

Smoke Signals

FEBRUARY
2023

ISSUE 5
VOLUME 17

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
Vanessa Gonzalez
Joy Griffin
Denny Hart
Juliette Thelusma
Meghan Teachout

www.vbhs.org

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'Smoke Signals'
Published Five Times Per Year
Apr, Jul, Sep, Dec, Feb, 22-23
School District of
Indian River County
1990 25th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960
Issue #5

A Message From The Chief

Dear VBHS Family,

We have had a very busy school year so far with a number of accomplishments and accolades to report. This month, we will host Parent/teacher conference night to provide parents a time to meet with teachers individually. In the coming weeks, we will begin individually meeting with students to create their class schedule for next school year. Winter sports seasons are finishing, spring sports are beginning, and performing arts are in their competitive season. There is always a whirlwind of activity on this campus, and I thank the parents, teachers, coaches, directors, and staff for making this such a wonderful place to teach and learn.

Our graduation rate continues to rise. Our percentage of graduates has risen each year for the past 5 years. This year's state report recently released showed improvement to 96.14%. VBHS Bands participated in the Florida Bandmasters Association Solo and Ensemble/Color Guard Music Performance Assessment. 77 superior medals were awarded to student musicians who performed solos or small ensembles. 9 Color Guard soloists received superior ratings and the Indoor Color Guard received a superior rating. Voices of Vero (chorus) competed at the Florida Vocal Association solo and ensemble festival and received a superior rating. Our VBHS Drama and Performing arts Department has prepared our school musical "Matilda" and will begin performances during February here in our James M. Sammons Auditorium. Winter sports seasons are finishing up in Vero tradition with strong seasons. Our Girls Weightlifting Team are the FHSAA Region 4 Champions for the 7th straight year. This month all our spring sports get underway, so stay tuned for more sports action.

We want our students to realize the tremendous importance of attending school daily, and the terribly negative impact that "non-attendance" has on a student's academic outcomes. Parents, we ask that you closely monitor your student's attendance. We find too often, that parents of truant students do not realize how much school their child is missing, until it is a big problem with irreparable repercussions. Please encourage your child to be in school and attend all their classes every day.

This month, we will host Parent/teacher conference to provide parents a time to meet with teachers individually. This month also, we will begin individually meeting with students to create their schedule for next school year. Invitations have been sent out to families for our VBHS Scholar (Top 10) Ceremony to be held Tuesday March 14th from 6-8PM in the PAC. With so much ahead of us to be accomplished, we can all look forward to a "breather" in the name of Spring Break, set for the week of March 20th. Also, Senior end of the year activities are posted on our website (and included in this newsletter) as a reminder for important events coming their way in the final third of this school year, like Grad Bash on March 31st and Prom on April 22nd.

We thank you all for your continued support as we forge ahead into the renewal of spring, embracing the work at hand with great school pride and spirit!

For the VBHS Family,

Shawn O'Keefe
Principal



Shawn O'Keefe

DO YOU'VE GOT TALENT?
*** AUDITION ***
For the TALENT SHOW:
 Pick up application and details **TODAY**
 from Mrs. Kouns in Admin. Bldg.
Talent Show is
Friday, March 10th
@7:00 pm in the VBHS PAC.
BRING YOUR TALENT!!
 SING COMEDY
 DANCE MUCICIAN COOL SKITS
 GROUP ACTS

TALENT SHOW
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
Friday, March 10th
7:00 PM in the VBHS PAC
All tickets ONLY \$5.00 ea.
 All proceeds benefit the
Chad Kouns Memorial Scholarship Fund!

Important Upcoming SAT/ACT Testing Dates

SAT: www.collegeboard.org

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Deadline for Late Registration (Late Fee), Changes, and Regular Cancellation	Expected Score Release
Mar 11, 2023	Feb 10, 2023	Feb 28, 2023	Mar 24, 2023
May 6, 2023	Apr 7, 2023	Apr 25, 2023	May 19, 2023
June 3, 2023	May 4, 2023	May 23, 2023	June 16, 2023

The SAT test does require the student to sign up on their own, pay the testing fee, and have a printed test ticket along with a valid photo id to enter the testing location on Saturday.

ACT: www.act.org

Test Date ⁺	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline (Late Fee)	Expected Score Release
Feb 11, 2023	Jan 6, 2023	Jan 20, 2023	Feb 21, 2023
Apr 15, 2023	Mar 10, 2023	Mar 24, 2023	Apr 25, 2023
June 10, 2023	May 5, 2023	May 19, 2023	June 20, 2023
July 15, 2023*	June 16, 2023	June 23, 2023	July 25, 2023

The ACT test does require the student to sign up on their own, pay the testing fee, and have a printed test ticket along with a valid photo id to enter the testing location on Saturday.

Dual Enrollment

Please submit the following information:

- Your full name
- Your phone number
- The classes you are taking with the professor's name and class id.
- Each class should be on a separate line
- Do not send me a picture from the bookstore.

