



DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL
“Celebrating 20 Years as an IB World School”

Dr. John J. Falino, Principal
Candace Reim, Assistant Principal

From the Principal...

I hope that this letter finds you well rested and looking forward to what promises to be another wonderful year at DFHS. We are eagerly anticipating our students' arrival in September and to officially welcoming our incoming freshmen to DFHS.

We are incredibly proud to share that this is our twentieth year of being authorized as an IB World School. DFHS was the first school in Westchester County to receive authorization and we continue to lead the way nationally as a model public IB school. DFHS is especially unique in that we are one of the only schools in NYS to be authorized in both the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) and Diploma Program (DP). As such, all students complete an IB Personal Project during their sophomore year and present their work at our Personal Project Expo each spring. The MYP Personal Project (PP) is the culminating experience of the IB MYP and draws upon the skills that our students develop in grades 6-10 to make a positive difference in a specific area of interest and need. The personal project will also serve as the basis for community service work that all sophomores will complete in 2018-19 as we aim to infuse service learning and civic engagement into all subject areas in grades 9-12.

In addition, all students at DFHS continue to successfully access the IB Diploma Program. Upon graduating, all students take at least two IB DP courses (Math and English), with students taking an average of three. Approximately 30% of the Class of 2019 is currently pursuing the full IB Diploma as well!

Our work within the IB MYP has ensured greater coordination with the IB DP and has in turn better prepared all of our students for success in grades 11-12. We are pleased to share that we once again sent a team to present on this topic at the IB World Conference in San Diego this summer. This is the fourth consecutive year that DFHS has been featured at this event.

Our focus on the "whole child" and our belief that we must have "something for everyone" continues to drive the academic and extra-curricular programs at the high school. We continue to create new clubs and electives that are aligned with the vision and mission of our school and the IB, and we strive to ensure that all students connect to our school both inside and outside of the classroom. A list of our clubs will be posted in early October. We hope that all of our students will join at least one of our many clubs.

Lastly, it is critical that our parents continue to remain involved and connected to the high school. High school presents a new set of challenges for all students so it is important that parents remain active. This will always be a main priority for all of us at DFHS. Given that, I will continue to stay connected to each of you in the following ways:

- **Email:** The administration will send emails to update our parents on school-wide events. Please let me know if you have a new email address that you would like to add to the distribution list.

- **Facebook:** Our school has an active Facebook page that is updated on a regular basis. The page is used to provide updates on important school news as well as to celebrate the accomplishments of our school community. It is not necessary to have a Facebook account in order to view the page. Simply visit the high school website and click on the Facebook link.
- **Principal's Blog (johnfalino.com):** Please be sure to visit johnfalino.com for articles on various topics in education as well as insight into the instructional programs at the high school.
- **Twitter:** You can follow me (@johnfalino1) or Ms. Reim (@careim2) for additional district updates as well as national trends in education.
- **HS Website:** The DFHS website has links to any (and all) of the important information that you need for the high school. The address is as follows: <http://www.dfsd.org/hs>
- **DF Television:** The district and building websites now have all district videos archived by building. Please be sure to check out some of our programming from this past year!

We are looking forward to another great year at the high school! As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

John J. Falino, Ed.D.
Principal

DFHS Receives Top Rankings!

U.S. News and World Report recently released the results of its annual "Best High Schools Rankings" and ranked Dobbs Ferry High School **#5 in Westchester County and #28 (out of 1,263) in New York State.** The annual rankings are based on proficiency in reading and mathematics, performance of economically disadvantaged

students, graduation rates, and college readiness (IB and AP). All data is pulled directly by *U.S. News* and rankings are set accordingly.

In addition, DFHS has been named an ***NYS Reward School*** for 2018. This is the fifth time in the past six years that we have earned this distinction! This top distinction was provided to the highest performing schools in the state that were without significant gaps in student achievement among subgroups, including ELL, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged. Graduation rate was also factored into this measure along with overall performance on NYS Regents exams. This is yet another recognition of which we should all be proud. It speaks to our continued commitment to creating a fully inclusive "IB for All" environment that focuses on preparing ***all*** students with the necessary skills for success beyond high school.

From the Assistant Principal...

On behalf of Student Support Services, I would like to welcome you back to school! The Student Support Services department includes all of the school counselors (Ms. Propersi, Mr. Palmer, and Ms. Silk) as well as the Dean of Students, Mr. Scott Patrillo. The alphabetical division for the counseling staff is as follows:

Grade	Propersi	Palmer	Silk
9	A-G	H-S	P-Z
10	A-G	H-O	P-Z
11	A-G	H-O	P-Z
12	A-G	H-O	P-Z

Please note that counselors are assigned to incoming 9th graders outside of their listed alphabetic caseload when they already work with sibling(s) who are current DFHS students.

The goal of our department is to support all of our students throughout high school as well as to ensure a safe and secure learning environment and school culture. We are pleased to announce that DFHS has been recognized as a "No Place For

Hate” school for the third year in a row. This recognition is a direct result of the work done with our students by the school counselors and dean of students in the areas of anti-bullying, positive school culture, and citizenship. A wonderful kick-off to our year of school events is always our MAC Field Day. This day celebrates the talents of all of our students through sportsmanship, cooperation, and consideration for all. The event is September 28th this year so be sure to touch base with your grade level advisor when you return to school.

