

FALLSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Comet News

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MARCH • 2015

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Dear School Community Member:

I hope this issue of the Comet Newsletter finds you warm, safe and in the best of health and spirit. This winter has been quite a challenging one for us and there are still a few weeks left before warmer weather arrives.

In this article I will update you on the district-wide building project and the school budget planning that has taken place up to this point.

Building Project Update

At the Benjamin Cosor Elementary School, building project work will continue starting and resume in the month of March. This work will take place during second shift hours and when school is not in session so as to not interrupt instructional time. March work will include abatements and window installation work.

In the summer, beginning in late June, the work at BCES will include: Flooring completion, cabinetry work, abatements, installation of doors, glass/glazing work, electrical upgrades, bathroom renovations/upgrades, main entrance concrete repair and renovations, site work, and the installation of an emergency service generator.

At the Junior-Senior High School, building project work will resume in late June. This work will include: Electrical upgrades, locker room renovations throughout the building, bathroom renovations, kitchen renovations, fire alarm system upgrades, installation of an emergency service generator, pool area upgrades, auditorium wall restorations, outdoor track restorations, tennis court restoration, and site work.

The building project work listed above is scheduled to be completed by the opening of school next September. While the project work is taking place, school district facilities (including the swimming pool) will not be available for community use. Once the building project work is completed, the school district facilities will once again be available for community use.

Budget Update

The Board of Education has been working with the school district's administration to create the 2015-16 school budget. While there are many obstacles in creating a school budget that balances the community's capacity to pay with the educational needs of the school district, the major obstacle that the board faces is not having the Governor's budget available to us to know what one of our major revenue streams is going to be. The Governor is not releasing his State budget until his package of education reforms is enacted. In the recent past, the Governor released his budget in late January and we got what's called "school runs" that tell us the minimum aid package the school district could expect.

The other major revenue stream for the school district is real property taxes. We have calculated the tax cap for the 2015-16 school year to be 3.24%. The tax cap is the maximum amount the district can raise the school tax levy without needing a super majority budget vote. There is a common misconception that school levy increases are limited to

two percent. The reality is that the tax cap limit is the product of a complex calculation that takes into account, among other factors, the rate of inflation and the amount of property tax growth in the school district. For the last two budget years, Fallsburg has not increased the tax levy to the legal maximum limit. We have remained under the limit.

The administration is also working on calculating recent savings, or tax efficiencies that the district has enacted. The district has saved money by cooperating with other school districts, sharing services with other school districts, and combining some student transportation with other school districts. If the calculated savings are more than one percent of the school tax levy, the district can submit a plan to the Director of the New York State Budget. If the plan is accepted and the school district's tax levy does not exceed the tax cap, 3.24%, every STAR eligible property owner will receive a rebate equal to the increase in school taxes. The net effect, just like last year, would be no school tax increase on a property owner's primary residence.

As we continue moving forward in our budgetary planning, we invite you to attend our budget workshops that take place during our regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Educationally yours,

Ivan J. Katz, Ed.D.

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FROM THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Cyberbullying

Over the past few weeks, we have seen an increase in student incidents involving social media. Our children are immersed in technology and although, as parents, we feel that we have guided our children to make the right choices while engaged in social media, it can, unfortunately, quickly escalate into something that they are not prepared for. We would like to take this time to share with you some information about cyberbullying that may help guide your discussions and, possibly the supervision of your child as they continue to explore the rapidly changing world of technological social interactions.

Frequency of Cyberbullying

The 2010-2011 School Crime Supplement (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics) indicates that 9% of students in grades 6–12 experienced cyberbullying.

The 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey finds that 15% of high school students (grades 9-12) were electronically bullied in the past year.

Research on cyberbullying is growing. However, because kids' technology use changes rapidly, it is difficult to design surveys that accurately capture trends.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Why Cyberbullying is Different

Kids who are being cyberbullied are often bullied in person as well. Additionally, kids who are cyberbullied have a harder time getting away from the behavior.

Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and reach a kid even when he or she is alone. It can happen any time of the day or night.

Cyberbullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source.

Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

Be Aware of What Your Kids are Doing Online

Talk with your kids about cyberbullying and other online issues regularly.

Know the sites your kids visit and their online activities. Ask where they're going, what they're doing, and who they're doing it with.

Tell your kids that as a responsible parent you may review their online communications if you think there is reason for concern. Installing parental control filtering software or monitoring programs is one option for monitoring your child's online behavior, but do not rely solely on these tools.

Have a sense of what they do online and in texts. Learn about the sites they like. Try out the devices they use.

Ask for their passwords, but tell them you'll only use them in case of emergency.

Ask to "friend" or "follow" your kids on social media sites or ask another trusted adult to do so.

Encourage your kids to tell you immediately if they, or someone they know, are being cyberbullied. Explain that you will not take away their computers or cell phones if they confide in you about a problem they are having.

Establish Rules about Technology Use

Establish rules about appropriate use of computers, cell phones, and other technology. For example, be clear about what sites they can visit and what they are permitted to do when they're online. Show them how to be safe online.

Help them be smart about what they post or say. Tell them not to share anything that could hurt or embarrass themselves or others. Once something is posted, it is out of their control whether someone else will forward it.

Encourage kids to think about who they want to see the information and pictures they post online. Should complete strangers see it? Real friends only? Friends of friends? Think about how people who aren't friends could use it.

Tell kids to keep their passwords safe and not share them with friends. Sharing passwords can compromise their control over their online identities and activities.

For more information on cyberbullying, visit stopbullying.gov.

Mary Kate Stinehour

FROM THE ELEMENTARY ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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BENJAMIN COSOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BCES Mission Statement

At BCES, we challenge our students to be the best individuals and learners that they can be.
We strive to create respectful, caring, and responsible citizens who are challenged to soar to their potential and achieve academic excellence.

At the Fallsburg Central School District, we are very concerned about the safety of our students. Students ensure that the school is a safe environment when they obey the rules. For example, students should not run in the halls or engage in "horseplay" in the classroom. In the same way, students need to practice proper behaviors when they ride the bus to and from school.

During the school year, we, of course, conduct regular bus safety drills. In addition, we talk to the students about bus safety. We can, by using our PBIS expectations of Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Be There, Be Ready, ensure that the bus is a safe environment for all of our students.

Be Respectful

While on the bus, students should use a quiet (Level 1) voice, and speak nicely to others.

Be Responsible

Students should follow directions the first time that they receive them. They should accept the consequences for their actions without arguing with the bus driver and/or aide. Students need to treat the bus drivers and aides with the same level of respect that they give to their teachers.

Be Safe

Students must, while the bus is in motion, sit in their seat, and face forward. They need to keep their hands, arms, as well as any objects that they carry, inside of the bus. They need to keep their hands and feet to themselves.

Be There, Be Ready

In the morning, the students need to be outside/at their bus stop on time. If they have an assigned seat, they need to sit there.

As we all know, especially during the winter months, drivers need to focus their full attention on what is in front of them. If, while riding the bus, students misbehave, they put themselves at greater risk because their actions can serve to distract the driver. The driver needs to concentrate on making sure that s/he pilots the bus safely. If s/he has to look at the students, then s/he is not looking at the road. Potentially dangerous situations can quickly develop, putting everyone at risk.

We want everyone to get to school and get home as safely as possible. Students can do their part by simply observing the commonsense guidelines already mentioned. To reiterate, students should stay seated while the bus is in motion, speak in as low a voice as possible and treat each other with respect.

Dave Viglione

SAVE THE DATE

Please join us for a wonderful luncheon as we recognize this year's winners of the Samuel Beytin Fallsburg Central Community Scholarships.

