

Alumni Responses

What year did you graduate?	In what ways did Bexley Schools prepare you for your future? Please list/describe all of the things that the school did to help you feel ready for your life after high school.	In what ways did BCS not adequately prepare you for your future? Please list/describe things the schools could have done better.	What education-related changes or new opportunities should we explore to help our current students before they graduate?
2016	I was very prepared academically (e.g. study skills, writing skills, time management, workload management, etc). The fine arts programs also prepared me well for collegiate programs (e.g. musical groups, music theory, sight reading, etc).	It would have been helpful to learn more about repaying student loans, writing resumes, and preparing for employment interviews.	The school I currently work at does a career day, which would have been really awesome to attend as a student to get more ideas of career possibilities post-high school.
2022	Compared to many of my other friends in college, I feel like Bexley made me much more disciplined and prepared for college work. I also feel more prepared in aspects such as reaching out to teachers and meeting new people.	School is still hard. We act like school will not be difficult because we went to Bexley, but that is very wrong.	Classes need to be stricter, teachers cannot be as lenient as they have been with due dates, sick days, ect. Additionally I think capstone should be in person, I think this may have been added already, but having something to enhance not only education but encourage creativity would definitely be beneficial.
2017	The ASL class helped me to discover my passion in Sign Language and I went on to become a Educational Interpreter for Deaf kids. I owe my interest in ASL to my high school ASL class at Bexley. Unfortunately, the class was short lived despite all the interest in taking it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •more social groups for students to meet other students (mandatory groups during homeroom students from different grades to meet people) •a more welcoming school where students don't feel judged. 	Internships for students who are seniors if they know what field they want to work in. Senior year I did mostly sitting around instead of learning. I would've loved to get working experience in the field of work I was interested in. Bring back ASL as a foreign language.
Other	Being at Bexley, you don't realize how difficult the curriculum is until you get to college. Once in college, I was surrounded by students who were well below academically.	Many people left Bexley with the same group of friends they have had since childhood. While in many ways this is a positive. I know many people who, once they got to college, has no idea how to make new friends and ended up transferring to new schools where their same high school friends went.	Bring back senior project. This allowed students to try out "career opportunities" before college. Offer other options to students who may not think college is for them.

2018	High scholastic pressure being replicated at the collegiate level. Broader life experience from travel with BCS Band and Choir. AP classes clearing the way for lots of my general education, letting me take more classes. Mrs. Motassem teaching us how to sew a button and a few other actual life skills.	Learning how to interact with people who aren't honors students: white, upper-middle class, and achievement oriented was not part of the cocurricular education. Classes get separated very early on and it becomes like an echo chamber at the higher end classes like AP courses. Functional life skills were because a single teacher went above and beyond: how to change tire, file taxes (what forms, where to send them, etc.)	I'm not sure how to fix the first part. There's a lot of sociological factors that play into it that the school can't necessarily rectify, perhaps hiring minority teachers (e.g., hiring a Black AP math teacher because Black students might feel more comfortable in the AP course). The second part can come in the form of an expanded personal finance curriculum. Work with a CPA or tax lawyer (perhaps utilizing alumni network) to prepare the teacher and then teacher is well prepared for the students. Reframing the capstone as a career exploration could help with that course restructuring. I think it would also make sense to have it as a 2 semester course, giving more time to dive in-depth about benefit programs, the tax system, job applications, state documents (state ID, driver's license, passport), a brief overview of reserve banking and how interest works, and more.
2012	High rigor of courses prepared for rigor of college courses, opportunities to engage in hands on learning, especially in science.	Didn't necessarily feel prepared to handle study skills and balancing harder courses when it moved past entry level analysis. High achieving doesn't always equal strong study and coping skills. Also feel that Bexley is a bubble and wasn't always exposed to different cultures in a real-world way given the homogeneity of the school population.	A greater emphasis on exploring fields of study/careers-shadowing days where juniors/seniors can explore a field and learn about it to inform their decisions about college majors/pathways. Some kind of required elective class that focuses on college readiness/organization/study skills. This is something that a lot of high achieving students struggle with when they transition because they've been able to succeed on talent alone and might lack the skills and procedures that will help when it gets hard. Access to the larger community. Columbus is diverse and having the students explore these diverse backgrounds and experiences to expose them to the "other" to reduce the "Bexley Bubble" effect and combat some recent issues of racism on campus.

