

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

36 Charter Road, Acton, Massachusetts 01720

Larry Dorey
Interim Principal

August 3, 2017

Dear ABRHS Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! I hope that you are enjoying a relaxing summer break. All of us at ABRHS are looking forward to working with families in the Acton and Boxborough communities as the school year begins. We have been working hard this summer to prepare for our students' return.

Communication

This letter contains lots of practical information about the start of school. We are committed to clear, consistent, and helpful communication throughout the school year. While I do not send a regularly timed message to families, I will be in touch as topics arise. New this year will be an Administrative Team Blog; the Associate Principals and Deans of Students will join me in sharing school updates and pertinent information with you. Look for an opening school year blog post in the coming weeks. Please note that the PTSO sends out a weekly "Chatter" every Sunday. The "Chatter" contains up-to-date information about our high school calendar, events, and school policies. Please make sure to note your preferences concerning email communication on the School/PTSO Permission page on the PowerSchool Parent Portal (accessible via the ABRHS website).

Opening Days of School

As you know, we will have a day-long 9th grade orientation event on Tuesday, September 5th, beginning at 7:23am. The day includes an assembly to meet the leadership team and other members of the high school staff, an abbreviated class schedule, counselor meetings, and time for students to gather together for activities at the end of the day. Student Ambassadors will be available to help 9th graders find their way around the building and answer questions. As this is the official opening day for the district, buses will run and lunch will be served. We are very excited that we are able to support our incoming 9th grade students in this special way.

Students in grades 10-12 will report on Wednesday, September 6th. We will begin the day on September 6th in Advisory (noted on student schedules), to which all students should report by 7:23am.

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be available online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal on **Thursday, August 10th**. In order to access PowerSchool, you will use your personalized username and password (A reminder email will be sent to parents with username and password recovery instructions.). If you have not yet created a parent portal account, log on to the PowerSchool Parent Portal and click on "Create an Account". Detailed instructions are available under "Learn More." You will need your student's ID number and Access Password to create this new account. If you need to retrieve this information, please contact jpotter@abschools.org. Once you are logged in, you will need to complete your child's online emergency information card and the School/PTSO permission page before accessing your student's schedule.

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While we have put much work and thought into student schedules and are confident that they will be well received by students and families, we know from experience that some of you will have concerns. Because we have limited staff available in the summer, please use the following procedures if you have questions or concerns.

Should a student identify an error, or wish to add an elective to her/his schedule, s/he may access a Schedule Change Request Form on the main page of our website under "Quick Links" on the sidebar. Students should follow the instructions on this form and submit their requests. The deadline for this process will be August 23rd. Please be aware that we may not be able to grant all requests due to class size restrictions. At this time, we will no longer accept requests for level changes to a higher-level course. If there are extenuating circumstances, students should contact the appropriate department leader. Such requests will not be otherwise entertained.

Lockers

Most schedules contain information regarding lockers, including locker assignments and lock combinations. Please do not be concerned if a student's schedule is lacking this information. If a student does not receive this information on the schedule, it will be provided on the first day of school.

Computer Network and abschools Gmail Account

Students should make sure that they have their abschools and network passwords set-up and working within the first week of the school year. It is important to their success at school that they be able to log in to the computers and access their abschools accounts without issue. The library will be open to students needing password help September 5th through September 8th. After that, students will be able to go to the library during their lunch periods for help resetting passwords.

Bus Schedules will be posted on our website in late August.

Cafeteria

There are four lunch periods during the school day, periods 4 through 7. In addition to lunch, the cafeteria operates a snack bar that is open daily 7:00 am to 1:30 pm serving breakfast and snacks. [Cafeteria/Lunch Information 2017/2018](#)

Financial Assistance

For families that may need assistance with school related dues and fees, please read the [Financial Assistance Letter 2017-2018](#) for more information.

Fall Sports and Activities

Football practices begin on August 18th, while the other fall sports practices will begin on August 24th. Please check our [website](#) for information and dates for tryouts for each sport. Students trying out for a team must have proof (green form) of a current physical examination on file with the nurses before tryouts. The athletic fee is \$250 per sport per season with a \$1000 family cap. Waivers are available for cases of financial hardship if you have applied for Free and Reduced Lunch.