Sunday, May 3, 2015 - Bernie's Holiday Restaurant - 12:00 noon.

Donation: \$28.⁰⁰ per person.

For more information, please contact Renee Kates – 845-434-7472.

FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Greetings again! The year is certainly moving by very quickly, isn't it? Before we all know it, the Class of 2015 will have graduated and be moving on with their lives, while the rest of us are busy preparing for the next school year. Part of that preparation includes scheduling, reviewing our student handbook and putting all of the pieces in place to insure the success of all of our students! The spring sports season will begin shortly and the prom and senior trip are quickly approaching. It is indeed a very exciting time in the building.

The students in the junior-senior high school have had a wonderful year thus far! I want to thank everyone that has contributed to this success. This includes the teachers and staff, district administration, parents, board of education, but most of all, the students themselves. Student achievement continues to improve, our athletic teams have been very successful up to this point, as have our musicians, artists and every other group that continues to represent Fallsburg with dignity. This is due, in large part, to the dedicated efforts of our staff and the resolve, or grit, of our students. As I have spoken about previously, the focus on "grit" has played a major role in what we are doing this year in the JSHS. I will continue to push every student for greater effort, improved results and a renewed commitment to excellence!!

If you have been reading the newspaper lately, you have seen that public education is always changing and higher standards continue to be implemented. We here in the junior-senior high school are working diligently to give your child every opportunity for success. This means constant training for administrators and teachers, investigation regarding new methods to educate students and an expectation of the same effort we ask of our students.

Of course, the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are just as important in creating a well-rounded individual with a wealth of varied experiences. The Fallsburg School District has a great deal to be proud of, and I want to continue to demonstrate that pride in everything we do.

With the warm weather on the way, students may become distracted by the lure of outside activities. It is important that we all continue to focus on finishing the school year as strongly as possible. This insures success this year and prepares us for the challenges of the next. Every student faces year-end assessments, which may determine their placement next year and sets the stage for future success. Many students will be taking their SAT's and ACT's, examinations which help determine where a student might go to college, and more importantly, what kind of scholarships or financial assistance may be available to them.

As always, the school district is here to serve our students and their families to the best of our abilities. Please continue to stay in touch and if we can be of assistance, don't hesitate to ask! Again, thank you for your continued support. Enjoy the warm weather of spring!

Michael Williams

E=E • Effort Equals Excellence!

From the High School Assistant Principal

It is strange to think of spring when temperatures are below zero. As spring approaches, however, we need to recognize that another year is almost gone. Sometimes as we go through the cold dreary winters ESPECIALLY THIS ONE, we think the year will never end. As spring arrives, however, the time just flies by.

Spring is also a time when other concerns arise. The warmer weather tends to lead to shorter tempers and dress code issues. Remember, the dress code states, "skirts, shorts and other such apparel must be of appropriate length". They must not be more than five inches above the knee. Tops must also cover the midriff and be of significant length to present the midriff in a relaxed state (not a stretched state).

Cleavage should also be appropriately covered. Straps on tops must be at least one (1) inch thick. No spaghetti-type straps. The dress code is not much different than what might be expected in the professional work world. We want our students to be prepared for expectations that exist beyond the school house gate into the real world.

I often use the analogy of the school year as a race. If that is the case it would be a marathon. What that means is there is always time to recover. If your children have struggled thus far and have not given their best effort, there is still a chance for them to succeed. Students must give 100% effort, seek out their teachers and get extra help and do everything in their power to succeed. Teachers are

available daily through the extended day program. State Exams, end of year assessments, finals and Regents Exams, are extremely important. The first of these exams are the middle school assessments which are just weeks away (7 – 8 ELA April 14th - 16, 7 – 8 Math, April 22nd – April 24th). Be sure that they prepare and give their best effort.

Spring is also a time when people tend to "hang around" after school. Remember all students must be with a staff member if they are staying after classes. You must have a late bus pass from a teacher or coach to ride either of the late runs.

