



Harding
ACADEMY
CHRIST-CENTERED

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July 10, 2013

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Starting school! For me, the idea evokes memories of new book satchels and lunch boxes; of crisp tablets, sharp pencils, and pristine crayons; of new homemade plaid dresses in fall colors and new hair ribbons; of new shoes that were a little bit too big; of new teachers; of a new classroom; of new friends. For students and teachers, this time of year brings many changes, and those changes remind us of the opportunity to start over, to begin anew. What a joy and a blessing!

As you have come to expect, the back-to-school letter begins by telling you of changes you can expect in this new year. The decision to equip each upper school student with an iPad obviously represents a significant change. We believe that digital technology will ultimately be a gateway to a new environment, one where students are discovering and creating, finding answers to their own questions, working collaboratively, and participating in global conversations in real time. Because this is our first year with iPads, you should expect that the level of integration and use will vary from class to class, discipline to discipline, grade to grade, and day to day. While the changes may be gradual, we hope you notice that we will be trying to make students think more and memorize less, to push them to create questions instead of learning responses to teachers' questions, and to figure out their own solutions to problems and not wait for someone to give them a quick answer. I can get excited thinking about the opportunities—can't you?

Again this summer we have lived in construction and renovation at the Cherry Road campus. When school begins, our students will find that all the restrooms have been renovated; the football field lights have been replaced with modern, energy-efficient, low-pollution lights; the track has been replaced; and new signage is going up at the entrance. Some of these renovations will still be in progress when school begins. I ask for your patience, knowing that the final product will be worth the wait.

Maybe even more exciting than physical changes are the academic revisions that will begin this year—a new grade scale, new consideration for honors courses, and new diploma requirements. These changes are being made to give our students every advantage in the competition for college admission and scholarship dollars. I hope you will read over the document that outlines all of these changes, if you have not already done so.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in us by enrolling your children at Harding. We take seriously both the opportunity and the obligation we have to help your student to develop in the image of God. It is our joy to get to work alongside you as parents to encourage students to grow as God would have them grow.

We welcome several new faculty members this year. Ms. Jennifer Daniels will teach speech and drama and direct our theatre program. Mr. Phillip Dutton joins us to teach government, economics, and world history and to coach. Mrs. Dana Viner Palacios will teach Spanish, and Ms.

Charli Shelby will teach junior English. Mr. Seth King will serve as our campus minister and will continue to teach Bible. We have one teaching position, Bible 9, yet to be filled.

To help you get ready for a new school year, be sure to look at these items which are posted on the Harding website. These are items that we would have mailed in the past, but for the second year, we are paperless. Please be sure to look at each item and print off the forms you need.

- Academic Revisions
- Back 2 School Bash information
- Calendar for 2013-14
- Daily bell schedule
- Dress code uniform (chart)
- Dress code
- Handbook for Students and Parents
- Handbook receipt
- Institute for Faith and the Arts
2013-14 season brochure
- Letter to seventh grade and new
8-12 parents
- Letter to all parents (this letter)
- Medication form
- Medication rules
- Parents Club membership form
- Reading list for 2013-14
- Sodexo (food service) information
- Supply lists for each class and each
teacher
- Tennessee Tax Holiday information

A few more reminders...

Meet the Teacher Night. Mark your calendar for Meet the Teacher Night on Monday night, August 19. That's a different night from our traditional date—we hope to be avoiding some athletic conflicts with the change. Our Parents Club is hosting a time of fellowship and information beginning at 6:00 that evening, with the rotation to the classes beginning at 7:00. Please come to the elementary gymnasium to enjoy some light refreshments, pick up your student's schedule, check your directory listing, and find out about opportunities to be involved at Harding. We hope every student will have at least one parent in attendance. Give yourself time to park and get into the building. If you arrive on campus at 7:05, you will miss first period!

Health records. We will be checking to see that every student has a complete health record. There are new requirements for new students and for entering seventh graders.

New students must have a new Certificate of Immunization form PH-4103 (revised 3/10). A sample is enclosed in this packet.

Seventh graders must have (1) this new Certificate of Immunization form PH-4103; (2) evidence of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster [t-dap]; and (3) verification of immunity to varicella [2 doses or history of disease].

*If we do not have complete records for a student by **Tuesday, September 3**, the student will have to remain out of school until we do have those records.*

Uniforms. Students are expected to wear uniforms from the very first day, including orientation day for seventh graders and new students. The guidelines are posted online.

Note about uniforms—If your daughter has been wearing the same uniform pieces for a few years, please take a close look and make sure the items still fit (many girls have outgrown their blouses and skirts) and make sure the blouses are not stained or dingy. Skirts may need to have

their hems let down and pleats re-pressed. Many boys have also outgrown their knit shirts, and shirts worn for several years have become faded.

PowerSchool. We continue to use PowerSchool for managing student records including grades, attendance, enrollment, and more. Parents will be reissued new user names and log-in codes at the beginning of school. Grades will be available for viewing after August 23. Please remember that PowerSchool is our primary communication from teacher to parent. I ask teachers to spend a great deal of time putting grades and other information into PowerSchool, but I don't expect them also to call and tell you about those grades. Please look at the grades weekly. When you see something in the grades that concerns you, I ask that you initiate communication with the teachers.

Ride Waiting. Ride Waiting continues this year for students who do not have transportation at the end of the school day. This service was begun many years ago when only a few students needed this option. In recent years, we have had over 100 students staying in Ride Waiting. As you can imagine, providing a quality service for this many students at no cost to parents is no longer working. You can expect next year (2014-15) to see a new program in place. Be aware that next year there will be a fee for after-school supervision in this program. Because this will be the last year Harding will offer Ride Waiting as a free service to parents, I hope you will begin now to make alternative arrangements for student pickup.

Seventh Graders and New-to-Harding Students. Students new to Harding and all seventh graders will begin school on Monday, August 12. See the separate letter to parents of seventh graders and new students 8-12 for a specific schedule for that day.

Student Handbook. In an effort to be as paperless as possible, we are posting the student handbook online this year. We will not be sending printed copies home.

Our first full day of classes will be Tuesday, August 13. (Returning students must not be on campus before August 13 unless they have special permission from Mr. Goddard or me.) Students should be in their first period classes when the 7:50 bell rings that morning. Being on time, bringing paper and pen, and iPad (fully-charged), being ready to work, and being dressed appropriately will help your student get off to a good start.

We know that you, the parents, are the first and most important teachers in your students' lives. It is the ministry of all of the teachers, administrators, and staff here at Harding to support you in your task. We at Harding are thankful for the opportunity to work with your family, and we hope you and your student are anticipating a challenging and rewarding year. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions now or during the year, please do not hesitate to call on any of us.

Sincerely,



Melanie P. Semore
Head of the Upper School