

Smoke Signals

DECEMBER
2023

ISSUE 4
VOLUME 18

Vero Beach High School

1707 16th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960
Main: 564-5600
Attendance: 564-5555

ADMINISTRATION

Principal
Shawn O'Keefe

Vice Principal
Rahshard Morgan

Assistant Principals
Greg Ahrens
Juliette Carroll
Vanessa Gonzalez
Joy Griffin
Denny Hart
Meghan Teachout

www.vbhs.org

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Indians"*

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Published Five Times Per Year
Apr, Jul, Sep, Dec, Feb 2023-24
School District of
Indian River County
1990 25th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960
Issue #4

A Message From The Chief

Dear Parents,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our VBHS Stafulty, students and parents for all the support so far this school year. Hopefully our newsletter will give you a flavor of life in the school over the first semester and upcoming events 23-24. I would like to wish you and your family happy holidays and I hope you enjoy some well deserved rest over this festive period.

Semester grades will soon be final (12/20/23) and serve as a tool to assess the academic progress of our students. Teaching and learning are collaborative processes. They require hard work on both sides of the desk. Please assure that adequate time is spent at home, each night, re-enforcing the learning process. Homework and studying are two separate processes, but both are essential if real learning is to take place. See our tutoring opportunities in this newsletter and parent/teacher conferences will be held on February 15th from 3:30-6:30PM through electronic scheduling with the particular teachers you select.

As we move through our busy days, we may not take the time that we should, to appreciate all that we are accomplishing along the way. Here at school, we have had a challenging and rewarding first semester with much to be proud of at VBHS. Our student's achievements are amazing in the classroom and beyond. Our teachers are working hard for the benefit of our students and sharing their best practices with one another on a regular basis. It is important to share our appreciation for our community of Vero Beach who support our efforts. As we approach the holiday season perhaps it would also be an opportune time to discuss with our children the many things for which they can be thankful. There is so much negativity in the news these days, there is a danger that we might forget or overlook all the good things we have in our lives. Those of us who have been blessed with many gifts and talents have an opportunity to share our bounty. Examples of this very concept are all around us and we all have something to contribute, especially this time of year. Thank you for your continued support of our educational mission at VBHS and for sharing your children with us!

The second semester is a "fresh start" for students to keep up good academic habits and make improvements where needed. Our 90% Attendance Policy continues with everyone starting fresh at 100% for the start of the second semester. Please keep track of your student's attendance on focus and call in any necessary absences, so that they are excused. Being in school is essential to positive academic outcomes.

In the meantime, I look forward to ending the first semester of the school year on a positive note with our students, staff, and community. I hope you and yours have a wonderful Holiday Season and joyous New Year.

For the VBHS Family,

Shawn O'Keefe

Principal



Shawn O'Keefe

Merrin Metcalf Chosen as School Related Employee of the Year

We are proud to announce Vero Beach High School's School Related Employee of the Year, Merrin Metcalf. We are so fortunate to have her with us. Ms. Metcalf has been the receptionist at the Main Campus for 9 years. She works very hard every day to assist parents and students and welcomes visitors to our campus. We are extremely lucky to have Merrin as part of school family. Thank you for all that you do to support of faculty, staff, and students!



Christopher Fonehouse Named Teacher of the Year

Mr. Fonehouse has worked at Vero Beach High School with for over 10 years as a teacher and 15 years as a coach. He has been a member of the Social Studies department since the start. He has taught many different subject areas, grade levels, and student levels through the years. From Advanced Placement classes, multiple electives, and graduation requirement courses at the regular and honors levels, he excels in them all and more importantly his students excel as well. He is a teacher that has very high expectations for his students. He works with them to meet those expectations which often are above what the students themselves believe they can accomplish.

The soccer field is an extension of his classroom. As the boys' and girls' soccer coach, Coach Fonehouse shows the same time and dedication to his players and staff that he does in the classroom. Coaching is a key part of his contribution to the school. He works with boys and girls of all grade levels and abilities.

He is creating a lasting legacy of academic and athletic achievement here at VBHS.



