

SEPTEMBER  
2023

# BUENA VISTA MIDDLE SCHOOL



## **A Message from Principal Emilsson**

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Greetings and Salutations BVMS Community!

On behalf of the staff at BVMS, let me say “WELCOME BACK!!” We are excited to start another school year especially after the great progress that we made last year. Buena Vista Middle School had a very successful year!

Academically, the school reduced the number of “F’s” from 382 in 2021-22 to 259 last year in 2022-23. That is a reduction of 32%! In addition, the number of students who received at least one failing grade dropped from 82 students to 60...a reduction of 27%!

Attendance improved as well. Chronically absent students (those with 17 or more absences) dropped from 54 to 39 students, and students with less than 10 absences rose from 46% to 54%. We had more kids in their seats last year experiencing more success academically...and it shows.

The students showed their skills by beating the State average in 6/7 tests on the Colorado Measure of Academic Success tests (CMAS). We still have a long way to go, but we are very proud to see our students achieving at high levels. We are still waiting to see more data from the State, but the initial results that were reported are very encouraging. Those numbers reflect achievement, and while achievement is valued, it is the growth scores that we are really excited about. We anticipate those growth scores to be high as well. We hope to have the student’s individual results available by the time Parent-Student Presentations happen in mid-October.

BVMS is committed to helping all students experience success and feel pride in their accomplishments. We believe that students feel valued when they are challenged academically and held accountable for their learning. We believe that all students can grow academically by putting forth an effort. The staff at BVMS are the most dedicated and caring group of professionals that I have had the pleasure of working with in my 25 years in education. They are here to help the students reach their goals. Students...you are in good hands. Put forth the effort and you will reap the rewards. Let’s have a great school year everyone!

John Emilsson, Principal

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS\*

**Save the date for upcoming events! The sports calendar link is at the bottom.**

DATE	EVENT
August 30	Back to School Night 6:00—8:00pm
September 1	Card Club starts after school—Mr. Bever's Class
September 4	Labor Day Holiday
September 15	Fall Classic Fishing Tournament—Town Lake (McPhelemy Park)
September 20	RISE Olympics Fall Edition (school assembly)
September 22	No Students—Staff Professional Day
October 9, 10 or 11	6th Grade Star Party (see details on the following page)
October 13	End of First Quarter
October 18	6th Grade Science/Challenger Field Trip
October 20	No Students—Staff Professional Day
October 23	No Students or Staff—Staff Exchange Day
Nov 20-24	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 18-Jan 2	Winter Break
*Detailed sports calendar is available online: <a href="http://www.tripeaksleague.org">www.tripeaksleague.org</a>	



**STUDENTS!** Bring your family to meet your teachers and tour your classrooms! Meet in the Red Gym at 5:45pm to meet the Principals of BVMS and BVHS!

**Wednesday, August 30 from 5:45-8pm**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Star Party

**Who:** 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Students, Parents, and Teachers

**What:** A night of astronomical observation

**When:** This depends on the weather and the condition of the sky for viewing stars. We will go at 7:30 pm on the first available opportunity from the options below. The night will end at 9:00 pm.

- Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>
- Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>

**Where:** The Rodeo Grounds



**What to bring:** Your parents, Star Finders, Devices with Starfinding Apps, Telescopes, Binoculars, Astronomy Treats (Moon Cookies etc.)

*Students attending the star party can receive extra credit!*

## Homework Help

**What:** A great chance to have a quiet place to do your homework, get caught up on missing assignments, and get extra help.

**When:** Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

**Where:** Mrs. Hankins Room (Monday) Mr. Hogan's Room (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday)

**Why:** Because it just might be your ticket to school success!



# INFINITE CAMPUS

If you haven't familiarized yourself with Infinite Campus yet, you might be missing a lot! This is the web-based program that staff and teachers use to track nearly everything in the school.

You can access daily announcements, student grades, attendance, lunch account balances (including adding funds), and more. Nearly everything you need to know is right at your fingertips!

Not only can you get this information from the Infinite Campus website (link at the bottom of the page), there's also a convenient app you can get on your phone. You do not need to remember to get on a website to check grades—they will come to you!



## CAMPUS PARENT APP

- Find it on the App Store or Google Play by searching for Campus Parent.
- Use the same log-in you use for the web program. If you do not have log-in information yet, please email the school to request more information.
- Once logged in, you will receive real-time notifications when grades and attendance are posted on the system.
- If your student has a mobile phone, have them get the **Campus Student** app with notifications. That way, they will know what you know!



To download Campus Parent mobile app, visit the App Store or Google Play and search Campus Parent or click on the direct link below.