2013	Bexley did a great job at encouraging AP level courses so that I could be better prepared for college and skip some of the introductory courses. It also did a wonderful job of exposing me to different teaching and learning methods so that I could take that with me through college and even graduate school to adapt to different methods. And lastly, the teachers were always honest, forgiving, and had high expectations that taught me to seek success.	More college preparedness would have been beneficial. I ended up transferring colleges after one semester once I quickly learned it was not the right fit for me. Encouraging students to look at a variety of schools (size, location, majors, etc.) would have been so beneficial.	More carrer exploration. Seeing what kind of jobs, majors, careers, real world experiences are out there.
2015	It exposed me to the arts, taught me how to academically write, prepared me to be a real world problem solver.I was ready for college and beyond.	Expose me to other cultures	Not sure if you are there yet but there should be a 1 to 1 ratio for technology and students. Students should be required to take an elective exposing them to different cultures. Improvement of science staff. Leniency when allowing students to take AP classes (overly restrictive on who can take them): inequitable.
2021	gave me college credits	very poor conflict resolution. i retained little to no knowledge in my 4 years. now i am unemployed and not even going to school. they dealt with harassment issues like idiots too. at least i built up a patience tolerance.	

Other	Incredible relationships with peers and staff. I left home really feeling the love and support from Bexley and rely on many of those relationships to this day.	Things may have changed since 2011 but I do think the lack of racial diversity was a stark contrast in comparison to life outside of Bexley. I have memories of the way that some of my peers of color were treated, even just in tone and attitude from students and staff alike, that stand out after now being in more diverse settings. Even just adding more D&I and equity based education for students could go a long way. I recall my history teacher talking about Chicago when we covered redlining in class. It wasn't until years later that I realized that Bexley itself is one of the strongest examples of redlining in the region. It's okay to admit and teach that. I loved my community and school and wouldn't trade my experience for the world, but I hope to see improvement in this department before I send my own child to the district.	Bexley is great for accelerated students and students who may have special educational needs, but I struggled as a solid B/occasional C+ student to find the right path for me in math and science and in general.
2022	I was well-prepared academically for college. I definitely felt ahead of many of my friends	It would be helpful to implement some classes or opportunities learning real-world stuff. A class on woodworking, how to use tools, etc	unsure
2015	It helped me feel extremely prepared for college. I felt ahead in most of my classes and was able to handle any work loads thrown at me. I do wish they promoted trades or the military more.	I did not feel ready for the real world. I felt prepared for college but after college, I did not understand taxes, and budgeting very well. Wish I learned it at a younger age.	I would personally say to promote trade options and the military to people who feel like they're just jumping into college. The only reason I decided to go to college is because I saw all of my classmate around me getting acceptance letters and wanted to "fit in" in a certain way with them. Now being 26 if I could go back to 18 again I would've joined the military or went into trade schooling not knowing really the benefits that there truly is in those programs. I felt like I did not know much about any of those options while in high school. I think promoting the fact that you do not need to necessarily go to a college right out of school to some students could benefit some in the long run.

2021

Not very much to be completely honest.
I would say that being at Bexley does help with setting some things up.
For example I know how to engage in conversations a little better and I know how to present myself but for the other things such as taxes, and just how to do things people need to do in modern day it really doesn't. I still have a lot of questions.

Taxes,
How to get a car,
How to get the job I want and not the job I need.

Offer hands on courses.
Sitting in class taking notes doesn't help a lot of students and I was one of them.
I'm an artist so I took almost all the art courses I could because it was hands on and taught me things for the career I wanted to pursue.

2012

Academic wise felt very prepared. I didn't feel a sense of being so overwhelmed with school work in college. The teachers do a great job of getting to know students and building relationships with them. That helped in college as I was able to build relationships with my professors and continue to learn. Small class sizes also help force students to know the material and harder to hide. Again in college gave me the ability to participate and not feel scared even as a freshman in the academic setting.

