



## Binghamton City School District

164 Hawley Street  
PO Box 2126  
Binghamton, NY 13902-2126  
Phone: (607) 762-8100  
Fax: (607) 762-8110

Dear BHS Families,

I want to first acknowledge the thoughts, concerns and feedback shared by members of our school community. Your voices matter and I truly thank you for the care and concern you've shown. We know that the actions of a handful of students, and some community members, put our entire building in danger on Dec. 15. We will not tolerate what occurred, and it is not a fair representation of the amazing students who attend Binghamton High School.

The entire school building, led by administration, members of the school leadership team and several students, have worked to put into place the specific changes contained in this letter. Additionally, our school safety team is reviewing and updating our evacuation plans, to include additional evacuation sites and protocols to address any threats should they be located near any pending evacuation site. We are committed to a better and safer BHS, and we thank you for being our partners in that effort.

Starting Jan. 3, 2022, students should report to Binghamton High School by 8 a.m. All students should report to their 1st period, where expectations and our new reintroduction plan will be discussed. Students who have been consistently not attending class will receive a separate communication next week with instructions for reporting to school on Jan. 3, 2022.

There will also be an option for students to express their concerns and to partake in further solutions at the start of the school day. We value student voice in our decision making, and will continue to request student input throughout the week. More information regarding parent cafes will be shared when students return. These parent cafes will allow us to hear more parent voices so we can better understand and support our school community.

**Entrance:** All students are expected to wear their ID badges. As shared at the recent Board of Education meeting, the District Safety Committee has researched and met with two different companies that offer scanning equipment to detect metallic and other unsafe items. The system the district is considering maintains dignity for students, faculty, and visitors while keeping the high school safe from unwanted threats. A site survey will be conducted next week, with plans to install the equipment in the new year so that we can pilot the device. Once the device is in place, I will inform families about any changes, if needed, in protocols for entry. Please be on the lookout for an additional letter as early as next week.

**Hallways:** We recognize that many students do not follow the bell schedule the way it is intended. Our expectation is that students are in class when the bell rings. It is the only way for our students to receive the academic instruction they need. Once the bell rings, all staff will now be shutting their doors. School safety and administration will then accompany any students who remain in the hallways to a central location for the remainder of the period. Progressive discipline in accordance with our Code of Conduct will be issued to any student who continues to disregard attending classes

and being on time. Teachers will only allow one student out of class at a time. Students will not be allowed to leave any classroom for the first and last five minutes of class; we are calling this the “5:5 Rule.” We will have an increased presence of staff in the hallways to ensure that students are receiving focused instruction in their classes. Adults in the halls will be checking for passes and ensuring students arrive at their intended locations.

**Bathrooms:** We recognize that the bathrooms have become hangout spots and a main reason students are late to class. Our bathrooms need to be safe and clean environments for students to use. All bathrooms will now be closed during passing time. The 2nd and 3rd floor bathrooms will remain closed. Once class starts, bathrooms on the 1st and 4th floor will open. Students with medical reasons who need immediate access to bathroom facilities will be accommodated. We will be limiting the amount of students in the bathroom at a time. Staff will ensure that students are tapping in and out of the bathrooms. Students must have a pass from a teacher to use the bathroom. The purpose of these new protocols is not to deprive students of the use of the bathroom, but rather to regulate that students in the bathroom are there for the appropriate reasons. Any student who violates any of our protocols will receive progressive discipline in accordance with our Code of Conduct. This is a measure that other high schools have taken to secure a safe environment.

Finally, you will see an increased presence of staff at BHS focusing on maintaining safety and security. We have a wonderful community, including many who have voiced that they wish to help promote school safety. If you are interested in volunteering at BHS, we encourage you to please fill out our mentor application at [BHS Mentor Application](#).

We want to thank our students and parents for having faith in us as we work to address concerns at BHS. We have an amazing staff who are tirelessly working to put students’ needs first. We are committed to providing support for those students who have experienced trauma and challenges in their lives through the support of our guidance counselors, school social workers and community partners. And, for some students, we must ensure they are being educated and supported in the most appropriate academic environment for their needs.

We have an incredible school district, and the acts of a few cannot derail the great work that is happening. We must come together as a community. Together we will rise. We owe it to our students. I continue to be an extremely proud Patriot.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Richman  
Binghamton High School Principal

*Educating, empowering, and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.*