

THE SCORPION SCOOP

Official Brandon Academy News



From the Head of School
October 23, 2020

Dear Colleagues, Parents, Students, and Friends,

At Brandon Academy, our goal is for all of our students to have an opportunity to pursue rigorous and engaging courses that will prepare them for college and/or a career of their choice. This week, I informed the upper school faculty and students that, next year, we will be transitioning away from the IB program and implementing a new [Advanced Placement \(AP\) curriculum](#). AP courses are college-level courses offered in high school, and AP courses reflect what is taught in top introductory college courses. Students take AP exams in May, measuring their mastery of college-level work on a 1-5 point scale. A score of 3 or higher on an AP exam can typically earn students college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college. All Florida state universities MUST offer college credit for a 3 or higher on an AP exam. Here is a [link](#) to information about AP credit at thousands of colleges and universities. Think of the IB program as a one size fits all kind of program, while the AP program is more tailored to each student.

Our teachers, students, and administration are very excited about the greater flexibility in scheduling AP courses will provide, meaning students will have more access to elective courses. AP courses also allow students to focus on areas of strength or passion, therefore helping students during the college admissions process. Students will have far more opportunities to earn college credit. Starting in 9th grade, students will be able to take AP courses. Finally, because AP is run by the same company that administers the PSAT and SAT tests, our new curriculum will develop a better foundation for success on the SAT/ ACT exams.

This switch in curriculum is part of a bigger picture plan to enhance the high school experience for our students. I welcome any BA parent to attend my coffee conversation via Zoom next Thursday, October 29 at 8:30 am to find out more information. Details are below.

Personally, I have had the privilege of sending my three boys to four private schools. As a parent and educator, I have seen and learned a lot. The most common mistake made by parents is they think the “grass is greener” at another school. Having spent 13 years leading large, college preparatory schools in Naples, FL and Wilmington, NC, I learned that the most important factor in navigating high school successfully was relationships.

When a student enters 9th grade, their college resume is blank, like a white piece of paper, and over the course of four years, students will paint a picture of themselves for colleges through their academic studies, the clubs they join, their leadership skills, the sports they play, and the community service they perform. Some pictures are more defined than others, and that is usually because a teacher, coach, or college counselor helped guide them along the way.

Colleges and universities are looking to build diverse classes, and they do not compare BA high school students with students from other high schools because every school does things differently. They look at whether or not a child took advantage of the opportunities that the school provided them and how successful they were.

In Wilmington, parents thought that CFA was too small, so they sent their child to a larger, more expensive private school. At the end of the day, CFA students were much happier during high school because they were not in a “pressure cooker” school, and the college placements were just as impressive because of the guidance students received from teachers, coaches, and the college counselors. Many parents did not consider that universities do not want a large number of incoming freshmen from the same high school. Again, they look for diversity. They need business majors, science majors, artists, education majors, and student-athletes.

The curriculum changes in the high school will enhance the middle and lower school curriculums, and we are very excited about the potential these changes will have on your sons and daughters. I hope you will join me next Thursday.

Kind regards,

Eric Miles
Head of School

News From Around Campus



Coffee with the Head of School

Enjoy coffee and conversation with our Head of School, Eric Miles, and fellow BA parents.

Thursday, October 29
8:30 - 9:30 am

LIVE via Zoom.

[Here is the Zoom link to join.](#)

All BA parents are invited to a virtual Coffee with the Head of School at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 29 via Zoom. Mr. Miles will present updates for next year followed by a time of Q&A, during which parents can get answers to any questions they may have.



The Middle School had a gender reveal for Middle School History teacher, Mrs. Aimee Daley. Looks like she is having a girl! Congratulations, Aimee!

Fall Open Houses

The BA student is one who strives to achieve in the classroom, on the stage, and on the playing field. BA is committed to shaping and developing the scholar, artist, and athlete within each and every student who walks our halls. At BA, everything we do is in support of developing the mind, spirit, and talent of a well-rounded and civically minded individual.

