



July 2021

Dear Briarwood Upper School Parents and Students,

One of the most exciting days of the year is just over a month away. I say this every year right about now because it is true! To walk through the Briarwood doors, greeted by friends, with the anticipation of making new ones, to make a return to normalcy from this past year, to anticipate the upcoming exciting events and activities about to take place...it gives us much to look forward to!!!

Below is key information to know prior to embarking on this new 2021-2022 journey. Please carefully read over everything.

The **first day of school** will be **Tuesday, August 10, 2021** and it will be a full day. All students will begin their first day back to school by reporting to their 1st period class by the 8:00am bell. The JH & HS will have a morning *student assembly* period where we will start the year with a time of praise and worship and the opening of God's word to get the year started off right! In addition, we will review general guidelines that will assist all students in the transition back to BCS, their new grade level, and aid in positive high school community living.

The JH and HS will be on a very similar schedule. Like last year, we will run an EIGHT period schedule. However, instead of all extended period days, we will begin Monday with an All-Eight Period Day (shorter classes obviously) and then have periods 1-4 on Tuesday and Thursday and periods 5-8 on Wednesday and Friday for our extended or longer periods. The bell schedule on our website will help to make this very clear.

To kick off our partnership for the 2021-2022 school year; I would **highly encourage** every parent to join us for the beginning of the year celebration known as **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**. Please mark your calendars for **August 19th at 6:30 pm!** We will run concurrent Junior High and High School class preview sessions following our combined meeting that will require us to use both floor and balcony seating.

You don't want to miss this opportunity! Due to COVID, we really missed not seeing parents on our campus. We want you to come back! While this is not mandatory, there are few opportunities throughout the year where, as a school community of parents, teachers and administrators, we can gather together and talk about how to best meet your child's needs, and where you can hear the heart of your child's teachers and what they will expect from their students. On this particular evening:

- We will begin by meeting in the auditorium to share information for your child's upcoming experience as we partner together to educate and train your children for Christ;
- You will have a chance to meet all the new and returning faculty and staff members;
- You will also have an opportunity to meet PTF members, hear about and sign up for ways to serve at BCS-- we want and need your help;
- You will hear from individual teachers as you rotate throughout your child's classes.

Exciting News about our NEW Upper School PTF!!! The Jr High & High School PTFs have combined into one team to better serve the entire Upper School Campus. Our mission remains unchanged, to glorify God through our support of the teachers, faculty, students and families of the Junior High & High School.

Now more than ever, we need all families to join the Upper School PTF to support this mission and the activities the PTF sponsors and assists with at the Upper Campus. Please visit the website at <https://www.briarwoodchristianschool.org/about/ptf> to support the Upper School PTF with your \$25 Membership. A full list of the committees and the areas of service they provide is listed below the membership form on the website. You can sign up to volunteer in any of these specific areas of service when you join. We need your help!! Many of the committees require very little time, and with many hands, we can serve mightily.

If you have any questions, please contact either Linda Schultz or Sarah Rath who are serving as co-Presidents this year. They are super excited to serve our BCS Upper School this year!!

- Linda Schultz 205-919-8250
- Sarah Rath 205-807-0574
- bcsupperschoolptf@gmail.com

Supply Lists: Please refer to our BCS website for the JH and HS supply lists. Hopefully, you all will be able to take advantage of **Alabama Tax Free Weekend** Fri., July 16th - Sun., July 18th.

Schedules: We will send notification of the release of high school student schedules on **Wednesday, August 4th**. There will be a three day drop/add period August 10th-August 12th should a student need to request a change **in order to meet graduation requirements**. Please note that classes have been created based on student's course requests and that class space may be limited. Mrs. Miller will be available during the drop/add period to assist students with schedules. Students requiring a change of schedule will need to visit her office between 7:30-3:30 August 10th-August 12th. Only requests made in person by the student will be accepted.

Counseling Team: We have some changes in our counseling team and want to draw your attention to who your child's counselor will be based on their grade level:

- 7th and 8th grade - Mrs. Anna Margaret Ezelle - aezelle@bcsk12.org
- 9th grade - Mrs. Chelle Godbehere - cgodbehere@bcsk12.org
- 10th and 11th grade - Mrs. Pam Azar - pazar@bcsk12.org
- 12th grade - Mrs. Brent Latta - blatta@bcsk12.org

Also, it is important to note that Mrs. Latta will be our NEW Director of Counseling Services leading this team as a vital part of our leadership team in the Upper School. Additional hires will be shared via social media and as we approach the school year.

NEW Students Orientation Luncheon: NEW Junior High and High School students are invited to a NEW student dinner and brief orientation on **August 9th at 11:30am** to ensure that you are ready for the first day of school. You will be receiving a personal invitation from us for this event! We look forward to welcoming you!

School Calendar: We encourage you to take a look at the JH and HS calendars for the 2021-2022 school year.

Health and Medical Information: All students must have an updated immunization form on file by the first day of school. Please be sure all immunizations are up to date. Please contact our upper school nurses @ nurses-us@bcsk12.org.

