

# WARDLAW + HARTRIDGE

## Pioneering. Thinkers.

August 2023

Dear Upper School Families,

As summer fades away and the warm breeze carries the scent of new beginnings, we are thrilled to have our students and families returning for another exciting academic year. We hope this letter finds you all in good health and high spirits, ready to embark on an unforgettable journey of learning and growth. The summer break has provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the past year and plan for an even more enriching experience ahead. We want to assure you that the staff and faculty have been working diligently during the summer to create a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment for all our students.

This letter contains important information to begin the year successfully. As a former upper school parent, I understand that what you really need to know are the important dates for the school year. You now will have access and control of the school calendar. It is available on our home page: <http://www.whschool.org> under *I'm Looking For....* Once you have accessed this page, you can customize your calendar by clicking on the icons on the right which allow you to filter and set alerts. At this point you can select the calendars that are important to you. This calendar is a really wonderful way to keep track of what is happening throughout the school year; it will be populated with more events very soon. I hope you find it as helpful as I have and refer to it often throughout the school year.

For students, the approach of the school year means finishing the summer assignments, participating in practices for fall sports (if participating), and, for some, going on the senior peer leadership retreat. For parents, if you have not already, it means making sure you have completed all the necessary online forms or paperwork to ensure that your child can start the year smoothly. Documents describing all of this are available as part of the electronic mailing.

**In the coming weeks, you will hear from your student's advisor. As a way of introduction, Upper School Parent Partnership Conferences will take place.** New parents and advisors should schedule a time and place that is most convenient for everyone (including via Zoom if that works best). These conferences can also be scheduled throughout the day on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 5 and 6. If you are a returning 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade parent and would like to schedule a meeting with your child's advisor, you may email their advisor directly to arrange a time for you to do so. If you are a new family and did not receive information on Parent Partnership Conferences by September 5, please contact Alissa Folkes, our Upper School Administrative Assistant, at [afolkes@whschool.org](mailto:afolkes@whschool.org) or 908-754-1882 ext. 103.



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**September 5 - 7 will be a busy opening week for all of us in Upper School:**

### **Tuesday, September 5:**

**New Family and Student Orientation** programs begin at 8:45 am at the PAC with refreshments. **This includes all 9th grade families and any 10th and 11th grade families who are joining the Upper School this year.**

Student and parent programs are run separately.

**New parents** will join me for a conversation in the Laidlaw gymnasium concentrating on transitioning into our Upper School. The parent presentation will end at 11:00 am. At that point, for parents who want to wait on campus for their students, there will be beverages and snacks available in the courtyard. Student council members will also be conducting tours for any families that are interested. Student orientation will end around 12:30 pm.

**New students** will remain in the PAC for their orientation. The things that will happen include meeting all the new students including their advisory groups, a dress code fashion show, a scavenger hunt, and some other surprises. **New students will need to bring their laptop to school. If you have bought a computer through the school, you will receive it at this time.** In conjunction with the Technology Department and our Dean of Students, training on our computer systems will take place. Student dress is casual.

12<sup>th</sup> Graders will have a **Senior Class Kick Off** from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm. **Please note seniors will be meeting to play Laser Tag at Branchburg Sports Complex, 47 Readington Road, Branchburg, NJ 08876. Student dress is casual.**

### **Thursday, September 7**

**First Day of School:** We begin at 8:00 am; students will go to their advisor's room. Note: We strongly suggest you arrive by 7:45 am at the latest. The opening day schedule will be distributed to the students that morning. Students, advisors, and the class deans will have an opportunity to meet with each other for a variety of activities. Class syllabi, goals, rules, and procedures will be discussed in class.

**Convocation** will take place at 9:00 am on the center back turf field. All W+H students, faculty, and staff will be present as the Upper School students carry their class flags and march into Convocation. There will be a short program featuring greetings from Dr. Crafton, our newly appointed Head of School, a representative from the Board of Trustees, and Student Council President Gbemi Olarewaju. Immediately following this, there will be a brief ceremony installing Dr. Crafton as the new Head of The Wardlaw+Hartridge School.



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Our **All-School Welcome Back Barbeque** begins at 5:30 pm. The entire Wardlaw+Hartridge community gathers behind the school to celebrate the start of a new school year. This is a wonderful opportunity to make new friends, see old acquaintances, and eat some fantastic food. I truly hope your whole family can join us for this fun tradition.

### Other important calendar dates for September and the beginning of October:

- **September 10:** Auditions for our fall play in the PAC from 6:00 – 8:30 pm. More information is available in our electronic summer mailing.
- **September 14:** Grade 9 Jump Start to College at 7:00 – via Zoom
- **September 25:** School closed in observance of Yom Kippur
- **September 26:** Paying for College (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade families) at 7:00 pm presented by our College Counseling Office - via Zoom
- **October 2:** US Back to School Night. You will receive more information regarding this evening event once the school year begins
- **October 6:** Upper School Portraits
- **October 9:** School closed in observance of Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples' Day
- **October 10 – 13:** Spirit Week
- **October 10:** College Admission Case Studies (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade families) at 7:00 pm - via Zoom
- **October 14:** Fall Fair & Homecoming 8:30 am – 3:30 pm

We look forward to a fantastic start to the 2023 – 24 school year. I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer!

With warm regards,



Bob Bowman  
Upper School Head