Monday, November 9 kicks-off Articulation Week, which includes our annual Open Houses. The purpose of Articulation Week is to give parents a preview of what's in store for the 2021-2022 school year. Here is the schedule of the Open Houses for new families:

<p>Tue, November 10 Lower School Open House Zoom Sessions (Pre-K to Grade 5)</p> <p>Open to all new, interested families. Session 1 at 10am Session 2 at 6pm</p>	<p>Wed, November 11 Middle School Open House Zoom Sessions (Grades 6 - 8)</p> <p>Open to all new, interested families. Session 1 at 10am Session 2 at 6pm</p>	<p>Thu, November 12 High School Open House Zoom Sessions (Grades 9 -12)</p> <p>Open to all new, interested families. Session 1 at 10am Session 2 at 6pm</p>
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If you have friends who wish to be considered for admission to Brandon Academy in August 2021, please pass on this information and invite them to participate in one of the upcoming Zoom Open Houses. [Here is the link to sign up.](#)

Any additional questions can be directed to Cindy Strickland for the Lower School or Eric Miles for the Upper Divisions. Thank you!



Gina Morse
College Counselor

Scholarship Opportunities

The scholarships listed below do not encompass all available scholarships—they are merely a comprehensive list of every scholarship of which we have been made aware. Please note: for any scholarship where counselors need to complete a recommendation form or letter, we ask for three weeks' notification to allow us ample time to complete the recommendation.

[Practice for the SAT Opportunity Scholarship](#)

Seniors who spend at least 6 hours prepping for the SAT with Khan Academy are qualified to win one of 150 \$1,000 scholarships. Students can increase their chance of winning by practicing more hours. **Deadline is October 31, 2020.**

[Coca-Cola Scholars Program](#)

Seniors are eligible to apply. This is an achievement-based scholarship recognizing students for the capacity to lead and serve, as well as their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities. 150 students are selected each year to receive a \$25,000 scholarship. **Deadline is October 31, 2020.**

[Middle District of Florida 2020 High School Essay Contest](#)

High school students living in Hillsborough, Pasco, & Pinellas County are invited to submit an essay celebrating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment. Awards ranging from \$50 - \$2,000 will be given to students at a special awards ceremony. Submissions must not exceed 1,000 words. Deadline is noon on November 2, 2020.

[Brooks Law Group Community Scholarship](#)

Seniors who complete a 700 – 1,400-word essay on the assigned topic are eligible. Two scholarships will be awarded: first place winner will receive \$1,000 & second place winner will receive \$250. **Essays are due by November 6.**

[Prudential Spirit of Community Awards](#)

High School students who have engaged in volunteer activity within the past 12 months are eligible to apply. Awards range from \$1,000 - \$5,000. **Deadline is November 10, 2020.**

[Elks Lodge “Most Valuable Student” Scholarship](#)

Seniors who are planning on pursuing a four-year degree on a full-time basis are eligible to apply. Applicants do not need to be related to a member of the Elks. **Deadline is November 15, 2020.**

[National Honor Society Scholarship](#)

Seniors who are active members of NHS are eligible to apply. Awards range from \$3,200 - \$25,000. **Deadline is December 1, 2020.**

[Profile in Courage Essay Contest](#)

Students in all grade levels are eligible to apply. Essay should be 700 – 1,000 words describing an act of political courage by a US elected official who served during or after 1917. The official may have addressed an issue at the local, state, or national level. Essays must have a minimum of 5 sources. **Deadline is January 15, 2021.**

Sources:

FastWeb.com
CollegeData.org
MyScholly.com
CollegeXpress.com
Chegg.com/scholarships
GoingMerry.com

AIE.org
StudentScholarshipSearch.com
BigFuture.CollegeBoard.org
Cappex.com/scholarships

Hello Brandon Academy Parents,

Thank you all for registering your child for the Golf Squad at Brandon Academy. In efforts to offer the best Golf Squad experience for your child, the start date has been pushed back to:

Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 3:40 pm on Thursdays thru December 17, 2020.

This class has not yet met the minimum participation level, and we are hoping this change allows for many more families to enjoy the PGA professional instruction being offered at Brandon Academy.

Please help us "get the word out" to other families you believe would be interested in golfing with us and forward them to the below revised Brandon Academy page on golfsquad.com.

<https://golfsquad.com/class/brandon-academy-f20>

([Click Here](#) to read more on how and why your child can benefit from continuing golf practice with the Golf Squad at your school.)

We look forward to building the foundation to enjoy golf for a lifetime together! As always, I'm here for questions, comments, or simply to share with us your child's growth in golf.

Best,

Ysreen Shores

ysreen@golfsquad.com



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News From the Athletic Department

Upcoming Home Games

Middle School Soccer next Thursday, October 29

Silver Team (Grades 4 & 5) at 3:30 pm

Navy Team (Grades 6, 7, & 8) at 4:30 pm

Go Scorpions! (And Rays!)