Frank Godlewski

Fallsburg Junior High School Welcomes Newcomers to School

During the current school year as part of the Extended Day curriculum, English as a Second Language Teachers have been meeting with 7th and 8th graders who are new arrivals to America and to the Fallsburg Central School District. The Newcomers Program has been very helpful to the children, who come with little or no English. According to instructors Jesus Galvan and Malvina Saavedra, the children get to bond with each other, learn to use computers, and work on homework and academic support with the teacher's guidance.

Since many of the children from Honduras and Ecuador have families working in the local farm and farm-related industry, the State Migrant Education Program is deeply involved in this after-school program as well. Parent Specialist for Sullivan County Mid-Hudson Migrant Education Program Martha Gonzalez visits the sessions regularly and assists with academic support. Many of the children come with very limited life skills and literacy even in their native language. She appreciates these classes and is working to develop other support for the students.

Living the Meaning of Valentine's Day in Fallsburg. (left)

Ms. Calabrese with her students in the Pre-K classroom at BCES preparing Valentine's Cards to bring home to parents.

Fallsburg Girls Varsity Basketball Team Makes History

Thirty-three years is sure a long time to wait, but this year the Fallsburg HS Girls Varsity Basketball team defeated Burke Catholic 33-31 to win the OCIAA Division IV Title for their first championship since 1983. To the great joy of a couple hundred loyal fans and supporters, the victory was especially sweet since it was the last home game and an evening to recognize the seniors, their families, and the coaches prior to tip-off.

The following senior girls were a major contribution to outstanding an season: Nyasia Harris, Cassandra Foertsch, Brittany Spinelli, Diana Presti, Naomi Moody, and Karryn Smith.

It was an emotional ceremony for Assistant Coach Lucille Carter-Harris to acknowledge her daughter Nyasia for her achievements on the basketball court. Head Coach Daniel Redmond thanked Lucille and other assistants Mike Weiner, Shaina Swerdling, and Patty Seletsky for all their support to make the season a great success. He also acknowledged the parents, grandparents, and siblings that came out to honor their senior girls.

On Feb. 28th the girls won an exciting first-round overtime game in Sectionals against Highland. Cheering the girls to victory was an enthusiastic crowd that included retired physical education teacher and Coach, Mel Feldman and several members of the 1983 Girls' Varsity Basketball Team.





Heart-a-thon on Valentine's Day

The Heart-a-Thon is a wonderful community event in Sullivan County. Organized by WSUL-WVOS for the benefit of Catskill Regional Medical Center (CRMC) and its cardiology unit, this year's event was held at The Sullivan Hotel in Rock Hill.



Thanks to Lions Club Vice President George Gibson, Fallsburg Councilman Mike Weiner, and for the Fallsburg Lions Club and the Leos Club at the high school for all the work they did to make the February 14 event a big success.

BCES teacher and advisor Shari Mednick came with 13 Leos and joined eight Lions Club members to offer help on the telephones. All together the Fallsburg Lions Club and Leos collected over \$1500. It is a wonderful example of people coming out on a brutally cold day to warm the hearts of an entire community. Additionally, thanks to the efforts of Fallsburg Jr/Sr High School teacher Ms. Jamie Lippen and her mom Mrs. Jessie Lippen from BCES, students and staff in both school buildings donated more than \$1000 through the sale of paper hearts. Ms. Lippen has been organizing this effort for many years with the help of her students.

Fallsburg Community Meeting Bears Fruit in School Assemblies

When the Fallsburg High School Superintendent's Community Advisory Council was organizing a Community Forum on December 6th, 2014, council member Larry Schafman invited Jennifer Reinhardt, a Program Director from Fallsburg's Dynamite Youth Center (DYC), to attend. She asked if she could bring some of the young people that are in Dynamite's rehab program. Mr. Schafman thought it was a great idea.

