm to 7:00 pm. More details to come.

SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES

SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS: All lists have been updated on our website [here](#), so you can purchase supplies when they are on sale.

LATE ARRIVALS TO SCHOOL: Students arriving to school after 7:50 am, for any reason, need to sign in at the office and obtain a pass to class.

CHECKING YOUR STUDENT OUT EARLY: Student safety is our number one concern and, as a result, students may only be checked out early by an adult whose name is listed on the student's emergency card. **An identification card must be shown since we will not know every adult listed on the emergency card.** Though we know this is an inconvenience at times, we want to ensure your child's safety and thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please allow enough time to follow this procedure as it will not be waived because people are in a hurry.

To expedite this process, please send your child with a note stating the time he/she is to be released from class; your child should give it to a secretary before school starts. The secretary will issue a pass for the time stated. Your child gives the pass to his/her teacher at the beginning of the period from

which he/she is to be released and your child will be released to go to the office. ***If this procedure is not followed, please allow an additional 15 minutes to check your child out of class.***

ABSENCES: If your child is absent, please call the school at 933-9290, extension 4 or by using the on-line [absence form](#) (Bookmark this link), first thing in the morning. If you do not contact us, we will require a note from home to explain the absence. If your child comes in tardy due to illness or a doctor's appointment, we will need a note from the doctor or a parent, or it will be considered an unexcused tardy. The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) states a student is considered truant from school when absent without a valid excuse more than three days or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of more than three days in one school year. You will receive an automated phone call when your child is absent and no call has been made to the school. Please make every effort to have your child attend for at least some portion of the day if you must schedule an appointment during school hours. **Please know that students are considered to be chronic absentees if they are absent more than 10% of the school year to date, whether absences are excused or unexcused.**

HOW TO GET HOMEWORK WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT: To get homework when your child is absent, please go to our school website under [staff](#). Each teacher has a link for their website with the homework on this page. Please email teachers directly for handout requests. Please allow 24 hours for teachers to put your child's work together. If you email before 7:30 am, teachers may be able to have work available after 2:30 pm on that same day.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS (INCLUDING PE CLOTHES, HOMEWORK AND LUNCHES): In an effort to ensure that classroom instruction is not interrupted, we do **NOT** deliver forgotten items to students. **We do, however, offer a one-time delivery pass to each student each year. The pass will reiterate our no delivery policy and remind students to come to the office to check for items.** Items are placed in bins in the front office for students to come and get in between classes. Thank you for your understanding and for reminding your child to check in the office if he/she ever forgets something at home.

MESSAGES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY: Please communicate to your child **BEFORE** school any necessary information regarding his/her day or pick up information. If it's a true emergency, we will interrupt class to deliver information.

CELL PHONE AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Students may carry cell phones and other electronic devices. Students may use them only before and after school. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be out of sight (including headphones or ear buds) and turned off as soon as the first bell of the day rings and must remain off and out of sight until the last bell rings (this includes lunch time). The school will not be responsible for any lost, damaged, stolen or confiscated electronic devices. Use of a cell phone or electronic device in the classroom may be permitted on a limited basis when directed by a teacher. If a student is not following this policy, he/she will receive disciplinary consequences and loss of merits, and the electronic device will be confiscated and returned only to a parent. Please do not contact your child via cell phone during the school day.

INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACTS: The state of California requires that Independent Study Contracts may only be set up for students who will be out of school for three (3) or more CONSECUTIVE days. Please note you must give the school a minimum notice of five (5) school days to take out a contract! We thank you for planning ahead. **Please note that contracts cannot be taken out due to illness, and interdistrict students do not qualify for contracts.**

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS:

The primary purpose of grades and report cards is to clearly communicate a student's areas of strength and areas needing improvement each trimester based on the district's grade level standards. The goal is for students to meet each grade level standard by the end of the school year. Teachers use a variety of assessments to determine whether a student is meeting standards.

- **Progress Report Cards** will be distributed to students in their Focus class during the 7th week of each trimester and serve as an indicator for how your student is progressing.
- **Report Cards** will be distributed to students in their Focus class at the end of each trimester with the exception of the 3rd trimester in which they will be mailed home.

The distribution of progress reports and report cards ensures parents have a sense of their child's performance approximately every 6 to 7 weeks. Parents are encouraged to check grades regularly via the Home Access Center (HAC) and contact their child's teachers if they have any questions.

