

July 24, 2019

Dear New Darrow Family:

Welcome to the Mountainside! I hope your summer has been filled with both relaxation and the excitement of getting ready to join the Darrow community. The 2019–2020 school year is shaping up to be an exhilarating one, full of adventures and opportunities for us all. I look forward to working with you to make your learning experience as successful and collaborative as possible. Darrow is an optimal environment in which to cultivate that collaboration, with its distinctive program offerings, engaging electives, plentiful opportunities for community involvement and leadership, and, most importantly, its warm, welcoming, and dedicated people.

Indeed, Darrow's greatest asset is its people. For over three years now, I have had the pleasure of witnessing our students' shared pride in the School's uniqueness, their ability to make their ideas heard, and their sense of trust in each other and the adults around them. Darrow students engage deeply with their education and take full advantage of the autonomy and empowerment provided by Darrow's active curriculum, as well as the many extracurricular offerings and the opportunities of the residential program. It is this level of engagement that best demonstrates to me the power of Darrow's approach to learning.

A draft of your academic schedule is included in this packet. If you have already spoken with Lorrie Wechter in her role as registrar, or with me, this schedule should reflect the preferences you have indicated, along with your core classes. If that discussion hasn't yet taken place, the schedule will include the basic course choices based on your incoming grade level. We will have the opportunity to fine-tune it over the rest of the summer. Please contact me via email or if you have any questions or concerns, or want to schedule a time to talk. Selections for athletics teams and Hands-to-Work crews will be made when students arrive. Academic Mentors will be assigned in the first week of school, once class schedules are finalized. If you registered for this added support, you will have a chance to talk with Libby Doan, Director of Academic Mentorship Program, during registration.

Advisor, dorm, and roommate assignments will be available in August. Your Advisor will be your primary support at Darrow, along with your houseparents, teachers, academic mentors, and coaches. For parents, your student's advisor is the first point of contact when you have questions or concerns. They can help you find the right person or source of information. I can also help with questions regarding the academic program, while Dean of Students Kate Johansen can address issues related to student life and discipline. You will also receive a link to the online *Student Handbook* in August, and this will give you a clearer picture of the various elements of academic, extracurricular, and residential life at Darrow, along with rules and community expectations.

Darrow is a close-knit community, and for many students it quickly feels as if everything is shared. Whether you are new to a boarding school environment or have had past boarding experiences, there are some expectations to keep in mind. First, it is important to remain respectful of others' space and property. Darrow students may not be in other students' rooms without the presence of the host, and may not use anything that belongs to another student without express permission each time. We strongly encourage students to leave valuable or irreplaceable items at home, and to register and engrave all electronics. Please pay close attention to the enclosed list of what to bring, as well as what not to bring. Students should practice keeping close track of keys and other valuables during the summer months.

Enclosed is login and password information for your student's Darrow email account in Google. To encourage a high level of communication and awareness within the community, students are expected to check their Darrow email at least once a day. Many teachers make announcements and share time-sensitive information via email. Additional technology training will be provided to students during orientation. An important expectation is that every student have their own laptop computer they can bring to class. Printers for student use will be available around the campus. Smartphones allow students access to the various modes of communication we use on campus, but will not be permitted as classroom devices. I would also like to remind you that all registration forms are available on The Darrow School website. Please visit [www.darrowschool.org](http://www.darrowschool.org) and click on "Admissions" and "Registration Forms & Information" to access all the medical, business, and academic forms needed prior to registration. **All forms are due by August 15.**

I will be in my office the majority of the time between now and the start of school. It will be my pleasure to speak with you if you have academic questions or concerns or would simply like to introduce yourself. New students should plan to arrive and register on August 27. New students will attend orientation activities on August 28-30, and classes begin on Monday, September 2.

I very much look forward to meeting your family over the summer or at the start of the school year.

Best regards,



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