



August 10, 2026

Dear Blue Devil Community,

As of today, we have a few weeks until the 2026-2027 school year! The High School team is eagerly anticipating the return to school and we hope this letter will provide answers to the questions that we've been hearing this summer.

We believe things like students' attitude and integrity will shape their lives as much as things like grades. Our philosophy starts with the idea that all types of learning and growth are based on authentic relationships and we are confident that students can grow and learn best when they are engaged, valued, and encouraged.

One of the things that we are planning to put some extra focus on this year will be on the ways we will help our students grow their reading and writing skills. We believe that this focus on literacy will help them in every subject. Other things at LHS will remain consistent, like our cell phone policy. Once again students will not be allowed to use phones between 8:00am and 2:50pm. There is a lot of evidence that students who have their cell phones during the school day have lower learning outcomes, higher anxiety, and more peer conflicts. Law enforcement officials say that limiting student access to cell phones in an emergency helps keep dispatch centers from becoming overwhelmed and makes sure first responders have clear lines of communication. [Here's the policy](#) which you can also find in the paper copy of the Student Handbook that we will give to every student when they pick up their schedules and Chromebooks. If you ever need to get a message to your student, you may call the office and we'll get them the message (just like when we were all in high school!).

I know that August brings many questions about programs, events, and other things happening at the high school. Here are some of the things we get the most questions about:

Calendar:

Follow this [link for the High School calendar](#). Please note that we update this calendar as events and information changes.

The first day of school is August 24 and as always, normal school days will have 66 minute classes between 8:00 - 2:50.

Graduation Commencement for the class of 2027 is scheduled for the evening of **May 28** at LHS!

Resource Pickup:

Over the past few years, we have gotten some good feedback about making sure we offer flexible times for students to pick up materials, class schedules, and walk through the halls. Like last year, we are happy to distribute student Chromebooks and class schedules the week before school starts. Here's a schedule when students may come in to pick these up:

Tuesday August 18, from 10am - 2pm
Wednesday August 19, from 3pm - 7pm
Thursday August 20 from 8am - 12pm

Attendance:

There is nothing that makes a bigger impact on student success than being present in school, on time and ready to learn! Thank you for partnering with us to help prepare kids to have the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to find success in the workforce! Each trimester, students are allowed 8 absences per class. Please keep in mind that absences outlined as exemptable in School Board policy are as follows:

Illness with doctor's note; Death of a relative; School business; Required court attendance; Bonafide religious holiday

If a student misses school due to the above reasons, and provides official written documentation in support (ie, note from Doctor's office), the absence will be considered exempt from the policy.

Every 3 tardies in a single class equates to an additional absence in that class.

Students who are more than 10 minutes tardy and those who sign out with more than 10 minutes remaining will be marked absent for the class.

Students who violate the attendance policy without the documentation above must pass the course exam to earn credit or not violate the attendance policy in the next trimester.

Counseling Office:

Students will receive access to their class schedules around the end of this week. If students have individual questions about courses, schedules, planning for college, the workforce or the military, they should contact our High School counselor, Melissa Karsen at mkarsen@lawtoncs.org.

The counseling office is also an important resource in the support of students' mental health needs during the school year.

This fall, representatives from various colleges and military branches will be available for meetings with students. Once the school year starts, watch the daily announcements to see which visits are upcoming and how to sign up for these visits.

VB Tech:

Van Buren Tech programs begin on August 25. Follow this [link to the Van Buren Tech Center's website](#).

On the first day of school only, 12th grade students who are signed up for programs at VB Tech do not need to attend LHS until 11:30am, in time for their Achievement period. If they do come in the morning, they will be assigned to stay in the Library.

11th graders who attend VB Tech will be released from LHS at 11:30 and may sign out (we'll need to hear from you that you're okay with them signing out).

Dual Enrollment:

Many Juniors and Seniors at LHS start taking college courses by dual enrolling at KVCC! [However, there are many things to consider when making this decision](#). Although many fall semester courses at KVCC are full, if your student is interested in Dual Enrollment there is still time to enroll in the Winter Semester. For more information, including limitations about class options, contact Mrs. Karsen in the counseling office. Students

already signed up for Dual Enrollment courses should confirm their college course schedule through their KVCC account login and plan accordingly. KVCC's fall semester begins the week of September 7.

Athletics & Activities:

We are eagerly anticipating a great fall season for our athletes! In order to participate, athletes MUST have a current physical on file in our office.

If you have any questions, please contact the Athletic Director Chris Richter at crichter@lawtoncs.org or send a contact email to the head coach from the list below.

Sport	Coach	Email address
Cross Country	Kris Bullock	kbullock@lawtoncs.org
Football	AJ High	ahigh@lawtoncs.org
Boys Soccer	Steve Shannon	shannon.steven.p@gmail.com
Sideline Cheer	Marissa Williams	mwilliams@lawtoncs.org
Girls Volleyball	Kristin Burk	kristin.burk@ppps.org

Students who plan to participate in the Marching Band should make sure they are in contact with director Makayla Klein (mklein@lawtoncs.org).

Whether athletics, the arts or other school or community activities, please encourage your students to become involved in extracurricular activities. [Research shows that students who are involved in activities find more success in other parts of their lives too!](#)

Information about clubs will appear in the daily announcements once the school year begins.

School Supplies:

If there are any specific supplies necessary for a class, teachers will communicate this with students the first week of school. Generally, students should have a folder for each class, writing materials and a way to keep track of assignments (let me know if you need us to provide these supplies for your student). We do not allow students to bring backpacks to class, so I encourage you to talk with your student about ways they can keep their school supplies and assignments organized.

Although each year brings changes, what stays the same at LHS is our commitment to supporting all of our students. Whether they are preparing for college, the military or the workforce, we look forward to working with you to help your students grow and succeed!

Go Blue Devils!

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