

# BIG WALNUT HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2026



## FALL NEWSLETTER-OCTOBER 2025

**Greetings Class of 2026 and Families!** The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed about the many things happening this year for your senior. Please pay close attention to the information below as there are many important dates and guidelines concerning your senior year, as well as answers to many questions you may have. As we get closer to graduation, we will send out more specific information concerning the graduation ceremony.

### **Class of 2026 Class Officers:**

**President:** Sahana Katta

**Vice-President:** Ava Tackett

**Secretary:** Sadhana Jeyakumar

**Treasurer:** Anna Swager

**Steering Committee Members:** Ali DelVesco, Grace Dorsten, Caroline Judy,  
Tanvi Konduru, Jacob Marshall

**Class Advisor:** Mrs. Christina McDonough

\*Please see any of these individuals if you have questions or concerns at any time during this year.

### **Important Dates for the Class of 2026:**

|                |                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 7     | College Application Day (Academic Commons)                                                                                      |
| November 20    | ASVAB Test (see Schoology for more information)                                                                                 |
| November 21    | FINAL Senior Portrait Retake Date (*please note, to be included in the yearbook, you <i>must</i> be photographed by HR Imaging) |
| December 2-19  | End-of-Course Retakes (if needed-students will be notified)                                                                     |
| December 12    | College Application Day (Academic Commons)                                                                                      |
| December 17-19 | First Semester Exams                                                                                                            |
| March 18       | Scholars' Dinner for the Class of 2026 Honor Court (by invitation only)                                                         |
| May 9          | Prom                                                                                                                            |
| May 11         | Senior Awards Night                                                                                                             |
| May 4-8, 11-15 | AP Test Dates                                                                                                                   |
| May 8          | Last Day of Classes for Seniors                                                                                                 |
| May 11-13      | Senior Exams                                                                                                                    |
| May 14         | Eagles' Last Flight*                                                                                                            |
| May 15         | Graduation Breakfast and Rehearsal*                                                                                             |
| May 16         | Graduation--Big Walnut High School Stadium (weather permitting) Time: 7:00pm                                                    |

***\*required attendance dates for seniors***

### **ACT OR SAT TESTING OPPORTUNITIES:**

For the Class of 2026, some schools are requiring students to submit ACT or SAT scores for acceptance while others are considering it optional. Please check with the specific schools you are applying to for details regarding these tests. For those students who would like to test, there are limited remaining test dates for both the ACT and the SAT. Students who would like to take one or both of these tests are encouraged to check out **act.org** and **collegeboard.org** for a complete list of test dates and locations as well as registration deadlines.

### **ATTENDANCE AT COMMENCEMENT:**

Attendance at commencement exercises, while encouraged, is optional. Choosing to not participate in the ceremony exempts you from paying class fees, but it also excludes you from class activities such as the senior breakfast. Also, once dues are paid there will be no refunds. Diplomas for those not attending commencement will be available in the main office the **Tuesday** following commencement and during summer hours.

Attendance at commencement is a privilege. You may be barred from attendance at commencement for failure to meet school and/or class financial obligations, misbehavior at school, misbehavior before or during rehearsal or commencement, failure to attend rehearsal or adhere to rules concerning it, and other major infractions of rules having to do with commencement. The advisor, in consultation with the principal, will make decisions on this matter.

### **CAPS AND GOWNS:**

Jostens visited BWHS this fall to share information about purchasing caps, gowns and graduation accessories. If you missed the presentation, you are able to browse their catalog and order online at [www.jostens.com](http://www.jostens.com). All cap and gown orders go through Jostens and questions should be directed to them. For more information, visit their website at [www.jostens.com](http://www.jostens.com) or call Mike Dillon at 614-440-2594.

### **CAREER SHADOWING DAY:**

Career Shadowing has become a part of our Big Walnut High School senior experience and as such, the Class of 2026 will be asked to participate in a shadowing experience. In thinking about their future career plans, seniors will need to find one person that they can shadow for the day, who works in a field they are interested in pursuing. As verification for the day, students will be asked to fill out a form including a signature from the person they shadowed. ***Please understand this is a required attendance day for seniors and failure to complete the shadowing experience will result in an unexcused absence.*** Because the career shadowing experience meets an attendance requirement for our seniors, it ***MUST*** be completed on a day that Big Walnut Local School District students are not in session. Seniors must choose ***ONE DATE*** from the following options to complete their experience: November 26-28 (NOT December 1); December 22 thru January 2; January 19; February 16; March 30-April 6; or any weekend day. (Blue forms for Career Shadowing were handed out in 3rd period classes earlier this fall.)

