



A letter from the Dean

I hope you all had a restful and rejuvenating Thanksgiving break. I am very thankful for the week off as well as the opportunity to serve you all as Dean of Students. I wanted to take this moment to speak on what has been a great first semester. I have really enjoyed the leadership of the seniors and juniors in creating and sustaining a positive and inclusive environment for all students. Freshman and sophomore students are doing a great job in adapting to increased demands put on them academically. It really has been a fantastic first semester and the entire administration is proud of the hard work put in by all students.

I want to focus on two things in this message. Primarily, I want to encourage all of our students to finish strong this semester. There are so many times in life where things get busy and attention is divided between family, academic, and social pressures. It is of utmost importance to think about two things when faced with much demand on your time. Firstly, it is important to remember that there are things you can control and things that are outside of your control. Focus on those things you can control. Secondly, managing time can help us weather those difficult moments. Planning out our days with what needs to be done as well as making time for our mental health and fun helps avoid burnout.

I also want to encourage students to always be working on becoming the best versions of themselves. There are many opportunities throughout each day to be a positive force in someone else's life. We want this to be a school where students impact others in positive ways. This also applies to etiquette in common areas and in the cafeteria. How we treat the school makes a huge impact on the climate and culture within the school. We want to be a school where students look after themselves and their friends.

There is so much to be thankful for at this point of the year and I wish nothing but success for all of you over the next three weeks as we finish up first semester. I look forward to second semester and opportunity to continue partnering with you all. Happy Holidays to you all.

-- Mr. Ashmore, Dean of Students and Culture

'TIS THE SEASON FOR A CLASSIC CHRISTMAS TALE

It's December, which means our sophomore students are reading Charles Dickens' classic story *A Christmas Carol*. Hearing our students read aloud about Ebenezer Scrooge's cold and unfeeling character reminded me of why this story is an important one. It also reminded me why we are a school that teaches classic literature. I am often asked why we still make students study "old books", and my English major mind often goes to the myriad reasons and research that keeps us rooted in the classics. The shorter reason is that readers can take away timeless universal lessons from works by the likes of Bronte, Fitzgerald, Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, and Dickens. In case it's been a while since you've read or heard the story of Scrooge's transformation, I would like to remind us all of the lessons to be learned from the beloved Christmas story.



Speak less, listen more.



A person's past does not have to be their future. People are capable of change.



Humility is a sign of strength and can lead to renewal.



Generosity brings more joy than a mound of wealth.



Friendship and love is something all human beings need.

It is my hope that our students will take to heart the lessons put forth by Mr. Dickens, and that they will have a little fun reading along the way. It is my hope for you all that this is a season of rest and peace, and as Tiny Tim best says it, "God bless us, everyone."



IMPORTANT DATES

DECEMBER 8TH & 9TH

Join us to watch the drama students as they perform the comedy *Clue* in the high school café. The tickets are \$5 per person. Seating is limited, so tickets will be for sale beginning Monday, December 4th, in the front office. Tickets will be sold at the door, but patrons will be turned away if all seats are sold.

Friday, December 8th @ 7pm

Saturday, December 9th @ 2pm

Saturday, December 9th @ 7pm

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

Join us in the high school field house for the HS band and choir holiday concert. The doors will open at 6:30pm and the concert will begin at 7:00pm. Your students have been hard at work preparing for this concert, so invite your friends and family to join us in a celebration of the season through music.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH

1st and 2nd period final exams beginning @ 7:45am. 11:05 student release. Busses will run for HS and MS students at 11:05.



IMPORTANT DATES

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18TH

3rd and 4th period final exams beginning @ 7:45am.
11:05 student release. Busses will run for HS and MS
students at 11:05.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

5th and 6th period final exams beginning @ 7:45am.
11:05 student release. Busses will run for HS and MS
students at 11:05.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

7th period final exam beginning @ 7:45am. 9:15
student release.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST

Staff day -- no students

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22ND -- MONDAY, JANUARY 8TH

Winter Break --all JICS schools will be closed for
winter break. We will see you all in the new year.
Classes resume on Tuesday, January 9th.



Important Reminders

Cold Weather is Here

Cold Weather and Drop Off

- Remember that the procedure for drop off is that cars pull as far forward (towards the west) as possible before letting students out of the car. Cold weather does not change the procedure.
- Encourage your student to be prepared with the appropriate cold weather clothing -- hats, gloves, scarves, coats/jackets, etc.-- so they can stay warm until the doors open.
- The office doors still open at 7:30am. If the temperature is below freezing (32 degrees), students will be let into the commons. They will not be allowed to wander the halls or go to their lockers until 7:30. If the temperature is 32 degrees or above, students will need to remain outside until 7:30. This is why it is important for students to be dressed in warm clothing.

Finals Are Upon Us

Reminders:

- Teachers hold office hours at least once a week from 3:30 until 4:15. Encourage your student to visit with their teacher if they need support with review for finals.
- Final exams are comprehensive. Students will be tested on concepts from August through December.
- Students may choose not to come to school during their study hall or TA period.
 - If their study hall/TA period is 1st, 3rd, or 5th period, they will simply arrive to school at 9:15am.
 - If their study hall/TA period is 2nd, 4th, or 6th period, they will simply leave school at 9:15am.
 - If they have a study hall or TA period during 7th period, they will not come to school on Wednesday the 20th.
 - If they choose to not attend their study hall/TA period, they may not be in the school building. They are of course allowed to attend study hall/TA period and study for their exams.