I felt in high school there wasn't a lot of opportunity to be in the Columbus community and being exposed to kids who are different from the bexley bubble. I knew it would be an adjustment when I graduated but I did feel like I wish I had more experience with kids who were different from me. I think the school could work on being more inclusive to other communities and getting kids to volunteer outside of bexley not for their college application but to see a world larger than the bubble.

While college was the right fit for me, I did see a lot of kids struggle with being expected to go to college. The school should do a better job of explaining to 16/17/18 year olds that if you're not ready for college, there are other options. There were plenty of kids who could've benefited from being told about gap year programs, work study programs, community college benefits, etc. instead I saw bexley kids struggle in college, barely graduate, or graduate and be freaked out about having a job/not knowing what to do.

It would have been nice to have a financial literacy class. Again with the college expectations I don't think anyone was told what college loans mean? My parents explained to me that have \$100k in loans would take forever to pay off and hang over my head, but I saw a lot of my friends go to a "dream school" and put down a lot of loans. A lot of them now talk about the stress of it and it affects them a lot. The

Give kids more opportunities to go out and volunteer in the Columbus area. Offer financial literacy workshops for juniors and seniors. Give students a day or two a year where they can miss class if they go to shadow someone for work so they can get an idea of what they might want to do when they graduate.

Other

Social skills, good studying, rewards if do stuff well, punishment if done wrong.

Perhaps set higher goals and expectations. Reward only for truly outstanding merits.

basic adult financing.

2020	AP Credits	While I can't speak to how things are now, upon reflection there was a distinct lack of diversity in my higher level of academics at BCS. Many influences of the "Gifted Track" from my elementary days were felt up until my last day at high school. I don't think I ever had a full understanding of the implicit biases that were reinforced by this divide until I left the school.	Greater emphasis on diversity in teaching staff.
2018	The personal approach that the teachers took in making sure students who were struggling got the help they needed. Some Financial classes, I.e. the capstone project.	Financial classes, knowing what websites to find good paying jobs.	Skill/Trade classes
2021	challenged me with advanced coursework. Guided me through the college application process. I had the opportunity to participate in sports that taught me discipline and work-ethic.	As a computer science major in college, I am taking some VERY hard courses. I do not feel that Bexley prepared me for the higher-education classes where you study and still get a 35% on the test, but then the test is curved. Pushing through on an assessment when you know you are failing it as you take it, is a hard situation, and it could make a lot of kids drop out of harder, STEM majors in college because all of their efforts are still only producing "failing grades" (before the curve). One professor told me, "it doesn't matter if everyone does well or everyone does poorly. It just matters how you do compared to the average." (because the professor knows it will be curved).	More classes that put a focus on potential careers to help us choose a better fit for our future. Especially at Bexley where almost every kid will go to college (willingly or not), it is good for kids to have a better idea of what they want to do as a career.
2014	Academically rigorous	Cultural diversity throughout curriculum, experiences, etc	Anything and everything possible to make all students feel welcome, supported, and appreciated by all students and staff
2015	Bexley Schools prepared me for all aspects of life. From preparation, to accountability, and even being genuine good person.	NA	I think there should be more internship opportunities for students. You can never be too prepared for the real world!

2022	Good education, AP tests (you should pay for it again), good teachers who help get opportunities in the community	Paying for AP tests, teaching diverse history all year round in all subjects (not just "black and white" history, AAPI, Hispanic, Latinx, etc etc), toxic school environment of success and grades over mental health, self medicating students with alcohol/juuling	More community work/opportunities in adult spaces in order to prepare for college/scholarships/adult life
2020	Offered many higher education courses, teachers challenged students to become better people	I was not aware of some of the resources that were in place to help me with classes.	Advertise non-collegiate post-grad opportunities to all students
2014	Bexley taught me that hard work and perseverance will help me in the job field. Also because of how I learned to talk to people it taught me networking. Bexley when I was a student challenged kids and teachers and administration didn't conform to all of the new Social stigmas.	Bexley at times sugarcoated the real world. In the schools kids were never told what it was like trying to compete with kids.	Bexley should focus on keeping kids accountable for their actions and challenge them and not make things about equality. The real world and job market are not equal and the school should not be posting equal this and equal that. Most companies will hire based on merit and that is what needs to be stressed to kids
2014	Rigorous focus on reading, writing, math and other core subjects. Do NOT compromise on the standard for any of these fundamentals as they are THE difference for BCS grads later in life. No question	The education I got was absolutely top notch compared to even some of my most affluent peers at college. I would just say this focus on pushing kids into attending the absolute most prestigious, expensive, big-brand out of state universities was already out of hand when I was at BHS and has only gotten worse. Many would be just as successful (if not more so) going to a state school or liberal arts college that doesn't bankrupt them.	If it's not broken don't fix it. I realize it's all about finding the next big thing, but the absolute most important thing is to never take for granted the excellent and thorough education Bexley already provides. Math, reading, writing, science, humanities, arts... proficiency in each of these subjects is what sets us up for success compared to our peers. Just because not 100% of graduates chose to take advantage of these opportunities doesn't mean you have to uproot the whole program - by and large (and maybe contrary to what more recent administrators will claim) the vast majority thrive with the standards and curricula already in place

