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OUR MISSION IS STUDENT SUCCESS...ACADEMIC, ARTISTIC, AND HUMANISTIC

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## **FROM PRINCIPAL KELLY NICASTRO**

### ***OUR OPPORTUNITY TO EVOLVE, ADVANCE AND IMPROVE.***

School of the Arts anxiously awaits the beginning of the new school year. When we open our doors on Thursday, September 9, 2021, our students will be welcomed back to familiar surroundings by friendly faces. We have missed our students and look forward to their return. However, when classes begin, SOTA scholars will not be “learning as normal, but returning to better.”

SOTA is focusing on new knowledge to set the path for the months ahead and new technologies are leading the way. We have a better understanding of our strengths and a firm resolve to manage our challenges. Since SOTA shuttered its doors in March 2020, our faculty has devoted many hours to professional development sessions to prepare for the reopening of schools and enriching their understanding about the many facets to learning.

Learning is a social experience which happens everywhere. School of the Arts values your child’s individual identity and development. The quality of our interactions shape our ability to learn and our emotions are essential to it. Our brains develop throughout our lives... racial, cultural, and personal identities play a critical role in our cognitive development. Most importantly, sustained and supportive human connections are crucial to every child’s well-being, growth, and sense of belonging.

### **SOTA IS READY TO MEET THE LEARNING NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD!**

This year SOTA will focus on meaningful learning and targeted teaching methods which offer your child opportunities to build social, emotional, and intellectual skills. We promise a safe environment where students are respected, supported, and feel a true sense of belonging. Our faculty and administration are committed to building strong, trusting relationships with adults and peers. We pride ourselves in being a welcoming, student-centered learning environment.

Our commitment to culturally responsive education affirms racial, linguistic, and cultural identities; prepares students for independent learning; develops their ability to connect across the lines of difference; elevates historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of positive social change. School of the Arts will continue to develop student leaders; provide restorative practice training; nurture student’s artistic interests; build a strong student government; offer field trips through ROC2Change Summits, and present other opportunities to engage the student body.

## THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF 2021-2022

- Students who still have library books, should please return them to SOTA either before school starts or when we return.
- Lunch periods will be split into two sections to provide social distancing and social emotional support.
- At this time, students will not use lockers.
- To limit distractions during learning, students will utilize Yondr cell phone pouches.
- Student Information sheets- please send in or email the corrections.
- Power school log in- you should have received an email with your new password. The directions for power school can be found at: [www.rcsdk12.org/rcsdlink](http://www.rcsdk12.org/rcsdlink)
- Student schedules will be printed for students in their period 1 class. Students who are not sure of their first period class, should ask any faculty member when they arrive at school.
- School web site: [www.sotarochester.org](http://www.sotarochester.org) - this has all of the up to date and current information you need to stay informed.
- Students who want breakfast, should enter through exit 13 until 8:25 AM.
- Transportation and bus ID- students should have received their temporary pass in the mail. They must bring it until they receive their permanent picture ID from SOTA (by Friday).

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **School Opens Thursday, September 9, 2021**  
Bell Times: 8:30 AM-3:30 PM
- **Curriculum Night - Thursday, September 30, 2021- 6:00-8:00 PM.**
- **Marking Period Dates:**

Quarter 1	9/9 – 11/12
Quarter 2	11/13 – 1/28
Quarter 3	1/29 – 4/8
Quarter 4	4/9 – 6/30
- **September / October At-A-Glance**

9/30	Senior Parent Meet and Greet	5:00 PM
10/4	College Night	5:30 PM
10/11	Columbus Day Holiday	No School
10/13	PSAT/SAT for Gr. 10, 11, 12	Periods 1-4
10/14	Parent Teacher Conferences	5:00-7:00 PM

Thank you for your patience and support. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [sotainfo@rcsdk12.org](mailto:sotainfo@rcsdk12.org).