

EIGHT “FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS” FOR NEW BLS PARENTS

Q1) How does my child get to school?

A1) *Most students take public transportation to and from BLS. The closest MBTA Trolley/Subway stop is the Green Line, "E" Line: Heath/Arborway car Stop: Longwood/Medical Area. MBTA Buses 38, 38A, #39, #47, #60, #65, #CT2, #CT3 all stop at or near BLS. The T does provide supplemental buses that are designated to relieve traffic on regular MBTA bus routes by providing direct access for students coming to and returning from school. Information will be posted at www.bls.org as soon as it is available. Student passes are available at BLS. If you drop off or pick up your child, please do not do so directly in front of the school as this interferes with the buses. Also, U turns are not allowed on Avenue Louis Pasteur.*

Q2) Why do we have a six day schedule?

A2) *There is a six day schedule so that everyone (student and teachers alike) have the opportunity to have a class first period which is one hour long. All classes rotate so that every class is held at a different period each school day. However, only 6 of the 7 classes actually "rotate." The 5th period is fixed because of the lunch schedule.*

Q3) How does a student get involved in chorus, band, orchestra, music lessons, drama or the visual arts?

A3) *New students receive a form in the mail with their registration information before school starts in which they indicate an interest in studying an instrument or being part of a choir during the school day. Some students get their second choice since some instruments are first come, first served. Students are encouraged to take private individual lessons on their instrument, if they can afford the fee. Information about private lessons will be available early in the year. Also, other audition and non-audition musical groups meet after school, and information about them can be found at www.blsarts.org. As the music and visual arts schedule is currently under review, updated information will be posted at www.blsarts.org and www.bls.org. Additionally, there are multiple opportunities for budding theatre artists and technicians to participate in plays and improvisation groups after school.*

Q4) How does a student sign up for a sports team or get involved in other school clubs and after school activities?

A4) *BLS offers a wide variety of interscholastic athletic teams in the fall (football, girls swimming, soccer, cross country, girls volleyball, golf and cheerleading), winter (basketball, hockey, indoor track, wrestling, boys swimming) and spring (baseball, softball, boys volleyball, track and field, tennis, sailing and crew). Girls/Boys and Junior Varsity/Varsity Teams are listed in the Student Agenda book and at www.bls.org under Student Life → Athletics. There are information and sign up meetings prior to the beginning of try outs although students can try out even if they miss the meeting. Fall tryouts begin before school starts; the schedule is posted on the website all summer. Winter tryouts begin the Monday after Thanksgiving. Spring tryouts are the third Monday in March. Information is made available throughout the year on the website and is posted outside Mr. McDonough's office and both locker rooms. The Sports Hotline is 617-635-8895 X 257.*

In addition to the student newspaper, the Argo, and magazine, the Register, there are well over sixty after-school student clubs. Although there is a faculty member assigned to each club, club

formation and activities are student driven and may vary from year to year. A Club Fair will be held for students after school in late September. At this fair, students learn about participation in the different clubs and activities at Boston Latin School, as well as when they meet.

Q5) When and how can I contact my student’s teachers or other BLS staff?

A5) Contact information is available at www.bls.org under Directory on the navigation bar and by Department under Academics. A comprehensive “Who’s Who” of BLS administrators and their duties is available at www.bls.org→About BLS→Administration. Guidance Counselor assignments are available under Support Services → Counselor Assignments. Parents meet in groups with teachers in classrooms for the first time at an evening Open House for grade 7 parents, held mid-September, or at a separate Open House a few days later for other parents. There will be another opportunity to meet later in the year. For dates and times, see the website or the daily e-bulletin. The Student Handbook also lists the dates and is posted at www.bls.org. Parents can always schedule appointments directly with teachers if any concerns arise.

Q6) How are students in 7th grade assigned to clusters?

A6) Class VI students (aka sixies or 7th graders) are randomly divided into three clusters (A,B and C). The students in each cluster take all their major classes together and have the same set of teachers. These faculty members meet weekly to plan those classes and parents are welcome to make an appointment to meet with the teachers during that time, as a group, to discuss any problems or concerns.

Q7) What if I need to drop something off for my child at school?

A7) Parents must always report directly to the main office upon entering the building. You will need to know your child’s grade and homeroom number, and be aware that dropped off items will not reach your child until the last period of the day, R7. No valuable items (money, cell phones, wallets) can be dropped off in the Main Office.

Q8) What can I do to help my child succeed at BLS?

A8) Stay informed. Students are encouraged to use their Agenda Book to record all assignments and important deadlines. Monitor your child’s homework and ask about tests and assignments. Make sure your child is using the Agenda Book to stay organized. For students in grades 7 to 9 who encounter difficulties, After School Tutoring runs throughout the year, Monday through Thursday; Saturday Success School is held every week from October through May, except before or after school vacations or on three day weekends. After the first term, a workshop for parents interested in helping their child succeed will be offered by the Guidance Department. See www.bls.org → Support Services for details in September.

Get involved. There are many parent organizations which support student success and can offer assistance and advice to new parents. These include the BLS Parent and Site Councils, BLS Home and School Organization, The Asian Parent Association, the Black Parent Association, The Latin American Parent Association, Friends of Chinese Culture, Friends of the Arts, Friends of BLS Soccer and Friends of Boston Latin Girls’ Crew.