Performing Arts Department Happenings

The VBHS Performing Arts Department has had an exciting and busy fall semester. On October 14th, the VBHS Band hosted the 42nd Annual Crown Jewel Marching Festival. On October 28th, the Fighting Indians Band participated in the Florida Bandmasters Association District Marching Band Music Performance Assessment and earned its 43rd consecutive superior rating. On Friday November 3rd the band held the first annual VBHS Band Alumni night at the final regular season home football game. Over 80 alumni from the years 1970 to 2023 attended this event which included a catered dinner and performing with the current band in the stands and at halftime. The VBHS Symphonic and Jazz Bands presented their fall concert on November 9th.

The VBHS Orchestras have had an exciting first semester. In October, there was a thrilling Halloween Concert that opened up the new season for the Performing Arts Department. In November, the Annual Concerto Competition was hosted. Any VBHS Performing Arts student was eligible to participate. The winner of the competition will be the featured soloist in our Spring Symphony Concert. This year's winner was saxophonist Merrick Figueroa. In addition to playing the saxophone with the VBHS Band, Merrick plays bass with the orchestra. Violist Isabella Eastwood was chosen to participate in the 2024 Honors All State Orchestra in January at the All State Conference in Tampa, FL. Top students in schools all over Florida are chosen to represent their school in this incredible opportunity.

Our Drama Department hosted the District 15 Thespian One Act Festival on November 17th and 18th. Our own Thespian Troupe earned the following: All-Star Cast Member - Jessah Moore, Best Supporting Actor and Actress - Terrance Taylor and Beatrice Mantel. Our Technical Team of Zachary Walsh, Rygel Estillore, and Timothy Cicco were chosen as the best technical crew. The one act, #Censored, received straight superior ratings and was selected as a critic's choice to represent District 15 at the State Thespian Festival in Tampa in March.

The VBHS Chorus has been working hard preparing for their annual December community performances and Disney Candlelight. The choir was selected to perform at Epcot this December. Grace Gailliard has been selected for the Florida Vocal Association SSAA All State choir. She will be performing with the choir in January at the Florida Music Educators Association conference in Tampa.

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Notifications of Parents Regarding Out-Of-Field Teachers

Included in this memo is a list of teachers or long-term substitute teachers at Vero Beach High School and Freshman Learning Center who have been reported as teaching out-of-field as required by Section 1012.42 of Florida Statute. Those teaching out-of-field are qualified to teach; however, all or part of their teaching assignment is not covered by their current certification. Individuals teaching out-of-field are required to complete additional coursework or testing until the coverage/endorsement is added to their certificate. Should you have any questions about these requirements, please call the school or Adalia Medina-Graham, Certification Analyst (772)564-3116.

Teacher	Current Certification	Out-of-Field Assignment
Baines, Aquaria	NOT CERTIFIED	SCIENE 6-12, ASD ENDORSEMENT
Bell, Suzanna	ESE K-12, ESOL, ELEMENTARY ED	ENGLISH 6-12
Castillo, Danielle	ESE K-12, ESOL, ELEMNARTY ED	ASD ENDORSEMENT
Cisco, Anastasia	COMPUTER SCIENCE 6-12	MATH 6-12
Ellis, Maxy	DRAMA 6-12, ENGLISH 5-9, READING	ENGLISH 6-12, ESOL
Magelssen, Heather	ELEMENTARY ED	SCIENCE 6-12, ASD ENDORSEMENT
Pearson, Kayla	SOCIAL SCIENCE 6-12	SCIENCE 6-12
Rahal, Bryan	VARYING EXCEPTIONALITIES 6-12	ELEMENTARY ED
Robles Marken, Babette	GUEST EDUCATOR	SCIENCE 6-12
Teske, Addison	GUEST EDUCATOR	BUSINESS EDUCATION 6-12
Welsh, James	ESE K-12	SCIENCE 6-12
Adams, Carrie	ENGLISH 6-12, JOURNALISM 6-12	ESOL
Adams, Shayna	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Demsick, John-Peter	ENGLISH 6-12, HEALTH 6-12, PHYSICAL ED 6-12	ESOL
Jenkins, LaTrecia	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Monlouis, Sheaon	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Somers, Valery	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
White, Jennifer	ENGLISH 6-12, ESE K-12	ESOL

