



September 21, 2018

Dear Eighth-Grade Parents:

For sixth- and seventh-grade students, Fall Retreat meant taking part in a two-day, one-night off-campus trip. This trip consisted of individual and group challenges through the use of high and low ropes course elements in addition to field initiatives and other team-building-oriented activities. Students were led by camp staff and Pennington faculty. Meals were supplied by the camp cooks, and enclosed heated cabins with bunk beds and mattresses were provided for a protected and comfortable night's sleep.

For eighth-grade students, Fall Retreat will mean something different. Students will take part in a two-night, three-day camping and hiking experience October 3–5 led by our very own faculty. This experience presents eighth graders with a number of opportunities. We want each of them to step out of their comfort zone by experiencing something new; to learn when to lead and when to follow; to persevere in order to overcome a challenge; to appreciate each other's unique talents, interests, and roles; to consider others when making decisions that have an impact upon others; to experience three days without technology or something that will instantly entertain them; and to contribute to an experience instead of just receive it. In the end, students often return with a new appreciation for the little conveniences in life that they often take for granted.

Accompanying this group of eighth-graders is the eighth grade advisor team of Mr. Moore, Ms. Houston, Ms. Coates and me. Others include Mr. Ding, Mrs. Paige, Mr. Fraser-Pauls, and Mr. Harding. Our destination is Worthington State Park, located in northwestern New Jersey along the Delaware Water Gap, just across the river from the Shawnee Inn in Shawnee, PA. Students will be camping and hiking in advisory groups, led by two faculty members, the advisor and another faculty member. Students will be responsible for setting up tents, cooking and preparing meals, reading trail maps, working a campfire, and the like. Our campsites offer a reliable water supply and bathroom facility; all other needs will be met by what we bring with us. Outhouses are also available for a more rustic camping experience.

Click [here](#) for the *Packing Information* sheet and *Itinerary* to help you and your child prepare for this adventure. 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 me 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 me. 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.

I feel myself gearing up for another amazing Retreat experience. It is my hope that each student will walk away from this trip with a better understanding of himself/herself as a member of this community, as well as an appreciation for those who will be a part of their lives throughout the year. Education and experiences make for a powerful partnership, and we hope to provide your children with a healthy dose of both.

Best regards,