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### Parent PORTAL

Get the latest information about your student's academic progress by connecting to our student information system.

Find out how here:

<http://portalso.pcsb.org/>

**Pinellas County Schools**  
301 4<sup>th</sup> Street South West  
Largo, Florida Postal 33779



# Freshman Flash

## Welcome to High School!

*Rita M. Vasquez, Executive Director*

The freshman year is probably the most important of the four years your student will spend in high school. During the freshman year, your student will make decisions, purposefully or by default, that will set the path toward a successful graduation or if not supported, many freshmen experience struggles that are often difficult to overcome. Every course your freshman student takes beginning with first semester counts toward graduation in some important way. All courses count in your student's grade point average (GPA), several courses are specifically required for graduation, and earning a C or better in all courses help students pass the required state graduation assessments. In other words, there is no time to waste in ensuring your student has a great freshman year setting up for graduation followed by college or technical school, as well as entry into a promising career!

### Keys to Freshman Success

- Attendance: Your freshman student must come to school every day and attend every class! Falling behind because of absences is a prime cause of the struggles too many freshmen experience. The work and activities that high school students engage in can be very difficult to make-up as the workload in high school is often greater than what students have experienced in middle school. Unless your freshman student is ill, developing the habit and work ethic that school attendance is a must is

critical for success. When your freshman student is ill, please contact your school to notify them of your student's absence and please ensure your student arranges to make-up all the work missed.



- Set Goals for Success: Working with your freshman student to decide what they wish to achieve while in high school and then helping them set goals to obtain those things is very important for their success in school. Goals can be personal like making new friends or joining a club or sports team to ensure they are connected to school and develop school pride. Setting academic goals help students stay focused on why they attend school. School is preparation for success in college, career and life. Earning a high school diploma is a critical step for success in the future. Ensure your freshman student sets goals and then set aside time with them after every grading period to review their progress toward those goals.
- Seek Assistance Early: If your freshman student does begin to experience difficulty in school, academic or personal, the sooner you reach out to school personnel, the better the final results will be for your student. Your student's counselor, teachers, and school principal are all available to help you and your student overcome

obstacles that they will encounter during their freshman year. Time is of the essence here- reach out early and be persistent about the help your student needs until you see that the issues are being addressed and your student is getting back on track. There is no time to waste during this first important year of high school!

## Graduation Requirements

The State of Florida sets the high school graduation requirements for all students seeking to earn a high school diploma. The link below provides greater details about each graduation requirement listed briefly in the bulleted list below:

[www.fldoe.org/graduationrequirements](http://www.fldoe.org/graduationrequirements)

- Earn a minimum of 24 course credits (use link for specific courses required)
- Earn a minimum 2.0 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Earn a passing score on the state’s Algebra End-of Course (EOC) Assessment
- Earn a passing score on the state’s Florida Standards Writing and Reading Assessments

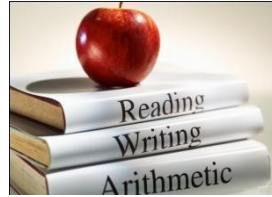
Additionally, your freshman student can qualify for three Diploma Designations that can celebrate your student’s distinguished high school career. The link below provides greater details about each of Diploma Designation your student can earn:

<http://pcsb.schoolwires.net/Page/1690>

- Pinellas Advanced Scholar
- Scholar
- Merit

## Literacy Success

In high school English and reading classes, your student will learn to become skilled at gathering information from text, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately. It will be important that your student learns to convey clearly what he or she understands about what he or she has read. Speaking clearly and appropriately, listening attentively when discussing findings and evidence, and building on others’ good ideas while expressing his or her own ideas persuasively are all part of building college and career ready literacy skills.



