

Dear 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent,

We are thrilled that your child is joining the IA community and look forward to guiding them throughout the next four years. The IA has some unique policies that are in place to ensure the long-term success of our students. During the first weeks of school your son/daughter will receive the student guidebook which outlines all of these policies and procedures. Given its detailed nature, the counseling department has highlighted some of the major points below to ensure you are fully informed, but we hope you read through the whole guidebook.

**Freshman Focus:**

Please refer to the timeline on the counseling page at [www.iatoday.org](http://www.iatoday.org) under “What should I be doing this Year” to help determine what your child should focus on as a freshman. We believe students should focus on transitioning to the IA curriculum, explore extracurricular activities, and build relationships. Please help your student develop a strong organizational system to enable him/her to stay on top of the work.

**College & Career Planning:**

Are you wondering what your son/daughter should be doing in terms of college admission this year? Freshmen will be provided with a SCOIR account to utilize as a college planning tool. Counselors will introduce this to them in a classroom lesson. We do not emphasize college planning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, as the successful transition to high school is most important.

**Standardized Testing:**

All 9<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the PSAT 9 at school in April on a weekday. This is a practice SAT designed specifically for freshmen. There will be no fee for the test. More information will follow later in the year. No other testing is recommended and no preparation is necessary.

**Attendance:**

Refer to the attendance policy in the guidebook that your student will receive the first week of school. Regular attendance is important for success at the IA. Remember to call the attendance line any time your child is absent, late to school, or leaving school early.

**Grading Policies:**

Please familiarize yourself with both the Grading Policy and the Failure and Low Grade Policy sections in the guidebook.

**Parental Involvement:**

There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in the school community. Please refer to the Parent Involvement section in the guidebook to learn how to become an active community member.

If you have questions about anything listed above, please contact your counselor. We look forward to working with you and your student.

Lisa Acton and Kristin Jahnke, Counselors