2014	<p>AP classes at Bexley were much more difficult than college courses, which in hindsight I am extremely happy about. This made college and professional workloads seem very manageable by comparison.</p> <p>Several teachers I had exemplified loving their job while handling their responsibilities to the highest level. Mike Featherstone, Amy Blosser and Andy Johnson deserve shoutouts, all excellent role models.</p> <p>I have made a living in the arts as a symphony orchestra musician, and that is in large part thanks to the excellent music department. The lessons learned in ensembles and AP music theory were invaluable to my success in college and in my career.</p>	A quick course in how taxes work would be great.	Any program/club that champions personal creativity. Creative writing, music composition/song writing, coding, graphic design, etc. These may be in place already but I don't remember them from my time. Encouraging personal exploration like that could help steer people towards careers that they might not fall into and love.
2014	Academically, I was completely ready for college.	Life in the Bexley bubble is not real life. Bexley students are sheltered and taught that life is easy.	Home economics! How to pay bills, how to take care of a house, what do student loans really mean, how to do laundry, etc.
2018	Bexley strongly developed my critical reading and writing skills. It also definitely strengthened my ability to use and understand primary sources within social sciences.	I don't feel like Bexley really prepared me to engage meaningfully with others professionally. There were not very many opportunities to work as a part of a team, which is the biggest skill I needed for my career. I also think Bexley failed to give me the technological hard skills and creative problem solving abilities that I need as I start my career. Lastly, I think that Bexley could've prepared me better to be an engaged community member and part of a democracy. There was really no training in how to advocate for yourself or how to initiate engagement with community members to lobby for change.	I think integrating technology into classrooms in more meaningful ways is a change that the high school specifically should make. I think there should be more opportunities for students to learn through meaningful engagement with leaders doing meaningful work. This could mean guest speakers (increased expectations for the way students interact with guest speakers would also be meaningful) or could mean implementation of projects where community members could come in and give feedback and workshop with students if possible.
2018	Taking so many AP classes was super good	The social experiences were terrible	Stress relief classes, personal finance, etc etc

2014	<p>Bexley taught me all of the fundamental academic areas very well -- my reading, writing and math skills are very strong, even years after graduating from Bexley. These skills set me up well for the SAT and ACT, which I performed strongly on, helping with the college admission process. I took a few AP classes in high school as well, which gave me a nice little leg up on my college coursework.</p> <p>The most important thing that Bexley did for me during my time there was allowing me flexibility in my curriculum to do a Rotary Youth Exchange year. I spent one year living with host families and studying in Lima, Peru, which was an incredibly impactful and formative experience for me. This wouldn't have been possible without the Bexley administrators granting me the flexibility and accepting my Peruvian transcript as part of my Bexley high school education.</p>	<p>Some things Bexley could do better to create more well-rounded and well-equipped graduates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meaningful group projects; teaching kids to collaborate is VITAL for success in college - Autonomy in the classroom! Students who feel empowered to take ownership over their own educational experiences will feel so much more bought in to their high school experience, making them significantly more equipped for college and the workforce - More career exploration opportunities - Increased connectivity within the greater Columbus area; there are so many amazing opportunities for learning and growth within our city, but so many students remain incredibly sheltered within the Bexley circle. Bexley could do a better job of bringing in some of the outstanding thought leaders from our community into classes and create more opportunities for students to get out into the world - More exposure to programs like Rotary Youth Exchange, CISV and other global education entities - WORK LIFE BALANCE. Students at Bexley work really really hard on homework, studying, extracurriculars, etc. and miss out on other incredibly important parts of the teenage experience because they're so focused on the grind and fearful about not getting into college 	<p>Some of the highest-impact experiences that I had as a high schooler happened outside of the classroom -- my year as a foreign exchange student, cross cultural educational programs with CISV, half-day project-based learning program Mosaic etc. I think that Bexley has a ton of opportunity to create non-academic focused experiences for kids that can still be incredibly educational and formative for students, making them even more well-rounded and equipped for college and their careers.</p> <p>Focus on collaboration, autonomy and empowerment, career exploration, hands-on learning opportunities, projects vs tests, exposure to local thought leaders and other cultures, emphasis on personal reflection, etc. would all go a really long way to create even better young adults coming out of the Bexley school system.</p>
2019	<p>I felt that i had a heavier workload in high school than I do in college. I am very grateful for this because I feel like I was better prepared for college than some of my peers.</p>	<p>I felt in the school there was a lack of real-world learning</p>	<p>Maybe there can be more opportunities for immersive experiences such as having panels of speakers come to talk or having more classroom field trips to museums</p>