USER TIP: You will need to click on the screen notifications for more details. For example, if a student is not INCLASS for any reason (field trip, nurse's office, special event, meeting, etc.), you might get a notification they are absent. This does not necessarily mean they are not at school. If you have notified the school of an absence, please wait until the end of the school day to allow for staff to get excused absences entered.

Infinite Campus website:

[https://cocloud1.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/buena\\_vista.jsp](https://cocloud1.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/buena_vista.jsp)

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# SCHOOL POLICY HIGHLIGHTS & REMINDERS

## ATTENDANCE

We had 39 students who were considered "Habitually or Chronically Truant." That's 16% of the student population of the middle school. We want that number to be even less. Habitually truant students miss 17 or more days of school in a year...which is 10% of the school year. Those can be excused or unexcused absences. When your student gets to 17 days it doesn't matter anymore. An absence is an absence. The school will continue to notify and communicate with families frequently this year to make sure everyone is aware with how many days their student has missed. There is a proven correlation between attendance and academic success. We made good gains last year, yet we can do better.

## GRADES

We will continue our focus on grades and eliminating "F's." This year all classes will set up their grading to reflect the following: 80% Mastery and 20% Work Habits. Work Habits are defined in our school's Work Habit Rubric which is a combination of Effort, Participation, Responsibility, and Work Completion.

This year, each teacher will assign points weekly for students' Work Habits. Those points will be weighted as 20% of a student's overall grade. Excused absences will not count against the student. Not all excused absences are excused absences! For example, Family vacation, hunting, and illness with no documentation are not excused. Medical documented absences (Excused Medical), Court, Office Conferences, School Activities, Homebound, Bereavement (up to 3 days), and other are ex-

cused. Additionally, just because a student is in their seat might not mean they earn a point that day.

Afterall, Work Habits aren't just about showing up...one needs to demonstrate the other indicators as well...like engagement! Showing up and working hard matters, and we hope bringing consistency with work habits grading will help to convey this message to our students.

## ELIGIBILITY

Once again this year, we will be running weekly eligibility checks for all students. Students will need to make sure they don't have any F's in their classes to stay eligible to participate or attend extra-curricular activities including sports but also school dances, field trips, movie nights, and other "fun" activities designed to promote our school culture. Parents and Guardians will receive a notice when their student finds themselves on the ineligible list. We have many resources to help students stay off the list including Homework Help Tuesday-Thursday from 3:30-5:00. Let's work together to eliminate F's and have all students experience success this school year.

## SCHEDULE

Our schedule has changed this year. We are eliminating the Tuesday and Wednesday block days, and going with just the 8-period day every day with a short Advisory after lunch. Ninety-minute classes have some advantages, but they also have a number of disadvantages. Having everyday contact with students for 45 minutes each day

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will eliminate a lot of “down time” for students and will serve to maximize instructional time.

## **YOUR VOICE/COMMUNICATION**

This year, the middle school is making a conscious effort to give students and their families more of a voice in the school. “Lunch with Fearless Leader” will be a new addition to the school culture this year. Each month, students can sign up to have a pizza lunch with the principal. The lunch is intended for students to share with the principal their views on how things are working in the school, things they would like to see change, and anything else they feel we should know. You don’t have to be in student council to make sure your voice is heard!

Additionally, the school will be including a monthly parent survey on a variety of school related issues. We value your feedback and want to make sure that your voice is heard pertaining to a number of things that affect our school. Be sure to look for it in the newsletter.

## **LUNCHES**

The voters of Colorado have approved a measure to provide lunches for the students who do not qualify for Federal free lunches. Families who may qualify for the federal program are still encouraged to apply as it helps provide the school district with federal funding for lunches, and may help to reduce your costs in student and athletic fees.

Please visit our website at:

[www.bvschools.org](http://www.bvschools.org) > Administration > Food Service for more information

## **DEPARTMENT NIGHTS**

Look for upcoming “Department Nights” where students will showcase their hard work and their learning. The teachers will be announcing these as they get closer. These Department nights will be nights where parents can come to the school and see their student’s learning on display. Similar to the 7th grade Cultural Fair, every department will have one night to showcase student learning. Keep an eye out for those nights.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Any student who fails two or more quarters of a core academic class (Language Arts, Science, Math, and/or Social Studies) will be required to attend summer school to ensure that key concepts were learned before advancing to the next grade level.

## **HOMEWORK HELP**

There is an additional day available for homework help this year. We are serious about being available to help your child succeed!

