

February 27, 2020

Dear 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Families,

### **March 4 – Grade-Specific Programming**

On Wednesday, March 4, we will have a half-day of school during which students will participate in specific programs designed for their grade level. On that day, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will begin with assembly at 8:15 am in Haertter Hall, and then, they will proceed to a diversity activity, which will be facilitated by our Middle School Diversity Group's student leaders. Following the diversity activity, the 7<sup>th</sup> graders will participate in a Model United Nations General Assembly Session that has been organized by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade teaching team. Under the direction of their social studies teachers, students have researched a country of their choosing and have begun writing a five-paragraph summary that highlights many aspects of their selected country, including the country's governmental structure, economy, culture, and problems or conflicts. After gaining insight into their country, students researched two possible resolution topics, carefully considering how the United Nations could help the selected country (or region) and how the selected country could contribute to other nations in the world. Each student has had several clearly defined assignments that are integral to their final resolution. On the 4<sup>th</sup>, all students will participate in the General Assembly session, during which several resolutions will be presented. Lunch will be served; dismissal will be at 1 pm.

### **2020 – 2021 Course Selection**

During our March 5<sup>th</sup> advisory period, all students will receive the Curriculum Guide for 2020-2021. This guide contains a description of every course that will be offered next year and outlines both the courses in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum and the course options that will become available to your child during high school. For students transitioning to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the only course choices that must be made relate to math and music. The math options for 8<sup>th</sup> grade are Algebra I and Algebra I Accelerated. Over spring break, you will receive a letter, which will include the math recommendation for your child. Regarding music, your soon-to-be 8<sup>th</sup> grader will continue taking a music course, and most will keep the same music focus as they have now, but it is possible for students to switch (e.g., from band to chorus). The week following spring break, the course selection process will begin. Students will receive course registration cards on Monday, March 30, and will have until Wednesday, April 8 to finalize their course selections. Advisors will be instrumental in helping students fill in their registration cards correctly and will direct them to the appropriate teachers/department chairs for needed signatures; you will need to sign the card, as well.

### **Spring Updates**

In addition to the recommendation letter you receive over spring break, you will receive a set of comments that summarize your child's second semester progress. These spring updates will be similar to the preliminary reports you received during your conference in the fall, and will provide information that should be useful to you and your child during the final stretch of the school year. Shortly after spring break, you can expect your child's advisor to call you to discuss both the spring update report and the course selection process as it relates to your 7<sup>th</sup> grader.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Seminar Class**

Seventh Grade Seminar continues to provide significant learning opportunities for students. Recently,

- Student leaders from the KUTO club (Kids Under Twenty-One), with guidance from our counseling staff, led a discussion that focused on strategies a 7<sup>th</sup> grader might use to thoughtfully address a friend who is making decisions which could compromise the friend's academic, social, emotional or physical health.
- I led the students in a lesson about dangerous words (e.g., the *r-word*, *f-word*, *n-word*, ...). During the lesson, students thoughtfully articulated their concerns about the usage of certain words, particularly on the Burroughs campus, and many committed to respectfully confronting peers who use offensive and hurtful words and language at JBS.

And this week during seminar class, Jennifer Jones (7<sup>th</sup> grade counselor and chair of Counseling and Wellness) has been speaking with the students about sexting, the laws pertaining to it, and some of the longer term implications that sexting can have on individuals.

Seminar class continues to provide an opportunity for adults in this community to get to know your kids and for kids to get to know one another. During seminar, we engage in meaningful and compelling conversations that allow us to learn more about ourselves and others. I urge you to ask your child about the conversations we are having during 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Seminar – I think you'll be pleasantly surprised by their insight and thoughtfulness.

Wishing you a relaxing spring break and a wonderful end to the school year!

[Julie Harris](#)

Principal, Grades 7 & 8  
314.993.4045 ext. 219