

July 24, 2019

Dear Darrow Family:

I hope you are enjoying a happy and relaxing summer. The 2019–2020 school year is once again promising to be an exciting one, as we continue to develop Darrow’s program offerings and active curriculum model. I look forward to working with you again to make our shared learning experience as successful and collaborative as possible. As I begin my fourth year as Director of Studies, I believe more strongly than ever that Darrow is an optimal environment in which to make that collaboration happen, with its distinctive program offerings, engaging electives, plentiful opportunities for community involvement and leadership, and, most importantly, its warm, welcoming, and dedicated people.

Indeed, it is the people of Darrow that are in so many ways the greatest asset of this school. For several 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. Clearly, they 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.

Most of you already selected courses for the fall during academic registration last spring. A draft of your class schedule for the 2019–2020 school year is included in this packet. Hopefully you will be placed in all of your top choices, but this is not always possible because of occasional conflicts between class blocks, or due to some classes being over-enrolled. If you would like to change something that you see (or don’t) in your schedule, or to find out where a conflict is, please feel free to call or email me. Independent studies are not currently listed and will be added upon your return, along with mentoring blocks.

In a separate August mailing, each of you will receive Advisor and house assignments. Athletics and Hands-to-Work choices will be scheduled in the fall. Please take the summer to practice healthy habits like regular exercise, sufficient sleep, enriching and fun activities, and time management so as to return relaxed but prepared for the diversity of experiences and responsibilities that we engage in every day at Darrow. Some fall coaches have developed training programs for their teams, check your school email for details.

Please remember the expectation that every student has their own laptop computer they can bring to class. As before, 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 primary 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 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.**

Core Leaders are expected back on campus on Sunday, August 25, while RAs return to campus Monday, August 26. All other returning students will arrive on Friday, August 30 with required student orientation on Saturday, August 31 and classes starting on Monday, September 2.

I very much look forward to seeing you again at the start of a new and exciting school year.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mika Saarela', written in a cursive style.

Mika Saarela
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