

Despite some HVAC issues early on, we had a terrific first week back!

Although I realize students are not excited about the new law banning personal communication devices during the school day (more about that below), it was sure entertaining to see how they adapted. Students must have dug some relics out of their parents' drawers. Ipods with wired earbuds were the most popular, but I even saw about four walkmen! Keeping my fingers crossed that mixed tapes will make a comeback. I know I'm dating myself, but how great was it when your friend took the time to make you a mixed tape? Anyway, if your student wants to sleep the day away today, that's normal. It often takes a few weeks to get back into the school routine.

Tuesday is Back to School Night. You'll find all you need to know about how the evening will progress further down in this message. We hope everyone can make it. If you want to get a little extra insight into your child's teachers, one strategy is to come early with a donation to the PFLASA (Parents and Friends of LASA) teacher dinner. If that is too early for you, that's fine. You can also try to make the 5:30 PTSA meeting. However, if this event just doesn't work in your schedule this week, don't worry. If you are unable to make it to Back to School Night, Bring Your Parent to School Days are right around the corner. More details to come, but mark your calendars now. BYPTSD will be September 25 & 26.

Weekly Schedule

- **Monday** – Regular Schedule A Day
 - Club form opens
 - Library is now open after school Monday – Thursday for quiet studying
- **Tuesday** – Regular Schedule B Day
 - Back to School Night
 - All on campus student after school events are cancelled
 - First PTSA meeting begins at 5:30pm in cafeteria
- **Wednesday** – Regular Schedule A Day
- **Thursday** – Regular Schedule B Day
- **Friday** – Advisory Schedule A Day
 - Junior Class meeting in the gym during advisory (students check-in with their advisory teacher before heading to the large gym)
- **Saturday** – First home football game! Johnston High School Homecoming
 - Kickoff at 7:30pm at House Park Stadium

Whether your student has questions about class or not, remember, it's never too early to begin attending teachers' office hours!

More Consent Forms

Senate Bill 12 (SB12) which passed during the last regular legislative session requires school districts to obtain **written parental consent** before providing certain services or allowing student participation in specific school-sponsored activities. In last week's PM, I gave you a link to the permission for students to participate in clubs form. Below are the forms for consent for mental health related services and physical health related services. Attached to this email is a letter explaining these in more detail. The links can also be found in the letter.

[Consent for Physical Health Related Services](#)

[Consent for Mental Health Related Services](#)

Library Open after School this Week

Starting Monday, the LASA library will be open Monday through Thursday until 6:30pm. Students can then go out front and catch the late bus. There are a few important things to remember if your student plans to stay in the library after school. Students are welcome to use the Raptor Library after school to study, tutor, meet with others or wait for parent pickup. Students will sign in and out using their school ID. Students should have an academic or extracurricular reason for staying after school and using the library space. Students are expected to work or relax quietly and respect the learning environment. Students may only leave to use the restroom or be picked up. Similar to during the school day, no food deliveries will be accepted. If your student is planning to stay in the library, please make sure they know what they are going to work on. Students who do not remain in the library when asked or who need to be reminded to be quiet will lose the privilege of staying after school. Students who are staying for an activity such as a sport or fine arts practice must remain with their coach or director until 6:30pm or until they are picked up by a parent. The Raptor Library is closed after school on Fridays.

Credit Recovery Meetings Start Monday

On Monday I will begin meeting with students who lost credit in the spring due to attendance. I will meet with seniors first so they have enough time to complete their principal plan and regain credit in time for initial transcripts to be sent to colleges. Once I am finished with seniors, then I'll move to meetings with juniors and sophomores. No need for your student to set up the meeting. I'll send passes as I have time throughout the week. Individual meetings generally don't take more than about ten or fifteen minutes. My goal is to have completed all credit recovery meetings by the end of September.

Club Form Opens Monday

In order to start a club at LASA, a student needs two other students who want to be involved and a faculty sponsor willing to supervise. If the club plans to raise or collect money, the faculty sponsor needs to be willing to handle the money and attend account sponsor training. All clubs must resubmit their paperwork each year. With very few exceptions, clubs do not roll over from year to year. Also, just because a student had a club last year does not mean they automatically get to sponsor it this year. Club authorizations are done on a first come, first served basis. Remember, a student cannot participate in any school or district sponsored club, team or organization without their parent/guardian completing the correct permission form.

Starting **Monday**, here is the info to start a club:

A sponsor and the principal must approve clubs. Form will be on the LASA website under the "Clubs and Organizations" tab. Please fill out the form completely. Once the google form is submitted, an email will be sent to the student and the sponsor. It is the student's responsibility to print the email and take it to the club sponsor for their signature. Once the sponsor signs, the student will drop the form off at the front office for the principal's signature. Please remind your student to be patient, the form may take a few days to

process once it is submitted to the front office. Once the club is approved, the student will be notified via email. They can also check the club list to see if their club was added. No clubs can formally meet or advertise until they are approved through this process.

Late Busses

Late busses leave at 6:45pm. Your student can find the number of their late bus on the Bus Finder section of the AISD website. It's common, however, for substitute busses to be used. If your student does not see the number of the bus they are looking for, just have them pop into one of the busses and ask. The drivers, if they don't know the answer, can radio the bus barn and get your student the substitute bus number or let them know the bus is on the way. Late busses leave promptly at 6:45pm. Please remind your student that they need to be on their bus by that time.

