

An FAQ For Concerned Parents

Before you Read

This document was created to address concerns parents might have about the strike that has been in place at Haverford College since 12:00am on Thursday, October 29th. In the process of working day and night to maintain the strike, it has come to our attention that there is a lack of information getting to parents and some misinformation spreading. We made this sheet to address concerns and clear up rumors.

Before you read, we ask that you review the following information:

- [The Strike and Demands Document](#), which explains how and why this strike came about, and what strikers are demanding from the college.
- These two documents, released to the entire student body, faculty, and staff: [What does Striking Mean?](#) And [Strike Updates](#). The former describes the actions we expect community members to take to support the strike. The latter includes recorded **day-by-day updates** to those expectations based on what we're learning through the strike.
- A list of acronyms and links for you to know before you start reading:
 - BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
 - FGLI = First Generation, Low-Income
 - PWI = Predominantly White Institution
 - BLM = Black lives matter
 - [BSRFI](#) = Black Students Refusing Further Inaction (a group of bi-college Black students who wrote an open-letter to the college over the summer with demands concerning anti-Blackness at the college, and gained over 2,000 signatures in support)
 - [@hc_strike](#) = an Instagram account that serves as a centralized place for information and graphics on the ongoing strike at Haverford

FAQ

1. What is a strike?

- “A refusal to work organized by a body of employees as a form of protest, typically in an attempt to gain a concession or concessions from their employer” (Oxford languages).
- In this case, a strike was organized by a group of Black, Indigenous, and of color students in response to the continued racism and anti-Blackness perpetrated by Haverford College administration. Please see [this google drive of resources](#), released to all Haverford students, faculty, and staff, for more on what this strike means for us, and why we're doing it. Please start with “What Does Striking Mean?” and “Strike Updates” if you haven't already as was asked in the *before you read*.

2. When will the strike end?

- When students, faculty, and administration reach a mutual agreement on how to move forward with student demands. Students have conceded to existing college mechanisms of “consensus” in the past and have still not seen equitable, productive change.
- The students organizing the strike are specifically looking for a definite, concrete timeline and plan of action detailing how the administration plans to meet the demands. President Raymond has publicly [responded to the demands](#), and student organizers [responded](#), informing her and the student body that her response leaves most demands unmet. Her blanket statements are not enough, and hence the strike continues. Student organizers have indicated how, when, and on what terms they intend to be in communication with administration moving forward.

3. I'm disappointed in the students' choice to jump to such a harmful course of action. Can't they write a letter, meet with the administration, or utilize student governance procedures to make change instead?

- Multiple student organizations and individuals (most recently BSRFI, ALAS, SALT) have done all of those things for years and [decades](#) (link to a drive of documents concerning the 1972 Haverford Boycott led by BSL) without any or enough change. A strike is a tool of last resort after communication breaks down between two groups of differential power.
- Over the summer during the protests, President Raymond and the college made several statements promising a different Haverford with anti-racism at the core of its decision making. This recent statement was a betrayal of those promises.
- Moreover, change does not come without sacrifice. Like your child, the student organizers are also students with parents who care about their education and professional development. **These sacrifices are to make Haverford a less violent institution both for students and those in the surrounding area.**

4. Who is this strike for and how will it benefit the college?

- The strike is for support of BIPOC and FGLI students. Here is the [link to their demands](#), as previously linked in the *before you read*.
- The point of the strike is not to benefit the college, but to bring demands that have been neglected for years into fruition.

5. Why are activist students allowed to be mean and to bully my child?

- A strike requires social pressure. When people cross a picket line, they are criticized because it means they are supporting the current norm at Haverford that consistently harms BIPOC and FGLI students. There cannot be grey areas in supporting the right to have equal access to an education.

- When your child is saying they are being bullied, what is being said? Having an emotional reaction to being pressured is common, especially under high stress.
- Emotions are high for many Haverford students right now. The academic rigor that normally pushes student stress levels in a normal year has continued despite the ongoing pandemic and political moment
- Your child may be jumping to the conclusion that they are receiving hate, when what they are actually hearing is frustration and anger from students who have faced disproportionate barriers to success because of their race and color at Haverford.
- You want your child to succeed in school, and so we hope you also wish BIPOC students and FGLI students to succeed. This strike is about standing in solidarity.
- BIPOC students consistently experience bullying and harm both from other students and the administration because of systemic racism. If you feel the urge to discredit this, please read the responses to the [BlackatHaverford](#) instagram page. This strike is to significantly reduce harm, not coddle uncomfortable feelings.

6. How can I support my child and other students participating in the strike in reaching their aims for justice in the Haverford community and the broader Philadelphia community?

