



James Bowie High School

❖ Pride In Performance ❖

Monday, March 25, 2019

Greetings Bulldog Nation,

This edition of the Bowie Star is dedicated to attendance. Emphasizing regular attendance serves multiple purposes, the most important being the reinforcement of student learning. Attendance is also a factor in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) school accountability system through which campus distinctions are earned. **By setting a 2018-19 goal of 96.5% average daily attendance, we are aiming for the first quartile of our campus comparison group in order to maximize our chances of earning TEA distinctions.** As you are well-aware, attendance is also used to fund schools. Austin ISD is required to submit its attendance to TEA reflecting student attendance at a specific time each day. **You can help maximize Bowie's funding by scheduling appointments for your child before school and after school, or if that's not possible, after the official attendance-recording time of 10:15 a.m.**

To illustrate the financial impact of absences, consider that **the significant number of unexcused Senior absences on the Friday before Spring Break cost Bowie over \$14,000 in funding for next year.** While it's easy to think that allowing students otherwise in good standing to miss an instructional day is harmless, it does have implications for student learning, state accountability, and as illustrated here, for school funding.

While we certainly want to diminish unexcused or discretionary absences, there are legitimate reasons to be absent from school. Given the uptick in flu and other illnesses among our students, it is still very important that you **keep your student at home if they are sick** to ensure their recovery and the health of other students, as well the Bowie staff. If your child is ill and raises concerns about their semester exam attendance incentive eligibility, please remind them that the incentive only involves one or two of their courses, and therefore, isn't worth jeopardizing their health by attending school before they recover.

Given the importance of attendance, we routinely revisit our attendance incentive strategies. Over the last couple of months, for example, a **task force of parents, students, teachers, and administrators reviewed Bowie's attendance incentive pilot program to evaluate its effectiveness and implementation.** The task force recommended steps be taken to make the policy more easily understood to parents and students. The [JBHS Attendance Incentives FAQs](#) were developed as a result. We also revised the [attendance page](#) on the JBHS website to highlight easy-to-use forms to document absences and to provide other useful information about attendance. I hope you find both of these new resources useful. As always, thank you for your continued support!

Juniors and their parents are invited to attend our College Fair that will be held on April 3, 2019, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at Bowie. We will have representatives from a few local and out of state colleges, as well as military representatives on hand to help answer your questions. There will be a couple of breakout sessions pertaining to going through the application processes at some of these schools.

The list of names of candidates for graduation has been prepared and ready for review for accuracy by the Class of 2019 and their family. Since diplomas and transcripts are legal documents, names must match what is on the student's birth certificate or have a legal document on file showing a name change. However, **beginning this year, the name printed in the graduation program or announced during the ceremony may be a preferred name.** Students, even those over the age of 18, must have a parent/guardian approve any name change request for the graduation ceremony. Lists of names are available in the main office, counselors' offices, the College/Career Center, senior English, government, and economic classes. Forms for making name change requests are available in the main front office and with the counselors. **All name change forms are to be turned into the registrars' office no later than April 1, 2019.**

The James Bowie PTSA proudly awards scholarships to our Bowie Seniors who plan to attend a certificate program, trade school, two-year college or four-year college program. **Through PTSA memberships and fundraising, we will award several scholarships this year that could range from \$500 - \$1000.** For eligibility requirements and instructions to apply, please visit www.bowieptsa.org/scholarships. **Applications are due April 12, 2019.**

Sincerely,

Mark Robinson
Principal
James Bowie High School
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A Recognized School of Excellence