



FRIENDS'
CENTRAL
SCHOOL



Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Dear Middle School Families,

Teachers return this week, and we are excited to continue preparing for the school year with our extremely talented faculty. As we do our preparations and professional development, we want to share some important information and a few reminders as you look ahead to the fall.

COVID-19 Testing Sign-Up:

Please remember to register for your child's COVID-19 testing. The testing date is next **Tuesday, September 1**. You will choose a specific time slot for your child. Please refer to the prior [email](#) for additional details, and contact the Business Office with any questions. Note: Students who will be participating in our remote-learning option do not need to be tested.

Orientation Day Schedule:

We look forward to welcoming all of our 6th graders and our **new** 7th and 8th graders, to **Orientation on Tuesday, September 8**. We will also have a virtual orientation for all of our remote learners (grades 6-8) that day. Please see the times below for each group.

- All 6th Graders: 8:30 am to 10:00 am
- New 7th and 8th Graders: 10:30 am to 12:00 noon
- [All Students Learning Remotely](#) (Grades 6-8): 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
 - This will be virtual. Click on the link above for the Zoom meeting.

Students should be dropped off on these days; parents will not be able to stay on campus during the orientations. Instead, please read on for a parent information session that you can attend virtually.

Virtual Parent Information Sessions: Save the Date!

Although we have shared a great deal of information in writing, and will continue to do so, we would also like to invite you to join us for an information session for parents/guardians. These sessions will focus on the start of school, how our school days will look, and questions related to the “nuts & bolts” outlined in this email.

- **Parents/Guardians of 6th Graders:** September 1, 7-7:45 pm - [Zoom link](#)

- **Parents/Guardians of Students Learning Remotely:** September 1, 7:45-8:30 pm
- [Zoom link](#)
- **Parents/Guardians of 7th and 8th Graders:** September 2, 7-7:45 pm - [Zoom link](#)

Please don't feel you need to wait until this session to ask a question; you can email us anytime. These sessions will be recorded and shared afterward in case you are not able to attend.

What to Pack Each Day for School:

Our new learning conditions call for a slightly different set of school supplies. The list below includes a few additional items for your child to pack each day before coming to FCS.

- Fully charged Chromebook & charger
- Five-subject notebook
- Pens/pencils
- 3 masks - One for wearing and two extras
- Athletic equipment - if applicable
- Headphones - Please do not send students with expensive headphones; they simply need a set to carry with them for school days. We have had many students lose AirPods over the past two years and do not recommend that Middle School students bring those to school because they are so easily misplaced.
- Refillable water bottle
- Lunch - Since the School will not have any food service for at least the first half of the year, students will need to bring a snack and lunch daily. We do not have the ability to refrigerate lunches, so please make sure you have a freezer pack that will work for your child.
- Towel - We expect to have class outside as often as possible. Your child should pack a towel for sitting on when we are out in the grass or around campus. We recommend a thin beach or bath towel that will not take up too much backpack space.
- Optional: Bug spray or sunscreen for outdoor classes and athletics
- EPI-PEN and/or inhaler - Students who use an EPI-PEN and/or inhaler should have those packed in their backpack every day.

EPI-PENs, Inhalers, and Daily Medication:

Students who require an EPI-PEN or an inhaler should have one for their backpack, so they have it with them at all times, and should bring an extra EPI-PEN and/or inhaler to leave in our nurse's office. Students who need daily medication administered by our nurse (Penny Rosenblum) during the school day should bring that medication on the first day of school, along with the [medication request form](#).

On the first day of school, we will be welcoming students, and we will collect extra EPI-PENs, inhalers, or daily medication that are meant to be left here at school

and will give them to Penny Rosenblum. Please ensure your child's EPI-PEN, inhaler, and/or daily medication is clearly labeled with your child's full name.

What to Wear Each Day for School:

In order to have the best ventilation and be as safe as possible, we will have all classroom windows/doors open and will be outside for classes often. Therefore, it is very important that students dress comfortably for the weather.

We do not have the use of locker rooms this year, so students also need to come to school in clothes and shoes they can wear for their sport. For example, we recommend wearing a t-shirt and athletic shorts. If a student wants to wear flip flops/sandals during the day, they can certainly bring their sneakers or cleats to put on for athletics, but they will not be able to change their entire outfit.

Arrival & Departure:

Homeroom begins at 8:20 am and goes until 8:30 am. If at all possible, students should not arrive at school earlier than 8 am. Buildings will not open until then, and there will not be adequate supervision. If you are dropping your child off via car, you will simply pull up along the curved driveway and drop your child off between 8-8:15 am.

