



# STAFF NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024



## THIS ISSUE

*Important HR Dates*

*Safe Technology*

*Vector Training*

## IMPORTANT HR DATES

June 17, 2024

Longevity Forms Due

## KEEPING YOURSELF SAFE USING TECHNOLOGY

### Strong Passwords

Use complex passwords with a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols. Avoid common words or phrases, and never reuse passwords across different accounts.

### Backup Your Data

Regularly backup important data to an external drive or cloud, including Google Drive, to prevent loss in a cyber attack.

### Beware of Phishing Scams

- **Verify Sender's Identity:** Always check the email address of the sender. Be cautious of emails from unknown sources or those that slightly alter familiar email addresses (e.g., using first.last@gmail.com). Mass emails should indicate approval by Blount County Schools or designated personnel.
- **Look for Red Flags in Emails:** Poor grammar, urgent language urging immediate action, and offers that seem too good to be true are common indicators of phishing emails.
- **Don't Click on Suspicious Links:** Hover your mouse cursor over links to see where they actually lead before clicking. If in doubt, do not click.
- **Avoid Sharing Sensitive Information:** Legitimate organizations will never ask for sensitive details like passwords or social security numbers via email.
- **Be Wary of Pop-Ups:** Pop-up windows often masquerade as legitimate website components but are often phishing attempts. Always close them by clicking the "X" in the corner rather than clicking on the pop-up.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** If something feels off, trust your instincts and avoid interacting with the email or website.

### Always Report

If you have doubts about an email, click a link, or open an attachment, please let the Technology Department know as soon as you can. We appreciate the reports and will work quickly to resolve the issue.

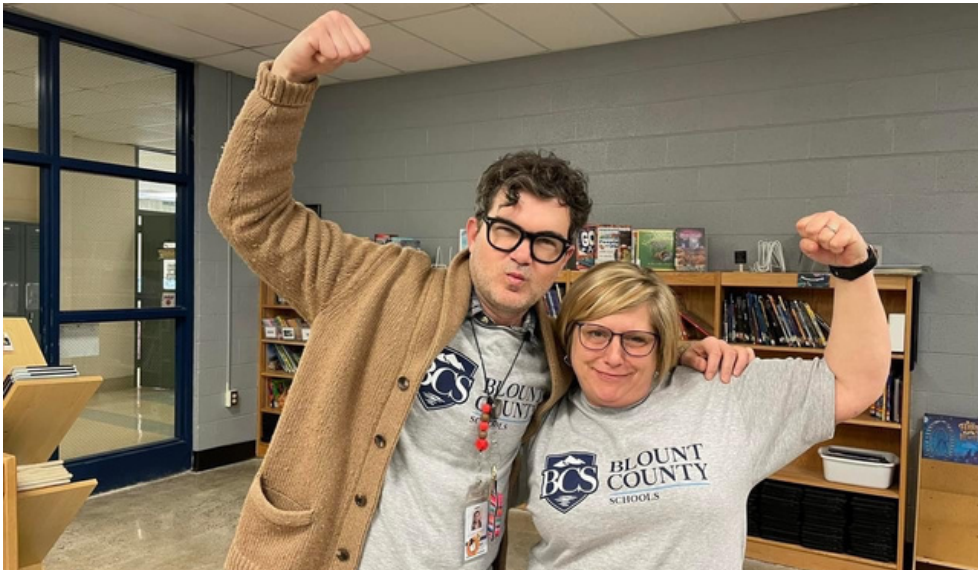
# RETIREMENT INFORMATION

Click on the links below for important information on retirement benefits.

- [401K Plan Highlights](#)
- [TCRS - Online Retirement Application Information](#)

# VECTOR TRAINING GOES LIVE IN MAY

Vector training (formerly known as Safe Schools) is required by state and federal laws for employees working with children. All BCS employees are required to complete the training through Vector. Our nutrition, maintenance, and custodial staff are trained in-person. In other words, if you are employed by BCS, these trainings are required. Hopefully, we will release the trainings for 2024-2025 in May. Your contact for all Vector questions is Leslie Mardis at [Leslie.Mardis@blountk12.org](mailto:Leslie.Mardis@blountk12.org).



# CALENDAR BLOCKING

Make every minute of your day matter by using calendar blocking.

Set time blocks for daily tasks including important meetings, appointments, exercise, rest, and fun.

Review your schedule before the new week begins and prepare in advance.

Do you have all the resources you need to complete the tasks planned for your week? If not, develop a plan to get what you need in order to be prepared for the new week. This will eliminate extra stressors and keep you focused on maximizing all of your moments.

# HR ROADSHOWS

Roadshows are a chance for all employees to connect with HR. We can make badges, discuss retirement plans, assist with login information for many systems, answer PowerSchool questions, and many more activities.

February 8, 2024

Union Grove Elementary  
Union Grove Middle

February 14, 2024

Porter Elementary  
Prospect Elementary

March 4, 2024

Montvale Elementary

March 6, 2024

Mary Blount Elementary

April 10, 2024

Middlesettlements  
Samuel Everett

# NEED A NEW BADGE?

Send a picture by email to:

- Certified-  
[susan.hughes@blountk12.org](mailto:susan.hughes@blountk12.org)
- Classified-  
[kathy.mccroskey@blountk12.org](mailto:kathy.mccroskey@blountk12.org)

Wait on the HR Roadshow

- HR will visit each school throughout the school year.

# TCRS LOGIN INFO

New to TCRS? You will need to create an account.

- Go to [mytcrs.tn.gov](http://mytcrs.tn.gov)
- Choose "Need to Register" in the blue login box to the left of the page.

# ESS REFERRAL BONUS

Do you know someone who would be a great substitute teacher? Go to [ESS.com/refer/](http://ESS.com/refer/) to learn about the \$100 ESS referral bonus available.