Dear Upper School Parents:

When the 2016 Commencement exercises ended on the evening of May 28th, one might naturally assume that activities at Porter-Gaud would slow down. Not so. The multiple responsibilities connected with finalizing grades and transcripts, scheduling new families, and reviewing curricula segued into various sports and enrichment camps that utilized the wonderful facilities on campus, and voila, mid-July has arrived.

There exists no doubt in my mind that as Porter-Gaud works to fulfill its mission of providing the highest quality educational experience possible for this and future generations of students, we will continue to see signs everywhere that Porter-Gaud is an institution being watched by many, both for what it is achieving and for what it promises to achieve in the future. I, for one, welcome the scrutiny and attention that comes with being an institution of uncommon excellence. I know you share with me Porter-Gaud’s commitment to develop and serve highly motivated and capable students seeking a challenging, disciplined, and personal learning environment in an exemplary college preparatory school. We strive to instill in our students the confidence, integrity, and skills necessary to succeed in their continued educational, personal, and societal endeavors. Our school community’s high expectations require individual responsibility for actions and consequences and help students develop a standard of excellence for the way they lead their lives.

Below are several bullets of information that will allow you to plan for the opening of school.

• **SUMMER WORK:** The rationale behind required summer work centers on two thoughts: the value of keeping students intellectually engaged during their “time off” and the benefits of preparing for the upcoming academic year in at least a couple of academic disciplines. Summer work should be completed by August 18th. [Summer work by grade is listed here](#).

• **STUDENT SCHEDULES:** Students may come to school to review their schedule before classes begin. In this manner, students would begin the year with their schedules finalized and correct. We encourage students to preview their schedule so that the new school year can begin as smoothly and as efficiently as possible. Ms. Oswald will be available to make changes if needed. Beginning Monday, August 15th, there will be a moratorium on all schedule changes until Friday, August 26th. Students may review their class schedules on the following dates:

  - **Seniors:** Tuesday, August 9th  8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
  - **Juniors:** Wednesday, August 10th  8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
  - **Sophomores:** Thursday, August 11th  8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
  - **Freshmen:** Friday, August 12th  8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
• **MONDAY, AUGUST 15th, 2016: 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (Laptop distribution: 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.)** New Student Orientation for first-time students to Porter-Gaud School in grades 10 - 12 and all ninth graders will begin at 10:30 a.m. with registration and will run until 2:30 p.m. Your student should be in the regular school uniform. The most important meetings will be with your student’s faculty advisor and classroom teachers as students follow their 2016 – 2017 class schedule. New students will also enjoy the time they spend interacting with student hosts and hostesses throughout the day.

• **MONDAY, AUGUST 15th, 2016: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.** in Gwynette Auditorium
  New Parent Orientation for parents of all ninth graders and first-time students to Porter-Gaud School in grades 10 – 12 will be an opportunity for the Upper School administration to share information that will help new parents gain a greater understanding of the depth and breadth of the Upper School. A key element of the evening will be an overview of the laptop program by Mr. Zaubi, our Director of Technology. You will find the orientation to be informative and worthwhile as you too begin your assimilation into the Porter-Gaud community.

• **THURSDAY, AUGUST 18th, 2016: 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.** First Day of School. The regular school uniform will be required. We will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. on the 18th in advisor-advisee meetings (lists will be posted throughout the Upper School) where students will be issued their class schedules which will include their locker assignments and their teacher and room locations. Following that brief advisor meeting and several class periods, we will convene for an Opening Assembly in Gwynette Auditorium. I would suggest that students arrive early enough to allow for the usual reunions with classmates and faculty and for finding their advisor’s location. Because there will be athletics that day, students should have all necessary athletic equipment.

• **UNIFORM GUIDELINES:** Please take a moment to review our 2016-17 Uniform Guidelines.
  • Our provider of the PG uniform is Lands’ End. All items can be purchased online at [www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school) using our school code: 900138413
  • **Parents of girls:** Please be aware that the acceptable length of the uniform skirt is 3 inches above the top of the knee or longer. We are committed to seeing that all girls are in compliance with this guideline, and would appreciate your help in making sure you daughter’s skirt is an appropriate length.
  • **Parents of boys:** The PG necktie is worn as part of the Dress Uniform on Chapel days (Tuesday). New ties can be purchased at the front desk from Ms. Luff.
  • **9th graders taking Health/PE** will receive their PE uniform from their teachers on the first day of class.
• **Sweatshirts must be official Porter-Gaud gear.** NON Porter-Gaud sweatshirts (pull-over or zip-up) are not acceptable outerwear. Please plan accordingly for the colder months.