2017

The academic rigor certainly prepared me for a college-level workload once I graduated and attended a four-year institution, particularly when it came to writing and synthesizing skills. Less so when it came to hard sciences and math skills. The relationships I had with my teachers encouraged me to seek out similar relationships with my professors and I was able to cultivate connections with mentors because of the open-door policy that Bexley teachers adhered to

There could have been more of an effort made within academics not related to AP courses. There was a lot of social and institutional pressure to take as many AP classes as possible which is not necessarily beneficial to the student without adequate support systems in place

I think more experiential based learning would be beneficial to students to help open minds to different walks of life, along with career and post-secondary school development. I wish I had more guidance knowing what to study in college and what I wanted to do with a degree, and I think some sort of coursework that would help student narrow down their plans for after high school would be an asset

2012

Bexley did a good job helping me identify colleges to apply to, which ultimately led to me attending a strong business school where I gained extensive experience working in groups and with technology, both of which are skills I use extensively in my career. Additionally, I had some amazing teachers (e.g., Ms. Horger and Mr. Featherstone) whose passion for their material was palpable. These teachers served as examples of adults who had found careers that they loved which, as a student considering a variety of potential career options, was powerful to see.

My education at Bexley was fairly traditional - there was a lot of emphasis on homework, grades, exams, and quantifiable metrics. Additionally, the experience was largely individual in nature, with consequences for collaborating on assignments or using external resources during an exam. Ultimately, this is extremely unlike my experience in the workforce. I rarely am in positions where I have to memorize a set of information and regurgitate it blindly. Instead, I am consistently in positions where I am forced to think critically with a set of information, or where I am given a small amount of information and am challenged to use my resources to learn more and transfer what I learn into a real-life scenario. If Bexley could provide students more of this type of experience, I think they would better prepare their students for the workforce.

In addition, at least when I was in school, there was extremely limited coursework dedicated to technology. In my experience in the workforce, almost every job has some element of technology, and many of the most lucrative, challenging, and sought-after careers are focused in the technology space. I would recommend that Bexley provide more technology-oriented opportunities to students.

I personally did at least two internships during high school, outside of Bexley City Schools. One of the internships was set up independently, and the other was through a program I did through the John Glenn School of Public Affairs geared toward high schoolers. These internships were highlights of my high school career and definitely two of the most valuable learning experiences I had prior to college. I would highly recommend that Bexley explore ways to give students, particularly students from under-privileged families who may not have a built-in professional network at home, opportunities to experience professional internships to augment their high school curriculum.

In addition, I would recommend exploring more project-based curriculum. That's something that I did a lot of at my business school in college, as well as at Mosaic, which I participated in during my junior year. In my 6+ years in the workforce following college, I have taken less than 5 "individual exams" similar to those I did during my days at Bexley. However, I am consistently working in new and different team environments where I am not aiming for a grade, or for individual success. I would challenge Bexley City Schools to give students more opportunities to work in groups that more closely mirror the modern workforce.