Aviso Para Los Padres Sobre Maestros “Fuera Del Area”

Incluido en este aviso se encuentra una lista de maestros o maestros sustitutos a largo plazo en la escuela Vero Beach High School and Freshman Learning Center quienes han sido reportados como “fuera de área” como se requiere en Sección 1012.42 de Estatuto de Florida. Esto significa que los maestros están calificados para enseñar y tienen su certificado sin embargo les hace falta completar algunos requerimientos que solo aplican a su asignado trabajo de enseñanza. Estos individuos que están enseñando “fuera de su área” requieren completar un curso adicional o tomar un examen para cumplir con los requerimientos. Si Ud. Tien preguntas sobre los requerimientos favor de hablar con la escuela o Adalia Medina-Graham, Analista de Certificación (772)564-3116

Masestro (a)	Certificación	Fuera de Área en
Baines, Aquaria	NOT CERTIFIED	SCIENE 6-12, ASD ENDORSEMENT
Bell, Suzanna	ESE K-12, ESOL, ELEMENTARY ED	ENGLISH 6-12
Castillo, Danielle	ESE K-12, ESOL, ELEMNARTY ED	ASD ENDORSEMENT
Cisco, Anastasia	COMPUTER SCIENCE 6-12	MATH 6-12
Ellis, Maxy	DRAMA 6-12, ENGLISH 5-9, READING	ENGLISH 6-12, ESOL
Magelssen, Heather	ELEMENTARY ED	SCIENCE 6-12, ASD ENDORSEMENT
Pearson, Kayla	SOCIAL SCIENCE 6-12	SCIENCE 6-12
Rahal, Bryan	VARYING EXCEPTIONALITIES 6-12	ELEMENTARY ED
Robles Marken, Babette	GUEST EDUCATOR	SCIENCE 6-12
Teske, Addison	GUEST EDUCATOR	BUSINESS EDUCATION 6-12
Welsh, James	ESE K-12	SCIENCE 6-12
Adams, Carrie	ENGLISH 6-12, JOURNALISM 6-12	ESOL
Adams, Shayna	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Demsick, John-Peter	ENGLISH 6-12, HEALTH 6-12, PHYSICAL ED 6-12	ESOL
Jenkins, LaTrecia	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Monlouis, Sheaon	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
Somers, Valery	ENGLISH 6-12	ESOL
White, Jennifer	ENGLISH 6-12, ESE K-12	ESOL



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Attendance Matters!

Chronic unexcused absences will negatively affect a student's progress in high school, keep them from eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, suspend privileges, and in fact the State of Florida may suspend their driver's license. In addition to all this, there is a new district wide attendance policy for secondary students (grades 6-12) who are "habitually truant" which is defined as; "10 unexcused absences in any one core course per semester". According to policy; for habitually truant students, the school attendance committee will meet at the end of each semester and may withhold credits for students who are habitually truant. Students are regularly reminded of this policy at school and encouraged to attend their classes, so that they do not lose credits towards graduation due to habitual truancy.

A2 Tutoring

A2 tutoring at the Main Campus and the FLC is to provide your student academic support in the core areas of English and Math. If your student is struggling in other areas, please contact the teacher.

Bus Transportation Available – Students must have a pass from the A2 Tutoring Teachers to ride the bus home and remain in the library until the bus shows up between 4:15pm- 4:30pm. Tutoring is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays at both campuses from 2-4pm.



90% Attendance, Tardy Policies, and Procedures

VBHS has a 90% Attendance Policy, which means students must attend 90% of their classes in order to participate in sports, extracurricular activities, clubs and/or privileges (parking, dances, Grad Bash, Prom, etc.). Students may participate in practices, rehearsals, etc. but may not participate, compete, or perform in athletic games, performances, and extracurricular events until they are in compliance with the 90% Attendance Policy.

Please note that for a tardy to be excused, a parent/guardian must physically sign the student in at the attendance desk or the student needs to provide a medical or court note for the time missed. NO phone calls to excuse a tardy. If a student has been called out of class by attendance to be able to leave campus, the student must sign out at the attendance desk and receive a pass to leave campus for the absence to be excused. To have a student called to leave campus, you must be on the contact list in Focus. There is also no early release for students after 1:22pm.

