



Dear Middle School Parents:

As we turn the calendar to August, I am already looking forward to a wonderful year for you and your children. I hope your family has enjoyed some fun, relaxing time together this summer. While I didn't get to hike any major mountains again this summer, I was able to get away with my extended family for a fun week in Corolla in the Outer Banks. I also spent some quality time with my two- and six-year-old grandsons. Perhaps the biggest milestone for me as I look to the start of the school year is that my oldest grandson, Michael, will be a new first grader at Key. For the first time, I will be participating in Grandparents' Day in a whole new way!

The Key School campus has remained an active place over the summer, with many academic, athletic, arts, and camp programs bringing students from all over the greater Annapolis community to Key. Alongside the daily Summer at KEY activities, children have attended a wide array of exploratory and enrichment programs such as the Counselor-in-Training course, Emergency Vet class, digital photography and other visual arts classes, Robot Engineer, College Application, Minecraft Game Design, Ultimate Drone Obstacle Challenge, cooking, 3D Creator, chess, musical theater, and the ever-popular Filmsters Academy. At the same time, our popular summer athletic offerings occurred in soccer, mountain biking and ultimate frisbee. Finally, our Outdoor Education staff has led some exciting trips this summer, including a five-day canoeing trip along the Pocomoke River, and a five-day student leadership excursion to the backcountry of Shenandoah National Park. As these programs are coming to a close and Upper School pre-season sports practices are on the horizon, we are again reminded that the summer is winding down and the school year is upon us.

The Middle School teachers remain actively engaged in school life during the summer. Many teachers continued in the school environment, either by teaching, attending graduate courses, training on new technologies, exploring new field trips, or by working in teams on curriculum development for their classes and programs. Some teachers also participated in our summer programs as camp counselors or running exploration classes or athletic clinics. As you can see, summer is a time not just of rest, but of regeneration for such a dynamic faculty who are extremely energetic and passionate about working with and for children, and who embody the goal of lifelong learning that we strive to nurture in our students.

I am extremely excited to introduce to you four new faces to our faculty this year. First, we are adding **Jessica Schwenk** as the newest member of our Learning Department. With a B.S. from Penn State University and an M. Ed. from the University of San Diego, Jessica has been

working most recently as a special education teacher in the Calvert County Public Schools and as an education specialist instructor at the Cajon Valley Union School District in southern California. She has significant background in outdoor sports and recreation, as well as travel, cooking, music, theater and Broadway, and photography. Jessica will be teaching sixth and seventh grade Workshop classes, and, along with Sarah Judd, she will be providing academic and study skills support to students in all grades.

Second, please welcome **Samantha Tyson** as a part-time teacher in our Math faculty. Samantha has a B.S. in aerospace engineering from Texas A&M and is currently working toward her M.A.T. from the University of Maryland. She has been a substitute teacher at Key School and Anne Arundel County Public Schools, and a high school math and physics teacher at Antilles School in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Beyond her teaching background, Samantha has been a software engineer at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab, a cryptanalyst for the Department of Defense, and an aerospace engineer at Lockheed Martin.

Next, as many of you know, Christy Serinis will be on maternity leave at the beginning of the school year and we have hired **Kate Treatman-Clark** to teach Christy's classes and fill in as a sixth grade homeroom teacher in her absence. With an A.B. in biological anthropology from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in anthropological sciences from SUNY Stony Brook, Kate has been a middle school science teacher for the Johns Hopkins CTY program, as well as an anthropology instructor at SUNY Stony Brook. She brings an extensive background in research and publication, and has recently been a substitute in French and Science classes in the Lower School at Key.

Finally, Kim Simpson will not be returning to Key in the fall due to unexpected logistics related to her family for the upcoming school year. With Kim's departure, we have hired **Alice Drayton** as the newest member of our Humanities faculty. No stranger to Key School, Alice has a B.A. in history from Rhodes College, and an M.Ed. from University of South Alabama. With sixteen years of teaching experience, Alice has most recently been an IB program teacher at Annapolis High School, and, before that, she taught fifth grade at the Naval Academy Primary School. Alice will be stepping into Kim's role as seventh grade Humanities teacher and advisor, and as eighth grade Global Studies teacher. While we regret that Kim will not be continuing at Key this year, we are fortunate to be adding such a quality, veteran teacher.

I hope you will join me in welcoming Jessica, Samantha, Kate and Alice to their new roles in our Key School faculty this year.

In order to prepare for a smooth opening to the school year, please read the list of important scheduling items and reminders below. In the meantime, I hope you and your children enjoy the final weeks of the summer. I look forward with great anticipation to welcoming your children to the first day of school on Monday, August 26.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help you or your children prepare for the beginning of school.

