



William A. Kresse, Ph.D. PRINCIPAL

Tandy J. Hamilton ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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August 25, 2025

Dear CHS Families:

We're excited to welcome our students back to the Hilltop for a full day of school on **Thursday, September 4!** This school year will bring change but many positive benefits for our families and students. Here are some items of note that all families should be aware of:

-New York State's new distraction-free, no personal smartphones/electronics policy will take effect at our school opening day. This law requires students to store their internet-capable personal devices from the first bell to final dismissal in a secure designated storage area at their school. This includes smartphones, smartwatches, cell phones with any internet capability, iPads, or similar devices.

Our approach to implementing this law at City Honors is based on feedback from stakeholder representatives on our Site Based Management Team. We will monitor and adjust this where needed as the school year proceeds. All students will place smartphones and other internet-enabled personal devices in their lockers or cubbies (full class lock boxes have been ordered for grades 5/6; these will be used once they arrive as our cubbies are not lockable) upon arrival at the school. Students may not take them out until they are dismissed at the end of the school day. Additional information can be found in the enclosed 'Back-to-School Survival Guide'. There will be a learning curve with a significant change like this. We will adjust and adapt as we go. We ask for our families' patience and support as our staff works to implement these new procedures.

-City Honors is now a 'Class Dojo School'. Class Dojo allows staff, families and students to communicate with one another by instantly sharing messages and updates. It can be used on iOS, Android and from computers at [classdojo.com](http://classdojo.com). Many of our families have become familiar with Class Dojo at the elementary level, but the Buffalo Public Schools is now collaborating with Dojo to be sure all classes are automatically rostered in Dojo for our teachers. Invitations to join our school and classes have been emailed to all families. Reminder emails from the Class Dojo system will be sent out during the first few weeks of school. Teachers will work with students to enroll on their BPS devices. If for some reason you have not linked up with Class Dojo just yet, we will have additional communications headed your way.

-This summer, we began a long-planned twelve million dollar construction project to improve our facility at City Honors. Crews have been working throughout the summer to repair the roof and repoint masonry on our original 1914 school building. Crews also captured images of damaged terracotta that will be replicated by Boston Valley Terracotta to make our building watertight again. This two-year construction project will include: replacing all lighting in the school with energy efficient LED lighting, improvements to the auditorium electrical and stage rigging, construction of new and improved instructional spaces for special education and special services, cooling in some of our spaces that get the warmest during warm weather and much more. In addition, the district made significant upgrades to our wireless internet capabilities throughout the summer, our pool timing system was upgraded and gym floor resealed. Thank you to our members of the Board of Education and the BPS Plant Services Department for making all of this work possible!

www.cityhonors.org

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-Families, if you need to sign your child out of school early, you must do so by 2:45pm. If you cannot, you will need to wait to pick them up at our 3:09pm dismissal. Beginning at 2:45, our security officers and teacher assistants move to transportation duties. We appreciate your cooperation.

-Over the summer, Buffalo Schools replaced 50% of our laptops. Devices that were not replaced were cleaned and stickers removed. Laptops will be issued during the first few weeks of school. Any homework assignments in September and October will take into account that students will not have use of their district laptops until at least November.

-Please welcome the following teachers who are new to our faculty at City Honors this school year:

<b>Ms. Laura Crump</b>	Technology (part-time)
<b>Ms. Emily Curran</b>	STARS Science, Special Education CT
<b>Dr. Jennifer Desiderio</b>	English Language Arts
<b>Ms. Abigail Griffith</b>	English Language Arts
<b>Ms. Nicole Johnson</b>	Grade 7 Social Studies
<b>Mr. Peter LoJacono</b>	Spanish
<b>Mrs. Katherine Musso</b>	Grade 5/6 Special Education CT and Resource
<b>Ms. Monika Zanni</b>	Spanish

As always, we are indebted to the parent and teacher representatives who lent their time to serve on teacher hiring committees this summer. Parent and teacher voice is essential in identifying the most qualified teachers for our students. And a special congratulations to our strings/orchestra teacher, Ms. Harsch who wed this summer and is now **Mrs. Marsh!**

We anticipate that the Buffalo Public Schools will appoint a new assistant principal in the coming weeks to replace Ms. McDow who continues to serve the district as an assistant principal at the Math, Science, Technology School. We thank Ms. McDow for her years of service to City Honors.

Please carefully read the enclosed materials including our **CHS Start-of-School Survival Guide** which provides details about all of the ‘nuts and bolts’ operations information you will need to help your child begin the school year successfully.

Here are a number of additional ways that you can help your child to begin the school year successfully:

- Monitor your child’s progress finishing up their **CHS summer reading**. Links to summer reading lists for each grade level and all of the documents included in this mailing can be found at the [Parent Resources page](#) of cityhonors.org under the ‘Back-to-School Fall 2025’ tab.
- Complete and return the enclosed **Family Census Verification Form** so we have the best possible contact information for your family.
- Participate in our **Parent-Teacher “Get Acquainted” Night on Tuesday, September 10, from 6-8 pm**. This annual tradition allows parents to follow their child’s schedule, meet teachers, receive course syllabi and hear teacher presentations about their courses. More information will be sent to families closer to this date.
- Join us for the annual **Family Welcome Back Night on Friday, September 19, from 5-8 pm**. There is a flyer included in this mailing with more information.

Thank you for your continued support of our school. We look forward to seeing your child in person on **Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup>!**

Sincerely,



William A. Kresse, Ph.D.  
Principal