



The Taft School

D. Jeremy LaCasse
Assistant Headmaster

Dear Parents:

This school year is just coming to a close, and yet many of us are already thinking of next year. Although the summer is always a time from rejuvenation and reflection, we need to begin making preparations to ensure the 2016-2017 is a great school year.

In this letter, you will find copious amounts of information and some guidance on where to find the absolutely most up to date information. As ever, if you have questions about any aspect of your child's experience, please contact us. As part of this letter, I will try to provide guidance on where to direct some of these questions. If all else fails, please do contact me and I will do my best to find the answer. Taft and parents create an important team in supporting your children and our students. I look forward to our good work together.

Over the course of the summer, you and your child will receive requests to send in information essential to your child's experience. Your prompt responses to those requests help us ensure the school year starts smoothly. In August all students will receive a hard copy of the Student Handbook, which will provide detailed information regarding school rules, the Honor Code, extracurricular organizations, dress code, and other details essential to the function of our community. Parents and students may access an electronic version of this document on our web site. Please also check the online school calendar for the most up-to-date calendar information. Faculty or staff mentioned in the remainder of this document can be reached at school by calling (860) 945-7777, by dialing their office numbers directly, or by e-mail.

We are looking forward to a great year with your child here at Taft. Enjoy your summer and we look forward to seeing you in the fall.

All the best,

D. Jeremy LaCasse
Assistant Headmaster
860 945-7718
JeremyLaCasse@TaftSchool.org

Calling the School

The Taft School's telephone number in Watertown is (860) 945-7777. The direct line to the Dean's Office is (860) 945-7800 and the fax number to this office for permissions and other business is (860) 945-7720.

The School's switchboard is open from 8:00 A.M. until 4:30 P.M. on weekdays and from 8:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. on Saturdays. When the switchboard is closed, a recording will ask you to call the School Duty Office (860) 945-7800 or the Security Office (860) 945-7789 and (860) 945-7790, where emergency messages can be taken 24 hours a day.

Opening of School

As you will see from the enclosed calendar, students are asked to arrive at Taft at various times between September 1 and September 7.

Invited preseason athletes: September 1

Dormitory monitors: September 4

International students, new seniors, elected student leaders and student sponsors: September 6

All students: September 7

If for some reason it is necessary for you to arrive on a day other than the day you are expected, please call the Dean's Office to discuss the request. Students may only arrive to campus early or late with permission from the Dean's Office.

Preseason Sports

Coaches will contact students to invite them to return early for preseason sports. Preseason practices are only for invited varsity candidates. New students may attend preseason sports by invitation of the coach only. Otherwise, new students should arrive on Wednesday, September 7. Questions about early practices should be directed to the coaches listed below. All athletes should note that they must have health forms completed before they may practice. All athletes returning early will arrive on Thursday, September 1.

Sport	Coach
Football	Mr. Tyler Whitley TylerWhitley@TaftSchool.org (860) 921-7069
Girls' Varsity Soccer	Mr. Robert Madden RMadden@TaftSchool.org (203) 980-9845
Girls' Varsity Field Hockey	Ms. Rachael Ryan RachaelRyan@taftschool.org (860) 818-9381
Boys' Varsity Soccer	Mr. Ozzie Parente OParente@TaftSchool.org (203) 889-8005

Girls' Varsity Volleyball	Ginger O'Shea GingerOShea@taftschool.org (860) 299-6752
Girls' Cross Country	Ms. Lisa Klein LisaKlein@TaftSchool.org (404) 788-2792
Boys' Cross Country	Stuart Guthrie StuartGuthrie@TaftSchool.org (518) 322-8013

Immunizations, Medical Forms, and Health Insurance

All students are required to have a complete updated physical examination at home within the calendar year before coming to school. All information such as current immunizations and parent consent forms and questionnaire must be returned to the School Health Center by **July 1**. If possible the physical should also be included if up to date. If not, that can be sent after the July 1 deadline but must be received before the start of school. State Health Officials have the right to bar a student from attending Taft if the Health Center does not have on file the health questionnaire and a complete immunization record. Health Forms for 2016-17 will be posted on the Taft website within the next week. Please complete and sign all forms.

Please also note that the State of Connecticut requires all schools to inform students and their parents about concussions and both are required to sign the "Assumption of Risk and Release Forms." These forms are required of all Taft students regardless of their participation in sports and are due on July 1.

All students are required to have health insurance. A copy of a current health insurance card should be returned with the Health Questionnaire. As of 2015, the Taft School requires that all students have health insurance that is recognized and generally accepted in Connecticut. All students from outside the United States, including Canada, will be required to obtain coverage from Clifford Allen Associates even if they feel that they have adequate coverage from another company. More information can be obtained by calling 1-888-342-2224.

Students will not be able to participate in athletics or other activities unless they have a record of a current physical and consent forms filed in the Health Center.