The counseling staff, as well as Mr. Patrillo and I, are always available to meet with students and assist in any way that we can. We are looking forward to what will undoubtedly be another great year at DFHS. Please feel free to contact me at reimc@dfsd.org if you have any questions.

Important Dates

8/28 - 9th Grade Orientation (9-11) Commons
9/3 - Labor Day – School Closed
9/4 - First Day of School
9/10-9/11-Rosh Hashanah – School Closed
9/13 - Back to School Night – 6:30 p.m.
9/19 – Yom Kippur – School Closed
9/28 – MAC Field Day
10/9 – Columbus Day – School Closed

New Staff

Dobbs Ferry High School is pleased to welcome the following new staff this year:

Dana Molloy – Physics

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be *posted* to the Parent Portal on August 23rd. Our school counselors will be available during the last week of August to assist with any scheduling questions and/or final adjustments that students may have. Please be sure to fill out an official ADD/DROP form for any changes after the first day of school. Please do not request schedule changes due to teacher

preference. It is also best to schedule an appointment rather than drop in so that our counselors can prepare for your visit before you arrive.

Parent Portal and E-Gradebook

Student progress reports, report cards, and specific course grades can be viewed by logging into the Parent Portal on the district website. Please contact Diane Newell at 693-1500 x3060 if you need assistance.

Wednesday Early Dismissal Schedule

The district will continue with an early dismissal schedule on all Wednesdays so that staff members can meet for professional development. All high school students will be dismissed at 2:20. Please be sure to plan accordingly!

9th Grade Orientation

Incoming freshmen and students who are new to Dobbs Ferry High School are invited to attend our 9th Grade Orientation on **Tuesday, August 28th** from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in the HS Commons. Students will have the opportunity to meet some of their teachers, they will learn about life in the high school, and will sign-on to their individual Student Portal account. We are looking forward to welcoming all of our new students!

Back to School Night

All parents are encouraged to attend our annual Back to School Night on Thursday, September 13th. This will be an excellent opportunity to meet our teachers and to learn more about our academic programs. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the MS/HS Auditorium with a “Welcome” from the administration. Parents will then follow their child’s schedule and will attend 10-minute presentations given by each teacher.

The Dobbs Ferry High School Student Handbook

Our student handbook provides an overview of our school as well as specific information on the rules and procedures of our school. In an effort to conserve paper and to protect our environment, we have placed the Student Handbook on our high school webpage under the “Students” tab. Please contact the Principal’s office if you would like to request a hard copy of the document.

Code of Conduct Form

All students must sign and return the enclosed “Code of Conduct” form acknowledging that they have read and understood the expectations for student behavior that are outlined in the Student Handbook (HS website). ***The form must be returned to your child’s English teacher on the first day of school.***

What’s New at DFHS?

The administration and staff at DFHS are committed to expanding our instructional programs while making the best use of our allotted resources. As such, we are proud to share the following changes and updates for the upcoming year:

1) **IB World Conference:** DFHS had a team that presented at the annual IB World Conference in San Diego this summer! This is the fourth consecutive year that our school has been featured! The focus of the presentation was on the MYP Personal Project and promoting equity and access in the IB Diploma Program. The presentation was led by Dr. Falino, Ms. Halberg (IB DP Coordinator), Mr. Mussolini (MS Principal), and Ms. Cairo (DFHS teacher). A narrative about the presentation has been posted to Dr. Falino’s blog. Check it out!

- 2) **“Think Globally and Act Locally”:** Identifying areas of need in our local community and engaging in service activities that allow students to apply their learning will be a major focal point for all students at DFHS this year. In doing so, we will seek to expand the guiding principles of IB CAS (Community Activity Service) into all aspects of our school, and all sophomores will now complete a service project as a culminating MYP activity.
- 3) **Mindfulness—Social and Emotional Learning:** Students who are happy, healthy, and balanced are more prepared to learn and perform better academically. Our focus on “the whole child” will be enhanced with our continued work in the area of mindfulness. Teachers will continue to infuse mindfulness practices into their classrooms while receiving increased training on how to best meet the needs of all students.
- 4) **New Science Progression:** We are pleased to share that we will begin to phase in our new science progression in 2018-19. Our new progression will feature “physics for all” in grade ten, a new Nature of Science elective in grade twelve, IB Chemistry SL, an advanced science skills elective, and alignment with math in each grade so that ***all*** students in our school are better supported. Our new progression will also provide the opportunity for “IB for All” in science for our incoming freshmen (Class of 2022).
- 5) **IB Student of the Month Recognition:** Students are recognized each month by our faculty for exhibiting the qualities of the IB Learner Profile. This year, we will expand these recognitions to students who are making a difference in our local community. This will be part of our focus on service learning and our goal of “IB CAS for all.”
- 6) **Digital Portfolios:** Our incoming freshmen will be our second class to maintain a digital portfolio. This year, our teachers will use Google to support our digital portfolios so that there is greater compatibility with the other aspects of Google Drive that our students

engage with daily. In addition to allowing students to store their “best” work for college applications and beyond, digital portfolios provide students with an opportunity to “brand” themselves while establishing a positive digital footprint.

