



DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL
"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.

As an IB World School, we are committed to preparing all students in grades 9-12 with the necessary skills to succeed in college, the workforce, and beyond. Our continued focus on the IB Learning Standards has helped to ensure that our students receive an education that promotes self-direction, adaptability, critical thinking, and international mindedness. In addition, we are now in our fifth year of the one-to-one Chromebook program and we continue to evolve in terms of how we use technology to enhance teaching and learning. This year, our 9th graders will be the first grade to maintain a digital portfolio and we have created a robust digital citizenship curriculum for all students in grades 9-12. Our one-to-one program has truly enhanced teaching and learning at the high school and fully supports both the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) and Diploma Program (DP).

I am also pleased that our school was authorized as an IB MYP school last year and all sophomores enrolled in a research course and completed an IB Personal Project for the first time in 2016-17. This "capstone" project is a culmination of the learning experiences that students have across the disciplines in grades 6-10 and leads to a

school-based MYP certificate at the conclusion of grade 10. In addition, all students at DFHS continue to 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 25% of the Class of 2018 is currently pursuing the full IB Diploma as well!

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 in-line 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.

- **The Digital Eagle:** Our student newspaper provides readers with the latest school news. The newspaper is maintained by the students in our journalism class. Please visit the following link:
www.dfhsnewspaper.com
- **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

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	T-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. We look to continue this work in the new school year and have many events planned that our students can get involved with.

Additionally, the counseling staff, as well as Mr. Patrillo and I, are always available to meet with students and assist in mediating any issues that may arise. We are looking forward to what will undoubtedly be another great year at DFHS. Please feel free to contact me at reimc@dfsdsd.org if you have any questions.

DFHS Receives Top Rankings!

The Washington Post recently released the results of its annual "High School Challenge" and ranked Dobbs Ferry High School **#4 in Westchester County and #18 in New York State**. We moved up eight spots since the 2016 rankings. In determining these rankings, *The Washington Post* measured "Equity and Excellence" (E&E) by looking at the number of IB or AP tests administered at each school, the number of graduates, and the percentage of students who passed at least one of these college-level exams during their high school career. The number of families who qualify for lunch subsidies was also factored into the rankings.

In addition, DFHS has been named an **NYS Reward School** for 2017-18. This is the fourth time in the past five years that we have earned this distinction! Only 185 schools (K-12) from 194 districts earned this top distinction and are recognized as the highest performing schools in the state 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.

Important Dates

8/29 - 9th Grade Orientation (9-11) Commons
9/4 - Labor Day – School Closed
9/5 - First Day of School
9/13 - Back to School Night – 6:45 p.m.
9/19 - High School Pictures
9/21-9/22 - Rosh Hashanah – School Closed
10/9 – Columbus Day – School Closed

New Staff

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

Stephanie Mills – Special Education/Math and Science

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be *posted* to the Parent Portal during the week of August 22nd. 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 29th** 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 Wednesday, 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 6:45 p.m. in the HS Commons 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 readers with 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 once again presented at the annual IB World Conference in Orlando this summer! The focus of the presentation was on promoting equity and access in the IB Diploma Program and the work that is being done at DFHS to achieve this mission. The presentation has been posted to Dr. Falino’s Twitter page (@johnfalino1). Check it out!
- 2) **Middle Years Programme (MYP):** We are now officially an authorized IB MYP World School! In 2016-17, all of our sophomores enrolled in a research course and completed an IB Personal Project. In addition to further exposing all of our students to a rich curriculum that promotes international mindedness, the MYP further ensures greater access and overall success in the IB Diploma Program.
- 3) **MYP Personal Project:** This year, our sophomores will be the second cohort to complete the MYP Personal Project. To support in this endeavor, all students in grade 10 will be enrolled in either Introduction to Research or Science Research. Both courses will meet every other day for the full year and will provide our students with the necessary background research skills to complete the Personal Project while helping to individually guide each student through the process.
- 4) **Computer Science:** We are pleased to share that all students in grades 9-12 now have the opportunity to enroll in either our half-credit computer science elective course or our full-credit AP Computer Science Principles course. These courses provide a deeper understanding of computer programming and coding while providing students with “hands on” opportunities to apply their learning. These courses are the first of what we hope will ultimately evolve into a full sequence of computer science courses at the high school.

- 5) **IB Learner Profile Recognition:** Each week DFHS Students and Staff Members will be recognized for exhibiting the qualities of the IB Learner Profile. Recognition forms will be available online as well as in the main office. We look forward to recognizing all for the attributes they display as we all aspire to be IB Learners.
- 6) **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. To further support this mission, our social studies department has designed a formal digital citizenship curriculum that has been integrated into the 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.
- 7) **Digital Portfolios:** Our incoming freshmen will be our first class to maintain a digital portfolio. In addition to allowing students to store their “best” work for college applications and beyond, digital portfolios provide students with an opportunity to establish “brand” themselves while establishing a positive digital footprint. This new program will also include a curriculum that focuses heavily on digital citizenship!
- 8) **Google Expedition and Technology:** The DFHS teaching staff continues to look for new methods of connecting all students to the curriculum as well as developing critical thinking and analysis skills in all students. We are pleased to share that our teachers now have access to Google Expeditions kits that can take our students to into the rainforest or into the landscape of cities across the world. This tool as well as interactive sites such as Kahoot, Canva, and social media platforms allow our students to interact with and evaluate content. Our teachers and students continue to use technology to develop 21st century skills and become informed global citizens.

9) **New Construction:** We are pleased to share that we have a number of exciting construction projects happening at the high school. This includes updates to our auditorium, a redesigned school library, and air conditioning on the third floor of the high school.

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 set Dobbs Ferry apart 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. We are pleased to report that we are continually seeking opportunities to expand our program. We will once again offer Math HL and IB Spanish Ab Initio and will now offer both Music SL and HL.

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, we are continuing to focus on the learning experiences that students have in ninth and tenth grade and now prepared for authorization to the IB Middle Years Program (MYP).

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 an 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.
- Approximately 95% of our teachers have received IB training as we continue to work toward our goal of having all teachers trained in the program. 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 25% (varies from year to year) pursue the full IB Diploma. We are pleased to share that the class of 2017 had 29 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

Dr. John J. Falino, Principal
Ext. 3048

Ms. Candace Reim, Assistant Principal
Ext. 3104

Ms. Kerri Kastanis, Secretary to Principal
Ext. 3048

Ms. Camille Schiavone, Secretary to Assistant
Principal
Ext. 3057

Dean of Students

Mr. Scott Patrillo
Ext. 3027

Athletic Director

Mr. Andrew Klaich
Ext. 3109

Nurse's Office

Ms. Cara DeLeon
Ext. 3046

Attendance Office

Ms. Joanne Mattina
Ext. 3053

Guidance Office

Mrs. Michelle Propersi, Counselor
Ext. 3018

Mr. William Palmer, Counselor
Ext. 3012

Ms. Cristin Silk, Counselor
Ext. 3019

Ms. Denise Helgesen – Secretary HS Guidance
Ext. 3042

Mrs. Erin Vredenburgh, Director of Special
Education
Ext. 1479

Mrs. Lisa Honeck, School Psychologist
Ext. 3015

Mrs. Danielle Pecora, School Social Worker
Ext. 3320

Ms. Justine Roberto, Student Assistance
Ext. 3026