Sincerely,

[David J. Magnus](#)

Middle School Head

Important Dates and Reminders

The following information should help us have a great start to the school year. Please share this with your children so they know what to expect as the year begins:

Orientation for new students and all fifth graders will be held from 10:00-11:30 a.m. on Friday, August 23 in the Barn. **All fifth graders are invited and will go directly to their homerooms. All 6th, 7th and 8th grade new students will meet in the Barn Commons. Parents should park in the main parking lot on the corner of Hillsmere and Carroll Drive, or on the Key School side of Carroll Drive.**

For all other returning students, the **first day of school will begin at 8:15 a.m. on Monday, August 26.** Letters with information about homerooms will be mailed during the week of August 12-16. On the first day of school, all students should go directly to their homerooms. If you have questions about where to go, we will be happy to assist you.

Middle School students will begin each day with **homeroom/advisory** at 8:15 a.m. and the school day will end at 3:20 p.m.

To support parent work schedules, we do offer a **Middle School After School Program** every day until 5:30 p.m. Please [click here](#) to access the After School Program Registration Form.

[Key's Student/Parent Handbook](#) is now posted online. We encourage all members of the Key community become familiar with it.

Key takes its responsibility to be a good neighbor very seriously and we rely on our parents and students to help us maintain a good relationship with the residents of Hillsmere. As we prepare to begin the school year, **please remember to adhere to all posted speed limits while driving in Hillsmere and to be considerate of the residents** when parking around the campus.

Please note that the **Middle School drop-off** location is the driveway in front of the Science and Library Center. This is for drop-off only; please do not park in this area.

Student schedules will be distributed on the first day of school. The schedules will provide students with information about their teachers, classroom locations and order of classes each day.

Fifth and sixth grade students will be given School-owned Chromebooks at the beginning of each day, while seventh and eighth grade students need to bring their own device to school. [View additional information and specifications for the 1:1 Laptop Program.](#) We will be providing a technology orientation for all students during the first week of school.

Located under the "Parents" link found on the top of the website's landing page, **Key's Parent Portal** comprises important resources you can refer to throughout the year. Middle School specific information is found under the "Forms, Letters, Lists & Resources" box.

On the [Parent Portal](#), you will find:

- **Carpool Module and Bus Transportation** information: The School encourages the formation of carpools. A Google maps-based carpool module and bus transportation information is available on the password-protected Parent Portal.
- **Online health and emergency contact information** can be completed by clicking on the **Magnus Health** button. All forms must be completed by Friday, August 9.
- In June, we posted a **list of supplies** required for Middle School students on the Middle School tab under Forms, Letters, Lists, & Resources.
- Please make sure your children have completed their [summer math and reading](#) work prior to the first day of school. The work is found on the Summer Math and Reading button on the Portal or, for student access, on the O-Zone found on "Students" tab at the top of Key's homepage.
- In June, we posted a list of [textbooks](#) for students in grades 7-8 that need to be purchased for the upcoming school year. It is found on the Middle School tab under Forms, Letters, Lists, & Resources. If you have difficulty obtaining these books, please contact the Middle School Office.

Below are some important Middle School [calendar](#) items for August, September and October:

August

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| 23 | New Student / Fifth Grade Orientation (10:00 – 11:30 a.m.) |
| 26 | First Day of School /PA Back-to-School Coffee for parents (8:00 – 9:30 a.m.) |

30 Fifth Grade Outdoor Education Activities for students

September

- 2 Labor Day (NO SCHOOL)
- 3 [Middle School Fall Sports](#) practices begin (6th, 7th, 8th grades)
- 4 School Picture Day
- 4 Parents' Association Meeting (7:00 p.m.)
- 5 Middle School Back-to-School Night (7:00 p.m.)
- 9 Fall After School Enrichment Activities begin
- 10 5th Grade Intramurals begin
- 13 Sixth Grade NorthBay Trip Orientation for parents (8:30 a.m.)
- 17 Seventh/Eighth Grade Backpacking Trip Orientation for parents (8:30 a.m.)
- 20 Parent and Student Program on Cyberbullying and Safe Social Media Use
- 25-27 Sixth Grade NorthBay Outdoor Education Trip
- 26-27 Seventh Grade Appalachian Trail Backpacking Trip
- 27 Fifth Grade Parent Coffee with School Counselor Randi Alschuler (8:30 a.m.)
- 30 Rosh Hashanah (NO SCHOOL)

October

- 3 New Parent Breakfast, Lunch or Happy Hour
- 9 Yom Kippur (NO SCHOOL)
- 14 Columbus Day (SCHOOL IN SESSION)
- 15 Eighth Grade Field Trip to Holocaust Museum
- 16 Parents' Association Meeting (8:30 a.m.)
- 16-18 Eighth Grade Old Rag Mountain Backpacking Trip
- 20 Parents' Association 5K/10K and Family Fun Run
- 24-25 Middle School Parent Conferences (NO SCHOOL)
- 24 Optional Fifth and Sixth Grade Hiking Trip
- 24-25 Eighth Grade Shadow Days in the Upper School
- 25 Optional Seventh Grade Hiking Trip
- 31 Halloween Parade/Eighth Grade Halloween Fair (8:45 a.m.)
- 31 Gazebo Giving Day