

Dear Middle School Families,

Welcome back! The Middle School faculty spent this week preparing for the arrival of your children, and we welcomed new students and families for Orientation Day on Thursday. For those families who attended Orientation Day and would like to review the information I covered, you can access my presentation [here](#) and a full handbook of information for new families [here](#). The handbook has significantly more detail and includes things like a list of fall sports being offered.

Next week, we have planned a variety of opportunities to help students transition into the new year, acclimate to their schedule, connect with new and returning friends, and more. We will sign up for fall athletics (see the options and more information in a letter from Director of Athletics & Wellness Michelle Crowley in JTF), have Meeting for Worship by advisory, do an all-Middle School maker activity, and sign up for Service projects. This year's Service project offerings can be found [here](#). In case you and your child are wondering, we will sign up for Clubs the following week; we will share a list of club offerings in next Friday's *Just the FaCtS*!

On Wednesday, September 6, we will have Middle School Picture Day. We are pleased to have local photographer Mark Tassoni doing students' portraits in all three divisions once again this year. Mark takes all of his photographs outside, and his approach as an artist is to take photographs that are natural and show the spirit of the subject, as opposed to being staged in front of a background. I recommend that your child not wear a shirt with any text on it; because the photographs are from the chest up, text can be cut off in the final photo and can also detract from the focus on the portrait -- your child. You can see examples of his school portraits by visiting his [website](#). Another significant difference is that you will not order pictures ahead of time; after the photographs have been taken, they will be put on a password-protected website where you can view your child's photograph(s) and choose what to order. Some students may have one to two photos and some will have more to choose from. Some of the photographs will be in color, and some are black and white; this is part of Mark's approach, and I think you'll find the variety of the photographs quite beautiful. The "a la carte" pricing is about the same as packages would have cost in previous years, but you have control over the sizes and quantities of the prints. Please stay tuned for additional information on how to access the website to view and order photographs. We look forward to getting wonderful photographs of our students, and we do have a date scheduled in October in case of inclement weather or for any students who miss picture day.

Some additional reminders and information:

- If you plan to pick up your child via car, please wait until after 3:20 pm to arrive. The parking lot is crowded with buses until 3:20, and we have had extensive lines of cars that have caused back ups onto City Avenue.
- The library is open after school Monday through Thursday until 5:30 pm and until 4 pm on Fridays.
- Middle School Curriculum Night is Thursday, September 14 at 7 pm. Please join us to meet your child's teachers and to learn more about the curriculum for this year.
 - For Seventh Grade Parents: We will have an Echo Hill information session right before Curriculum Night to answer your questions about the Echo Hill trip. Please join us at 6 pm in Room 10. This session will end promptly at 6:45 pm -- in time for the beginning of Curriculum Night.
 - For Eighth Grade Parents: We will have an information session about our trip to Washington, DC, at 6 pm in the FCC Lecture Hall. You will also be receiving a letter with more information in the next week. This session will end promptly at 6:45 pm -- in time for the beginning of Curriculum Night.

The Middle School faculty and I look forward to welcoming your child on Monday and to seeing you in the coming days and weeks.

Best,
Alexa