During the Forum, Ms. Reinhardt and eleven members of DYC met with Jr. /Sr. HS Assistant Principal Frank Godlewski in a supervised session. These young adults shared some of their addiction issues, life consequences and suggestions for how to overcome some of the obstacles presented by drug abuse. Mr. Godlewski was very moved by the experiences and the maturity of the young people. One suggestion that day was to allow that group to share their stories with the student body.

On February 17th and 18th, 2015, Mr. Godlewski and Ms. Reinhardt brought that suggestion to fruition. Six members of the Dynamite Community presented a seminar in separate assemblies to each of the grade levels at the Jr/Sr HS. These young men and women, not much older than the students they were addressing, shared their stories and warned the student body about how it really can happen. They spoke about the dangers of addiction, the consequences of poor choices, their regrets and how important it is to be aware of your surroundings and the negative pressures of the people you hang out with.

One after another, the DYC members spoke of lost opportunities, undermining the trust of those who loved them the most in their families, and diminishing their sense of self-worth. Finding Dynamite Youth Center has changed their lives dramatically after the failure of previous rehab programs and interventions by well-meaning parents and teachers. DYC takes a holistic approach to the person—members live together in a supportive home environment, get individual and group counseling, and feel a deep sense of belonging and ownership as part of the larger community

This experience at Fallsburg High School for the DYC young adults was the first time that they spoke with students as a group or as individuals. They all shared how much they received by talking with the assemblies, seeing the responsive faces in the audience, and meeting the interested students who came up to them and thanked them afterwards. These youngsters, who have struggled with their addictions, knew at the end of the day that they have to "give back" and that relating their experiences can make a difference in the lives of other young people that are coping to make good decisions in their lives. One Fallsburg student junior Vincent Garcia said that the stories he heard got him thinking about what can happen to any young person today. "They were believable," said Garcia. He related that after the assembly, a lively discussion continued in the English class about the meaning of the assembly.

Mr. Godlewski and Superintendent Dr. Ivan Katz were very impressed with the candor and courage displayed by the DYC young adults. Dr. Katz said, "I suspect the fact that they are getting their lives back together will resonate in the memories of the FCSD students who came to see these important assemblies." He met on February 23rd with Mr. Godlewski and the rest of the Advisory Council to continue the discussion on positive actions to keep the community informed and involved in drug awareness and related issues.



FALLSBURG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REUNION AND LUNCH BUFFET

**Saturday, July 18, 2015
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**



***The Woodridge Municipal Hall*
2 Dairyland Road, Woodridge, NY 12789**

Join former staff and students for our annual meet and greet in the eleventh year of continuing our mission to award FAA Scholarships to deserving seniors. We will also honor a staff member and a community member.

RSVP BY PHONE: (845) 434-5371

RSVP BY E-MAIL: alumni-eileen@hotmail.com

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: www.fallsburgcsd.net

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN BY JULY 10, 2015

**FALLSBURG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION Eleventh Annual Alumni Reunion
Fallsburg Central Schools, PO Box 124, Fallsburg, NY 12733**

NAME _____



Admission: \$13.00 per person or 2 for \$25.00 (includes a light lunch)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING _____ \$ _____ (see above)

DONATION TO FAA SCHOLARSHIP FUND \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **FALLSBURG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Please note that due to construction at the school buildings, we will be holding this event at the Woodridge Municipal Hall.

2014-2015 SCHOOL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL						
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MAY							JUNE							JULY							AUGUST						
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31													30	31					30	31							

 SCHOOL CLOSED
 CONFERENCE DAY
 REGENTS EXAMS

SCHOOL CLOSED

SEP	1, 2, 25, 26
OCT	13
NOV	11, 26-28
DEC	24-31
JAN	1, 2, 19
FEB	16
MAR	30, 31
APR	1-6
MAY	25

SCHOOL DAYS

SEP	18	+ 1 CONF
OCT	20	+ 2 CONF
NOV	16	
DEC	17	
JAN	19	
FEB	19	
MAR	19	+ 1 CONF
APR	18	
MAY	20	
JUN	19	
TOTAL	185	+ 4 CONF.

