



SHAMOKIN AREA MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2023

Greetings to our remarkable Shamokin Area Middle/High School community!

With hearts brimming with excitement and positivity, we extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you as we embark on an incredible journey through the 2023-2024 school year. It is an absolute delight to see our hallways come alive once more with the vibrant energy of our students.

Central to our mission is an enduring dedication to ensuring that every student who enters our school experiences more than just a welcome – they are embraced as an integral member of our expansive Shamokin Area family. As we begin this exciting new chapter, we work together to create an atmosphere where strong connections grow, nurturing a safe space that empowers every young student to dream big and aim for limitless possibilities.

Our dedicated educators, the backbone of our school, have invested countless hours in crafting inspiring classroom experiences that will ignite curiosity and spark a love for learning within our students. Together, we firmly believe that each individual possesses the potential for greatness, and it is our privilege to guide them towards their own unique brilliance.

The educational path we carve out extends well beyond the classroom walls, driven by an unwavering commitment to equip our students for the road ahead. As they progress through Shamokin Area Middle/High School, we empower them to rise to the challenges of higher education, purposeful vocations, and meaningful citizenship.

Our maintenance team has worked diligently over the summer to prepare our campus for teachers, students, parents, and the entire community. Their dedication and hard work are second to none, evident in the quality facility presented to you all.

As we approach another amazing academic year, I am honored to continue serving as the principal of Shamokin Area Middle/High School. Let's begin this year by supporting Shamokin Area and believing in the potential of each day. Our commitment to positive relationships among parents, teachers, and students forms the foundation of our shared success. In this nurturing environment, we witness our students not only excel academically but also grow as compassionate, empowered individuals.

Let's unite with determination and a drive for growth, making this year at Shamokin Area Middle/High School truly exceptional. With each new day, we embrace opportunities, celebrate achievements, and face challenges united.

Summer has ended, the school year is upon us, and opportunities abound. Are you ready to take full advantage?

Best Wishes,

Todd Hockenbroch

Middle / High School Principal

General Information

All students will report for the first day of school on Tuesday, August 22nd. Homeroom will begin promptly at 7:45 am and students will dismiss at 2:32 pm. Students will be permitted to enter the school building at 7:25 am daily.

Back-to-School Night – Back-to-School Night will be held on Thursday, August 17th for ALL students in grades 7-12. Seventh grade students should report to the auditorium at 5:30 pm and all other students should report at 6:15 pm. to the gymnasium. The program will conclude at 8:30 p.m. We are asking ALL students to attend with their parents. Students will receive their class schedules and locker assignments, familiarize themselves with the building, and have opportunities to ask questions. This evening will be the ONLY opportunity to make schedule changes.

Senior Yearbook Pictures – In order to guarantee a senior picture image in the yearbook, Class of 2024 members and their parents should view the senior picture guidelines on the SAHS website or contact Mrs. Cheunes at the High School. Senior pictures are due by Friday, September 28th.

Homeroom/Lockers – All students are assigned to homerooms for attendance and announcements. Homeroom begins at 7:45 a.m. Each student is assigned one locker for keeping school materials and clothing. The school is not responsible for losses because of theft. Use only your assigned locker and do not give anyone your combination. Students are responsible for cleaning out their lockers at the end of the school year. Lockers may be examined randomly by the principal or his designee.

Insurance – Student accident insurance may be purchased through the school. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Chris Venna, Superintendent, at (570) 648-5752, extension 4116.

Guidance Services – The Guidance Department assists each student to help him/herself to become all that he/she is capable of being. Counselors help students to plan and evaluate their programs, review progress, and assemble alternatives regarding school programs, employment, or continuing education. Students may schedule appointments during study hall and may report to the counselors from class **only** when sent by the teacher or requested by the counselor.

Grade Reporting – The school year is divided into four 9-week marking periods. Report cards are issued at the end of each marking period. Updated grades are available 24/7 on Synergy. A numerical grading system is in effect. Please note that any grade below 70% is failing.

Parent Vue – Parent Portal is an electronic communication tool used by our school district to make it easy for you, the parent, to monitor your child’s performance. For more information regarding registering for the Parent Portal, please visit the school district website and click on the link.

Hair, Dress, and Grooming – The Shamokin Area Middle / High School does have a dress and grooming policy. The requirements have been developed to ensure the safety and welfare of the students and the order of the school and to maintain an environment conducive to learning. **Failure to follow the policy will result in disciplinary action. Please refer to the discipline policy. For more information regarding the dress and grooming policy, please visit the SASD website.**

Mesh/Clear Bookbags and Metal detectors

All students are required to pass through metal detectors upon entering the building. Students must have a mesh or clear backpack only. Students with oversized athletic bags will be required to leave the bag with security so it can be searched and then secured in the building. All students are allowed to have a non-mesh/clear pencil cases sized bag for personal items.

Attendance – When a student has 13 days of absences, he or she will need a doctor’s note for all subsequent absences. If one is not provided, the absence will become unexcused or illegal. Doctor or legal notes are not included in the 13 days. Please note that all sign-outs and sign-ins that equal a half day are included in this number. Parent notes after the 13 days of absence are still considered unexcused and will be included in truancy charges. All absences and tardiness must be verified by parents/guardians. Failure to return an excuse after three days following an absence will result in the absence being recorded as unexcused or illegal. No credit is given for any work missed during unexcused absences, trancies, class cuts, or unexcused tardiness, including tests and quizzes.

Tardiness – Students who arrive after 7:45 a.m. are tardy for school. Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. must have a doctor’s note or a parent must escort them into school. Students entering the building after 8:30 with a parent must sign in at the principal’s office. Please refer to the student handbook for more information regarding tardiness.