PREREQUISITES FOR CURRENT 6TH GRADERS TO TAKE SPANISH AS A 7TH GRADER IN 2024/2025

This is for advanced planning purposes. We don't want parents to be surprised by criteria in March, so here it is:

Please note that current 6th grade students must meet the following prerequisites to take Spanish 1A in the 7th grade:

- A grade of B+ or higher in Language Arts for all three trimesters
- Good attendance record

Applications for Spanish 1A will be distributed in the spring (March/April) to only those students who have met these prerequisites from Language Arts teachers. Please note space is limited and applications are taken on a first come, first served basis and are date stamped. If your child would like to take Spanish, but did not meet these requirements, we will establish a waiting list. If there is room available we will add students as space allows.

Spanish 1A is a year-long course that covers the equivalent of the first semester of high school Spanish. Spanish 1B, which is taken in the 8th grade, is equal to the 2nd semester of High School Spanish. In other words, by taking Spanish 1A in the 7th grade and Spanish 1B in the 8th grade, students have completed the first year of high school Spanish. Please note that because this is a high school class, students should expect approximately 15 to 20 minutes of homework nightly. Though entry into Spanish II as a 9th grader is not guaranteed, it is highly probable for students who are successful in Spanish 1A/B.

Taking Spanish in middle school requires a two-year commitment. Students enrolled in Spanish 1A in the 7th grade will automatically be placed in Spanish 1B as an eighth grader.

LIBRARY NEWS

Welcome Bengal Parents! My name is Laura Leszinske, and I am the RH Library Associate. I'm looking forward to seeing you and your students on Bengal Day, and throughout the 2023-2024 school year. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there's anything I can do to help support your students.

Library Hours: The RH Library opens to students every morning at 7:15 am. Students are able to visit the library during lunch, after obtaining a pass from the yard duty, and during the school day, as their teachers permit. After school, students may remain in the library until 3 pm daily, except Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, our early release day, the library closes to students at 2:15 pm.

Library Expectations: The RH Library is a space where our students are invited to read, study, work on a puzzle, craft, and play games quietly. Students may check out up to 3 books at a time, for a 2 week period, and may renew their books if needed. Library books are a shared resource and should be treated carefully and returned in good condition. Students are responsible for lost or damaged books.

Library Programs: The library sponsors our Battle of the Books (BoB) teams. BoB teams practice from September through March, and then compete against other local schools in a county-wide event for book lovers. The library also runs a student volunteer group, the Library Assistants (formerly Reader/Leaders), who help keep the library organized and participate in the library decision-making process. More information about signing up for BoB and LA will be available in early September.

Library Information: In addition to housing the school book collection, the RH Library checks out school chromebooks and facilitates their repair. Textbooks are available online, but some families find they need print copies for home use. Print textbooks are available for checkout in the library after school begins on August 9.

Questions?: If you have questions about the library, please contact me at lleszinske@buckeyeusd.org. The library website is available [here](#) and the code to join the library google classroom is **swnldzj**. Students who have trouble finding time to visit the library in person are encouraged to request a book via the [Book Request Form](#). Be sure and follow the library on Instagram **@rhmsreads**.

NURSE'S NEWS

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL: By District Policy, no child is allowed to take **ANY** medications at school without a form **signed by the doctor and parent**. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS. These forms are available in the school office or on our school website for your convenience. (We also accept medications, dosage, and instructions on your doctor's signed prescription form.) PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION WITH YOUR CHLD IN HIS/HER LUNCH. This policy is to protect all students, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please bring the medication to the office in its **original** container.

CJSF (California Junior Scholarship Federation/Honor Society)

What is CJSF:

Founded in 1967, the California Junior Scholarship Federation and Honor Society is the oldest junior high school scholastic institution in the state of California. CJSF is part of CSF, the oldest scholarship institution in California, founded in 1921.

CJSF/HS emphasizes high standards of scholarship, community service and citizenship for California junior high school students.

Qualifying for CJSF:

Students must apply for CJSF each trimester, based on the previous trimester's grades. Membership is not automatic. New this year, service hours are no longer required to become a member of CJSF or to receive the Gold Seal on the 8th grade promotion certificate. Service hours are required to participate in CJSF field trips and recognition events.