### Supporting Literacy at Home

Part of the literacy progress is learning how to think as you read. Asking questions supports learning how to think. Examples of some questions you might ask your student before, during, or after they read might be:

- *What was the most significant concept from the text?*
- *Why did the author write the passage?*
- *Which words are not familiar to you?*
- *What do you think will happen next?*
- *Did you learn about anything that impacts your life?*
- *What was your favorite part of the story? Why?*
- *How did the characters change over time?*
- *Does this text remind you of something that you’ve read before? How?*

## Mathematics Success

By the time your child enters high school, ideally he or she will be self-motivated and confident enough in his or her math skills to be able to tackle courses like algebra and geometry as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. But for many teenagers, a

lifelong fear of numbers, lack of motivation, and a weak foundation can make high school math a struggle.

Encourage your child to use math every day. At a

restaurant, have your child calculate the tip. At the mall, have her figure out the cost of a sweater that’s 35 percent off. When you’re driving, ask him how long it will take you to drive a certain distance at a certain speed. Parents are often reluctant to help their kids with math because they don’t have confidence in their own abilities. Regardless of your skills, it’s a worthwhile investment of your time and effort to help your child get comfortable with math.

### Supporting Math at Home

The links provided below are great places for your student to find additional math practice for high school and they can be reached from a home computer with internet access or at a local library or recreation center that allows internet access for students.

[www.carnegielearning.com/](http://www.carnegielearning.com/)

[www.algebration.com/](http://www.algebration.com/)

[www.artofproblemsolving.com/index.php?](http://www.artofproblemsolving.com/index.php?)

[www.easycalculation.com/](http://www.easycalculation.com/)

[www.math.hmc.edu/funfacts/](http://www.math.hmc.edu/funfacts/)

[www.mathforum.org](http://www.mathforum.org)

[www.coolmath.com](http://www.coolmath.com)

[www.brightstorm.com](http://www.brightstorm.com)

# Exceptional Student Education

Freshman year is the time to begin focusing on graduation! For students receiving exceptional student education services and their parents/guardians, this includes being well informed about diploma options and building self-advocacy skills.

There are 4 diploma options for students receiving exceptional student education services.

### **Diploma Options:**

- Standard Diploma (24 credits)
- Standard Diploma w/ Employment Courses (24 credits)
- Standard Diploma ACCEL (Academically Challenging

Curriculum to Enhance Learning) (18 credits)

- Standard Diploma FAA w/ Access Courses (24 credits)

Any change to the high school graduation option specified in a student’s IEP must be approved by the parent and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s.1003.572. Students can receive a standard diploma via access courses in any appropriate educational setting as determined by the IEP team. Please visit the following website for more information regarding diploma options: <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/graduation-requirements>

## ***Self-Advocacy***

It is important that students are active participants in their IEP meetings, sharing their interests, ideas, and goals for their future. This self-advocacy is an essential part of a student’s development. Encouraging your child to attend their IEP meetings will help them to become college and career ready! Your child’s guidance counselor and case manager are great resourced for more information about post-secondary planning, diploma options, and more.

### **In the next issue:**

Information regarding utilizing accommodations during state and district assessments.

## ***English Language Learners***

Dear Parents of English Language Learners (ELL),

Your ELL student needs high quality instruction focused on advanced literacy skills and not just on language acquisition. In Pinellas County, our principles and practices support improved achievement for our high school ELLs. These are some things you can expect for your student within our schools:

- A school-wide, team-based support network: all school educators must assume shared responsibility for the achievement of ELLs
- A dual curriculum that promotes the language development of ELLs as well as their general academic needs
- Global community classrooms that find a middle ground between integrating ELLs who are recent immigrants with the general school population and segregating them in self-contained classrooms for language learning
- All available time in ELLs' school day should be used for effective instruction
- Individual progress records: maintenance of records of individual ELLs' linguistic and academic history and ongoing progress
- A program providing full access to challenging curriculum
- High quality instruction and materials
- Inclusive and affirming school climate
- Valid, comprehensive, and useful assessments
- Strong family and community partnerships
- Schools structured to meet the particular needs of English learners.

If you have any questions and/or need assistance in your native language, please call the ESOL Office at 588-6068 and we will support you and your ELL student to ensure a successful school year!

