



# Big Spring E-NEWS



## Message from Dr. Guarente

Big Spring Families and Community:

Happy New Year! We look forward to all 2024 will bring for our students, schools, and community. We enter the year with optimism and hope for the future because we know how capable our students are to lead it with determination and purpose.

Over the winter break, I thought more about what it means to be “Ever, Always Strong” and how we are instilling those values in our young people.

Here are a few of my takeaways:

- Ever - Means consistency to me. We show up every single day for our students and our community. We do it because we care and because our impact matters.
- Always - This speaks to our enduring belief in our students. We believe IN them, in their future, in their capacity, and in their hopes and dreams for their futures.
- Strong - More than ever, our world craves strength. Strength of voice, of purpose, and of community. Our schools are as strong as our students and our community.

So, with that, I hope you feel as inspired as I do to tackle 2024 in the spirit of Big Spring!

Ever, Always Strong,  
Dr. [Nicholas Guarente](#)



## Bulldog Blitz Need to Know

**Board Appreciation Month!**

In January, we celebrate the members who serve on our School Board of Directors. We are grateful for their dedication to our students, staff, and community in providing oversight and ensuring that our schools reflect our community.

Follow along on our social media channels this month to meet each member and learn more about them and their role. Follow at: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram @bigspringschools](#)

## **Act 158 Explained: 5 Pathways to Graduation**

Big Spring offers five different pathways to graduation, aimed at supporting all students in achieving postsecondary readiness in college, career and life.

The pathways align with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Act 158, passed in 2018. Before this change, graduation required certain scores on the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature.

Now, students with unique strengths and aspirations can achieve graduation in a variety of ways that reflect their future goals and their actual readiness. This change signals the state of Pennsylvania and Big Spring School District recognize all students can succeed. The reality is that most BSHS students could graduate through several of the pathways explained below.

1. Keystone Proficiency Pathway: Students score proficient or above in all three Keystone Exams.
2. Keystone Composite Pathway: Allows for a combined total score on the Keystone Exams, with no below basic individual scores.
3. Career & Technical Education Pathway: For students focusing on vocational skills, involving relevant courses and a certification or vocational program completion.
4. Alternative Assessment Pathway: Students can qualify through other standardized tests or participate in dual enrollment programs to earn college credit.
5. Evidence-Based Pathway: Students can use a mix of high scores on advanced exams, college courses completed in high school, or professional credentials to qualify.

## **2024-25 Kindergarten Registration**

Registration for next year's kindergarten students is now available and may be completed online. Please help us spread the word for Big Spring parents to complete the online registration process! Details can be found on our web page by clicking [here](#).

2024-2025

Welcome to  
Kindergarten,  
Bulldogs!



## Info Bites More to Come

### Calamity Day Reminders

In an effort to keep our students safe and maintain a consistent academic progression, the district may institute Remote Learning Days during instances of inclement weather or emergency closures.

- On Remote Learning days, students will participate in learning opportunities facilitated through each building schedule. These schedules are available on the District website.
- In the event of a Remote Learning Day, the change of the instructional model will be clearly communicated, and a reminder will be shared related to the location of the materials.
- Be sure to check your correct phone number and email address are updated in Aspen so you can be in the know! [Student Information Change Request Form](#)

### We Need You! Feedback On Our Comprehensive Plan

As we continue to work on our district's comprehensive plan for the future of our schools and students, we will continue to reach out for engagement and feedback. Be sure to check back here and encourage your friends and neighbors to subscribe so they get the information, too!



## Bulldog Snapshots



### Dr. Guarente Joins BSMS Running Club!

Last month, Superintendent Dr. Nicholas Guarente laced up his running shoes to join the vibrant energy of our Middle School Running and Walking Clubs. It was an inspiring sight to see leadership and students sharing the path, stride for stride! A huge shoutout to Christy Gruver, the dynamic advisor of the Running Club, who organized this fantastic event. And let's not forget the wonderful Walking Club advisors, Jessica Dagle and Erin Zinn, for their dedication to keeping our students active and engaged. Together, they're not just promoting physical health but also fostering a sense of community and teamwork. It's moments like these that truly embody the spirit of our school - where learning, health, and leadership come together.



### 2023 Outstanding Teacher Award

Exciting News from our Teaching Community! High School teacher, Mr. Matthew Kump, and Middle School teacher, Mrs. Emma Shutt have been selected as recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Teacher Award, a prestigious honor sponsored by Shippensburg University Superintendent Study Council. Their dedication, innovation, and passion for teaching have not only inspired our students but have also been recognized by educational leaders in our region. This award is a testament to their exceptional contributions to the field of education!



## Big Spring Community News

### Mark Your Calendar

- January 10 - Mount Rock PTO Meeting; Oak Flat PTO Board Meeting
- January 11 - High School Semester 1 Finals
- January 12 - Secondary Marking Pd 2 Ends; High School Semester 1 Finals
- January 15 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Staff Development (No Students); School Board Meeting @ 7:30 PM MS Auditorium
- January 30 - Newville PTO Meeting
- January 31 - Early Release for Students (Staff Development)



**Big Spring School District**



