



September 21, 2018

Dear Sixth- and Seventh-Grade Parents:

On the morning of October 4, sixth- and seventh-grade students and members of the faculty will leave campus behind to take part in an overnight experience, filled with fun individual and group challenges and personal reflection, as we take part in this year's annual Fall Retreat. Sixth- and seventh-grade students will be heading to Camp Mason in Hardwick, NJ. Information about Camp Mason can be found here: www.campmason.org.

The history of "Retreat," as it is known, began in the early '80s. Back then, Retreat marked the beginning of a new school year. The day after Labor Day, the entire Middle School—students and faculty—in addition to the Junior Proctors, would pack up and head out for an overnight experience. A half dozen years ago, we moved to our current model with LAUNCH kicking off the year, and Retreat moving to October. We felt that providing an opportunity for students and faculty to go away for an overnight was important in building a strong community, at a time of year when students had established some relationships and a level of trust and comfort with one another and with their teachers. The combination of LAUNCH and the Fall Retreat has served our community well.

During Retreat, students will participate in a series of team-building activities, low and high ropes course elements, and small group challenges. Through these activities led by the staff of Camp Mason, classmates will not only get to know one another in very different ways but will also come to appreciate the contributions each other makes. It is my expectation that each student will walk away from this experience with a stronger sense of community and his/her place within it, not to mention an appreciation for those who will be a part of their lives throughout the year. Working through new challenges, being unplugged from their world full of technology, being away from what is so familiar, and spending time together always proves to create unanticipated opportunities. Sixth- and seventh grade advisors Mrs. Alito, Mrs. Shaffer, Mr. Cook, Mr. Gurick, Ms. Kuser, Ms. Vesnaver, Mr. Secrest, and Ms. Fitzpatrick are all looking forward to going through this experience with your child(ren).

The faculty and I understand that going away for a night may be a difficult proposition for your child, and perhaps even for you. If anxieties are high, please reach out to your child's advisor or to Mrs. Paige. The more information we have, the better we will be able to assist and respond to your child's unique situation. We are prepared and equipped for just about anything.

Click here for a *Packing Information* sheet. If you have not filled out the *Waiver* for the trip, click here to access it.

If your child will be taking **prescribed** medication, OR if you'd prefer that the trip leader carry over-the-counter medications or supplements for your child, please follow these procedures:

- A parent or guardian must submit all prescription medication directly to Ms. Shaffer prior to the date of the trip.
- Prescription medication must be in the original container with the original label. Please pack **ONLY** the amount of medication needed while on the trip.
- If any special instructions must be followed above and beyond what the label provides, please attach detailed instructions and review them with Ms. Shaffer. Your child's advisor will be responsible for carrying the medication for your child and for ensuring he/she takes what is needed and when.

So what will these days look like?

Thursday, October 5:

7:45 a.m.	Drop-off in the lower lot behind the Campus Center. Students and faculty will load buses.
8:15 a.m.	Departure from School
10:00 a.m.	Arrive at Camp Mason
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.	Move into cabins and get situated
10:45 – 12:15 noon	Introductory grade-specific activities with Camp Mason staff
12:30 – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch in mess hall
1:30 – 4:45 p.m.	Grade-specific adventure games and activities with Camp Mason staff
4:45 – 5:45 p.m.	All-grades activity
5:45 – 6:30 p.m.	Dinner in mess hall
6:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Prepare for evening activity
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Evening field activities (will need flashlight) and indoor games
9:00 p.m.	Campfire with s'mores
10:00 p.m.	Situated in cabins for the evening

Friday, October 5:

7:30 a.m.	Wake up, pack bags, clean cabin, and pack bus
8:00 – 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast in mess hall
9:00 – 12:15 noon	Adventure Challenges (high and low ropes course elements)
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch in mess hall
1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	One final activity
1:30 p.m.	Depart Camp Mason
3:00 p.m.	Arrival at School. Pick-up at lower lot by Campus Center

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