Send your information to:

- Laura.Attwood@indianriverschools.org

If you need IRSC books for your classes, do not wait until the trial period is over to submit your order.

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Senior Information

All Seniors need to check their Obligations in Guidance and Media Center because we do hold Diploma's and Transcripts!

As your high school career winds down, your next adventure awaits you. Wouldn't it be nice to have a little extra financial support when you begin your college career? The VBHS Local Scholarship Program opens today. All applications are located on the Guidance Canvas page. You just need to click on the scholarship button.

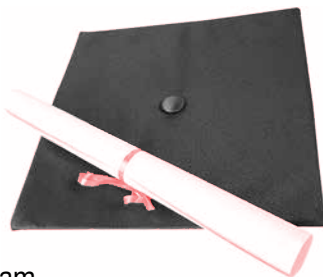
You must download and print out each application. It is your responsibility to assemble all the requested documents and then mail them prior to the application deadline.

Most applications require a counselor report, you must report to guidance and complete the request form and attach your resume. Please request these ASAP and give your counselor at least 1 week to complete your request.

Counselors will be available to help you get organized and complete your applications. You can book an appointment on conference night, using the link below. <https://calendly.com/vbhspath/pathadvisormeeing>

If you have any questions, please reach out to your counselor or to Mrs. Wood.

- 3/14/23-VBHS Scholar Ceremony-6pm in the PAC
- 3/31/23-Grad Bash-Universal Studios
- 4/10/23-Order AP, Honors Regalia in Guidance
- 4/22/23-Prom-8-11pm at the IG Center
- 4/25/23-Scholarship Night-6-8pm in the PAC
- 5/1-5/12/23-AP Exams
- 5/15-5/19/23-Senior week/Senior Catch Up Week
- 5/12/23-Senior Celebration-in the courtyard
- 5/16-5/18/23-Graduation practice at FLC from 8-9:30am
- 5/20/23-Graduation- 8am in the Citrus Bowl



SCOIR

SCOIR is a college and career exploration platform focused on finding the right fit for you. Visit college campuses virtually, compare college costs, acceptance rates, schedule virtual appointments with college representatives and build a resume. Students can login and invite parents to join them on the college and career journey. Visit www.scoir.com.

Scholarships

Local Scholarships are now available on CANVAS. Scholarship Spotlights and directions are being emailed daily to students sdirc.org emails as well as their personal and parent emails if they are listed in FOCUS. Most scholarships require a counselor report that can be requested in guidance. Students should provide at least 1-2 weeks for the counselor reports to be completed. Scholarships must be postmarked prior to the due date. Counselors will be available on conference night to assist students in completing their applications.

2022-2023 School Calendar

- 2/14/2023 High School Conferences
- 2/17/2023 No School
- 2/20/2023 All Presidents Day; No School
- 3/1/2023 End of Quarter 3
- 3/20-24/2023 Spring Break
- 4/7/2023 No School
- 4/22/23 Prom at the IG Center
- 5/20/2023 Graduation
- 5/29/2023 Memorial Day, No School
- 5/31/2023 Last Day of School for Students; End of Quarter 4

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.

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Performing Arts Department

The VBHS Performing Arts Department has begun a very busy semester of performances. Our Jazz Bands presented a concert in collaboration with the Oslo and Gifford Middle Jazz Bands on February 2nd. All three jazz bands will be participating in the Florida Bandmasters Association District Jazz Music Performance Assessment on February 8th at Centennial High School. The VBHS Concert Bands will be performing in and hosting the Florida Bandmasters Association District 13 Concert Band Music Performance Assessment on March 2nd and 3rd.

The VBHS Orchestra will be performing for the Florida Orchestra Association District 13 Music Performance Assessment in March. Additionally, our VBHS Choirs will be participating in the Florida Vocal Association District 13 Music Performance Assessment.

Our entire department will be collaborating with the production of our school wide musical, Matilda. The show runs February 17th and 18th at 7:00 p.m. and February 19th at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are on sale at the PAC Box Office. Please visit www.verobeachperformingarts.com for ticket information.

Science Fair

On January 31, 2023, awards were given out for the 31st annual Indian River Regional Science Fair. All VBHS students who participated walked home with an award!

Jaya Vernese & Ella Kilman conducted a study on the concentration of microplastics in local waterways, and they were earned the Stockholm Junior Water Prize as well as 1st place in the Earth & Environmental Science category.

Kimberly Ung-Davy conducted a study on the impact of Covid quarantine on various teen age groups. She was awarded the 1st place prize in the Behavioral & Social Sciences category.

Web Webster conducted an experiment on the impact of microplastics on seagrass root strength and was awarded an \$80,000 Florida Institute of Technology scholarship, Harbor Branch Award, and the 1st place spot in the Plant Sciences category.

Elizabeth De Schouwer was awarded the Office of Naval Research Award, the first place prize in the cellular/molecular biology & biochemistry category.

Kimberly, Web, and Elizabeth will all go on to compete at the Florida State Science & Engineering Fair in April, AND Elizabeth was awarded the prestigious honor of attending the Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair to be held in Dallas this May.