Lastly, I would recommend providing more opportunities for students to evaluate themselves, rather than hinging their success on evaluations from their teachers. In the workforce, after each project I complete, I am required to do a self-

2022

The teachers taught material very well and the wide variety of AP courses prepared me for college.

Actually do something about bullying. Me and many of my friends had been bullied for years with the school doing nothing. Maybe the principal shouldn't pull kids with anxiety out of class. Do something about students who try to commit suicide. It's a miracle that no one has been successful. And no, having an assembly where you say "we are here for you" and then doing nothing else to help people doesn't count as caring at all about students. Have a competent special education team. The lack of support for special needs kids is shocking. Follow kids' IEPs. It's a legally binding document, so act like it. Why are there so many admin? Wouldn't that money be better spent on making opportunities for students? I feel like they are constantly making new administration roles. Treat teachers like people. They would have so much more time and energy to teach kids if they didn't have to deal with random road blocks. *(Comment summarized to protect the person's privacy.)*

Get rid of the signs of suicide assembly and actually implement things that would help students' mental health.

2022	BSC helped me learn how to function at a high academic standard while balancing mental illnesses which has significantly helped me with my first semester in college.	Bexley did not prepare me how to become a functioning academic person. I struggled throughout my high school career on how to function in a high functioning academic environment especially through high school. I also still do not know how to file taxes which I believe should have been taught through the capstone course all seniors were required to take (at least give a lesson on it or some type of brief explanation of the process). There also needs to be more education when it comes to the seriousness of mental illnesses and suicide because the general overview that we got only through videos once a year truly did not help. Also please never return Big Mama to the schools because she seriously is awful at educating on being cyber safe to students and was more of an entertainment than a real educator on the topics she was trying to discuss.	BSC should open more career opportunities to students. I was lucky enough to participate in classrooms while having the desire to become a teacher and having these opportunities help me get real world experience.
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Other	critical thinking, writing skills, reading skills, relationship building, collaboration	Life skills and practical skills, like personal finance	Would like to see more balance between the academic skills and the practical life skills needed later on. Would also like to see increased emphasis mental health and well-being.
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2014

I could probably write for 50 pages about this, if I'm being completely honest. The most salient thing BCSD did to help me feel ready for my life after high school was give me an academically robust education. I took mostly honors classes during my time at Bexley from grade 7 to 12, and I felt that my teachers, for the most part, were both knowledgeable in their subject areas and capable educators. I would say my academic experience at Bexley was overall very positive. I participated in two sports, as well as a handful of extracurricular activities. I always felt that my academic and extracurricular endeavors had support from both the school staff and greater Bexley community. The BEF sponsored programs like Leadership Bexley and author visits from Jennifer Egan, Billy Collins, and Jonathan Safran Foer, which were all formative experiences for me. When I arrived as a freshman at the University of Michigan, I was ready to excel in my classes. I was able to say that I had met some other authors on my syllabi, and I was empowered by a strong background in academic writing and scholarly debate. I ended up earning an English major and two minors: one in cultural anthropology and one in art history. Now I'm a preservice high school English teacher, hoping to give other students positive academic experiences as well.

While at Bexley, I was able to learn about cultures that are different from my own through having many friends who were Jewish and engaging in literary works by some diverse authors. However, I felt that the school could have done a better job addressing topics around racial diversity and LGBTQIA+ students.

While there was a Black Student Union and a Gay-Straight Alliance, these groups remained mostly hidden to the general student population, which is the category I fell into. My general impression was that these clubs existed mostly as safe havens for marginalized students, but I have few memories of anyone who wasn't directly involved in these clubs voicing support of them. I know there has been more work around these issues at BCSD in recent years, which is great. I feel I would have benefitted greatly from learning more about my peers who probably felt marginalized, and that this would have better prepared me to build relationships in the diverse world beyond Bexley.

Lastly, I'll say that even though I've grown to appreciate the focus on academics at Bexley, I wish there was more support for the arts as well. I was a very strong student, academically speaking, but I was also a pretty good visual artist! However, since the arts weren't privileged as heavily at Bexley, I stopped

This question is a bit difficult for me to answer because I've been out of Bexley schools for almost nine years. I would say that my answer to the previous question could guide any education-related changes or new opportunities.