

# the COMPASS

BVT SCHOOL COUNSELING NEWS | FALL 2021

Welcome to *the Compass*, our school counseling noteworthy news source. Our team of compassionate counselors are here to guide and support you and your teenager on their educational journey. We're dedicated to fostering the academic, career, and social-emotional wellbeing of your teen to promote individual talents, and a curiosity for learning as they reach their full potential and become career, college, and life ready. Together, we can help you chart their course.



## Find Calm in Our Mindfulness Homeroom

We all experience some form of stress, trouble sleeping, or worry at some point in our lives. It's human nature, but when these experiences begin to interfere with our lives and overall well-being, we should consider making changes to our daily routines. One way to combat these occurrences is to practice mindfulness. What is mindfulness? Mindfulness is noticing your thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in the present moment without judgment.

Mindfulness has the potential benefits to improve overall well-being. This includes increasing self-esteem, regulating emotions, and decreasing worry and fatigue. It has also been proven to improve sleep, enhance mental clarity and attention, and promote healthy decision-making.

For 4- to 6-weeks, students have the opportunity to participate in our Mindfulness Homeroom, which replaces their regular homeroom and is run by our school adjustment counselors, school counselors, and school psychologists. Each morning students explore different mindfulness practices like yoga, meditation, deep breathing, and visualization.

It's our goal that students will utilize these practices in their daily routines and perhaps even share them with you at home. If you think your teen would benefit from our Mindfulness Homeroom, please reach out to their school counselor.

## Transitioning Back to School

Transitions can be difficult, especially when your teen heads back to school in the fall. Do you remember your first day of school? It's perfectly normal for teens to feel both excited and nervous about their classes. Who will they have for teachers? How will they fit in with their peers? We know everyone transitions at a different pace, and we're here to help.

Our freshmen will have the challenge of adjusting to the advanced studies of a regional technical high school and our upperclassmen will be actively planning and working towards their careers, post-secondary goals, and adult life. No worries, our school counselors are available to support your teen in working through the challenges transitioning back to school can pose.

Given the challenges that we've all been through this past year and will continue to go through, it's important to remember to take care of yourself as you prepare your teen for the return to school. Engaging in healthy habits like setting a regular sleep routine, eating healthy family meals together, limiting screen time, and getting in some daily exercise can go a long way to help you and your teen get ready for the new school year.

Other strategies you might consider are modeling flexibility and adaptability to show your teen how to work through transitions. You can also encour-

age them to connect and reconnect with a teacher, counselor, and peers. Feeling like they belong and they are a valued part of our school community can make a major difference in their development. Perhaps get them involved by joining a club or activity, or volunteering in the community.

Our school counselors are dedicated to supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of your teen while helping them meet their academic and career goals through a variety of tiered interventions. To start the year off strong, we connect with students by delivering workshops that range from the college process to social-emotional wellness. Counselors are assigned to our freshmen by their career enrichment classes, whereas with our upperclassmen, we use a shop-based model that creates a strong connection between their talents and career interests.

If you or your teen needs additional support or has questions about the school year ahead, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/meetourschool-counselors](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/meetourschool-counselors). We're available via phone, e-mail, Remind (with student and parent codes), and YouCanBook.me. In addition, your teen is always welcome to stop by the Student Services Suite to make an appointment.

## Welcome to Our MindScape Blog



Tips to Help Students Return to In-Person Learning



## Add? Drop? There's a Policy for That

There is a lot to consider when your teen is selecting their academic courses each year. As a parent, you are often thinking beyond the classroom and wondering, "Will these courses fit into their academic game plan and meet all the requirements they'll need to get into the college of their choice?" No worries, we're here to walk you through our academic course add/drop policy and help put your teen on the right "course."

Students request their courses in January/February for the following school year during their Career Enrichment class, where a school counselor is present to address any questions that may arise. We encourage our students to make thoughtful choices when reviewing the course offerings in the Program of Studies. It's important for them to discuss their options with their parents and teachers, and then review/revise those choices with their school counselor before submitting their final requests.

We understand that at the start of a new school year, there may be unforeseen circumstances that necessitate a change in your teen's courses. In such a case, students must finalize any course adjustments they would like to make with their school counselor by **Thursday, September 30th**. Students are encouraged to attend classes for the first two cycles before requesting a change. If a course change is approved, the student will be placed in the most appropriate class with the most available seats. To ensure equity among courses sections, students will be enrolled in the course with the lowest student count.

For more specific dates and the Advanced Placement Add/Drop Policy, you can visit: [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/adddropolicy](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/adddropolicy)

## Career, College, and Life Ready

From the moment your teen receives their acceptance letter to BVT, our school counselors work to prepare them for the day that they receive their diploma. No matter what your teen dreams of doing with their career, preparing for life after graduation is important. Whether their goal is to earn their vocational licensure, enlist in the military, or pursue further academic education, our school counselors in partnership with our Career Enrichment teachers and our vocational programs, will help them get there.

In Career Enrichment classes, juniors and seniors will spend time completing their Career & College Action Plans that help to guide conversations, research, and the exploration of the various options available to them after high school. Our school counselors offer in-class support as well as individual counseling so that your teen has a well thought out plan in place by the time they walk across the stage at graduation.

Check out our Career & College Planning ([www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/careercollegelifeready](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/careercollegelifeready)) section of our website for more information on scholarship opportunities, upcoming workshops and events, as well as helpful tools and resources. Together, we'll make sure your teen is career, college, and life ready.

# CALENDAR 2021 - 2022

Parents, keep your teenager up-to-date on all our school counseling events, deadlines, and workshops.

- Aug 25 Sophomores: Meet Your Counselor
- Aug 26 Freshmen: Meet Your Counselor
- Sept 7 Academic Course Add/Drop Begins
- Sept 7 Juniors: PSAT Intro & Practice
- Sept 9 Seniors: College Application Process Workshop
- Sept 13 Seniors: Career & College Action Plans
- Sept 20 Seniors: Financial Aid Lessons
- Sept 21 MEFA's Webinar Series: College Financing
- Oct 1 Early Action College Deadlines Begins
- Oct 1 FAFSA for College-Bound Seniors
- Oct 4 Thanksgiving Drive Begins
- Oct 19 Sophomores: Break Free from Depression Review Lesson
- Nov 8 Juniors: College Application Process Workshop
- Nov 18 Junior Parents: College Application Process Workshop
- Nov 22 Juniors: Career & College Action Plans
- Nov 29 Holiday Drive Begins

*NOTE: All dates are subject to change.*

## Assessments

MCAS, AP, SAT, PSAT, oh my! Keeping track of all the fall exams and requirements can be challenging. Here is a sneak peak at the fall schedule:

- Aug 28 Seniors: 1st SAT Exam
- Sept 7 Juniors: PSAT Open Registration
- Sept 11 Seniors: 1st ACT Exam
- Oct 2 Seniors: 2nd SAT Exam
- Oct 13 Juniors: PSAT Exam
- Nov 6 Seniors: 3rd SAT Exam

Visit: [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/assessments](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/assessments) for more assessments and registration information. It's your go-to reference for exam schedules, prep courses, and do's and don'ts on exam day. Our School Counselors are also available to answer questions and help you develop a personal assessment calendar.

