



Dear Harding Middle School Families,

I hope you are enjoying a restful and refreshing summer. It's not quite over yet, but the start of the new school year is quickly approaching. I know that some may not be as excited as I am about that, which I totally understand. I was once a student (a long, long, long, time ago) after all. One of the reasons I have come to love the start of a new year is that it is just that: a new year! As parents, students, teachers, and even principals, we get to start anew and take everything we have learned from the previous years and use it to make this upcoming year the best we can. I love the opportunity of a new beginning (to be honest, I still really love summer, too). As the start of the new year is just around the corner, I wanted to share some important information with you.

We are blessed with several new faculty members this year: Mr. Ray Hayden (6th Ancient Civilizations), Mr. Hunter Smoak (8th Science), Mr. John Frizzell (8th American History), and Mr. Matthew Floyd (MS Improv, MS Production and Design, Theater Director). We are also adding some current Harding teachers to our middle school team: Mrs. Lindsey Cloer (7th English) and Mrs. Heather Griffiths (7th pre algebra). We are also excited to welcome two school nurses to our staff this year. Mrs. Megan Bolling and Mrs. Ashley Frizzell will be serving as our K-12 nurses.

A few reminders...

Back to School Bash. All families are invited to the Back to School Bash on August 9 starting at 5:30 pm. Join us and eat from some of Memphis' best food trucks, purchase spirit wear, take pictures with friends in photo booths, and get pumped up with an all-school pep rally.

First Day of School. Wednesday, August 7, is a required orientation day for ALL middle school students, and for students in grades 9–11 who are new to Harding. Seniors will be on their annual retreat.

The first regular day of school for all students in grades 6–12 will be on Thursday, August 8. It will be a B day.

Meet the Teacher Night. Mark your calendar for Meet the Teacher Night on **Monday, August 19.** This is a parents-only event designed to allow you to get to know the teachers who are blessed to work with your child each day. We hope every student will have at least one parent in attendance. **Mr. Williamson will open with a Family Meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium.**

Health records. The state of Tennessee requires that every student have a complete health record on file with the school from the beginning of the year. This year our school nurses are utilizing FACTS to maintain all medical and health records. Please check [here](#) for the instructions on how to enter and confirm this information in FACTS.

If your student's health records are from another state (for example, if you live in Mississippi or have moved from Texas), you must take your student's health form to a Tennessee physician or to one of the Memphis & Shelby County Health Department locations and have the data transferred to a Tennessee form.

All students entering seventh grade, including those who were at Harding last year, must have the following:

- Shots recorded on the Tennessee Certificate of Immunization form PH-4103 (revised 1/18)
- Verification of immunity to varicella [2 doses or history of disease]
- Evidence of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster [t-dap] given any time before seventh grade

The deadline for turning in health records is Friday, July 26, 2024. Beginning the first day of school, any child whose health records are not complete will not be allowed to attend classes.

Uniforms. Students are expected to wear uniforms from the very first day. The guidelines are posted online [here](#). Please check to be sure uniform items still fit and are the appropriate length.

Student Handbook. In an effort to be as paperless as possible, we are posting the student handbook online again [here](#). We will not be sending printed copies home. You and your student need to sign and submit the handbook receipt form on [Final Forms](#) by **August 16th, 2024**. If you have any questions about Final Forms, please contact Dawn Gilreath at gilreath.dawn@hardingacademymemphis.org.

Cell Phone Policy. We have updated our cell phone policy for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year which you can review [here](#). All students with cell phones and/or cellular-enabled smartwatches are required to store them in a Yondr pouch for the duration of the day. All families are required to fill out the cell phone information form [here](#). If you have not already done so, you can pick up your Yondr pouch from the tech office.

iPads. Please be reminded of the policy governing the apps that students may have on their school iPads. Students may download only those apps that are on the authorized list, viewable at HardingLions.org/ApprovedApps. There are consequences for downloading unauthorized apps. See the technology handbook for details: [Harding Technology Handbook](#)

Fobs. All middle school students will receive their fobs on **August 7th** during our middle school orientation day. Their house sponsor will be responsible for distributing them.

Lunch. We have recently changed food service providers in an effort to offer a better variety of options for our students. We are proud to announce our new partnership with Belltower, and you will be receiving an email with more information and instructions soon!

This year is going to be incredible!

Corey Cunningham
Middle School Principal