

Dear New Boarders and Families,

It is amazing to think that in just under two months we will all be gathering here on campus for the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. Campus is currently quiet as we have wrapped up the most recent school year. Soon it will be buzzing with summer programming, so while not the same age group, the campus will be anything but empty. In the Dean of Students Office, we quickly made the shift from last year to the upcoming year. If families have not yet submitted your [Arrival Form](#), Permissions Form, and Vehicle Form, all of which can be found in the My Forms folder of parents' [MyBackpack](#) account, please do so now as the **July 1 deadline** is fast approaching. In addition, new boarding students (not parents) should complete the [New Roommate Survey](#) by the same **July 1 deadline** so that the Dean of Students Office can begin the process of pairing new students with their roommates.

In May parents received [communication](#) from the Health & Wellness Center indicating that certain health forms are required to be completed and are due to the Health & Wellness Center by **July 1**. As a reminder, requests for air conditioning are handled by the Health & Wellness Center and are only granted for approved medical reasons. These requests must be submitted as part of the summer health forms as we cannot accommodate them mid-year.

All international students, as well as those domestic boarders who live a significant distance away (3+ hours), are required to have a local guardian (an adult relative or friend of the immediate family) who lives within two hours of Madeira. In the event of health issues or an emergency, having a local guardian allows for the student to be placed in their care. Instructions for sharing the guardian's name and contact information with Madeira are in the attached Guardian Information document.

Students and families received communication from the Athletics Department regarding [trying out for a varsity sport](#) and those who choose to audition for the fall play [will receive communication](#) from the Arts Department this summer as well. All students should be prepared to participate in their afternoon D Block (fall play, sports, activity, etc) beginning on Friday, September 1 which means having all necessary athletic gear when you arrive to school. Be aware that all sports teams (Varsity and JV) as well as the fall play will hold practice on the morning of Saturday, September 2.

If you are planning to attend fall varsity tryouts or play auditions, you will be arriving on [August 27 between 8:00-11:30 a.m.](#) The majority of new students, those not participating in preseason tryouts or auditions, should arrive on [August 31 between 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.](#) To ensure that your daughter does not miss any orientation programming, please plan to arrive during the arrival date and time windows listed here. If there are any complicating factors related to your arrival time, please contact the Dean of Students Office as soon as possible.

We will have [orientation sessions](#) for all new parents and girls on August 31 until 5:30 p.m. and then a dinner for parents (after you all have said goodbye to your girls) beginning at 5:30 p.m. Parents, we welcome your attendance for as much of that day as you are able to attend. You can find the full [orientation schedule here](#). We realize that some families, especially those traveling internationally, may want to spend additional time around your daughter's arrival experiencing everything that the Washington, DC area has to offer. We strongly recommend that you do so *before* your daughter's move-in date. Once they arrive at school, the girls are extraordinarily busy with orientation programming, activities, dorm events, and of course classes! In our experience, students transition best when they are fully immersed in the community from move-in day onward rather than having to navigate a protracted goodbye with their families.

Since September will be here before we know it, I wanted to reach out to all of our new boarding students to make some recommendations about how you might prepare for the upcoming school year. I have included a “What to Bring” list so when you think about packing you’ll have a better sense of what is needed as well as what isn’t allowed in the dorms. I also have some suggestions about how you might begin to prepare for community living.

Some helpful tips and hints:

- **If you aren’t used to waking yourself up** -- practice for a few weeks prior to coming to school. Use a variety of alarm clocks, sounds, etc. It will be your responsibility to wake up and get to class on time.
- **If laundry hasn’t been your thing**, you definitely will want to learn how to do your own. We supply the machines (free of charge!) but you will want to know how much detergent to use, how to separate colors, and what should be put in the dryer and what shouldn’t. Practice doing your own laundry before getting to campus. Don’t worry if you are not yet an expert by the time you arrive -- we have lots of older girls and dorm adults here who are ready to help!
- **Homesickness** -- it is very common and totally normal. Some girls get through it fairly quickly, for others it takes longer. Even returning students experience it! If you haven’t been away from home all that much, it might be a good idea to plan a few sleepovers during the summer if you aren’t already attending camp. Parents and students, you might want to decide to not call or text for those two days. Practicing that separation will make it easier.
- **Balancing free time with homework time** -- while we have structured study hall, you will most likely need to do some homework during free time or even after study hours end. Think about your study habits and try to figure out what will work best for you. If you are someone for whom free time seems to disappear or who tends to wait till the last minute to do things, use this summer to practice some strategies that will help you manage your time.
- **Used to having your phone with you all the time?** Take some time this summer to “disconnect.” We value personal relationships and face-to-face interactions immensely at Madeira and as such have some cell phone free zones such as classrooms, the dining hall, and the library. In addition, when you are walking around campus we want you to engage with one another rather than your Instagram account so we expect that if you need to use your phone while out and about, that you stop and “pull over”! While it may sound silly that you need to “practice” not checking your phone, it can be harder than you think to digitally disconnect. So girls, when you sit down with your summer reading books, leave your phone in another room.
- **Get to know your RA’s** -- each dorm has two Resident Assistants. These are selected junior and senior leaders who live with you in the dorm and they can be really helpful in solving little problems and showing you how things work in the dorm. You will receive emails from some of them this summer -- they are sending videos with tips and hints about life at Madeira. [Click here](#) for any videos you may have missed. The RAs are always a friendly face who can help you navigate all of your Madeira “firsts.” They are there to help you; please, please use them when you need them.
- **This last one may sound a bit odd** -- practice asking for help. You are about to embark on a big, exciting adventure. Starting high school is big, throw in living at your high school and that is

huge! There will be times when you are overwhelmed, excited, happy, worried or flummoxed, sometimes all at once. You, of course, always still have your parents to lean on, but often an adult who is here on campus can be enormously helpful. Our job is to help you when you need it so don't be afraid to reach out to us.

One more thing, we know that you are probably very excited to learn who your roommate will be next year. Thanks to all of you who have already completed your [New Roommate Survey](#); we are hard at work matching you up with another student. You will find out who your roommate is upon arrival at school!

As always, if you have questions throughout the summer, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Our hours are not as regular during the summer so email is often the best option. I can be reached at [hsouthworth@madeira.org](mailto:hsouthworth@madeira.org) or via phone at 703-556-8211. I would love to hear from any of you!

All the best,  
Hunter Southworth  
Director of Residential Life