Monday: Hankins

Tuesday: Hogan

Wednesday: Hogan

Thursday: Hogan

Classrooms are open and teachers are available from 3:30 to 5pm. Be on time!

Other teachers can provide help before or after school by appointment.

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Welcome to a new school year!

# GOOD TO KNOWS!

Here are some “Good to Knows” for our BVMS students and their families. Whether you are a returning student/family or brand new to our school, please take the time to read this...you will undoubtedly find it helpful!

- ♦ If your student will be absent, please email [bvms@bvconnect.org](mailto:bvms@bvconnect.org) or call as soon as possible. When we haven't heard about a student's absence, there will be a reminder text and email sent out late morning. Occasionally, we miss it when a parent reports an absence ahead of time, so we would appreciate if you would just remind us!
- ♦ We email a monthly newsletter, which includes a lot of important information, like upcoming events, ongoing opportunities, lunch menus, teacher contact information and much more! We know you probably get many emails...please make sure to read the newsletter each month...you'll be glad you did!
- ♦ If your child rides the bus and you have questions about the route, times, locations, please contact the Transportation department at (719) 395-9040. You may also create an account on EZ Route:  
  
[www.ezrouting.com/bvco](http://www.ezrouting.com/bvco)
- ♦ ALERT!! Middle school pictures will take place in the morning of Wednesday, September 6th. A photo form will be sent home soon, AND there will also be an online order form this year. All students will have their pictures taken, even if not purchasing photos.
- ♦ The student handbook for BVMS can be found online at [bvschools.org](http://bvschools.org) > Our Schools > Buena Vista Middle School > Student Handbook.
- ♦ Students will have school tablets and chargers checked out to them to use during the school year. They are responsible for the care and feeding of their device, and must bring it to school fully charged every day. We encourage students to bring their chargers as well, in case they need them during school hours. Please take time to review the technology agreement that can be found on our district website.
- ♦ Students should memorize their lunch PIN to make purchases more quickly and easily. Families are encouraged to apply for Free/Reduced lunches if they feel they would qualify.
- ♦ A full list of school and district poli-

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cies can be found on the [bvschools.org](http://bvschools.org) website.

- ♦ All school sports are offered to our 7th and 8th graders. Cross country and wrestling is available to 6th graders. Students who wish to participate in sports must have an athletic packet completed and turned into the middle school office. Additional sports are offered to 6th grade students through BV Rec. The website for information about sports and activities offered to younger students:

<https://www.buenavistarec.com>

- ♦ School activities and opportunities...we have lots of things happening throughout the school year, from field trips to after school activities/clubs and special events. We LOVE to have students involved! It's really important that students listen to announcements and check the community bulletin board... AND a great reason to read the monthly newsletter as well! Parents—the daily announcements are on the Infinite Campus homepage. Another great reason to check the website or app regularly!
- ♦ Speaking of after school...students are released at 3:25 each day, and will either head out the south doors (through the athletic commons) to catch their bus home or exit the front of the school for pick up. Students who walk home may leave through either of those doors. Please note: Unless a student is staying after school because they are participating in a club/activity, heading to sports practice, or attending either homework help or academic

support, they must leave the building by 3:40. Students may pre-arrange with individual teachers for specialized after school help. Students may not be in the school building after school hours without direct teacher/staff supervision.

- ♦ If you have medical concerns or questions regarding your child, please contact our school nurse Krystal Harms at either 719-395-7063 or by email at [KrystalH@bvschools.org](mailto:KrystalH@bvschools.org).

## THE BELL SCHEDULE

Warning Bell	7:50
Period 1	7:55- 8:40
Period 2	8:45 - 9:30
Period 3	9:35 - 10:20
Period 4	10:25 - 11:10
First lunch	11:05
Lunch	11:10 - 11:40
Recess	11:40 – 11:50
Advisory	11:50 - 12:05
Period 5	12:10 - 12:55
Period 6	1:00 - 1:45
Period 7	1:50 - 2:35
Period 8	2:40 - 3:25

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## What is the Parent Leadership Team?

The Parent Leadership Team (PLT) for Buena Vista Middle School serves a similar purpose as a traditional PTO. However, the structure is not as formal as a PTO. The PLT is not a separate non-profit organization, and there are no board members or elections. Funds which are raised through this group are deposited directly to the school district, and the school administration approves any purchases.

During the school year, the PLT looks for volunteer opportunities to assist and thank school staff. The goal of monthly meetings is to promote conversations between parents and school staff, identify needs of the school, and plan fundraisers to enhance school and teacher activities. Additionally, they host meals and treats for teacher/staff appreciation throughout the year.

