



"Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change."

-Stephen Hawking

Dear Gunn Families,

August 5, 2020

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! Your Gunn administrative team has been working diligently all summer to ensure our students, parents and staff thrive when school resumes.

In the quote above, Stephen Hawking defines intelligence as an individual's ability to adapt to change. By extension, our ability to continuously learn and adapt *organizationally* will be essential to ensure continued student success this year. To this end, our staff has engaged in extensive professional development throughout the summer. In addition, many department teams met routinely throughout the break to establish curricular alignment.

There is no doubt that the success of our community will depend on solid partnerships among all stakeholders, a growth mindset, and valuing our ability to collectively adapt and innovate. Together, Gunn is committed to the well-being of our students and to furthering their academic growth, leveraging best practices associated with teaching and learning, as well as connecting remotely and building community during distance learning.

Below are some updates on our plans for the school opening. You will continue to receive updates as our opening plans are finalized.

Safety On Campus

The Santa Clara County Office of Public Health and Safety and Palo Alto Unified have issued safety guidelines for all public schools. Our campuses are currently closed unless invited for a specific purpose.

Students and parents will need to wear face coverings at all times and in all locations on campus. Please practice social distancing adhering to 6ft. distance between yourself and others from another household. All other health and safety guidelines, including frequent hand washing and remaining at home if experiencing symptoms of the virus are important to ensuring everyone's safety.

Textbook/Materials Distribution Dates

Students will be able to return books from last year and pick-up books/supplies for this school year. Specific information for pick up location and times for each grade level will be posted on our website. Additionally, an email with this information will be sent early next week

School Photos/Student ID cards

TBD

Freshmen Orientation

9th graders will participate in a virtual 9th Grade Orientation the afternoon of Friday, August 14th, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. More information will follow from our student activities director, Lisa Hall, regarding this event. Freshmen Orientation exposes students to all that is Gunn High School. Key staff members will be introduced as well, so that students can begin to put names to faces.

First Week of School (August 17 - 21)

Our opening week schedule has been adjusted to accommodate community building activities, schoolwide events, and academic classes. Once we finalize our plans we will send out more detailed information.

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be released the evening of August 9th, and counselors will be correcting schedule **errors** on August 10th and August 11th via Zoom. Instructions will be posted later this week on how to access the Zoom meetings.

What is an error?

- Graduation requirement missing from schedule (12th only)
- Course already taken
- Schedule has an error (duplicate, requested class not included, etc.)
- Incorrect level placement/Substitute an “Alternate” from your requests

Schedule Correction Days

August 10th

8:30-11:30am – Counselors review schedule change requests.

12:30-3:30pm – Follow up virtual meetings with Counselor via Zoom.

August 11th

10:30-11:30am – Follow up virtual meetings continue.

12:30-3:30pm – Follow up virtual meetings continue.

Points of consideration:

- Please note, Counselors will not be addressing schedule change requests made by email at this time. Students are required to complete the Schedule Change Request Form.
- Please check the Counseling page on the Gunn website for a link.
- The Counseling team appreciates your patience as we expect a high volume of requests.

Course Changes

The following courses will not be offered this year due either to low enrollment or COVID complications:

- *Contemporary Writers & Writer's Voice*: All 9th and 10th grade students enrolled in these classes have been moved respectively to *Contemporary Heritage & Literary Styles*.
- Athletic Conditioning will not run, and we will not be offering a zero period physical education course.

Distance Learning

During this time of social distancing we want to ensure that each of our students continues to have access to high-quality instruction. We plan to deliver instruction through a virtual learning environment and we need your support to ensure the success of our efforts. Effective teaching is our core purpose, so that our students learn the identified essential outcomes for all of their courses. We also recognize the importance of building community during distance learning as it nurtures our students' wellbeing.

A Shared Platform: Staff are working together to identify a consistent format for Schoology and communication methods to students.

Synchronized Learning: Our synchronized learning schedules require students to attend classes virtually at the designated start times. The length of the synchronized learning experience will be determined by the teacher (independent and/or small group learning time might be assigned), but will always begin at the designated start time. Student attendance will be taken each period, and attendance data will be used to monitor student engagement behavior.

Student Expectations: During our opening week of school, we will communicate agreed-upon expectations for students and staff, including zoom expectations and protocols, attendance, and grading.

Your Administrative Team

I have introduced myself in earlier communications and I would like to now introduce or reintroduce you to the Gunn Administrative Team, including their overall responsibility, department supervision, and distance learning area of focus:

- Wendy Stratton—Principal
Staff professional development/engagement, communication,
- Pier Angeli La Place—Assistant Principal for Athletics, FOS, AVID, CAASPP Testing,
Student Attendance, School Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Department Administrator for History/Social Studies, World Languages

Distance Learning Area of Focus: PAUSD+, Restorative Practices
- Michalis Gordon—Assistant Principal for Student Services, English Language Learners
Department Administrator for English, P.E.

Distance Learning Area of Focus: Guidance Support, Student Wellness, SEL
- Harvey Newland—Assistant Principal for Technology
Department Administrator for Math, Science, CTE

Distance Learning Area of Focus: Student Discipline, AP Testing and SAT and PSAT Testing
- Leonel Argumedo—Assistant Principal for Facilities, Student Activities, Athletics,

Living Skills

Department Administrator for VAPA, Special Education

Distance Learning Area of Focus: Student Attendance, PAUSD+

Upcoming Parent Events

- **Thursday, Aug 6:** Principal's Welcome (followed by Freshman/Newcomers Welcome)
 - All School Welcome: 6:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
 - Freshmen/Newcomer Parent Information: 6:45 p.m.
 - Here the link to join: https://youtu.be/___e4GDj-2Ng
- **Sunday, Aug 9:** Student Schedules released on Infinite Campus (5:30PM)
- **Monday, Aug 10:** Principal's Welcome with PTSA's Sophomore Parent Network (6:30 PM)
- **Tuesday, Aug 11:** Principal's Welcome with PTSA's Junior Parent Network (6:30 PM)
- **Wednesday, Aug 12:** Principal's Welcome with PTSA's Senior Parent Network (6:30 PM)

You will continue to receive updates, regarding the start-up of the school year, as details are finalized. Once we get the school year underway, all secondary school administrators will be sending weekly updates on Wednesdays. This is the most unusual beginning school I have ever experienced and I know that every one of us wants the best for our students. I am confident that the Gunn Community will rise to the challenge.

In the Spirit of *Gunn Together*,

Wendy Stratton, Principal & the Gunn Admin Team

