



New Smyrna Beach High School

James R. Tager, Principal

December 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

It is with great excitement that we begin the new year. Before we know it, graduation day for the #1 Barracuda Class of 2012 will be here. In the name of academic achievement for all students, there will be some policy changes for the second semester that you should be aware of prior to classes resuming on Wednesday, January 4th.

One area of change will directly involve specific adjustments to the Proficiency Model. The ratio for grading within the core class curriculum which includes English, foreign language, math, reading, science, and social studies will be adjusted to 80% for summative assessments and 20% for formative assessments. This modification will allow homework to count in the 20% ratio of the formative assessments. There may be slight variations to this policy. However, we are striving to be on the same grading ratio that falls within the framework of each subject area department. Concerning re-takes, students will be allowed to re-test only on major assessments, such as unit tests. Again, there may be slight variations on re-test options, although we will try to stay with a uniformed policy relative to subject area departments.

Another area of a change will be with the bell schedule. Students will have one common lunch that will be extended in length to 45-minutes (except for Early Release Wednesdays). Seniors and juniors with a minimum 2.0 GPA and signed parent permission will be allowed off-campus lunch privileges. **Students must maintain that minimum GPA quarterly and return on time to 6th period to retain the privilege.** One reason for this alteration is to honor the 2012 class for their academic excellence by allowing more time to enjoy the full allotted lunch session. This will also promote safe travel time as students return to campus. One more benefit that goes with moving to one lunch is the availability of extending the Academic Intervention time to 28-minutes three times a week. Academic Intervention offers students a chance to study, re-learn, and/or re-test on unit summative assessments. We will also maintain a 22-minute Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time on Fridays to stay focused on our school improvement goal of reading across the curriculum areas.

The last change involves protecting instructional time for all students. Transition time in-between classes will be increased to 6-minutes in response to the concerns we received from families on the Open House surveys. We will operate with a locked-door policy for periods two through seven. Students must arrive on time to their respective classrooms for entry. There will be a two-minute warning bell to remind students to move along and expedite the process during the class to class transition. This modification allows for a full period of uninterrupted, high-quality instruction and learning. The first period tardy policy will remain the same as it was the first semester.

Please feel free to contact me by email, phone, or in person, if you have any questions or concerns. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your principal. Thank you for sending us the best students in Volusia County.

Enthusiastically yours,
Jim Tager

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