If you are interested in learning more, attending a meeting, or making a donation toward PLT activities, please contact Elizabeth Leon at [elizabethleon@hotmail.com](mailto:elizabethleon@hotmail.com). The first Parent Leadership Meeting of this school year will be in October. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend. You will need to arrive a little early if you have not been scanned into the Raptor security system visitors in the past year.

# SEPTEMBER FAMILY SURVEY

The Parent-Leadership Team that meets monthly with Principal Emilsson and other BVMS staff to discuss school events and fundraising, but the meetings also serve to give a voice to the BVMS families about happenings at the school. In the past two years since the relaunch of this helpful program, we've had very interesting discussions, and it has been great to get parent perspectives as we're thinking about classes and extra-curriculars.

For the past two years, these meetings have been held on a weekday morning at 8am. This month's family survey is about the Parent-Leadership team, and what would help your family to participate in the discussions.

Click on the link (or copy/paste) to let us know your thoughts!

<https://forms.gle/vQwaycqjgxBsJ3LS7>



# *Buena Vista School District*

## **District Accountability Committee (DAC)**

### **DAC MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

The District Accountability Committee (DAC), a subcommittee of the Board of Education, is a group of parents, community members, and BV School District staff that studies different school-related issues. The DAC looks at data, asks lots of questions, does research, and draws conclusions from the evidence that is found. Areas looked at include:

- *program evaluations,*
- *accountability*
- *teacher effectiveness,*
- *whatever the Board gives the DAC as its charge for the year.*

In short, we are an important voice that the School Board listens to which helps them to make informed strategic decisions.

The DAC meets in the District Administration Building from 6:30-8pm on the first or third Monday of each school month. If interested, please join us at our next meeting October 2 at 6:00 pm at the District Office, 113 N. Court St. If unable to attend, please contact the district office at 719-395-7099 or email to [lyates@bvschools.org](mailto:lyates@bvschools.org).

## **BV School Groups Seek Members**

Buena Vista is Strong, and its schools are an integral part of our community's strength.

You have an opportunity to help make them even better by joining BV PEAKS or DAC. Both are ways to connect to our district and use your influence to support the education of our kids.

**BV PEAKS** are key communicators. Comprised of parents, representative taxpayers, and community leaders, they meet quarterly to be accurately informed about district priority goals and actions. They take this information and communicate it to BV citizens so even more of our community know about our schools and their value.



**DAC** (The District Accountability Committee) is more of a working group and meets monthly. Required by Colorado, it is a subcommittee of the Board of Education consisting of parents, community members and district staff. The group studies different school-related issues and reports their findings to the Board in order for them to make more informed strategic decisions.

Both groups provide the opportunity to partner with the BV School District in order to create even better schools for our Strong community.

If you have questions or are interested in being part of BV PEAKS or DAC, please reach out to Superintendent Lisa Yates at [lyates@bvschools.org](mailto:lyates@bvschools.org) or [719-239-0435](tel:719-239-0435).

# September 2023

## DEMON CAFE LUNCH MENU MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1 MANDARIN ORANGE CHICKEN FRIED RICE POTSTICKERS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	2
3	4 	5 SLOPPY JOE SANDWICH POTATO WEDGES SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	6 CHICKEN FAJITA'S RICE/REFRIED BEANS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	7 CORN DOG ONION RINGS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	8 BBQ MEAT BALLS BAKED POTATO SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT ROLL	9
10 PHILLY STEAK SANDWICH CHIPS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	11	12 CHICKEN TENDERS MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT ROLL	13 BURRITO BOWL W/RICE/BEANS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	14 PIZZA 3 CHEESE LASAGNA W/FRENCH BREAD SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	15 HOT WINGS STEAK FRIES SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT ROLL	16
17 SPICY CHICKEN BITES STEAK FRIES SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT ROLL	18	19 MOZZ. BREAD STICKS PASTA W/MARINARA SAUCE SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	20 SOFT PRETZEL W/QUESO SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	21 CHICKEN FRY STEAK MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT ROLL	22 	23
24 PIZZA SALAD BAR FRUIT	25	26 HAMBURGER CHICKEN SANDWICH CHIPS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	27 SUPER NACHO'S RICE/REFRIED BEANS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	28 CHILI DOG ONION RINGS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	29 GENERAL TSO'S CHICKEN FRIED RICE POTSTICKERS SALAD BAR ASST. FRUIT	30

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER  
SKIM WHITE, 1% WHITE MILK OR 1% CHOCOLATE IS OFFERED WITH EVERY MEAL

