# FAQs for Incoming Families

## General Questions

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| **Where can I locate important information for new transfer students?** | A Welcome and Registration page was created for all transfer students. It includes information such as what you need to do before school starts, important dates, required physical forms and graduation requirements. |
| **What type of summer communications can I expect?** | Serra uses PowerSchool - a web-based school information management system that manages student data and securely shares academic records with students, teachers and parents. Families will receive an email from Rita Lee with login and password information and instructions on how to log into the PowerSchool Parent Portal by June 1st. If you do not receive this email by June 1st, please contact the Admissions Office.<br><br>Near the end of June, all families will receive an electronic summer mailing that includes information about logistics, policies and procedures (student handbook), medical info, carpooling, orientation, photos, Mothers' Club, Fathers' Club.<br><br>Once school starts, you will receive a weekly e-newsletter called "Spotlight" that is sent to all parents. |
| **When will we receive information about carpools?** | Carpool information comes out with the summer mailing or can be accessed at our Transportation Website. All families will receive a Carpool Google Form to indicate interest in carpool formation. We encourage you to complete the 2026-2027 Carpool Interest Form. Serra will then group families in the same area and send out the lists in late July. |
| **What is the uniform/dress code?** | This is a basic overview of the dress code. Parents should refer to the JSHS Student-Parent Handbook for the complete policy. |

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| | Students may wear Serra t-shirts, polo shirts or dress shirts. Students may wear jeans, long pants, and regular shorts that are in good condition, hemmed, and fit at the waist. Formal, casual and tennis shoes that are neat, clean and unaltered can be worn. No athletic shorts, athletic pants (sweats) or open-toe shoes/slippers are allowed. Serra sweatshirts or sweatshirts with a small logo (no larger than a fist) are also allowed.<br><br>Certain masses will be designated as “dress up” where students are required to wear dress shirts, ties, slacks, and dress shoes.<br><br>All students must be clean-shaven and keep their hair clean and neatly combed and/or styled. Hair should not extend beyond their eyes or their shoulders. Students must maintain natural hair color. Any highlights must appear appropriate to a student’s natural hair color. Extreme or faddish hairstyles are not permitted.<br><br>Questions about dress code and/or hair policy can be directed to the Dean of Students, Mr. Ray Baldanado. |
| **When are the Physical forms due? Where do we send it?** | Every incoming student must submit a medical form that documents a physical exam within the last year and up to date immunizations. These are due by June 29, 2026 and can be submitted to the Admissions Office.<br><br>If your son is considering participating in any sport at Serra, create an account and upload the physical to the Athletic Clearance website. Families who upload their physical form are not required to email the physical form to the Admissions Office. The pre-participation form must be submitted prior to beginning any summer athletics at Serra. More information on the Athletic Clearance Process can be found here.<br><br>Information about the physicals (due dates and where to submit them) is also provided on the Serra website. |
| **When are Immunization forms due? Where should they be sent to?** | Every incoming student must submit up to date immunizations. These are due by June 30, 2026 and can be submitted to the Admissions Office. |

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| | Information about the immunization form (due dates and where to submit them) is also provided on the Serra website. |
| **Will our son be assigned a "Big Brother"?** | Yes, we will make sure that your son is partnered with a Big Brother who can be a point of contact for him. Your son will meet his Big Brother during orientation on Thursday, August 13, 2026.<br><br>Along with your son's Big Brother, we will pair your family with one of our Parent Ambassadors. Ambassadors will reach out to you during the summer to initiate an informal meeting, along with other transfer student families. They will be a resource for you throughout the year and we encourage you to reach out whenever you have a question. |
| **How can I order Serra attire?** | Families can order Serra gear through Serra's Padre Store. This is a print on demand company. We recommend ordering at least 6-8 weeks in advance. ORDER NOW! If orders are late, students are expected to wear a collared shirt/polo. |
| **Is there a schedule of upcoming communications (what and from whom)?** | Right now you are receiving communication from different constituents, but soon this will slow down. You will receive emails regarding technology orientation in June, course schedules and orientation in the beginning of August.<br><br>During the school year the Serra Spotlight will be sent via email every Wednesday.<br><br>Families are encouraged to download our app to stay connected.<br><br>We have created the Transfer Welcome page for key dates and information. |
| **What are the dates for the technology orientation?** | Dates will be announced and sign ups open beginning in June. Look for an email around June 1 with instructions about how to log in to PowerSchool (the parent/student portal). Once you are in PowerSchool, you will be able to sign up for a tech orientation and access your summer math assignments. |

