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September 2020

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Summer is coming to a close, and we are getting excited for the new school year to begin. School of the Arts' mission of student success... academic, artistic, and humanistic is more meaningful than ever. We look forward to starting the school year working with you and your child using distance learning. Right now, our teachers are designing new ways to actively engage your child in the learning process using technology as never before. For the first 10-weeks of school, 100% of your child's instruction will occur virtually. Listed below is information about the opening of SOTA's 2020-2021 school year:

THINGS TO KNOW

Schedules:

- ✓ The first day of school for students is Monday, September 14, 2020. Prior to the first day of school, your child will receive an invitation to each of their teacher's Google Classroom in their student email account. This will provide your child with the Zoom link for each class.
- ✓ Your child should follow their schedule on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday by attending their teacher's Zoom meetings. On Wednesdays, students will have asynchronous learning. They will need to check in with each teacher or attend their office hours. Asynchronous learning means teaching can take place anytime, anywhere, and be self-paced.
- ✓ In August, you should have received your child's Student Information sheet asking you to check the accuracy. If there are corrections, please email them to sotainfo@rcsdk12.org.
- ✓ Enclosed in this mailing is:
 - your child's schedule,
 - the virtual class time schedule,
 - an opt-out form,
 - important SOTA numbers/emails.
- ✓ Students who want to adjust their courses schedules or have a question about a course, should email their counselor. Changes may not take place on the first day of class unless a student has an unscheduled period.
- ✓ Room numbers are subject to change and may not be correct on their printed schedules.
- ✓ If your child has an Advisement Period listed on their schedule, they can visit a teacher who has scheduled office hours or use the time for screen break.

Social Emotional Check and Connect:

- ✓ Students should report to their Social Emotional Check and Connect class by 8:30 AM. This will be a time for questions, activities, discuss coping strategies, and opportunities to discuss social emotional competencies or standards. Social workers, counselors and administrators will use this opportunity to assist with student engagement and well-being.
- ✓ Attendance will be recorded for this time.

Website Additions:

- ✓ SOTA's New Distance Learning Channel includes:
 - video and written tutorials about using Google Classroom,
 - frequently asked questions (FAQs) about virtual learning, Chromebooks, technology, and other valuable resources,
 - tips for virtual learning success,
 - a link to RCSD Learns,

- and a link to the RCSD website.
- ✓ Faculty Office Hours: Lists of office hours for MTRF and Wednesday for faculty will be posted to the website.
- ✓ Additional resources and tutorials for students and parents including the SOTA Library Media Center.

Chromebooks and MiFi Units:

- ✓ If your child has not yet received a Chromebook, please call 585-262-8700, or go on the RCSD website at <https://www.rcsdk12.org> to request the equipment you need. Once your order has been completed, we will call you to arrange a pickup time at SOTA.
- ✓ Concerns with your Chromebook? Please email SOTA's Librarian Mr. Kelly at jonathan.kelly@rcsdk12.org and he will provide suggestions. If he is not able to assist you, he will ask you to call 585-262-8700 to submit a repair ticket.
- ✓ Student's accounts are monitored for appropriate use. If your child is accessing inappropriate websites, using threatening behavior, or noted for a personal concern, you will be notified by a SOTA staff member. Please remind your child about the importance of technology and Internet safety.

Attendance Procedures:

Attendance will be taken daily in each scheduled class. If your child is going to be absent, please call SOTA and press one (1) for the Attendance Secretary, or email SOTA at: sotaattendance@rcsdk12.org. When communicating absences be sure to include your child's name, the reason for the absence, and your phone number. Absent/unexcused ROBO calls will go out after the first hour of instruction.

Curriculum Night:

September 23, 2020 from 6-8 PM; more details to come.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions. We are looking forward to seeing your child on opening day and having a successful year together.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Nicastro

Kelly A. Nicastro, Principal
School of the Arts

We Are School of the Arts... We Are SOTA Strong!