Important Upcoming SAT/ACT Testing Dates

ACT Test Dates (National)

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
February 10, 2024	January 5	January 19
April 13, 2024	March 8	March 22
June 8, 2024	May 3	May 17
July 13, 2024	June 7	June 21

SAT Test Dates (National)

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Deadline for Changes
March 9, 2024	February 23, 2024	Coming soon
May 6, 2024	April 19, 2024	Coming soon
June 3, 2024	May 17, 2024	Coming soon



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Palm Bay, FL 32905



Vero Beach High School Athletics

Boys Basketball

The Boys' Basketball program will be hosting our annual Holiday Hoopla Christmas tournament on 12/21-12/23/23. There will be 4 games each day, with the times being 3pm, 4:30pm, 6pm and 7:30pm. So, round up your family and friends and come on down to the Witt gym to catch some good basketball action and support your Fighting Indians Boys Varsity Basketball team before Christmas day. Vero Beach will play at 7:30pm on 12/21/23.

National Signing Day

Our National Signing Day was on November 8, 2023, for all high school sports with the exception of football. VBHS proudly had 5 student athletes from 3 different athletic programs sign scholarships. Congratulations to the following students:

- Beach Volleyball: Ava Lilliquist-Florida Gulf Coast University
- Softball: Dayna Patten-Lees-McRae College, Emma Youngblood- University of New Haven
- Lacrosse: Bryce Forrest-Florida Tech, Paige Medlin-Young Harris



Unified Bowling

Getting their state championship rings tonight are you Vero Beach Fighting Indians Unified teams.

The athletes are: Marquis Baskin, Lawrence Herbert, Marlon Herrera, Tirrell Baskin, Jamerious King, Persia Ferguson, Harmony Herman, Brianna Avelar, Mia Ross, Gabby Kofke, David Mendez, Jackson Rahal, and Wyatt Scruggs. Coaches Todd Wood and Stephen Byrd.

The flag football team defeated Chiles High School 26-25 for back to back state championships in Raymond James Stadium on April 22nd.

The girls track won the 4x400 in Jacksonville at UNF on May 17th for their 5th state championship in programs history.

Also, at UNF the Unified boys track team won their first and second state championship by winning the 4x100 and 4x400.

Unified Sports is a branch of the Special Olympics that includes students with and without disabilities.

Vero Beach now has ten state championships in Unified Sports.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND SIGN UP
FOR THE UPCOMING TESTING DATES

SAT TESTING DATES for 2023-2024

Aug 26, October 7, Nov. 4 and , Dec 2*

ACT TESTING DATES for 2023-2024

Sept 9, Oct 28, Dec 9*

*last testing date accepted for SF application

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Welcome to Our New Secondary CTE Teachers



VBHS Automotive Teacher: Ronald "Buck" Campbell

We would like to welcome Buck Campbell to VBHS as the new Automotive teacher. Buck is a graduate of Vero Beach High School, Class of 1998. He comes to us with many years on the Automotive field, to include 20 years of active-duty service in the US Marine Corps. During this time, he served as Automotive Maintenance Chief for 14 years, then recruiter and Safety Chief for 6 years. After his retirement from the USMC, Buck moved back to Vero Beach to be near his children Josie and Tucker. Since returning to Vero, he has worked in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Coordinator, specialist, and supervisor. This summer, he eagerly accepted the position to teach the Automotive Program after Kelly Vold retired. His experience in the military will greatly add to the knowledge he can impart on his students.



VBHS Business Entrepreneur Teacher: Addison Teske

My name is Addison Teske, and I am the new Business Entrepreneurship teacher at Vero Beach High School. I am also the head coordinator of Vero Bean, the Business Ownership course here at VBHS. I have had the passion for being a teacher since I was in grade school and have loved every minute of it thus far. I graduated from the University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in hospitality management, concentrating specifically in Meeting & Event Planning. I was a part of the Delta Mu. Tri Delta chapter, involved in many leadership and philanthropy activities throughout my time spent as UA. After graduating, I spent my time working for a local marketing agency. After the classroom, I am the Assistant Cheerleading coach for the Vero Varsity Cheerleading team at VBHS. and I also enjoy spending time with my family, dogs, and friends. I enjoy passing time on the boat, shopping and planning private events in Vero Beach. I look forward to seeing what this upcoming year has to offer. Roll Tide!