### **CCP and DACC STUDENTS:**

If you are a senior who attends the **Delaware Area Career Center** or if you are a **full-time college credit plus student**, please be sure to stay up to date on happenings at BWHS. Information from class meetings and other announcements will be posted to the BWHS main website and Schoology, utilizing the Class of 2026 group page. All Big Walnut students, regardless of where they take their classes, are able to login to Schoology. To access, go to [schoolgy.bwls.net](http://schoolgy.bwls.net) (going to [schoolgy.com](http://schoolgy.com)- won't work for you), then type in your Big Walnut Google login information. ***Please consider doing this; this mode of communication is one of the main ones we use at the high school.*** Our senior class newsletters and most significant information will also be emailed to students and families using the email address on file in PowerSchool. ***Please be sure this email address is accurate.***

### **CLASS FEES:**

Class fees are \$15.00 which is based on the end-of-year needs of the class, including costs for the senior breakfast, the commencement exercise, and other senior celebrations. **Failure to pay these fees by Monday, March 30, 2026 may exclude you from participation in the commencement exercise. You will not be permitted to attend the prom if your fees are not paid.** For your reference, this fee was posted to student accounts this fall and labeled as "BWHS Class of 2026".

### **DIPLOMA PRESENTER CHOICE:**

As is our Big Walnut tradition, seniors will have the opportunity to choose their own diploma presenter for our commencement ceremony on May 16. This decision will be made during second semester, but students should begin to think about their choice now. The diploma presenter policy is posted on our [senior class website](#). Any questions should be directed to Mrs. McDonough.

### **GRADUATION ELIGIBILITY:**

As a reminder, seniors must meet three requirements for graduation. They must earn 20 credits (in specific areas), show competency with passing scores on the English II and Algebra I End-of-Course tests, and earn at least 2 graduation seals (at least one being a state seal). For a more detailed look at the graduation requirements, [click here](#). If you have any questions concerning graduation eligibility, please see your school counselor ASAP.

### **HONOR COURT DESIGNATION:**

Our Honor Court recognizes our top graduates during our Commencement ceremony, based on their academic performance while in high school. According to the student handbook (page 27), we do not recognize a Valedictorian or Salutatorian, but instead recognize an Honor Court based on cumulative GPA's at the end of the student's **first semester** of their senior year. Designations are *Summa Cum Laude* (4.10 or above), *Magna Cum Laude* (3.83-4.09) and *Cum Laude* (3.67-3.82). Since we do not calculate semester grades in a year-long course, no AP or other year-long courses a student takes during their senior year will count in this GPA. However, any CCP or other semester course a student completes during the first semester, with a final grade, will figure into this GPA. Once final grades are received and calculated in June, students' final transcripts will be updated to reflect their cumulative GPA from their entire senior year.

### **PANORAMIC PHOTO:**

Our traditional senior class panoramic photo was taken at the end of October. Any family wishing to purchase this photo should go to [shop.hrimaging.com](http://shop.hrimaging.com). Once there, enter our school zip code/name and from there you will be able to select the panoramic or senior photos packages.

### **SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:**

Students and families should check the [school counseling website](#) for scholarship information. This information is updated frequently, especially after winter break, as more scholarship information becomes available.

### **SCHOOLINKS:**

SchoolLinks is the platform all seniors should use to request transcripts and letters of recommendation, once college applications are complete. Additionally, this is how they should notify their counselor of college acceptances. Any questions or problems with access should be directed to the school counseling office.

### **SENIOR EVENTS CALENDAR, WEBSITE AND SCHOOLGY:**

All senior information and events will be communicated to our families via Schoology and email. Please make sure you are checking the Class of 2026 Group page, as well as the Big Walnut High School page. Additionally, we have a [senior class website](#) that is linked in the resources section of the Class of 2026 Group page. This website has general information and FAQ's for our senior families.

### **SENIOR PHOTO AND YEARBOOK INFORMATION:**

All yearbook photos of seniors will be taken by HR Imaging. The final remaining date for this is **November 21 from 10:30-1:45pm**. Students should dress nicely for this photo. If a student is not photographed by HR Imaging, they will not appear in the yearbook or in the composite photo of the class. No submitted photographs will be accepted. Additionally, your 2025-2026 yearbooks are on sale now! The price is \$60 and you can place your order through [www.yearbookordercenter.com](http://www.yearbookordercenter.com) using code 13910. Please note-the price of yearbooks will go up on November 1. Yearbooks will arrive in the Fall of 2026. Any senior photo or yearbook issues should be directed to Ms. Horton, yearbook advisor at [christynehorton@bwls.net](mailto:christynehorton@bwls.net).

### **QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions about the content in this newsletter, please contact our senior class advisor, Mrs. Christina McDonough at [christinamcdonough@bwls.net](mailto:christinamcdonough@bwls.net) or 740-965-3766 ext. 2601.