Sign-Out Procedures – All notes requesting a student be released before dismissal must be brought to the principal’s office before homeroom or the request may be denied. Notes should state the time and reason for the early dismissal. Medical appointments will be verified by the principal’s office. Upon returning to school, the student must bring verification of attending the appointment. Failure to do so will result in unexcused or illegal absences. When a student reaches the 13-day limit, all sign-outs must be verified by the confirmed appointment, or they will be considered illegal. The student must bring verification on the next day of school. Please refer to the student handbook for more information regarding sign-outs.

Student Cars – All vehicles must be registered with the school and must be parked in the student parking lot. Reckless driving, failure to park properly, or failure to register the vehicle may result in loss of driving privileges and fines. The school is not responsible for your vehicle. You park at your own risk.

Student Emergency Cards – Every student is required by law to complete and return emergency cards to the school nurse. Failure to do so will result in a suspension until the card is returned.

Health Services – The nurse’s office is in the principal’s office complex. The school nurse will attend to injuries or illnesses that occur in school. Injuries incurred at home are the student’s responsibility. The school nurse will schedule physical exams for 11th grade, hearing tests for 7th and 11th grade, dental exams for 7th grade, scoliosis exams for 7th grade, and vision tests, heights, and weights of all students annually. Students must secure a pass from a teacher before coming to the nurse’s office. The nurse will determine if any student must be sent home and will call the parents accordingly. Students or parents may not simply sign a student out of school for illness. No student may ever sign out without permission.

Library Regulations – The library is open from 7:25 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each school day. Materials may be checked out for a period of time. Late fines will be ten cents per day to a maximum of replacement cost of the book. Students signing out books are responsible for their return or payment for replacement. The library is a quiet place to work, study, or read. All students using the library must have a library pass.

Athletic/Cheerleading Eligibility – In order to actively participate in interscholastic athletics or any cheerleading activity, a student must pass at least six classes in which he/she is enrolled. Grade reviews will be weekly and on report card issue dates. If a student has a failing grade at those times, he/she may not be eligible to participate in practices, competitions, or activities. Please reference the athletic

handbook or contact the Athletic Director for more detailed information. In order to practice or participate in an athletic or cheerleading activity, the student must be in attendance at school on the day of practice, competition, meeting, etc. no later than 8:15 a.m. The principal will determine exceptions.

Bus Rules – Students should be at their designated pick-up spot ten minutes ahead of time. Smoking is prohibited at the bus stop and on the bus. All students are to remain seated while the bus is moving. All directions given by the bus driver must be obeyed. Buses experiencing discipline problems may be supplied with student names and pictures. **Bus related discipline referrals may result in suspension and/or loss of bus riding privileges.**

Senior Names for Armed Services - Former Governor Casey signed into law Act 10 which facilitates release of directory information to the armed services. According to subsection (b), each school district shall notify students of the requirements. Each student/parent shall be given at least 21 calendar days to request, in writing, to the superintendent, exclusion of such student's name prior to release of such list. Access shall include, but not be limited to, a list of male and female students by name, home address, and, if published, telephone number.

Student Assistance Program - What is a student assistance program? At the Shamokin Area Middle / High School, the program is called STOP (Students Trying to Overcome Problems). The STOP team is a systematic process which makes it possible for school personnel to determine which students are having problems and refer them for help. The heart of the program is a core of school personnel who are specially trained to work with these students.

Policy on Drugs and Alcohol - Possession, use, distribution or sale of illegal controlled substances, narcotics (including look alike drugs) or alcohol on school property are forbidden. Offenses will result in parental conferences, suspension, reports to appropriate authorities, and possible expulsion. Please refer to the discipline policy.

Policy on Tobacco - Smoking or obvious possession of tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, by students is not permitted in the building or on school grounds at any time. Tobacco products, including snuff, are not to be brought into the building. Smoking or chewing snuff or tobacco in the building or on school property will be considered willful, deliberate violations of school rules. Parents will be notified. Refer to the discipline policy for penalties. The local magistrate will be notified.

Emergencies – If school is closed or delayed because of inclement weather or other cause, information will be given via the BlackBoard Connect messaging system as well as on local radio and television stations beginning at 6:00 a.m.

BILL 95.3 FM, WQKX 94.1 FM, WNEP, and WBRE. Do not call the school so that telephone lines can be kept open.

Start and Dismissal Times – Homeroom begins at 7:45 a.m. The doors of the school will remain locked until 7:25 a.m. Dismissal is at 2:32 p.m. Parents should utilize the student parking lot (east parking lot) for picking up their child at dismissal.

Metal Detectors – In conjunction with using metal detectors, school personnel may inspect the contents of any backpack, book bag, purse, or parcel for the limited purpose of determining whether a weapon is concealed therein, in accordance with Board policy. ALL students WILL pass through a metal detector upon entering the middle/high school building. Backpacks and other large bags are not allowed in the classrooms, in the hallways and/or in the cafeteria. Backpacks may be brought to school, but they must be stored in the locker prior to the beginning of first period and retrieved ONLY at the time of dismissal.

SASD Web Site – Please refer to the school district web site at www.indians.k12.pa.us for information and activities throughout the school year.

SASD Non-Discrimination Policy - All activities and courses, at Shamokin Area School District are available to all students as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504. If you have any questions concerning equal education opportunities or complaints of harassment or discrimination, contact Mr. Chris Venna, Superintendent, at (570) 648-5752, ext. 4116.

Important Phone Numbers –

High School Office	570-648-5731
High School Fax	570-648-0601
District Office	570-648-5752
District Fax	570-648-2592