Health Requirements and Prescription Medications

If possible, medical and dental appointments should not be made while school is in session. In the case of urgent medical matters requiring absence from school, parents should arrange appointments with the Health Center.

It is essential that the Health Center be notified of any illness or of any exposure to contagious or infectious disease that a student may have experienced during vacations. In addition, if your son or daughter has been under recent care for emotional or psychological issues, please indicate this on the medical form.

Students may not keep any prescription or over-the-counter medications in their rooms without stamped permission from the Health Center. Violation of this policy constitutes a major school rule violation no matter what type of medication is found in the student's room. Written prescriptions should be mailed directly to the Health Center or brought over by a parent/guardian on the day of arrival at school.

If your child is taking a prescribed medicine, the Health Center requires that all prescriptions distributed on campus be filled at the Health Center pharmacy. Please have your child's physician send the prescription to the Health Center in advance of your child's arrival on campus. Please see the Health Center brochure for more complete information.

Rooming

The Directors of Residential Life, Casey D'Annolfo (CaseyDAnnolfo@TaftSchool.org) and Erin Duffy (ErinDuffy@TaftSchool.org) handle room assignments. Rooming lists are not finalized until mid-August. Students will be notified of room assignments by email. If you do not hear from Ms. Duffy or Mr. D'Annolfo by August 29, you may call the Dean's Office (860) 945-7800 to request this information. This office will also provide roommate contact information.

Weekends

At Taft, students have both academic and athletic obligations on Saturdays. Students are not permitted to miss classes or athletics to take a weekend. Students in good standing may sign out for Saturday Weekends--weekends which begin after Saturday classes or athletic commitments and end at 7:30 P.M. on Sunday evening. Certain weekends during the year are closed; these weekends are listed at the bottom of the calendar later in this booklet.

Each term there is one Long Weekend as indicated on the enclosed calendar. Students are not permitted to miss class to leave early for weekends or vacations. Seniors are permitted to miss three days of classes during their senior year to visit colleges. Seniors are responsible for all academic work on these College Days and may use the days only to visit colleges.

Transportation

Please realize that we do not allow students to miss classes to leave early for vacations and weekends. It is not possible to alter class schedules to allow students to depart before the end of their last class for any vacation or weekend. In order to facilitate travel plans, the dormitories are always kept open the night that students get out for vacation, as well as one night before students are required return to campus. If making weekend or vacation reservations from Bradley Airport in Hartford, allow two and a half hours from the end of classes--times are listed on the enclosed calendar--until departure. If scheduling out of Kennedy or LaGuardia Airports in New York, please allow four hours. As you know, airlines are getting particularly sticky about asking travelers to arrive well before flight time. Special transportation problems should be discussed with the Dean's Office at least three weeks in advance of vacations.

If there is sufficient need, the School runs vans at students' expense directly from Taft to Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports, Bradley Airport and Pennsylvania Station at the beginning of Thanksgiving, winter recess, and spring recess, but not at the opening of school in September. If there is demand, buses and vans will also be run at the beginning and end of long weekends. At the end of these breaks, the School also provides transportation back to School from New York City, Pennsylvania Station, and Bradley Airport.

Questions about transportation can be directed to Michael Blomberg, He can be contacted at (860) 945-7721 or MikeBlomberg@TaftSchool.org. This office will also arrange transportation to Taft from Bradley Airport at the opening of School by request.

Reports

The scholastic year is divided into two semesters, each concluding with major examinations (in December and late May/early June). Parents will receive grades at mid-semester (late October/early November and March) and at the end of each semester. At the end of the semester, in addition to the student's grades, parents will also receive a letter from the student's advisor as well as a letter from the Class Dean. Class comments from all teachers will be available to parents on a secure online portal in December, March, and June. Finally, teachers report grades to Class

Deans approximately every three weeks on students who, in the opinion of their teachers, are not doing satisfactory work. Though these grades will not be made available to parents, Class Deans use them to monitor students' work. Class Deans will report to parents periodically on students about whom they have concerns.

Packing List

Parents and students often have questions about what to bring to school. Ms. McLellan, without whom the Deans' Office could not function, has developed a packing list. This list is more of a guideline than a list of required items, but we hope it will be helpful. You can find this list at <http://www.TaftSchool.org/students/deans.aspx>.

School Directory

In addition to the online Parent Directory through Veracross, the school also prints a "facebook" or school directory for internal use. We ask all new students to submit a photo for the directory. **New students should email a recent photo to photos@taftschool.org by June 30.** The picture need not be formal, but we do ask that NO hats or sunglasses be worn, as they make identification difficult.

You will be sent an email over the summer asking you to verify your contact information. Please respond promptly to that email. We fully understand that you may want to limit what information will be included in the directory, and our privacy standards protect that right. Although you may change which information you share with other parents through the online directory at any time, once the printed directory is completed no changes can be made to the book.