- Students are striking not only from classes but also from campus jobs. If you send your child money or they have access to your credit card, this means they have access to funds for food and other basic needs, but not all students do.
- Earlier in the strike there was an effort to provide funds to an on campus mutual aid network which works to collect funds from those with disposable income and provide funds and other resources to students who do not have the same means as these more wealthy students. However, now due to an amazing influx of funds, that mutual aid fund has met its goals and people are instead being pushed to donate to local Philadelphia protest, bail, and mutual aid funds.
- Here's a link to an article about what [Mutual Aid](#) is and how it's different from what you may call charity or giving.
- Finally, your voice can have a huge impact. Emailing President Raymond wraymond@haverford.edu, Vice President and Chief of Staff jlytle@haverford.edu, and jbylander@haverford.edu to express your support for the strike, meeting the demands of BIPOC and FGLI the forgiveness of grading for assignments missed during the strike would go a long way.

7. What about my child's responsibilities to classes? What will happen to their grades?

- Every academic department has supported the strike efforts. Professors and other faculty, in some cases, are supporting students directly in this cause. You can find [faculty letters of support here](#).
- If your student is still worried about communicating their participation in the strike to professors and campus job supervisors, here is a [form email](#) that strike organizers have provided.
- The Spring 2020 semester demonstrated that the college will reconfigure academic requirements for students during moments of crisis. Students will collaborate with faculty and Dean's offices to ensure an equitable reconfiguration of academic expectations.

8. My child doesn't have access to food because they are being bullied into refraining from going to the DC. Are the organizers taking action to stop this?

- Please see question 5 before continuing.
- At first, the organizers were concerned that while student workers at the DC were striking, adult staff would be unfairly overwhelmed with student demand. Therefore, they were encouraging students not to go to the Dining Center unless absolutely necessary. Since their initial fear has not been the case, students have released several statements and updates stating that it is not crossing the picket line to go to the DC, and that students should not be made to feel bad for it.
- There have also been numerous efforts of support from community houses providing free meals to students, as well as the continued operation of The Nest, a free pantry for low-income and FGLI students.
- Your child does have access to food.

9. Where are funds being pulled? Who is in charge of funds?

- The BiCo Mutual Aid Fund models itself off of many other mutual aid funds set up around the country. They have a public google sheet documenting their fund intake and dispersal that's updated frequently.
- The Fund's priority is helping students in the strike who rely on campus wages.

10. I saw this photo going around and it makes me uncomfortable that people are being shamed into contributing.



Not on financial aid \$20	Went to private school \$10	Has not worked in a dining hall \$20	Has not had an on campus job \$20
Had paid ACT/SAT Prep \$20	Not taking out loans \$20	Parents have degrees \$20	Never sent money home \$20
White \$40	Use parents money at school \$20	Parents have grad school degrees \$20	own stock \$20
connected to parents' credit card account \$20	trust fund \$20	Legacy student \$20	Didn't have a job in high school \$20

1) check off all boxes that apply to you
2) add up the total
3) Donate that amount to @bicomutualaid

- Seeing this as shaming misses the point that BSRFI is making about Haverford. The college has extreme wealth disparity amongst students. [There are 26 students who come from billionaire households. 180 students that come from households that make over \\$630,000.](#)
- This bingo sheet is about taking stock of financial privilege and acting to redistribute funds to students who do not have the same privilege. Haverford being an intentional community should mean everyone takes care of one another rather than being silent about wealth.
- And it works. Through this type of organizing, students have been able to raise over 80,000 dollars in two days. Imagine if Haverford had used more of its funds collected from alumni to eliminate need amongst its student body.
- BiCo Mutual Aid has raised so much money that they are now asking supporters to donate to local Philadelphia Aid efforts instead.

11. We're in the middle of a pandemic. Why were students pressured into protesting on Wednesday? Won't this risk increasing cases and sending students home early?

- Taking the position that the strike is unsafe because of the pandemic does not take into account the in-person/virtual components of the strike and the risks associated with in person protest.
- Please see [this article](#) demonstrating that national BLM protests did not result in spikes for Covid-19.
- Students were NOT pressured into protesting on Wednesday. The protest was live streamed on zoom and on Instagram for students who were off-campus or did not feel comfortable joining in-person. If your child chose to engage in the protest, that was entirely their choice.
- The strike does not increase contact between those living at Haverford, or between students and individuals in the surrounding area.
- Per Dean Bylander, Haverford College has publicly stated that they have the resources to level up testing in the event of higher-risk activities among students.

Finally, thank you for engaging with us at this time. We know that a strike is not an easy thing to accept when you have invested in a Haverford education for your child. But Haverford does not provide the same treatment to all students, and continues to harm BIPOC people in and around Philadelphia. That is what this strike is about, which we are demanding finally be prioritized.