School ends at 3 pm. We reserve the parking lot for bus traffic from 3:05-3:20 pm. This makes the parking lot much less congested and keeps it safer for students. If you are picking up by car, please do not arrive before 3:15 pm. When you arrive, please follow the directions of our colleagues doing bus duty. Cars will be directed to a particular part of the parking lot for student pick-up.

If your child's transportation plans change during the school day, please call Marian Petrarca in the Middle School Office. Marian will relay the message to your child. Students are not permitted to have their cell phones out or on during the school day, so they will not be able to receive messages.

Transportation:

If you are planning for your child to take public transportation or a bus and have questions, please contact JB Bowie (Director of Transportation) at jbbowie@friendscentral.org. Each district has slightly different plans for transportation this year, so please connect with JB or call your district transportation office for updated information.

If your child is taking a district bus home in the afternoon, please make sure that your child knows/has the district name, the bus number, and the route number with them for the first few weeks of school. Every year, we have students who do not know this vital information, and it can be very stressful for them if they are unsure of what bus to look for after school.

There can sometimes be issues with district buses at the beginning of the year--such as missing a student's stop or a student missing the bus in the afternoon. We highly

recommend that you have a back-up plan for transportation (both going to and from school) for the first week or so just in case.

First Week of School:

Students will arrive on campus on Tuesday, September 8 for Orientation by grade (see above). The first full day of classes will be Wednesday, September 9. On that day, students should arrive for homeroom at 8:20 am.

Much of the first week will be devoted to procedures and protocols. We will also use the time to introduce students to one another and their teachers -- and to orient them to their classes. We will go over health & safety procedures, hand out IDs, and make sure students know how to use Chromebooks, Veracross, and Canvas.

During this first week, students will be able to sign up for our (optional) music and drama offerings: Orchestra, Jazz Band, Chorus, and the Middle School Play (see below).

Picture Day:

Mark Tassoni, our school photographer, will take school pictures on **Wednesday, September 9**. These photos are taken outside, and he stands at least 8-10 feet from the student. We will have hand sanitizer outside for students to use when they take their masks off and put them back on following having their photograph taken. Later in September, you will receive a link to an online portal where you can view your child's photo(s) and choose to purchase any. We use these photos as students' Veracross photos.

Co-Curriculars & Other Programmatic Activities:

Our Community Block, built into the daily schedule, will be home to a variety of co-curricular programming. For the first few weeks of school, advisors will use the community time to establish routines and get to know each of your children.

As part of our continued commitment to diversity and anti-racist education, we will also use this time to break into affinity groups--providing a space for students to engage in meaningful dialogue surrounding issues of race, equity, and inclusion. Affinity groups will meet virtually and be facilitated by a faculty advisor.

Later in the fall, students will have the opportunity to sign up for clubs and activities based on their interests. These clubs will also meet virtually to prevent mixing and exposure.

Orchestra, Jazz Band, Chorus, and the Middle School Play will all take place after school virtually. Students will sign up during the first month of school and meet during designated times on Zoom. Students should expect to meet once or twice a week.

Schedules:

Class schedules and athletic choices will be viewable on Veracross on **Monday, August 31**. Please note that, due to the complicated schedule this year, we cannot make any changes

to a student's classes/cohort unless there is an error.

Handbook:

The Middle School Student & Family Handbook was shared with you yesterday. The handbook contains a wealth of valuable information including our Community Compact. Please read it carefully and note that it requires signing off on several components.

Student Support & Health Services:

We are fortunate to have wonderful folks who offer additional student support and can be resources for families. We're sharing their contact information here in case it would be helpful for you to connect with them in the coming weeks.

- [Jill MacDougall](#), Learning Specialist: Jill works with individual students to support their learning needs. She is also the person to ask if you are looking for outside tutoring referrals or are thinking of having your child do psychoeducational testing. Jill is a great resource for questions about supporting your child's learning and can help determine strategies that will work both in the classroom and at home.
- [Frederick Pratt](#), School Counselor & Director of Support Services: Frederick works with individual students to support their social and emotional wellbeing. Frederick can also assist with outside referrals if you are looking for counseling/psychological support for your child and can offer strategies for parenting your child. If your child already has an outside counselor/psychologist/psychiatrist, Frederick can be in touch with that person to help us integrate strategies already in place. Frederick is also our Director of Support Services, so he oversees all of our learning, emotional, and health support.
- [Penny Rosenblum](#), Nurse: Penny is our school nurse for the City Avenue campus. If you have health-related questions at any point, please don't hesitate to contact her.

The beginning of a new school year brings excitement and trepidation for many of us. We know this is further heightened in a year when our lives and our school days look different than before. We look forward to working with you and supporting your child as the 2020-2021 school year commences.

Best,

Alexa Quinn
Middle School Principal

Andy White
Assistant Principal



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