

**BHA Board Report
12/10/24**

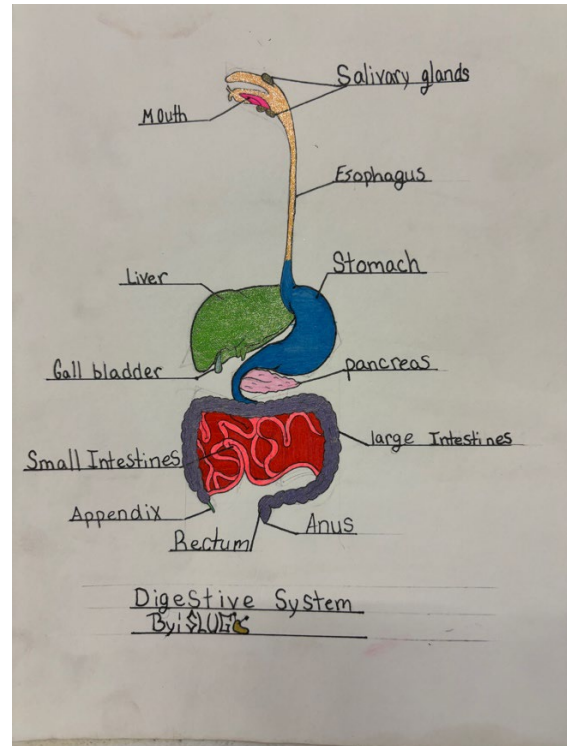
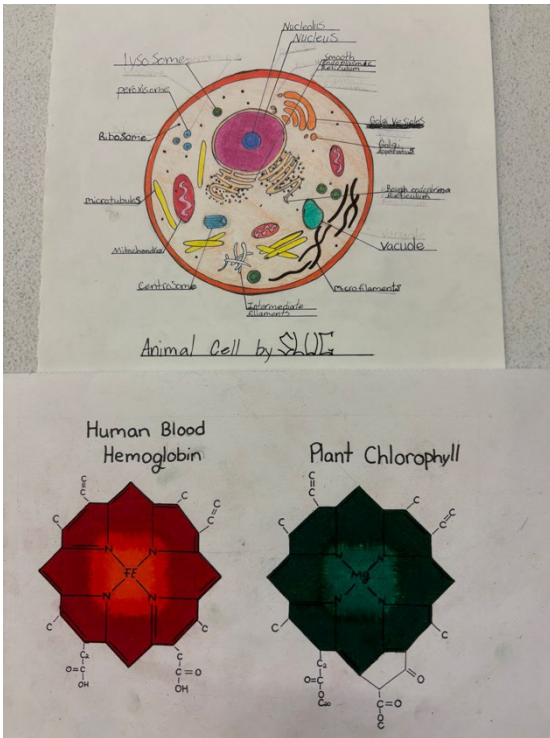


BHA Hosts Occupational Therapy Intern – Fall 2024

Sam Hilger (dude in the above pic wearing the BHA shirt) an Occupational Therapy student from Rocky Mountain College, sent us the final draft of his capstone paper for a project that he completed here at BHA this fall. I am attaching it to this board report. Sam was a fabulous addition to our school, and tried his best to address what we felt were our most pressing needs. His main directive from us was to build relationships with staff and students first, before worrying about other elements of his project. Sam took that objective very seriously and created a positive connection with everyone in our building.

Sam immediately learned that he could be extremely impactful with our students and share more of his expertise, so long as our students trusted Sam and felt comfortable in his presence. This required Sam to integrate into all areas of our school. He learned on the fly how to be effective in a variety of ways. Whatever a situation called for, Sam was willing to help out and support our community. He attended field trips, taught various lessons on stretching and aerobic activity, supervised students during PE and passing hours, and in general just chipped in wherever he could.

We were lucky to have Sam here for a few months, and now that he's moved on to other coursework in his graduate studies, his presence is certainly missed. It's always great for us at BHA to host interns and support graduate students in their coursework. It models great relationality for our students and gives them the opportunity to interact with individuals from other communities and backgrounds.



BHA Biology Classes/Health PE Courses

Investigating healthy lifestyles, studying nutrition, as well as the benefit of consistent exercise and active lifestyles is a major component of our Biology and Health courses. Through these classes, students learn how different systems in their bodies (digestive and circulatory) deliver nutrients to cells to give them energy while making them who they are. Our students create diagrams and utilize 3D models to understand the chemical makeup of nutrients and their body structures.

Our PE classes emphasize activities with lots of physical movement to promote wellness in the physical, emotional, and relational sense. As part of this coursework, our students develop goals in each major area of the class (physical, psychological, social/emotional) where they can track their progress throughout the quarter through various health activities. For example, some students may create goals to improve their sleep.

Part of the tracking of this goal would be to document sleep patterns for a period of time, usually a couple weeks, to acquire a baseline of what their sleep situations actually looks like. And after determining this baseline, Mr. Klauk generally works with each student to create realistic goals and interventions to test out.

After a few weeks of trying specific interventions, Mr. Klauk will facilitate an evaluation process with our students that will hopefully provide insight into whether specific interventions are effective. And if not, they'll go back to the drawing board to try different methods.



One thing we're really excited about that's coming up soon is a new collaborative course between Browning High School and Buffalo Hide Academy which will focus on the healing potential and wellness benefits of extreme forms of art – namely heavy metal, punk, and hardcore music. This is the first collaborative class ever between these two campuses, if I'm not mistaken. The class will take a deep dive into the coping strategies embedded in heavy music and the expressive arts, with a focus on the connectivity, connection, and community found within this scene.

As a lifelong, passionate metalhead, music is one of the most important ways that I process through difficult life experiences. Playing guitar, listening to loud and intense music, and attending shows is one of the great joys of my life and has provided me with tremendous meaning and countless reasons to live. Our hope is that this course will directly result in more protection from suicide for our students, specifically through acquiring new coping mechanisms to deal with distress and confront adversity. In addition, demonstrating the healing potential and the cathartic processing of difficult emotional material will be paramount to our daily routine.