- 7) **Digital Citizenship Curriculum:** The entire DFHS staff will continue to emphasize the importance of digital citizenship and will work to incorporate these principles into all aspects of our existing curriculum in grades 9-12. A specific focus will be placed on safe and appropriate use as well as creating a positive and lasting digital footprint.
- 8) **Expanding the IB Diploma Program (DP):** We continue to explore new ways to expand our IB DP so that it is more flexible to the needs of all students. This includes increased opportunities for all students to succeed in IB DP courses as well as multiple pathways for students who wish to pursue a full IB Diploma. Over the past several years, we have expanded the IB DP by offering courses such as IB Music HL, IB Spanish Ab Initio, IB English SL, and IB Math HL. This year, we will offer IB Chemistry SL and have introduced a new progression in science that provides the possibility of an HL course in the coming years along with “IB for All” in science.
- 9) **New Co-Curricular Clubs:** Each year, we assess our existing co-curricular clubs while encouraging students to write proposals for new clubs based on student interest and need. In 2017-18, we added several new clubs, including Gender Equality, Television: Past and Present, D20, Robotics, Public Relations, and FBLA. This year, students will once again have an opportunity to write proposals in September so that all clubs can begin in early October.
- 10) **Differentiating Professional Development:** The DFHS teacher leaders continue to find new ways to differentiate learning for teachers and staff. Last year, our teachers participated in an EdCamp, conference style “menu-based” workshops, and a day of professional

development that was facilitated by our students! We are looking forward to continuing our work in this area this year during our early dismissal Wednesdays!



An Overview of the IB Diploma Program at Dobbs Ferry High School

Strong parental involvement, community support, and the academic philosophy of the school district are just some of the qualities that make Dobbs Ferry unique from other districts in New York State. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the district is our commitment to the IB Program and to developing a K-12 experience that prepares all students for success in IB courses. The IB program is internationally recognized for its academic excellence and highly regarded by the top colleges and universities of our nation for success in preparing students for college and beyond. IB courses promote a consistent application of critical thinking skills and encourage students to think globally and from various perspectives. A key feature of the curriculum focuses on teaching students to “learn how to learn, analyze, and reach thoughtful conclusions.”

Upon entering their junior year, all Dobbs Ferry students have the option to either enroll as a full IB Diploma student or in one or more of our many IB courses. The IB Program is differentiated in that it provides both Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL) options for all students based on their specific strengths and areas of interest.

While we are excited about the prospect of offering more SL and HL options, our primary

focus is on how to provide all students with learning experiences that will prepare them to succeed in these courses. It is most important that as many of our students benefit from the IB program as possible. This philosophy is rooted in the IB and our district mission of equity and access for all. Therefore, all of our SL and HL courses (excluding science) are offered over two years.

In addition to the points above, it is important to note the following about the IB Diploma Program at Dobbs Ferry High School:

- 100% of our students enroll in at least two IB DP courses before graduation. Regardless of whether the course is SL or HL, all students are being prepared with a rigorous curriculum that challenges them to apply their understanding of the content on a regular basis.
- 100% of our teachers have received IB training. This is critical as we continue to emphasize the importance of instilling the IB philosophy in all grade levels and as we work to implement the MYP at the middle and high school.
- We are continually working to increase the number of students who can both enroll and succeed in our SL and HL courses. This will be accomplished by not only increasing our offerings, but by working backward so that all students develop the skills in the earlier grades so that they are best prepared for success come junior year.
- One of the ways that IB differs from AP is that the assessments are varied, there is an internal component to the final grade that is scored by the teacher, and it is rooted in a philosophy that all students should have access to an academic program that will prepare them for success in college and/or in any endeavor that they choose to pursue.

- While nearly all of our students take advantage of at least two of our IB courses, approximately 30% (varies from year to year) pursue the full IB Diploma. We are pleased to share that the class of 2019 has 37 IB Diploma candidates. Admissions officers recognize IB Diploma students as being prepared to excel at the most competitive colleges and universities. In addition, the “common app” now requires that students indicate if they are pursuing a full IB Diploma.

Please refer to the DFHS IB Handbook if you have any questions. The handbook can be found on the high school website under the “Academics” tab. You may also learn more about the program by visiting the International Baccalaureate website.

Contact Information

Dial: 693-7645 (then extension)

High School Office

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Ext. 3048

Ms. Candace Reim, Assistant Principal
Ext. 3104

Ms. Kerri Kastanis, Secretary to Principal
Ext. 3048

Ms. Camille Schiavone, Secretary to Assistant
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Dean of Students

Mr. Scott Patrillo
Ext. 3027

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Nurse's Office

Ms. Cara DeLeon
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Attendance Office

Ms. Joanne Mattina
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Mrs. Michelle Propersi, Counselor
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Mr. William Palmer, Counselor
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