# ***YOUR SENIOR TO-DO LIST***

*Brought to you by the BWHS School Counseling Department*

**Please check the boxes as you complete them, and see your School Counselor with questions!**

## Fall of 2025

- ☐ Get your Senior Credit Check AS SOON AS POSSIBLE--discuss with your School Counselor:
  - ☐ graduation requirement verification (courses, competency, seals)
  - ☐ your future goals/ plans
  - ☐ the college admission process (including SchoolLinks training)
- ☐ Get Connected!
  - ☐ Check Schoology messages regularly (information on School Counseling website and posted to Schoology at the beginning of the year)
  - ☐ attend family information session during parent-teacher conference nights (Senior parent night and a financial aid night)
  - ☐ pay attention to announcements, emails, Schoology, posters, school news etc.—DEADLINES MATTER!!!
  - ☐ know the deadlines of the colleges to which you're interested in applying
  - ☐ register for cafeteria college admissions counselor visits at BWHS (check schoology)
  - ☐ search for local scholarships (see School Counseling website during 2nd semester)
  - ☐ Attend 'college application days' with your peers, school counselors and staff
  - ☐ If you're using test scores request those from the testing website to be sent directly to the college
- ☐ Get Involved!
  - ☐ participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and organizations - take leadership roles!
- ☐ Get on SchoolLinks!
  - ☐ search for college & career information
  - ☐ start completing college applications - Connect CommonApp account to SchoolLinks and request official transcripts through SchoolLinks
  - ☐ request letters of recommendation through SchoolLinks (give 2 weeks notice) and supply a resume or brag sheet.
- ☐ Take the appropriate Tests!
  - ☐ register for the ACT/SAT if you are college-bound (even if you're attending a 2-year college)
  - ☐ register for the ASVAB if you are military-bound or would like some career ideas (offered every Fall at BWHS)
  - ☐ If you still have to pass an End-of-Course Exam, get resources to help you prepare.
  - ☐ If you aren't sure about future careers, take a career assessment! (ASVAB can also supply this information.)
- ☐ Get Out There!
  - ☐ visit colleges & universities - you are allowed 2 college visit absence waivers during the year (get forms from the main office and School Counseling Office)
  - ☐ attend local college fairs - (information on the school counseling website)
  - ☐ meet with military recruiters
- ☐ Get Registered
  - ☐ All male students must register for selective service on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. (<https://www.sss.gov/>)
  - ☐ If you are an athlete, register for the NCAA Eligibility Center if you didn't last year.
  - ☐ Begin working on the FAFSA and checking appropriate colleges for their deadlines to file. (FAFSA opens in October.)
- ☐ Get to Work in your Classes - senior grades matter! They say a lot to colleges about you and CAN affect your admissions chances.

## November

- ❑ You should have at least one college application completed by Thanksgiving Break – don't forget to ask your counselor to submit an official transcript to your colleges through SchoolLinks.

## December

- ❑ continue completing college applications – don't forget to ask your counselor to submit an official transcript to colleges through Schoolinks (final applications should be completed by Christmas break)
- ❑ check colleges for FAFSA filing deadlines

## January

- ❑ continue working on and submitting scholarship applications before their respective deadlines
- ❑ notify your counselor of all your college acceptances through Schoolinks
- ❑ begin to look into financial aid & scholarships

## February

- ❑ check college portals/emails to make sure all application materials have been received
- ❑ continue working on and submitting scholarship applications before their respective deadlines

## March

- ❑ continue working on and submitting scholarship applications before their respective deadlines
- ❑ carefully review financial aid award letters when they arrive

## April

- ❑ most admissions decisions arrive this month
- ❑ make final decision, submit enrollment form and deposit money to college
- ❑ notify schools to which you were accepted but are not attending that you will not be attending
- ❑ contact admissions office and let them know you are still interested if you're on the waitlist
- ❑ submit local scholarship applications, including Big Walnut Education Foundation Scholarship

## May

- ❑ May 1<sup>st</sup> is National Commitment Day—last day to send in deposits to the college of your choice
- ❑ take AP exams and make sure your scores are sent to your college
- ❑ send thank-you letters to your letter writers and anybody who helped you along the way
- ❑ ENJOY YOUR SENIOR CELEBRATIONS!!!!

To schedule an appointment with your counselor, please go to the School Counseling website (student/counselor appointments). You can also email your counselor, Mrs. Strahler at [cindistrahler@bwls.net](mailto:cindistrahler@bwls.net), or Mrs. Isganitis at [amandaigsganitis@bwls.net](mailto:amandaigsganitis@bwls.net). The School Counseling Office can be reached at 740-965-2243.

## School Counselors

Ms. Meghan Paul (last names A-EI)  
Mrs. Caleigh Moats (last names Em-La)  
Mrs. Jeanne Collett (last names Le-Ri)  
Mrs. Anna Laux (last names Ro-Z)

[meghanpaul@bwls.net](mailto:meghanpaul@bwls.net)  
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[annalaux@bwls.net](mailto:annalaux@bwls.net)

Dr. Tammi Jordan (CCP Counselor)

[tammijordan@bwls.net](mailto:tammijordan@bwls.net)

[School Counseling Website](#)