If your child will need to keep prescription medications at school, our nurses (Mrs. Blakeley Splawn and Mrs. Campbell Fulton) will be available during the first week of school, August 10-13, to receive medication and to discuss a plan. You may request an earlier scheduled appointment to meet if necessary.

Lockers: The JH locker number for your child will be on FACTS (RenWeb) **July 30th**. Junior High students are welcome to visit the junior high school on **August 6th from 9:00-3:00pm** to locate classrooms and organize their locker.

HS students wishing to have a locker will need to send an email to Mrs. Lynne Smith at lsmith@bcsk12.org requesting a locker. As many of you know, we have removed large banks of lockers near the Barbara B. Barker Auditorium to make way for our NEW Art Studio.

There are no locks on the lockers. While security cameras are present in the locker spaces, it is our hope that students would honor one another's property and refrain from ever going into someone else's locker. However, in the event a JH student would still like to have a lock installed, they can do so by contacting Mr. Gray, the JH Principal, and he will work to ensure a lock is placed on your child's locker.

Dress Code/Hair: The Dress Code Guidelines for 2021-2022 can be found on the school website. Gentlemen, it is important to note the hair / facial hair code and to be in compliance on the first day of school. There are some minor adjustments to the dress code and it is expected that all students have reviewed the guidelines and come in appropriate and modest attire.

Summer Reading / Book Clubs: If your child has not yet purchased their summer reading book, I would strongly encourage you to make this a priority. All students are expected to read and be prepared to be actively engaged in their book club discussions scheduled throughout the first two weeks of school. NOTE: **The Briarwood Presbyterian Church Bookstore** (205-776-5210) has the summer reading books in stock for purchase! This is quick and easy access if you need to purchase your summer reading book!

Dismissal and Carline: While the schedule has both the JH and HS getting out at the same time, the JH will actually have an earlier staggered release to get to carline before the HS students get out of school. Last year we had parents with 8th graders pick up behind the JH gym. This year we will have all 7th and 8th graders picked up behind the JH gym, and HS and JH/HS student combinations will be at the front of the school. Much more information will be coming about this. Please be on the lookout for details of this new carline schedule.

JH After School Supervision: Briarwood Christian School provides an After School Study Hall for students in the Junior High. The Study Hall is provided as a service to families when both parents work outside the home and cannot pick up their children when school is dismissed or for families who have special travel or transportation needs. Families interested in this service will need to submit a form that can be found on the Briarwood website.

Athletics Information: The Briarwood website is the best source of information for athletic schedules, scores, sports information, standings, and coaching contact information. We also encourage everyone to follow Briarwood athletics on twitter, instagram, and facebook for day to day highlights and activities.

Retreats: We have much to look forward to getting back into the full swing of engaging with students not just in the classroom but on the fields, on the stage, in the gyms, and on our beginning of the year retreats! While much more information will be forthcoming, and some has been sent already, this is the general

overview.

JH Retreat: We are excited to add a Junior High day retreat for the first time this year. We will kick off this new tradition on **Monday, August 16th** at Camp Winnataska. This will be a fun time where students worship together, participate in various activities, and build new friendships.


Freshmen: A couple of years ago, we added a freshman day retreat and found it to be a huge success for 9th grade's acclimation and assimilation to high school life! We will continue this tradition by offering this day retreat on **Monday, August 30th** as we enjoy a day at the Alabama 4-H Center on Lay Lake! Freshman will compete, worship, and play together on this fun-filled day as we welcome them to the high school.

Seniors: The long standing tradition of a senior retreat will take place **August 6th - 8th**. While previously communicated, please remember to save the date as we want all seniors to be present! Spiritual focus, team building, leadership, GAP groups, and class fellowship will all be emphasized on this retreat, which will take place in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in beautiful Tennessee. We will be staying at the Ocoee Retreat Center located just off of Lake Ocoee. We will have the opportunity to whitewater raft on the fun and challenging Ocoee River and engage in a variety of other activities that will bring the class together and get us moving in the right direction as they walk into their senior year here at Briarwood. (More information to follow on these important retreats.)

Spirit Day: On opening day, Tuesday, August 10th, we invite all students to take part in our upper school **spirit day** where faculty and students are encouraged to show their Lions Pride and sport our blue and gold school colors. **GO LIONS!** You can dress up in your blue and gold or wear BCS blue and gold T-shirts but show your Lions Pride!

Again, we look forward to meeting and serving you and your family. We hope to see you at the Back to School Night and look forward to having your children in our Upper School! Thank you for the incredible honor and opportunity to educate, love, and care for your children. We are humbled at this remarkable responsibility. Have a wonderful remainder of the summer!

For God's glory alone,



Shawn M. Brower, EdD
Head of the Upper School
Briarwood Christian School

We exist to provide a Christ-centered, transformational education that equips and inspires each student to glorify God by maximizing their God-given abilities. Our Vision is to develop leaders who impact the world by glorifying Christ in every sphere of life.