

# Learning Communities Q & A's

## How are Learning Communities determined?



Learning Communities are balanced between former school, course requests, and student gender. Though it's not an easy process to find a specific Learning Community for each student, it is a worthwhile endeavor, as proven by the Learning Community models we investigated and visited over the past few years. Students who take courses that are more specialized or above grade level will take them outside of the Learning Community. Students will still be able to take honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate classes. Each Learning Community consists of approximately 110-125 students and 5-7 teachers.

## What portion of the day will be spent outside of Learning Communities?

Only a portion of the day will be spent in a Learning Community to help support the core academics. In our new high school, many elective courses will be in our new state-of-the-art gym, auditorium, pool, art spaces, and other flexible learning spaces throughout the building. Students may even have the opportunity to learn outdoors in the new courtyard. Lunch serveries will be sprinkled throughout the building, giving students several options for lunch, and the new two-story Media Center will have a vast array of resources and flexible seating to accommodate a wide variety of activities. The Learning Communities were designed to help a large building feel smaller and more personalized for students and staff, especially in the lower grade levels (9th and 10th grade).

## What type of learning environment will students take part in?

The intent of the Learning Communities is to provide a more sophisticated learning environment. When students get to college, they often see a lot of the same people - living in the dorms, attending the same courses, etc. Professors in college will often request that students effectively work in groups, large and small, and independently. Learning Communities will help prepare BHHS students for a college/career environment.



## What opportunities are there for students to make new friends?

Meeting new people and making new friends is a fundamental piece of high school and Learning Communities won't change that. At the core of the Learning Community concept is the idea of deeper relationships. Throughout the Learning Community experience, students will have the opportunity to connect more with their teachers and classmates, and by extension, their learning. Friends who are not in the same Learning Community will have the opportunity to see each other in elective classes, at lunch, and before/after school, which is not unlike a traditional high school setting.

## What are some benefits of Learning Communities?



Learning Communities offer increased interdisciplinary connections, greater responsibility and ownership of the community, and an opportunity to build stronger relationships with teachers and other students. In the 2014-2015 school year, we will host Learning Communities at the 9th Grade Campus and 10th grade Learning Communities at the Main Campus.

