

September 28, 2017

Dear 11th Grade Families:

It was great seeing so many of you at Mini School! You were all good sports in spite of the rain that threatened to drench you as you dashed from class to class. If we didn't get a chance to chat that evening, I hope we will have a chance to do so sometime soon. October promises to be a busy month. As you'll see below, there are several dates you'll want to mark on your calendar.

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

You'll receive feedback from all of your children's teachers in preliminary comments, which will be written over the long weekend of **October 13-16**. Remember that preliminary comments are not final grades; instead, they are intended to give students a snapshot of their performance so far and guidance on how to improve academically in the coming months.

If advisors haven't done so already, they will be in touch shortly to set up conferences to go over the reports and to discuss any other questions you may have. As you discuss these reports with your juniors, it is always helpful to ask them to point out areas in which they have been successful thus far as well as asking them to come up with specific plans for how they might continue to improve. Remind them that this process of meaningful self-reflection – of learning and growth – is one that is never-ending.

BLUE & GOLD DANCE

The next big event for juniors is the Blue & Gold Dance, which will be held from 8:30 to 11 pm on Saturday, **October 7**. I want to take this opportunity to share the guidelines for student dances with you. Because we want all Burroughs students to have a healthful, safe and enjoyable experience at such school-sponsored functions, I hope you will use this event as an opportunity to talk with your child about safe driving and the dangers and legal issues surrounding the use of alcohol and illicit drugs.

Following are the guidelines for the Blue & Gold Dance, which I will review with all juniors and seniors before the dance:

- All students must check in at the front entrance of the dance. This process helps the dance chaperones keep track of how many students are present, take attendance if necessary, and collect fees when appropriate. Students must enter and exit from the foyer of Haertter Hall since they will not be allowed in the Commons hallway area. Therefore, arrivals and departures must occur in the Price Road lot rather than the Clayton lot.
- Just like last year, in order to encourage on-time arrival, fines will be imposed for late arrivals. Starting at 9:01 pm, it will cost an additional \$5 to enter the dance. The late fee increases each half hour (in \$5 increments) until 10:30 pm, when admission to the dance is no longer permitted. The late fees can be paid only in cash – no storecarding. Student Congress wants the student, not the parent, to be penalized for late arrivals. Again, no students will be admitted to the dance after 10:30 pm.
- Student Congress has decided this dance will be a lock-in. Students may not leave before 11 pm unless they have been given permission in advance from me. Student Congress hopes this will enhance the evening by allowing students to have fun as a group until the end of the evening,

and they've planned a number of special events throughout the evening to keep everyone entertained.

- The Blue & Gold Dance is for students in grades 10 through 12 only. One guest per student is allowed to attend the event unless otherwise specified by the event organizers. Students are responsible for the behavior of their guests. If a guest violates a school rule, the Burroughs host will be disciplined.
- The Major School Rules and the Drug Policy (copies of which can be found in the *Student/Parent Handbook*) are in effect at all school-sponsored events. Students are responsible for understanding these rules before attending the event. If a student is found to have been in violation of one of these rules, the student will be asked to give up his or her car keys, and a parent will be called to pick up the student. Further disciplinary action will be taken at the appropriate time. For the sake of clarity, it is important to note that all disciplinary cases involving the use of illegal drugs have resulted in expulsion, and all disciplinary cases involving alcohol have resulted, at a minimum, in suspension.
- The school is concerned about the use of limousines and so-called party buses. Although using a limousine represents a safe alternative for student drivers, such arrangements should not be made to facilitate the use of alcohol or drugs. All students sharing a limousine also share the responsibility for the behavior of the other students inside that vehicle and are subject to disciplinary action if rules are broken. Simply put, students should not get into a vehicle in which alcohol or drugs are present. If your child is planning to use a limousine or bus, please thoroughly investigate the chaperoning policies and procedures of the company in question.

Thank you to the parent volunteers who are devoting so much time to help with the dance, and we hope that you, as parents, will encourage your children to arrive in a timely manner in order to enjoy the dance and to show appreciation for the work of these volunteers.

JUNIOR PARENT MEETINGS

There will be an informational meeting for all junior parents at 7 pm on Monday, **October 9**, in Haertter Hall. At this meeting, I will speak about issues specific to the junior year and provide some guidance on standardized testing (SAT, ACT, AP). Nanette Tarbouni, director of College Counseling, will give an overview of the college advising program at Burroughs.

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, **November 16** (7 pm), for a much more extensive meeting on the college application process for all juniors and parents.

Note as well that if you'd like to get a jumpstart on learning about the financial aid process, you're invited to a Financial Aid Seminar for parents hosted by the College Counseling Department in conference rooms 1 and 2 at 7 pm on Thursday, **October 5**.

PSAT & HEALTH DAY

At 8 am on Wednesday, **October 11**, juniors will take the **PSAT** at school in the field house; all juniors have already been registered for the exam. Although the exam is not used directly in the college admissions process, the PSAT score from the junior year is used to determine who qualifies for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Therefore, juniors should spend some time practicing for the PSAT. I have distributed an informational booklet with a complete practice PSAT test to the juniors. Please encourage your children to take this practice test. Nanette Tarbouni, has also distributed

information about Khan Academy's free online PSAT/SAT prep offerings ([here](#)).

Immediately following the PSAT, juniors will spend the afternoon at St. Peter's (Ladue and Warson) taking part in the **Junior Health Day** program, which is organized by the Counseling & Wellness Department. Be on the lookout for a mailing (via snail mail, not e-mail) with more details about this event. Please do not plan other activities for your child, as the program is mandatory.

MAINTAINING INTEGRITY

Junior year has historically been a year in which some students consider taking shortcuts at the expense of their integrity. As a school, we are making a concerted effort to talk about the consequences – to ourselves and those around us – of integrity violations, to clarify policies and practices for students, and to reduce the opportunities for transgressions.

Please take the time to discuss this important issue with your children, not simply to avoid the potential consequences of such indiscretions, but also because patterns of behavior established now are likely to “snowball” during their college years and beyond. Remind your juniors that it's unfair to their peers, teachers, and families to cheat, and that it's always better to seek out an adult's assistance and take a late penalty than to compromise their integrity.

An insightful NPR piece entitled “Why Good People Do Bad Things” can be found by following this link: <http://n.pr/1hb9YHO>. If you find that story interesting, the following talk by Dan Ariely, an expert in the roots of dishonesty, is worth viewing: https://youtu.be/XBmJay_qdNc.

TALKING ABOUT RACE

Earlier this month, Mark Smith (chair of the History Department) gave a presentation on the history of Confederate monuments at the first program this year sponsored by the Community & Equity Partnership. Always meaningful and engaging, these dialogues about diversity, inclusivity, cultural competency, and equity and justice seem especially urgent given the ongoing conversations and protests in the St. Louis area in response to the Stockley verdict. Daniel Harris, director of Diversity and Multicultural Education, recommends the following website for those parents who are interested in talking to their children about race but who don't know where to begin: <http://www.readbrightly.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-race-books-and-resources-that-can-help/>.

LOOKING AHEAD

The next *Principal Link* will be sent at the end of October. Look for it at an inbox near you! In the meantime, I hope you're enjoying the first few days of fall.

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