## Stay Engaged!

THE Boca Ciega High School offers a great variety of School Sponsored clubs and activities to stay involved in:

- Academic Team
- Anime Club
- Art Club
- Athletic Trainers
- Band
- Battle of the Books
- 5000 Role Models
- Chess Club
- Chorus
- CROP (College Outreach)
- Debate Club
- Drama Club / Thespian Society
- English Honor Society
- Eye Patch News
- Fishing Club
- French Club
- French National Honor Society
- Freshman Class
- Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA)
- Girlfriends of Pinellas
- H.O.S.A.
- Jazz Ensemble
- JROTC
- Junior Class
- Literacy Club
- Marine Club
- Mu Alpha Theta Math Club
- Multicultural Club
- National Honor Society
- Police Explorers
- Principal Student Advisory Group
- Rho Kappa SS Honor Society
- Robotics Club
- Rotary Club
- Senior Class
- Sophomore Class
- Spanish Club
- Spanish Honor Society
- Student Government Association
- Student Library Committee
- SWAT
- Take Stock in Children Scholarship
- Treasure Chest Yearbook
- Tri-M Music Honor Society
- Video Productions Club
- Vocal Ensemble

For more information on our clubs and activities, please visit our website at [www.pcsb.org/bocaciega-hs](http://www.pcsb.org/bocaciega-hs)

# Welcome to THE Boca Ciega High School

*Michael P. Vigue, Principal*

Students and Parents,

Welcome to THE Boca Ciega High School! I hope your summer was a chance to relax with your family and friends. We are eager to welcome you to THE BCHS Community.

We are proud to offer a block schedule with eight credit opportunities for the next year. This type of schedule affords our students the opportunity to take one extra enrichment, remediation, elective, or college credit course. Our school hours for 2015-2016 will be from 7:05am to 2:05pm each day, and our bell schedule is displayed at the bottom. Blue days are periods 1, 3, 5, and 7 and Gold days are periods 2, 4, 6, and 8.

Please take time to familiarize yourself with our website, [www.pcsb.org/bocaciega-hs](http://www.pcsb.org/bocaciega-hs). We update the site weekly with upcoming events, and we maintain resources and calendars for your use.

We value your involvement and encourage you to stay involved in all aspects of your son/daughter's high school experience. On the right there are some upcoming events to help get us started.

Please call Ms. Bonnie Davis at 893-2780 ext. 2123 if you do not have access to FOCUS for your child's schedule, grades, and attendance. Thank you for all you do for our students. We are proud of the efforts of our students and the efforts of our dedicated staff.

Sincerely,  
Michael P. Vigue, Principal of THE BCHS

Period:	Time:
1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup>	7:05 to 8:36
3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup>	8:43 to 10:14
Lunch	10:19 to 10:49
5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup>	10:56 to 12:27
7 <sup>th</sup> or 8 <sup>th</sup>	12:34 to 2:05



## Extended Learning Program

### Free Tutoring!

Throughout the school year, we offer free tutoring every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in room 4-151B from 2:15pm to 3:15pm. Tutoring starts on 9/1/15 and ends on 6/2/16.

## Upcoming Events:

Here are some upcoming events as we begin the 2015-16 school year:

- **Thursday, 8/20/15: Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation** from 5:30pm to 7:00pm starting in the Main Auditorium. After a brief presentation, students and parents will be able to receive schedules, lockers, student ID cards, and breakfast/ lunch account information
- **Monday, 8/24/15: First day of school for students.** All students will report to a brief homeroom period, followed by a Blue day schedule, periods 1, 3, 5, and 7
- **Thursday, 8/27/15: Back to School Night** for all students and parents from 6pm to 7:30pm starting in the Main Auditorium
- Thursday, 9/3/15: JROTC Parent Meeting in the Main Auditorium at 6pm
- Monday, 9/14/15: School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting in the CWMP Auditorium at 6pm
- Tuesday, 9/15/15: Band Parent Meeting in the Band Room at 6pm
- Wednesday, 9/16/15: Fundamental Parent Meeting in the CWMP Auditorium at 7:15am and in the Main Auditorium at 6pm.

