

August 29, 2019

Dear 9th Grade Families,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year at John Burroughs School. And thank you for welcoming me to the Burroughs community as the new principal for grades 9 and 10. I'm so excited to get to know this class as they begin their high school years!

We got off to a great start by welcoming 11 new members to the 9th grade class. These new students – along with their veteran 9th grade buddies, Dr. Deken, four faculty members and me – participated in Drey Land Plus. We had a great time appreciating nature (in the Burroughs tradition) while getting to know each other and learning team-building skills. Each one of our new students brings wonderful attributes that will add much to the class and the Burroughs community.

I imagine that many of you are excited for your child as they start high school, but also perhaps a bit anxious. Even if you have had an older child graduate from Burroughs, each child is different and will experience high school differently. Knowing that each child is different makes it hard to predict what these next four years has in store for our 9th graders. I'm sure each student will experience many successes and will also experience some failures and challenges. Together, we should help our children celebrate successes but also help them to embrace and learn from failures. At Burroughs, we want to encourage and foster a growth mindset in our students to help them become lifelong learners who are constantly improving and growing. There has been a lot of recent research on the growth mindset. Some of you may have read Carol Dweck's book, *Mindset*. If you haven't, here is a brief video that provides key takeaways from the book: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nF90sAW-Yg>.

Other ways that you can help your child get off to a good start this school year: discuss strategies to organize their time and schedules; help them manage their computer and cell phone use; make sure they get a good night's sleep, eat healthy meals, and avoid drugs and alcohol. Dr. Deken, our former 9th and 10th grade principal (who is also a neuroscientist), has suggested some very helpful articles which you can find on the [Class of 2023 website](#) under "Recommended Links." We'll be covering these topics with you and your child throughout the year. I have also posted the handouts from our 9th and 10th grade Parent/Guardian "College Chat" that we had on August 14 with Nanette Tarbouni and Laura Fogarty.

Advisory

Many of you have heard that we are doing something new with our advisories this year, incorporating the "Common Day." During the Common Day schedule (most Wednesdays), students will meet together either as an entire class or in their individual advisories to devote time discussing important topics such as academic integrity, the Technology Acceptable Use Policy (found on pages 4 and 5 of the Student-Parent

Handbook), and attending their Health Seminars. Students will have time to discuss these topics with their peers and advisor in a small group setting.

UPCOMING EVENTS ...

JBS Family Picnic

Every fall, the Abbotts host a family picnic (for you, your students and their siblings, grandparents, faculty and staff). There is no program – it's just a low key buffet lunch in the Quad from 11:30 am to 1 pm on Saturday, September 7. If you can make it, please contact [Cindy Schnabel](#).

Mini School

On Monday, September 16, we will host the grades 9-12 Mini School event. We will begin at 6:45 pm. After a quick hello from me in the Haertter Hall, you will have the opportunity to hear from your child's health teacher, Kim Bouldin-Jones, meet with your child's advisor and then follow your child's schedule and meet all of their teachers. Please bring your calendars since your advisor may want to schedule a time in late October or early November for a conference. Many parents consider this one of the most interesting evenings of the school year, and they come away wishing that they could revisit high school and have some of our wonderful faculty as their teachers. I'm sure I will also see some of you during after-school extracurricular activities this year. Please do not hesitate to introduce yourselves.

Student Activities Fair

During the school day Thursday, September 19, the Student Congress will sponsor a Student Activities Fair. During our outdoor lunch, every club sponsored by the school will have a table with representatives explaining the goals of their club. At Burroughs, we hope that all students will begin to explore extracurricular involvement, and the fair gives them a chance to see what is available to them. You can also find a list of our clubs on the JBS website on the Student Resources page under "[Activities & Club Listing](#)." Encourage your child to join one or more clubs and watch them grow and develop in many wonderful ways.

Blue and Gold

Blue and Gold weekend starts on Friday, September 27 with nearly all of our teams competing against our rival teams from MICDS by the end of the weekend. There is a picnic for the students at 6:30 pm followed by a pep rally and a bonfire. Parents/guardians and alums are invited to watch the bonfire from the Haertter Hall overlook, beginning around 7:30 pm. The evening ends at 8:45. I look forward to seeing you and your child at many of these events.

Parents/Guardians Visiting Day

Monday, October 14 (a late start day) is Parents Visiting Day. We would like to invite the parents of every grade level to come and spend the morning with us. You can sit

through classes and see how the students and teachers interact and engage in powerful learning experiences. If weather permits an outdoor lunch in the Quad, you may also stay and enjoy a picnic with your child.

Web Pages

I encourage you to visit our web pages often to see candid photos, sports schedules and assembly presentation information. We also maintain a school Google calendar, which you can find on our home page under the caption "[Calendars.](#)" Our campus is vibrant, and we love to share these events with you through the school's web site.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone and remind you that my office door is always open. Please feel free to stop by and say hello anytime that you are on campus. I'm looking forward to getting to know you and I'm also looking forward to a great year with the class of 2023!

Sincerely,

[Julie Shimabukuro](#)

Principal, Grades 9 & 10
(314) 993-4045, ext. 340

P.S. Many people ask me how I pronounce my name since it's such a long one! It's pronounced "Shee-ma/ boo/ koo/ roh." If you have an unusual name, I also hope that you will share the pronunciation with me.