



**EMBRACE CHALLENGE,
DISCOVER YOURSELF.**

August 2019

Dear Upper School Families,

This promises to be an exciting year of change at Nichols. Under our new Head of School, Chris Burner, we will begin a review of our current schedule and curriculum to ensure that we are providing the best education that challenges our students, while supporting them in ways that enable them to discover fundamental values and truths. We also have some important physical changes on campus. Our new Student Commons in Mitchell Hall will give us much needed space for students to meet and collaborate. In addition, we have moved some faculty members to new classrooms, creating opportunities for growth, development and innovation. Much of the English department and the Writing Center will occupy the rooms on the second and third floors of Mitchell Hall, while the Modern and Classical Language classrooms are on the second floor in Albright Hall. The Admissions Office is now located on the first floor of Mitchell Hall, and the College Office and our Marketing and Communications Office have moved to the first floor of Albright Hall. Finally, you should have [received emails](#) regarding our new Parent Portal, which is called MySchoolApp. This new portal replaces both My Backpack and Schoology. Be sure to [set up your account](#) prior to the school year so that you can communicate with teachers and access schedules and grades.

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce you to our new faculty and to let you know about some changes in staffing and policies for the upcoming year.

We welcome four new faculty members to the Upper School: Ms. Block, a vocal music teacher, Ms. Wales, a history teacher, Ms. Jacobson, an English and history teacher, and Ms. Chan, a biology teacher. In addition, Mr. Shelton, our long-term substitute from last spring, joins the Nichols faculty as the 5-12 instrumental music teacher. Please watch for future newsletters to learn more about these talented people who are looking forward to working with your children.

After many years of excellent service, Mr. Potter will be stepping down as English Department Chair. Ms. Errickson will take on the role of English Department Chair. Mr. Greene will return as chair of the History Department with the departure of Mr. Mahn.

Students taking AP Exams will be required to commit to those exams earlier in the year due to changes instituted by the College Board. Any student enrolled in an Advanced Placement course is required to take at least one AP exam for that course. If a student should miss the AP exam in May, his or her transcript will be changed, the AP designation will be removed from the course, and colleges will be notified of the change. These exam dates are set by the College Board and take place between May 4th and May 15th. The College Board charges \$94.00 for each exam. We are able to offer financial assistance for qualifying students. Please contact AP Coordinator Sarah Jacobson (sjacobson@nicholsschool.org) with questions concerning AP exams.

I want to highlight a change to the Upper School Student Handbook regarding Student Accountability. In the past, we had the following responses available as tools in our graduated discipline process: Detention, Behavioral Warning, Behavioral Probation, Suspension and Dismissal. We have added “Behavioral Leave” as a step in between Probation and Suspension. Both Behavioral Leave and Suspension will require a student to stay home from school for a length of time; however, Behavioral Leave will not be reported in the college process. We found we had a



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need for a greater range of tools to respond to different situations. See the section on Student Accountability in the Handbook for more detail.

This year we will require both students and parents to acknowledge that they have read and agree to the contents of the Student Handbook. Please return this form to Mr. Combs, Dean of Students, once you have reviewed the Handbook. The Handbook [is available here](#).

As you know, students will not be able to start school this year unless we have current physical and medical emergency forms on file. You [received an email recently](#) regarding Magnus, our new electronic system for submitting health forms. Please contact our School Nurse, Michelle Derenda, with any questions.

New student ID Cards and lanyards will be issued the first day of school. Last year's cards will not work to access buildings. Student athletes and those participating in the Leadership Symposium in the last weeks of August will not be able to swipe into buildings with their old ID cards.

Finally, student schedules will be distributed at Book Store days at the end of August: August 22nd from 8:30-11:00 for 9th grade, August 23rd from 8:30-11:00 for 10th grade, August 22nd from 12:00-2:00 for 11th grade, and August 23rd from 12:00-2:00 for 12th grade. Questions regarding student schedules should be directed to the appropriate grade level dean: 9th grade – Erin Habelt, 10th grade – Tom Franz, 11th grade – Kerry Bennett, and 12th grade – Chuck Ptak.

While we work very hard to avoid conflicts when building the schedule, some are inevitable. If you are contacted by a dean regarding a schedule conflict in the coming days, please get back to us as soon as you can.

Enjoy these last few weeks of summer! We will see you soon.

Yours,

Aranya Maritime
Head of the Upper School