



October 24th 2021

Dear Benson Tech Parents/Guardians

It has come to our attention that there are some issues involving our 9th grade students when they leave campus at lunch. We know that there are stories that are floating out there regarding what's been happening with these real and/or perceived incidents. Please note that my office has followed up on all reports of incidents pertaining to Eastport Plaza/Walmart and at this time there are two confirmed cases where students have had either personal items taken from them or they were being harassed/threatened by non-Benson Tech individuals while off campus during lunchtime at Eastport Plaza/Walmart. It's important that with Benson Tech having an open campus that Parents/Guardians have real conversations with their students (especially our 9th grade students) about being proactive with safety measures if they choose to leave the campus during lunch. As an open campus I know that many of our students leave the facility during lunch and we want them to know that it's very difficult for us to provide for their safety when they leave the campus. The idea has been brought up with just closing the BHS campus at lunch and please note that this is not feasible on two fronts. The first being that we simply do not have the manpower within the building to supervise 1000 students on campus during lunch and the second reason being that with COVID-19 still prevalent within our schools and students being allowed to take off their mask during lunch and eat within the building this would soon become a major COVID-19 health concern for staff and students within the building.

Please note that in working with the District I am now going to extend my supervision at lunchtime in order to spend some time out at Eastport Plaza and Walmart during the lunch hour in order to provide an extra sense of security and support for our students. As the investigations are still ongoing with Eastport Plaza Security there is only so much I can divulge in these situations because of student privacy issues and the overall safety of the students involved in these incidents.

What I am asking Parents/Guardians of BHS students to do:

- Please remind your students to be mindful about leaving campus and going over to Walmart/Eastport Plaza during lunch and we highly encourage students to eat lunch on campus.
- If students do decide to leave campus, please remind students to be proactive regarding safety measures and always walk in a group and be sure to return back to school ASAP within the lunchtime period.

- Please have students call the school at (503) 916-5100 if student(s) have any safety concerns or information about any lunch time incidents.
- Students who want to anonymously report anything can also use Safe Tips: Find more information at <https://www.safeoregon.com/report-a-tip/> or call or text 844-472-3367.

As an administrative team we will continue to do all that we can to keep our campus and students safe at lunch and all other times throughout the day and we wholeheartedly appreciate your help and support in this effort.

Very Sincerely,

Curtis Wilson, Jr.
Principal

Sara Callies
Vice Principal

Barry Phillips
Vice Principal

Colleen Johnston
Dean of Students