

NUTS AND BOLTS FOR 2010-11

Policy Reminders, Schedule revisions and Handbook Changes

Fashion Reminders

Start off on the right foot

- You will need your dressy school outfit for the opening Chapel on Saturday, September 4th, including appropriate shoes - black or navy “dress” shoes, with a closed toe and closed heel. A recent fashion column in *The Richmond Times Dispatch* declared “Flats—ballerina, square, platform, whatever—are here to stay.” Those in the appropriate colors compliment the dressy school outfit as do loafers and Mary-Janes. Before you leave home, check that **all** wardrobe skirts are of the appropriate length (no more than 4 inches above the knee) and that you have plenty of socks or tights in appropriate colors and styles (see p. 45 of the *Student Handbook*).

And put on a happy face

- Remember at St. Margaret’s visible body piercings are not permitted except for ears, this includes but is not limited to tongue, eyebrow, nose and lip piercings. Exceptions will not be made for new piercing even if they are covered by a bandage.

Uh –gg, it’s still summer here in Virginia

- While Uggs may be all the rage, remember they are not acceptable everyday school wardrobe footwear. In fact, boots and rain boots may be worn only when it is raining or snowing or when snow, slush or puddles remain on the ground. As a reminder, at the opposite end of the of the footwear spectrum flip flops *are not* acceptable as part of the school wardrobe.

Keeping warm, this little piggy . . .

- Leggings and tights without feet allow you to wear skirts well into the fall. Pair them with your jeans skirt for mixers, and mall trips but please remember that they *are not acceptable* school wardrobe attire and *should not* be worn with school wardrobe skirts. What to wear? Appropriate socks or footed tights that include navy, black, or grey, or natural-colored nylons, and navy, black, grey, or white knee socks (not athletic socks).

What day is it?

- **Returning students take note!** There have been a few significant changes to the daily schedules for some days of the week compared to last year. We now attend Chapel on 3 period days—typically Wednesday and 7C days—typically Friday. Five minutes have been added to the lunch period each day, expect Thursday’s Meeting period lunch block, and the Sports/Activity period to start 5 minutes later, at 4:05 Monday through Thursday. On a 3 period day, TA follows the last class of the day and then we have the afternoon meeting period time. Residential meetings are now scheduled for Monday nights, with study hall starting at 7:45 pm on Monday to accommodate this change. The school’s Intranet page will continue to have the school calendar in daily, weekly, monthly and agenda formats in case you are wondering how you are every going to keep all this information straight!

Will the weekend ever come?

- Transportation and tickets for weekend activities are typically booked in advance and purchased based on student interest and sign ups. Thus, a student’s account will be charged if a student signs up for but then fails to attend a weekend activity. Charges may include ticket cost and transportation fee, and other prepaid expenses.
- The return time for a Sunday of an open weekend is 5:30 p.m. Please leave plenty of time for return travel, especially for boarders coming from Northern Virginia. You’ll want to be back in time to sign in to dinner and get ready for the upcoming week of school.

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Policy Reminders and Handbook Changes (continued)

Keeping in touch with the outside world

Social networking and instant messaging type Web sites

- Students will be able to communicate with the outside world using social networking Web sites on school nights from after evening study hall until their scheduled lights out and during designated times on weekends. On school nights, these times parallel the times students may use the telephone. A student who accesses these sites at inappropriate times will forfeit her computer and internet privileges for one week. A second offense results in a two-week suspension and should there be a third offense, it will result in a Community Council hearing. The family and advisor will be notified when a computer is confiscated. (The same policy is in place for misuse of room phones).

Cell phones

- Returning students who earned a certain amount of Residential Merit Level commendations last year are permitted to keep and use cell phones during designated times (with their family's permission). All other students are not permitted to have cell phones in their possession or to use them on campus, although boarders may store a cell phone on campus to be checked out for travel to and from home. All boarding students (even those allowed to have a phone) need to register their cell phones at orientation and those without the cell phone privilege must turn their phone in to the School Life Office before their family leaves campus. During the first few months of school, boarding students can begin earning the privilege to keep their cell phones after Christmas. Learn more about the cell phone policy at Orientation.
- Day students must leave cell phones in their cars, or deposit them in the key basket when they sign in to school each morning. *Day students must follow the rules for cell phone use that apply to boarders*; thus, cell phones cannot be used during the day in cars, or when going to or from, or at athletic contests.

Phone Security Codes

- A student may pay for phone service in her room through St. Margaret's. The student is responsible for all calls on the school phone system made using her unique security code. **Protect your code.** Do not give it to others or write it down where others can see it. Families who choose this option should discuss this with their student so that there are no surprises when phone bills arrive.

Dude, where's my car?

- Upperclassmen who would like permission to have a car at school (stored off-campus at the student's expense) must complete an application and receive prior approval. The application form may be found in the appendix of the *Parent Handbook*.
- **Day Student Drivers and Day Students who car pool.** The School Life Office needs to be sure we know who is riding with whom, and also needs to be informed of any changes. Day student drivers need to register their car (and riders, if any) with the School Life Office. The Day student dinner is a great time to do this. Remember, that day students need written permission to leave campus with a driver who is not a custodial parent.

Extra! Extra! Read all about it

All students should review the *Student Handbook* for more information about the topics mentioned below. No need to wait until you arrive at SMS and receive your *Handbook* during orientation, you can access it online now! Boarders should also be familiar with the information in the *Dorm Survival Guide* that can be found in each dorm room. The Handbook/School Policies test is scheduled for Wednesday, September 8th. Some changes to note include:

- Revised Room Inspection procedures and consequences (page 69). Note to returning students: the first room inspection is now on Monday morning (thanks Peer Leaders!)
- Medical Leave policy- note the length of absence that triggers an administrative review (page 49)
- A responsible adult chaperone 25 or older is required for all vacation hotel stays (page 60)
- Boarding student sign out procedures (page 56)