Upcoming Events:



An informational meeting will be held for students on August 22nd during all 3 lunches. Students should eat lunch and then go to the library to receive information about CJSF and the requirements for applying and becoming a member.

Advisors:

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns to Amanda Burstiner (aburstiner@buckeyeusd.org) and Laura Leszinske (lleszinske@buckeyeusd.org)

More information will be posted to our Google Classroom and in future bulletins.

August

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 Bangel Day 8am-2pm | 4 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 First Day of School | 10 | 11 Pep Rally 6 th - wear Orange 7 th - wear White 8 th – wear Black |
| 14 Discipline Assembly 7 th and 8 th Grades | 15 Discipline Assembly 6 th Grade | 16 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black | 17 Picture Day Pickett & Arroyo PE Classes Back to School Night 7 th & 8 th | 18 Picture Day Haagenson, Nowag & Heglie PE Classes |
| 21 | 22 Wear a Tutu | 23 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black | 24 Back to School Night 6 th | 25 Fun Friday |
| 28 | 29 | 30 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black | 31 |  |

September

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  | | | | 1 <u>No School</u> Staff Development Day |
| 4 <u>No School</u> Labor Day Holiday | 5 | 6 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black | 7 | 8 Welcome Party 6 th grade |
| 11 Picture Day Make-up | 12 | 13 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black CJSF Online Application Due 7 th & 8 th Grade 3 rd Trimester 22/23 | 14 | 15 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black | 21 | 22 Wear a Tutu |
| 25 Minimum Day Parent/Teacher Conferences | 26 Minimum Day Parent/Teacher Conferences | 27 Spirit Day Wear Orange & Black Minimum Day Parent/Teacher Conferences | 28 Minimum Day Parent/Teacher Conferences Fundraiser Begins | 29 Fun Friday Minimum Day Parent/Teacher Conferences |

WE ARE HIRING!



AVAILABLE POSITION :

- YARD DUTY**
2.5 HOURS/DAY
10:30-1:30

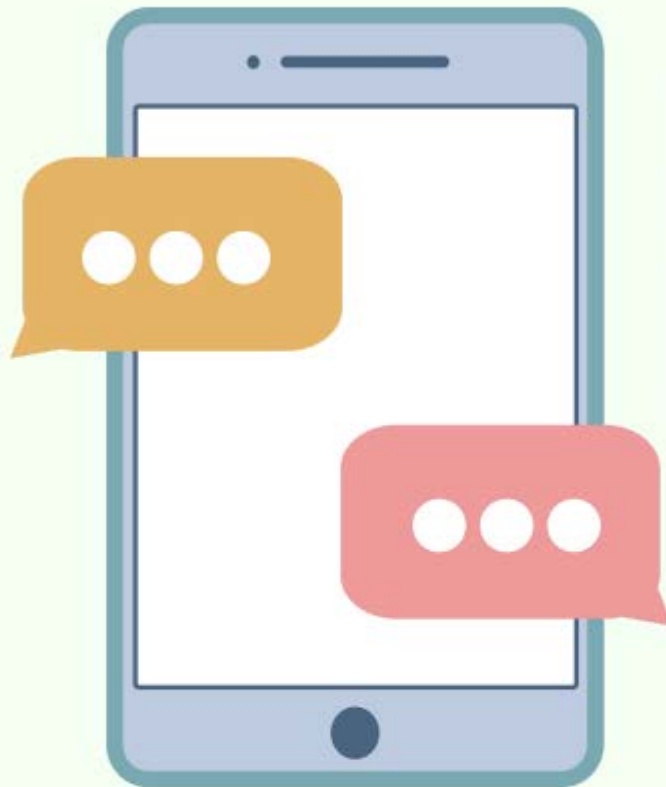
- INSTRUCTIONAL
AIDE**
7.5 HOURS/DAY
7:45-2:15

**APPLY ON [EDJOIN.ORG](https://edjoin.org)
OR EMAIL
DBOWERS@BUCKEYEUSD.ORG**





STOP IT!



Download today!



Anonymous Reporting

For several years we have used a program called StopIt, which allows for anonymous reporting of any safety concerns, while also allowing two way communication for admin to act accordingly. You can download the app or go to the "Student" tab on our Rolling Hills website.

Contact: sgallagher@buckeyeusd.org with any questions