



US Class Dean Update

October 11th, 2024

Dear 11th Grade Families,

Fall greetings! As the air turns crisp and we settle into the more predictable rhythms of a semester well underway, I wanted to touch base with you all about some of the expectations for junior year that I shared with your kids this week.

Talking to Your Kids About Party Culture

I hope you all had a chance to read Kim Lalli's message yesterday, which included these excellent [tips from Lisa Wittner](#) for talking to your teens about parties and your expectations for them regarding alcohol and substance use. This is an important opportunity for us to partner in caring for the health and safety of all of our students; we have made it clear to the kids that the school expects them to remain substance-free, and we hope that you will establish the same clear expectation at home. My message to the students was that we want them to have fun, be safe, and take care of each other, and the more consistently they hear that messaging from all of the trusted adults in their lives, the more likely they will be to seek our help in the (hopefully unlikely!) event that they do find themselves or their friends in a dangerous situation.

Attendance and Detention

As many of you know, our long-serving and stalwart attendance officer, Ro Florio, retired at the end of last year. If and when you need to let us know that your child will be late, absent, or leaving early, please reach out to Ro's successor, **Amanda Carstens-Potts** (pottsa@d-e.org; 201-569-9500 x 3242). Amanda has already helped us to institute more efficient procedures for tracking and following up on unexcused absences ("cuts"), the consequence for which is detention. If your child is assigned a detention for cutting class or developing a pattern of significant tardiness, then you will receive a notification from Amanda. Please don't be too alarmed by this; detention is an important but relatively

low-level disciplinary response to missing class, which only becomes a major cause for concern if it develops into a consistent pattern that interferes with your child's learning.

As a reminder, juniors **do** have “**come free**” **privileges**, meaning that they do not need to be on campus if they have a free (or frees) early in the day. They must be here on time for their first obligation, which is usually 10am at the very latest. (The notable exception is Thursdays, when Assembly begins at 9:50am.) Juniors **do not** have “leave free” privileges, and **they are expected to remain on campus until the school day ends at 3:25pm**. If they have a last-period free, then we hope they will use this time to work on homework, study with peers, meet with teachers, and otherwise engage in community life. Juniors **do not** have lunch privileges either, and they must remain on campus throughout the school day.

As I told the students at our grade meeting on Wednesday, “leave free” and lunch privileges are historically reserved for seniors, and the timeline on which they are rolled out is determined by the dean. I trust that they will follow our rules responsibly this year, enabling me to grant them these privileges sooner, rather than later, in their senior year. I have let them know that if they are seen leaving campus without permission during the school day, then I will assign them detention.

Junior Parent Forum October 30th, 2024

I hope to see you at the fall Parent Forum on **Wednesday, October 30th, 7-9pm**, if not sooner. In case you're curious about what's currently on my parenting reading list, it's [Alison Gopnik's *The Gardener and the Carpenter*](#). I look forward to sharing my takeaways with you as a part of our program on the 11th.

Otherwise, be well and please don't hesitate to reach out if you need me.

Best,
Emily