## Courses & Academics

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| **When will we receive the class schedules?** | Near the end of June, students will receive, via email, a list of the courses they are registered for. This list of courses can be used to order books but does not include the class schedule.<br><br>In early August, students will receive via email their class schedule. The class schedule gives the days and times for class meetings as well as the teachers for those classes. |
| **When should we order books and technology devices?** | Books can be ordered online through MBS direct beginning in July. Books should not be ordered until you receive your class list (end of June). MBS direct often has used books available for sale (if a physical book is required) but they sometimes go quickly so if you are interested in used books, order early.<br><br>Some courses use online textbooks, some use physical textbooks and some use a combination or let students decide. Each teacher makes independent decisions about what material best supports his/her class.<br><br>Serra is a 'Bring Your Own Laptop' school. While Serra doesn't dictate the laptop a student uses, we do require that it meets minimum system requirements. Requirements are located at serrahs.com under academics and technology or found here. |
| **Are different types of devices or supplementary software (laptops, etc.) recommended for ARC students?** | ARC students do not need specific devices or software that differs from the standard requirements for everyone. The ARC office does have additional tools available for students to borrow to help support their learning plans. For example, this could be a computer in a quiet space to take an exam or recording pens for note taking (student must get teacher's permission to record), silencing headphones, etc. |
| **Where should parents/students be directed for ARC-specific questions?** | Prior to starting classes, all ARC questions should be directed to the Admissions Office.<br><br>Once you have started class in Fall 2026, you will meet with the ARC Director to discuss and implement a learning plan. |
| **What type of summer homework will there be and is it required?** | Summer homework is an important way for students to retain the skills and knowledge developed over the school year and help with the smooth transition into a new school. Students should expect to be evaluated on their summer work at the beginning of the school year. |

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| | Math - all students will have math homework over the summer (regardless of what level math they are placed in). Math homework will be available by logging on to PowerSchool (after June 1).<br><br>English - all students are expected to read two books over the summer, one chosen by the English department and the other from a list of summer reading options. Summer reading is located *now* on the Serra website under academics or here. It will also be available through PowerSchool (after June 1). |
| **How does a student join the Men's Chorus?** | There are no auditions for chorus. We encourage anyone interested in joining the Men's Chorus to sign up. If you sign up for the course, Mr. Murphy will contact you to procure a recording of your voice so he knows where to place you. |
| **Who can play in the Symphonic Band?** | An audition is required to participate in the Symphonic Band. This performance-based course is offered to students with experience in music ensemble playing and at least an intermediate playing ability (one year minimum) on one or more instruments. Once you sign up, Mr. Murphy will contact you for recordings of your playing. |
| **Does the Jazz Ensemble require an audition?** | Yes. If you are interested in participating in Jazz Ensemble, email Mr. Murphy to discuss auditions. |
| **Is there a program for students who want to learn to play an instrument?** | Yes. Our Concert Band is for students who have not played an instrument before or would like to try a new instrument. If you are interested in participating or learning more, email Mr. Murphy. |

## Extracurricular Offerings

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| **How do students sign up for extracurricular activities?** | Club Day takes place in the fall soon after school starts. This is a great opportunity for students to learn about the wide variety of clubs offered at Serra and to sign up for what interests them.<br><br>Sports: There will be information about how to sign up for fall sports in the summer mailing. All new families are required |

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| | to attend an Athlete and Parent Orientation held in the Fall. Check the school's calendar in August for the date.<br><br>Look for information in the summer mailing about auditions for the fall play. |
| **If our son wants to play a fall sport, does he try out in the summer? When will we hear information about fall sports**? | There will be information about how to sign up for fall sports in the summer mailing. You can also email Athletic Director Justin Ferdinand if you have questions. |