• **Logos:** Clothing or accessories like belts or hats that have inappropriate logos, slogans, or symbols are not allowed at any time. Such a list would reference, for example, alcohol, drugs, or tobacco, as well as political logos or symbols that are either morally or ethically offensive in any way.

• **ATTENDANCE:** Your child’s safety and well-being remain paramount concerns of ours at all times. Consequently, the school establishes the attendance policies and standards for its students. A fundamental faculty expectation is that students will be in school on a regular and consistent basis. I also expect that you will notify me or Ms. Frazier if extenuating circumstances involving an extended illness impact your student. Excessive absenteeism remains a leading faculty concern, and while I will individually review each excessive absence case with the Head of School, I want to avoid students losing academic credit for violating the excessive absence policy. Finally, please understand that missing classes during the day may prohibit a student’s participation in athletic practices and games as well as drama or musical rehearsals or performances.

• **DRESS CODE:** Dress regulations at Porter-Gaud focus on neat, clean clothing in good taste and are consistent in spirit and in line with the standards, philosophy, and style of the school. Starting on Thursday, the 18th, a student’s failure to comply with the dress and grooming standards of the Upper School will mean that the student may not be permitted to attend classes and may risk being sent home. Please assist your son or daughter in following our dress and grooming regulations; the school stresses that good character development and maturity require an appropriateness of dress, which the school defines as part of its training and educational responsibilities.

• **STUDENT DRIVERS: REGISTRATION:** Students will be required to register their cars and post a 2016 - 2017 parking permit on their vehicles by August 26th, 2016. Registration forms and permits will be available at the start of school in the Main Office. **PARKING:** Obviously building construction will seriously impact student, staff, and faculty parking this year. For that reason, a separate email will be sent prior to the start of school clarifying parking guidelines for 2016 – 2017.

• **RULES and REGULATIONS of CONDUCT:** A significant focus of Porter-Gaud School’s mission focuses on the development of those qualities of responsibility, morality, and intellect that define good character. In living daily the ideals of “fides, honor, scientia,” each individual must exercise self-control and self-discipline for the common good. Each student must assume responsibility for his/her own actions and for the actions of others and be cognizant of consequences for inappropriate behavior. The School and its
teachers assume that each student is a gentleman/lady who possesses or seeks to acquire those qualities and habits which contribute to sound character. Rules and regulations of conduct are intended to enable all the members of the school family to live together cooperatively, honestly, harmoniously, and with mutual respect. For this reason, students whose conduct or influence is injurious to others are subject to disciplinary action by the school. It is impossible to define precisely all areas and degrees of misconduct and unacceptable behavior; however, there are specific rules in the Handbook forbidding the use or possession of alcohol, intoxicants, or drugs, and stealing of other’s property to name a few. Only if we as faculty, staff, and administration have unequivocal cooperation from you and your student on routine, but necessary, aspects of student life such as proper attire, promptness, regular attendance, and proper conduct, can we direct our attention toward helping your student achieve his/her potential and goals.

- **DECEMBER EXAMS:** The December mid-year exam schedule runs from Wednesday, Dec. 14th through Tuesday, Dec. 20th. Please note that this exam schedule allows for department exams to be arranged so that students have one exam per day. The School expects that any holiday travel plans will be made after exams finish on Tuesday around 12:00 p.m. The School will not alter the exam schedule to accommodate student requests for exams to be moved to an earlier date.

- **FUTURE MAILINGS / WEB POSTINGS:** Look for the following information in the weeks ahead to help you organize and prepare for the new school year:
  - **NetClassroom:** This information will contain details for accessing your student’s grades and assignments. NetClassroom parent access will open on Tuesday, August 18th.
  - **Porter-Gaud athletic season pass** application for families.

I have presented considerable information in this letter; if you have questions, please e-mail or phone me. My best wishes to you and your family during the remainder of the summer and throughout the upcoming school year.

Warmest Regards,

Brad M. Gilman, Head of Upper School