

CCES

CHRIST CHURCH EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

July 29, 2009

Dear Parents,

Don't panic; there are still about three full weeks of summer vacation remaining! It's time only to update you about the coming year, then you can return to what have hopefully been those lazy, hazy days.

First, I am pleased to report that most of our Middle School faculty will be returning for the coming year. We will add one new member, **Mr. Trey Skaggs**, as our Middle and Upper School band director and teacher of 8th grade general music. Trey finished undergraduate work in Music Education at the University of Southern Mississippi, then went on to complete a Masters in Music Ed at the University of Kansas. Soon, in fact perhaps by the time you read this letter, Trey will receive his Doctor of Education degree in Music Education from the University of Georgia. So, MR. Skaggs will actually begin his CCES position as the new DR. Skaggs! In the midst of his academic pursuits, Trey accumulated much experience with direction of bands and orchestras, including three years as Director of Bands at a middle school in Georgia. We congratulate Trey on his PhD, and look forward to his able leadership of our band program and strong instruction of 8th grade music.

As you may be aware, for a number of recent years the Middle School has hosted internships for students in the Masters of Teaching program at Clemson. For the coming semester, we welcome **Ms. Tara Hartness**, who is an MAT candidate for middle school math. Tara has roots at CCES, having attended our school for part of her academic career. She will be working with Mrs. Sally Henley in eighth grade math for most of her time with us, but she will also observe in other classes. We look forward to welcoming Tara back into the CCES fold!

Since school dismissed in May, faculty and administration have been working toward another great year in the Middle School. An example of such work is that of faculty representatives from each grade level who met in June, with facilitation from Betsy Burton (MS assistant director), to revise and update the **advisee curriculum** for next year. You will want to be aware that, in the interest of providing a smaller teacher-student ratio during advisee and more sense of community in the Middle School, additional advisors have been added to each advisee team for the coming year. We will have six advisee groups in grades 5-7 and seven groups in grade 8. The new advisee "team rosters" are as follows:

GRADE 5

Mrs. Jennifer Eley, (Social Studies 5), Mrs. Andrea Fox (Science 5), Mrs. Jenny McGrady (French 5-8), Mrs. Ginny Tate (Math 5), Mrs. Kristin Westberg (Writing 5), and Mrs. Jane Williams (Reading 5)

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GRADE 6

Mrs. Caroline Bethel (Social Studies 6), Mrs. Deborah Davis (Science 6), Mrs. Paula Merwin (Reading 6), Ms. Lindsay Mosley (PE 5-8), Mrs. Martha Stone (Math 6), and Mrs. Diane Talbert (Writing 6)

GRADE 7

Mr. Erick Bousman (Latin 6-8), Mrs. Chris Cunningham (History 7), Mr. Larry Frost (PE 5-8), Ms. Cynthia Ouzts (Science 7), Mrs. Betsy Smith (Math 7), and Mrs. Cary Walker (English 7)

GRADE 8

Mrs. Donna Burns (Geography 8), Mrs. Ginny Coykendall (Spanish 7-8), Mr. Michael Fox (PE 5-8), Mrs. Sally Henley (Math 8), Mrs. Kimberly Morgan (Science 8), Ms. Jennifer Numberger (PE 5-8), and Mr. Russell Shelley (English 8)

These teams began working together last spring, and we are excited about the enthusiasm and energy with which they approach their new collaboration! Each group of teachers will meet together at least once a week to continue planning and communication during the coming year, and we are hopeful that, with fewer in each advisee, our students will experience an enhanced sense of care and growth as part of our advisory program.

In addition to focus on advisee, work toward clearer framing of our Honor Code and nurture of integrity has begun, as well as continued planning for Middle School bullying prevention, the **PEACE @ CCES** program, still under able leadership of faculty members Donna Burns and Paula Merwin. Other members of the Planning Committee for the coming year include parents Kristen Rooke, Lelia Reynolds, Gregorie Bylenga, and Janet Mullins, along with chaplain Joe Britt, Middle School assistant director Betsy Burton, additional faculty Jane Williams, Cynthia Ouzts, and Russell Shelley, and myself. Plans so far include a thorough briefing about the program for our incoming fifth graders and new students at other grade levels, as well as an informative and fun-filled 09-10 kickoff for all Middle Schoolers, scheduled for the afternoon of Friday, September 18.

Directly connected to the emphasis of our PEACE program on respectful treatment of others is a new CCES **Equity and Justice Statement**, crafted this summer by our Headmaster, Dr. Kupersmith. I encourage thorough reading of all of the Student-Parent Handbook for you and your children, but please be especially attentive to the new statement; it will appear in the first few pages of this year's Handbook, to be published online sometime near the start of school.

I realize that this letter, the remainder of this packet, and the aforementioned Handbook represent only part of what will accumulate to create a mountain of back-to-school information for you, and it's ALL important! Therefore, I'll close with a bulleted list of remaining news/reminders, so that you can return to your summer in short order:

- Remember that we will implement our **new uniform dress code** policies in the Middle and Lower Schools this year. Many of you have already been busy with preparation, but dress code information is included in this packet, just in case.
- Mark your calendar for **TUESDAY, AUGUST 25 at 6:30**, when **Middle School Parents' Night** will take place for all four grades, fifth through eighth.
- The Middle School will have five **Late Start Tuesdays** this year, as we have for the last several years. Dates and other details are included in the "Items of Note" included in this packet.
- Under separate cover, sixth grade parents will receive information related to **single-gender grouping in the sixth grade** for the coming year. The short version is that, because of numbers, it appears that gender grouping will be limited to very few, if any, sixth grade classes. More information will be forthcoming.
- Parents of seventh and eighth graders are reminded that your children will be taking **exams** at the end of the coming semester and also at year's end. Dates for **first semester exams in seventh and eighth grade are December 15-17**. Please plan for your child to be in town on those days.

Every year about this time, we begin to sense excitement in anticipation of another productive year in community with dedicated students, parents, faculty, and staff. It's another opportunity to live our shared values of academic excellence, good character, and a sense of service. We look forward to starting another great year, our school's 50th birthday year, in fact, with all of our Middle Schoolers on **Monday, August 24, no later than 8:00 am!**

Meanwhile, please savor the remaining days of sleeping in, swimming, travel, or whatever means most in terms of relaxation and family fun for you and yours!

See you soon,



Director, Middle School