



July 21, 2022

Dear Parents,

Can you believe we have been out of school for almost seven weeks? I hope you have enjoyed some rest and relaxation despite playing chauffeur for your kids' activities, camps, swim practices, and playdates. Whatever it is that makes you happy, I hope that your time has been spent doing things you love with the people you love. I've enjoyed a visit with my daughter in Arizona (it's a dry heat!), and a wonderful professional development session in Atlanta. Still to come is reading more books, riding bikes, and relaxing under a beach umbrella.

This time of the summer is always a "slow news" period at school, but it has been fun to see some students at Camp Cannon and others taking advantage of the athletic workout offerings. I'm just touching base with a few July updates as I do each year. This letter is LONG, but it is full of good information. Grab a drink, settle in by the pool or on the porch, and give it a read!

We are excited to embark on a "normal" year after two and a half years of uncertainty. During COVID, we emphasized being relational over strict adherence to policy, allowing more grace in some areas of school life during a very stressful time. As we undertake our usual reflection on the previous year, it is even more important that we strengthen our culture in several areas of academic work and student life, in reaffirming our treasured partnership with parents, and in helping our students recommit to our core values. Our collective responsibility of ensuring a sense of belonging in our community has never felt more important than it does at this point in time.

On **August 8th**, you will receive an email with advisory placements, letters from the Deans, and other timely information for the start of school on Thursday, August 18th. We look forward to greeting new families and students in all grades in addition to all of our 5th grade students on Wednesday, August 17th for orientation. We will begin at 10 a.m. that day, and we will wrap up about an hour later.

Faculty Updates

Before advisory placement information comes to your email inbox on August 8th, we wanted to give you an update on our faculty changes so that you know about a few internal moves and our amazing new teachers before the lists are posted. Click on each link below to learn more.

[Shelley Lyttle](#), Assistant to the Head of Middle School

[Mike Hoffman](#), promoted to 7th Grade Dean

[5th Grade Updates](#)

[6th Grade Updates](#)

[7th Grade Updates](#)

[8th Grade Updates](#)

[World Language, PE and Counseling](#)

Friends, it can be a challenge to be a new teacher at Cannon, as the fear of the unknown can be unsettling to both parents and students. Please know that while we spend a great deal of time vetting and onboarding our new faculty, we also know that adults need time to adapt and adjust to the culture and expectations just as our new students do. We ask that you encourage your children to welcome our new teachers, and we ask that parents do the same. We were all new at some point in our time at Cannon!

The annual reminder about advisory placement...

The advisory lists will be emailed the afternoon of August 8th along with a grade-specific letter with information for the first days of school. When you receive the advisory lists, please understand the thorough and thoughtful process we engage in as a faculty to ensure our students are in the best possible position to succeed. We pair students with an adult to ensure a good match, and we also try to make sure the chemistry of the group is appropriate for all students. Due to the complicated nature of this process, we will be unable to move students once lists are published. Because students travel throughout the day in different groups, they will have opportunities for social time with other students not in their advisories.

Your positive and excited reaction to your child's advisory placement will guide your child's reaction, and we appreciate the trust you place in us in getting just the right fit. Advisory is a great place to make new friends and get to know people in a different way. We have heard story after story of kids who have grown to love advisory groups and other students despite not being excited about the initial list.

As always, please encourage your child to welcome all of our new students. It can be a little frightening to enter a new school in middle school, and we want our new folks to feel at home.

Style Guide Updates and Information

It is our practice to forward the most updated Middle School [Style Guide](#) with this letter every summer before the fun back-to-school shopping begins. Each year, the guidelines undergo analysis and conversation with both students and faculty in order to provide a framework that accommodates realities of fashion and comfort for a successful school day. We have a student "workplace" that includes students from age 4 - 19, faculty, staff, and other adult visitors, so we ask that everyone dress for the task at hand each day as part of the larger community using these gender-neutral guidelines.

Click [here](#) to find the 2022-2023 updated version, with a few minor changes from the previous year. We have extended the Cannon t-shirt option to include college t-shirts, but all other t-shirts must adhere to the outlined policy. We will enforce the sweatshirt policy - only Cannon, plain, or college sweatshirts are permitted.

Like last year, rather than designate a specific length on shorts, skirts, and dresses--mid-thigh has become an almost unattainable fashion goal-- we are asking for adequate coverage. What does adequate coverage mean? It means that kids should be comfortable standing, sitting, bending over, engaging in physical activity, participating in a science lab activity, and walking up stairs, just to name a few things. Yoga pants, leggings, sweatpants, gym shorts, athletic slides, or any other workout gear are not permitted. We are no longer allowing crocs (students did not do a good job wearing them properly and safely), and we are not allowing ripped or patched jeans of any kind.

We will be having conversations with students at the start of the year and we ask that you be on the lookout for the Handbook Highlights form that will come home during the first week.

Dress guidelines are not meant to cause stress, but we do realize that for a middle schooler with a changing body who wants to dress in fun and fashionable clothing, thinking about what to wear is challenging on a good day. We simply ask that kids and families do their best to stay within the guidelines while honoring the need for individuality and choice.

All students will be required to change into the designated Cannon PE uniform. If a uniform was ordered by July 18th, the uniform will be magically delivered by the good folks in the Cougar's Den to your child's advisory during the first few days of school. If uniforms are not pre-ordered, students will need to purchase directly from the Cougar's Den once school begins. You can reach the Cougar's Den at cougarsden@cannonschool.org. Three-sport athletes who pop into PE just two times per year- a few weeks in February and a few weeks in May--do not need to order a PE uniform; those students will simply need to dress to participate in physical activity either indoors or outdoors during those time periods.

As always, please refer to the [Back to School page](#) on our website for anything you are wondering about for the start of the school year, including summer reading assignments, supply lists, athletic tryout information, and much more.

We all look forward to having the kids back in the building—but not before they have enjoyed what is left of the last few precious weeks of summer!

Thanks,



Carla Moyer | Head of Middle School
Cannon School
5801 Poplar Tent Road | Concord, NC 28027
tel (704) 721-7162 | fax (704) 788-7779 | www.cannonschool.org

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