The Athletic Department will hold its annual, mandatory Fall Sports Night on August 29th at 6PM in the high school auditorium for all athletes participating in fall sports. All student-athletes must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. A tentative schedule for the

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Fall Sports Night includes a workshop by the Positive Coaching Alliance from 6:00 - 7:30 pm. Meet the Team meetings will commence at 7:30 pm.

Student IDs/School Pictures

Student pictures will be taken on Monday, September 11th and Tuesday, September 12th. Every student will be provided with an ID card. In addition, families may choose to purchase packages of these photographs. Parents will receive information in the mail from the photography company regarding picture ordering procedures. If you have any questions, the phone number for Prestige Portraits for Lifetouch Studios, our school photographer, is (800) 426-9533.

Senior Portraits

To have a senior picture included in the yearbook, each student must have his/her senior portrait taken by Prestige Lifetouch Studio. Photographers will be on campus August 14th - August 18th and again on October 10th-October 13th and Nov. 6th-Nov. 9th. Families will receive postcards from Prestige/Lifetouch, our contracted photographer, which will include a pre-scheduled appointment, contact information, and other notes regarding the senior portraits sitting. All other questions can be directed to ABRHS Yearbook Advisor, Genevieve Hammond at ghammond@abschools.org.

Extended Privileges

Seniors who have not yet applied for extended privileges may pick up application forms at the Main Office. Please follow the instructions on the privilege request form.

Applications will be reviewed for seniors only during the week of September 11th.

Juniors will be able to apply after Term 1 is complete and applications will be reviewed during the weeks of Nov 13th, Jan 29th and April 9th.

Parking

Parking on campus will be available for seniors only at a cost of \$200 for the year. Those seniors wishing to purchase a parking sticker may report to Room 102 North (Campus Support Room- near the Gazebo entrance) on August 23rd, 24th and August 29th & 30th from 11:00am to 2:00pm. Parking stickers may also be purchased after the school year begins during school hours. Any incoming senior who owes a parking fine from junior year will not be issued a parking sticker until the fine is paid. During school hours parents and visitors are welcome to park in the designated visitor parking spaces at the high school. Please do not park in any non-designated visitor parking space as all other spaces have been assigned to faculty and staff. Please note that no parking will be available at R.J. Grey Junior High School for high school students. Any student without a parking sticker who is interested in parking on campus must park at the Hayward Road lower fields.

The high school campus has specific drop off and pick up areas for parents, students and buses. The direction of traffic flow changes in the morning (7:00 to 7:25am) and in the afternoon (2:00 to 2:30pm). We ask that all visitors please follow the direction of the high school campus support staff. The campus support staff is available to answer your questions and direct you through our campus.

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Absences

Parents are to notify the Main Office of all student absences. Please call (978-264-3323) **on the day** of the absence. If parent notification is not received, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. An unexcused absence is defined as a truancy. Unexcused absences will not be retroactively excused, unless a doctor's note, including the date of absence, is presented. Details pertaining to consequences for student truancy will be discussed with students in advisory on the first day of school and is available in the Student Handbook. As was the case last year, parents can review their child's daily attendance records on the PowerSchool Parent Portal. In order to receive access, you will be required to update your child's emergency contact information and the PTSO permissions first. In accordance with the school policy, each student is granted an opportunity to earn full credit for any course as long as his/her total absences (excused and unexcused) do not exceed 20 days per full year course, 10 days per semester course, or 5 days per semester course meeting on alternate days.

Dismissals

If a student needs to be released early, he/she must bring a note signed by a parent or legal guardian to the Main Office prior to third period on the day of the dismissal. In the event of an emergency, parents may call the Main Office to have their child dismissed on that day. Students returning to school must check in at the Main Office when they arrive. Students leaving campus without following the proper dismissal procedures will be considered truant from any class missed. Notes excusing trancies due to the student's failure to follow the dismissal policy will not be accepted. Upperclassmen with privileges are expected to follow the same dismissal procedures whenever they are going to miss class.

I know this letter contains a lot of information. We do not expect you to remember everything! Please note that all of the information contained here is available on our school website: <http://abrhs.abschools.org>. Links are also provided to both the PTSO and the Counseling Department websites. We encourage you to check these sites regularly for information about school happenings, upcoming events, school policies, etc.

Again, I hope that you are enjoying your summer. We look forward to seeing you soon.



Larry Dorey
Interim Principal