

September 26, 2019

Dear 7th Grade Families,

Transition to Burroughs

With just over a month of school under their belts, most 7th graders are navigating the physical campus with ease and are adjusting to the academic demands of Burroughs and the social changes that come with attending a new school. I couldn't be more pleased with the kids' transition to Burroughs.

The relationships the students began developing during the early weeks of the year will be strengthened as a result of their Drey Land experience – when they come back together on Monday, October 7, they will find themselves closer and more connected to their 7th grade peers because of their shared camp experience.

Assessments and Planning Ahead

During seminar class a few weeks ago, I told the students about the Burroughs two-test rule. This rule has been in place for a very long time, and it is intended to keep students from being overwhelmed by tests, papers, projects and presentations that are due (or happening) on the same day. While it is called the two-test rule, it applies to any two major assessments. When students learn that they have more than two major assessments scheduled for the same day, they have the option of adjusting their assessment schedule so they have no more than two on a given day. To move an assessment, students must speak to their teachers well in advance of the assessment's originally scheduled date, and the two of them will decide on a mutually agreeable alternate date. Please encourage your child to keep a detailed planner and to check Canvas regularly; this will help your child know if more than two major assessments have been scheduled for the same day. (This policy is also stated in the *Student-Parent Handbook*.)

Preliminary Reports and Parent Conferences

Each fall, Burroughs is closed for two full days (this year, October 10 and October 11) so teachers can write mid-semester (preliminary) reports for each of their students. During the report-writing period, teachers compose detailed and unique comments about the students in their classes, providing specific accolades, recommendations, updates and/or information about developing concerns regarding academic progress. These preliminary reports are intended to summarize the work that students have completed during the first couple months of the school year and provide insight into their academic habits, social interactions, class participation and approaches to learning.

The preliminary comment reports are distributed to the parents/guardians of 7th and 8th grade students during the fall parent conference with the academic advisor. These conferences will happen between mid-October and early November. Many 7th grade advisors began scheduling conferences during Mini School. If you haven't yet scheduled this meeting, feel free to contact your child's advisor to set up a mutually agreeable conference time.

After conferencing with the advisor, I urge you to speak with your child about the preliminary reports. Together, review each of the comments – celebrating the aspects of your child's report that indicate positive growth and discussing strategies for moving past challenges and onto more meaningful learning and exploration. Enjoy this process!

Upcoming Events

Please remember that Blue & Gold Weekend begins on Friday, September 27. On Friday afternoon and throughout Saturday, Burroughs and MICDS teams will face off against one another in competitions across many fall sports. After most of the Friday competitions have ended, we will have a student picnic at 6:15 pm, followed by a pep rally and bonfire; these events will end at 8:45 pm. I hope that you and your child will attend some of the Blue & Gold Weekend events!

Also remember that you are invited to campus on Monday, October 14 for Visiting Day. We will begin with an 8 am breakfast, and then you will have the opportunity to observe your child's morning classes. Following 4th period classes, feel free to join us for lunch in the Quad. (If bad weather forces us inside, we won't be able to accommodate families in the dining room – sorry!) To RSVP for the breakfast and/or lunch, please contact [Debbie Drummond](#).

Sincerely,

[Julie Finnie Harris](#)

Principal, Grades 7 & 8

314-993-4045 ext. 219