MAKE-UP DAYS

DAY 1	Nov 26
DAY 2	FEB 16
DAY 3	MAR 30
DAY 4	MAR 31
DAY 5	APR 1

* if all snow days are used this day will become a student day and not a conference day

GIVE BACK DAYS

1 st day	May 22
2 nd day	Apr 7
3 rd day	Apr 8

FALLSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

115 BRICKMAN ROAD • PO Box 124 • FALLSBURG, NY 12733-0124

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Visit us at www.fallsburgcsd.net

CONTACTS

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Mr. Keith Edwards • Director of Technology 434-6800 Ext. 1258
Ms. Jane Tingley • Director of Staff Evaluation
 & Student Data. 434-6800 Ext. 1257
Ms. Heather Hendershot • Pupil Personnel Director. 434-6800 Ext. 1273
Mr. Michael Williams • High School Principal 434-6800 Ext. 2206
Mr. Frank Godlewski • High School Asst. Principal. 434-6800 Ext. 2207
Ms. Mary Kate Stinehour • Elementary Principal 434-4110 Ext. 3206
Mr. David Viglione • Elementary Asst. Principal 434-4110 Ext. 3204
Mr. Harold Fried • Interim Athletic Director. 434-6800 Ext. 2212
 Central Registration. 434-6800 ext. 1222
 Tax Collection 434-6800 Ext. 1219

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Business Office 434-0418
High School 434-0168
Jr./Sr. HS Nurse 434-3821

SCHOOL ADDRESSES...

Fallsburg Central School District Office & Fallsburg Jr./Sr. High School

115 Brickman Road • PO Box 124
 Fallsburg, NY 12733-0124

Benjamin Cosor Elementary School

15 Old Falls Road • PO Box 123
 Fallsburg, NY 12733-0123

WEBSITE: www.fallsburgcsd.net

If you want to notify the tax collector with a change of address, you can now e-mail that information to: tax@fallsburgcsd.net.

KEEPING YOU POSTED

Date	Event	Time	Location
3/4	Board of Ed. Mtg.	7:15pm	MS Board Rm.
3/5-7	All-County Band		
3/13	Superintendent's Conf. Day		
3/18	Board of Ed. Mtg.	7:15pm	MS Board Rm.
	BCES Math & Literacy Night	7-8:30pm	Cafet. & Classrooms
3/19	BCES Math & Literacy Night snow date		
3/20	BCES PTA Mtg.	4:30-5:30pm	
	Class of 2016 Spaghetti Dinner	4:30-7pm	HS Cafet.
3/20 & 21	"Little Shop of Horrors"	7pm	HS Audit.
3/26	BCES Parent/Teacher Conf.		
3/30-4/6	School Closed		
4/7	School resumes		
4/8	Board of Ed. Mtg.	7:15pm	MS Board Rm.

Date	Event	Time	Location
4/8 & 9	BCES Spring Picture Day		
4/17	BCES PTA Mtg.	4:30-5:30pm	
4/21	Board of Ed. Mtg.	7:15pm	MS Board Rm.
4/27 - 5/1	BCES Book Fair	8am - 5pm	Behind the library
5/1	BCES Family Fun Night	6-10pm	Cafet.
5/6	Annual Budget Meeting	7:30pm	Audit.
5/7	HS Spring Concert	7pm	Audit.
5/19	Budget Vote	8am-8pm	HS Library
	Board of Ed. Mtg.	After polls close	MS Bd. Rm.
	BCES Spring Concert	7pm	Audit.
5/25	School Closed		
5/29	BCES Talent Show	7pm	Audit.
5/29-31	Senior Class Trip		