Congrats to all of the students who participated!



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40 Indian River County Students from the Class of 2022
Received \$664,730 in College Scholarships



IF YOU'D LIKE OUR HELP WITH COLLEGE FIRST STEPS TO QUALIFY*

- Unweighted GPA of 3.0 or Better
- SAT Scores of 1110 to 1330 or Better
- ACT Scores 22 to 29 or Better

*Standards for Class of 2022 may change for Class of 2023

MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND SIGN UP FOR THE UPCOMING TESTING DATES

SAT TESTING DATES for 2022-2023

Aug 27, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3*

ACT TESTING DATES for 2022-2023

Sep 10, Oct 22, Dec 10*

*last testing date accepted for SF application

Scholarship Applications Available Online **Beginning November 1, 2022 @ www.sfindianriver.org • Absolute Deadline January 31, 2023**

P.O. Box 1820 • Vero Beach, FL 32961 • For more info call **772-569-9869** or visit our website www.sfindianriver.org

TOP TEN

Top Ten Seniors

Congratulations to our Class of 2023 top ten by weighted GPA in alphabetical order: Mary Amos, Caysen Campbell, Elizabeth DeSchouwer, Madison Gravelee, Zachary Hessler, Alexander Johnson, Edward Johnson, Kara Malone, Anthony Marzouk, Camden Elwell (Salutatorian), and Katherine Dalton (Valedictorian).



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.

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.

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Vero Beach High School

Winter Athletics

Boys and Girls Soccer

At the start of the season both the Girls' and Boys' Soccer teams prepared to play a very tough schedule. The teams worked, prepared, and overcame obstacles all season in order to compete and participate in the sport they love. Both programs had successful seasons, and both lost in the district semi-finals.

Boys Basketball

The Boys Basketball team ended with a tough 1-pt loss to Treasure Coast High School in the first round of the District Tournament. The Indians finished the season with 7 wins. The team was led by Senior Derrick Davey who averaged 15.2 points per game. Junior Jaylen Shelly was second on the team in scoring with 11.8 points per game.

Girls Basketball

Tay Dawson leads all Lady Indian scorers averaging 21 points 9 rebounds and 5 assists per game. Ariyah Brown has averaged 16 points and 8 rebounds per game and Jaida Civil has 12 points 5 rebounds 8 assists and 5 steals per game. The Lady Indians knocked out Centennial High School 65-24 and will now travel to Dr. Phillips in Orlando for a regional playoff game.

Boys Wrestling

The 2022-23 Wrestling Team had seen its largest turnout to date. A total of 48 wrestlers joined this year's program. The Varsity Wrestlers have had a stellar season finishing top 3 in each tournament they have participated in and Team Champions of the last 3 tournaments they have entered in. The Fighting Indians Wrestlers are currently unbeaten in Dual Meets this year as well.

Currently five wrestlers are in the top 20 of the State in 3a. Kevin Benjamin 138lbs, David Benjamin 160lbs, Cooper Patton 170 lbs. , Johnathan Roberts 195 lbs and JaQuone Jean 220 lbs.

The Fighting Indians Wrestlers have two Dual Meets and one Tournament left to the regular season before heading into the District Tournament being held at Ft Pierce Centennial HS.

Girls Weightlifting

The Vero Beach Girls Weightlifting Team won the 7th straight District and Regional Championships. During these two meets 10 school records were broken. There will be 12 girls from the team going to compete in FHSAA Girl's Weightlifting State Meet on February 18th to defend their State Championship from last year.

continued...

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Girls Wrestling

Freshman Jayla Benjamin ended her season with a winning record 19-8. Sophomore Brenda Gomez ended her season with a record of 5-8. Senior Penelope Ortiz participated in a few tournaments. Sophomore Shyonte Stinson with a record of 17-9, 4th place in Districts, advanced to Regionals. Sophomore Mya Wallace placed 3rd at Districts and advanced to Regionals. Sophomore Harmony Weigand ended her season with a record of 10-7. All girls had an incredible year, with two returning from last year.

Parent Survey

February 27th-March 17th is our Parent Survey window. Please look for the link and QR code on our website and parent Focus account.

Scholars Ceremony

VBHS will be hosting our annual "Pride of the Tribe" Scholar Ceremony (Top 10 Percent), Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 6pm in the PAC! Honorees should have received their invitations. Seniors, be sure to submit your required/additional submissions ASAP! If there are any questions regarding donations, participation, or extra forms, please contact Ms. Powell at 772-564-5483 or tara.powell@indianriverschools.org.

February Is Black History Month

VBHS celebrated the contributions that African Americans have made to our history. Each day we highlighted an important day in Black History, or we had an inspirational quote from a famous African American. The A2 Student Council is sponsoring a Celebration of Black History Month on Feb. 22nd at 6pm in the PAC Center. All are welcome to come.



Environmental Science

Ms. Pybus' 9th grade Environmental Science class is learning about managing protected lands by creating their own National Parks.



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