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Vero Beach High School Athletics

Bowling

- The Girls Bowling team finished the season with a record of 13-3 and placed 4th in the district championship.
- Junior Angeli Atayde finished with a 166 average, freshman Katie Bender finished with a 135, and senior Skylar Cade finished with a 122 average to lead the team.
- The Boys Bowling team finished the season with a record of 9-7 and placed 5th in the district championship.
- Junior Tyler Rilling finished with a 179 average, junior Asher Oliver finished with a 176 average to lead the team, and sophomore Shayne Bender finished with a 172 average to lead the team.

Cross Country

- Boys and Girls Cross Country had an amazing season with a trip to State Cross Country Championships in Tallahassee.
- Girls team was led by Anna Cobb. Gracie Fleming, Sindy Monado, and Aubrey Dunham also made huge impact
- Girls team placed 6th at Regionals and 26th at State.
- Boys team was led by Kenan Willard, Sage Morrow, and Evan Dunham.
- Boys team was the regional champion and district runner-up.
- Boys team placed 8th at State.

Football

- Finished the Season 9-3.
- Finished the season with a Top 10 State Ranking.
- Advanced to the State Playoffs
- Had a First Round Playoff win on the Road vs Heritage High School.

Girls Golf

- Qualified for State Championship, seeded #10
- Finished 8th place at States
- Dounia Bezzari led the team with scores of 77-78, Sophomore Darci Wagner 82-79, Senior Hailey Eisert 87-87, Senior Marissa Weaver and Junior Maggie Twardowski tied at 89-95.

Boys Golf

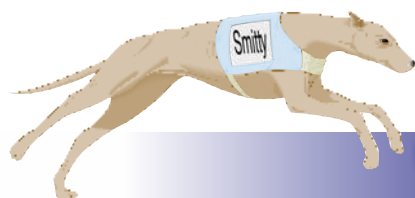
- Travelled to Arizona to play in the Ping Invitational at Grayhawk
- Finished regular season with a record of 7-3
- Finished 2nd in the district and finished 6th in the Regional
- Freshman Connor Sloss finished the season ranked #19 freshman in the state in all classes. Sophomore Blake Reed finished in 13th place at Regionals with a 73.

...continued on page 8

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Vero Beach High School Athletics

continued from page 7...

Swimming

- 17 girls, and 6 boys qualify for Districts
- Girls 200 free relay (Arriagada, Jelfimow, Kelly and Beirne) district champ runner up.
- 5 girls and 1 boy qualified for Regionals. Both the girls 200 Medley and 200 Free relays placed top 10. Individual regional qualifiers were Amy Arriagada 50 and 500 free, Aniela Kelly 200 IM, Sarah Beirne 50 free 100 breast, Kamila Branka 500 free and 100 breast. Henry Hazell 100 Fly and 100 back.
- Henry Hazell was a State Qualifier in the 100 Back and placed 17th at the State meet his highest finish of his 4 years.

Girls Volleyball

- Finished their season with a record of 15-8
- Finished 3rd place in their district.



2023-2024 School Calendar

12/19/2023 Modified Instructional Day
12/20/2023 Modified Instructional Day
12/20/2023 End of Quarter 2
12/21/2023-1/5/2024 Winter Break
1/8-9/2024 Teacher Workdays
1/10/2024 Students return from Winter Break
1/15/2024 Dr. M.L.King, Jr Day; No School
1/16/2024 Quarter 2 Report Cards
2/2/2024 No School for Students/PD for Teachers
2/15/2024 High School Conferences
2/16/2024 No School
2/19/2024 All Presidents Day; No School
3/19/2024 End of Quarter 3
3/25-29/2024 Spring Break
4/5/2024 Quarter 3 Report Cards
4/19/2024 No School
5/17/2024 Graduation
5/27/2024 Memorial Day, No School
5/29/2024 Modified Instructional Day
5/30/2024 Modified Instructional Day
5/31/2024 Modified Instructional Day/Last Day of School