



Dear Upper School Parents and Students:

When the 2017 Commencement exercises ended on the evening of May 27<sup>th</sup>, 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. Then, of course, there is the inspiring, new, state-of-the-art Upper School building and the relocation of classrooms and student services. The WOW! factor will delight students, faculty, staff, and parents when we start classes in August.

The entire Porter-Gaud community's commitment to this major undertaking and the future Performing Arts Center and Chapel leaves no doubt in my mind that as Porter-Gaud works to fulfill its mission of providing the highest quality educational experience 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.

*Now with most fall preseason athletic practices commencing in a few short weeks, and the official start of the academic school year in a little over a month, I would like to share with you some 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. Remember that summer work should be completed by August 22<sup>nd</sup> unless specifically stated in the assignment's instructions. Avoid a stressful, frenetic end of summer by successfully completing all summer work well in advance of the first day of school. Clicking on the P-G web page, hovering the cursor over "I am a Student" and then clicking on the Summer Work link will allow you and your student to access the summer assignments.

**STUDENT SCHEDULES:**

Hours and hours of time are devoted to creating a course scheduling matrix that aims to minimize student schedule changes once the year commences. In an effort to minimize lost class time, 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. While this scheduling time is optional, it makes sense for 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. Students will attend according to the following schedule:

Seniors: Tuesday, August 8 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Juniors: Wednesday, August 9 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Sophomores: Thursday, August 10 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Freshmen: Friday, August 11 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

**Beginning Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, there will be a moratorium on all schedule changes until Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.**

**THURSDAY, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017: 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. New Student Orientation will include welcomes and comments from Mr. Egleston, the Head of School; me; Ms. Oswald, the Registrar; Ms. Frazier, the Upper School Dean; Mr. Zaubi, the Director of Technology; and Ms. Ridgell, the Upper School Counselor. The most important meetings will be with your student's faculty advisor and classroom teachers as students follow their 2017 – 2018 class schedule. New students will also enjoy the time they spend interacting with student hosts and hostesses throughout the day.**

**THURSDAY, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017: 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. While I do not want to require your attendance, I do believe that you will find the orientation to be informative and worthwhile as you too begin your assimilation into the Porter-Gaud community.

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017: 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.**

All students report. **The regular school uniform will be required.** We will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. on the 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Our role in the Upper School as “in loco parentis” requires that we maintain accurate 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 imposing end-of-semester grade deductions or having students lose 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. A more detailed explanation regarding attendance policies will be available in the 2017 – 2018 Upper School Student – Parent handbook.

**DRESS CODE:**

Dress regulations at Porter-Gaud focus on neat, clean clothing in good taste and are consistent in spirit and in letter with the standards, philosophy, and style of the school. **Starting on Tuesday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>, a student's failure to comply with the dress and grooming standards of the Upper School may mean disciplinary consequences including the possibility of not attending classes or 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. Prior to the end of July, Ms. Frazier will be sending a letter that outlines dress code regulations and contains contact information for ordering through Land’s End.

**STUDENT DRIVERS:**

**REGISTRATION:**

Students will be required to register their cars and post a 2017 - 2018 parking permit on their vehicles by August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Registration forms and parking permits will be available at the time students pick up their schedules in early August.

**PARKING:**

Obviously new building construction continues to seriously impact student, staff, and faculty parking. *In an effort to be transparent about this challenge, I want to share that current thinking centers on limiting the number of issued parking permits based upon grade level because of viable and available student parking spaces.* For that reason, a separate email will be sent prior to the start of school clarifying parking guidelines for 2017 – 2018.

**RULES and REGULATIONS of CONDUCT:**

Our school community’s high expectations assume individual responsibility for one’s actions, an awareness of the actions of others, and an understanding and acceptance of consequences. A significant element of Porter-Gaud School’s mission focuses on the development of those qualities of responsibility, morality, and intellect that define good character and help students develop a standard of excellence for the way they lead their lives. In living daily the

ideals of “fides, honor, scientia,” each individual must exercise self-control and self-discipline for the common good. 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.

Our rules and regulations of conduct are designed to enable all the members of the school family to live together cooperatively, honestly, harmoniously, and with mutual respect. For this reason, students unable to abide by our standards will find themselves 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 Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>. The School expects that any holiday travel plans will be made after exams finish on Wednesday around 12 noon. The School will not alter the exam schedule to accommodate student/parent requests for exams to be moved to an earlier date. Aside from the Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> make-up exam at 12:45 p.m., all rescheduled exams will be taken in January.

**FUTURE MAILINGS / WEB POSTINGS:**

Look for the following additional information in the weeks ahead to help you organize and prepare for the new school year:

1. NetClassroom: This information will contain details for accessing your student's grades and assignments. NetClassroom parent access will open on Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>.
2. 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. The accompanying list of people may also help with specific concerns. My best wishes to you and your family during the remainder of the summer and throughout the upcoming school year.

Warmest Regards,



Bradley M. Gilman  
Head of Upper School