Senior Meeting

Ms. Cherry and I met with the seniors Friday during advisory. We showed them some fun flashback videos of themselves during new student orientation the summer before they were ninth graders. We also reviewed campus expectations. Being a senior brings with it some extra freedoms like off periods, hanging out in the College Center and leaving campus for lunch. However, it also brings higher expectations from the adults. Seniors need to demonstrate their maturity and be a positive role model to the underclass students. We reminded them that, if they leave for lunch, they need to be at their next class on time. They cannot bring their lunch (or lunch for anyone else) back in the building and, good grief, they cannot take non-senior students with them. We also talked about taking advantage of all the opportunities to get involved. If they've always wanted to be a part of a group, team or club, this is their last chance. Please help us to encourage this – while still ensuring that they have a balanced schedule. I hate to talk with alumni only to hear they wish they would have tried out for a play or gone to the Homecoming dance.

Update to Ban on Personal Communications Devices

On Thursday, the Austin ISD School Board met and finalized the policy for consequences to students if they should violate the new Texas law banning personal communication devices at school. I'll attach a longer, more detailed, communication from AISD Leadership to this email, but here are the key things you need to know.

**** Devices must be stored "out of sight".** The AISD policy allows for each campus to define what out of sight means. For LASA, out of sight means all devices must be either in your student's backpack or locker. That's it. Not in their pants pocket, purse, hoodie, lunchbox, etc.

**** If a student is seen with a device during the school day (8:15am – 3:55pm), it will be confiscated.** The first time the student has their device confiscated, they may pick it up from the front office at the end of the school day. After the first offense, the parent/guardian must be the ones that pick up the device. Second offense = end of the school day, but after that the amount of time we hold the device in the front office increases to one or more school days.

**** Students are required to comply with any staff member who asks for their device.** Non-compliance will result in a referral for insubordination. Since we are a 100% transfer school, multiple referrals may result in a transfer revocation meeting.

Again, the entire policy is attached so you can read it.

Now, a few quick questions that have come up from last week.

Q: How do I know what counts as a Personal Communication Device?

A: Keep in mind this is VERY broad. The device has to meet two criteria. One, it isn't issued by or owned by the campus or district. Two, it can communicate in some form or fashion. Any type of communication counts, text, call, email, open google doc, connect with internet, etc.

Q: What if a senior has an off period?

A: Any student on campus during the school day (8:15am – 3:55pm) must follow this law and subsequent AISD policy. If a senior is on campus during their off period, they must follow the law.

Q: Does this include lunch?

A: Yep, the entire school day. Your student must be personal communication device free from 8:15am– 3:55 pm. Lunch and passing periods included.

Q: But what if my child wants to listen to music at lunch?

A: Hence the comeback of Ipods, MP3 players and walkmen.

Q: What if I have to pick my student up during the day for an appointment?

A: If it is during class time, we'll send a pass. If it is during lunch, you will have to arrange with your student ahead of time when they should meet you in the main office to check out.

Q: What if not having their device on and close to them makes my student anxious? Can they have an accommodation for this anxiety? This may be my favorite of all the questions I received this past week.

A: Honest answer.... If not having their device is the cause of the anxiety, then there is a bigger problem we should discuss. There are a small number of disabilities where access to a personal communication device is necessary to meet the academic needs of the student, but anxiety over the loss of access to the device is generally not one of them.

Rankings

Yes, yes, the US News and World Report rankings came out last week and LASA is ranked #4 in Texas and #36 in the Nation. Of course it is wonderful to be acknowledged for the work we do. However, it is important to realize that, as a campus, we don't make any adjustments in our curriculum or acceptance process with rankings in mind. Philosophically, we do what we think is best for students every day and if in doing so our ranking is good – bonus! The thing I tend to look at with the rankings are the sizes of the schools. Just looking in Texas, you have to get to number 36 before you find another school over one thousand students. There are a couple knocking on the door, but most are small to very small schools. If I am proud of anything with regards to rankings, it's LASA's ability to give this rigorous academic experience to so many students across the city of Austin. We are starting this year with right around 1600 students. Now that is something to brag about!

Annual Asbestos and Pest Management Letters

The District is mandated by the **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)** to provide written notification to all parents regarding the availability of asbestos management plans for District facilities. This notification is required even if a facility does not have asbestos-containing building materials.

Similarly, the Texas Structural Pest Control Act mandates the District, which requires chief administrators of schools, educational institutions, and daycare centers to provide written notifications of the types of pesticides used and their scheduled application to parents or guardians of children attending the facility.

Attached to this message are letters, in English and Spanish, that give the mandated asbestos and pest management information.

Back to School Night (Tuesday)

You should have received the following email from Mr. December:

We are excited to welcome you to our Back-to-School Night on August 26th. The first period will start promptly at 6:05 p.m. and the last period will end at 8:00 p.m. Back to School Night is an important occasion for parents/guardians to:

1. **Experience Your Student's School Day:** By following your student's schedule, you'll gain insight into their daily routine.
2. **Meet the Teachers:** This is a great opportunity to meet your student's teachers and learn about their teaching styles, expectations, and goals for the year.

Schedule Form:

To help you navigate the campus more easily, please use the [Back to School Night Schedule Form](#) to complete your student's schedule ([Instructions on accessing student's gradebook/schedule](#)). Alternatively, you can take a picture of your student's schedule instead of completing the form. This will help you navigate your way around as you visit each class. Our amazing LASA Ambassadors will also help direct families to their designated locations.

Parking Options:

- **School Parking Lots:** You can park in any of the school's parking lots.
- **Street Parking:** Please be considerate of our neighbors when parking on the street. Avoid blocking driveways to ensure that everyone has access to their homes.
- **Southwest Key Programs:** 6002 Jain Ln. Please park in the front lot facing Jain Ln. The back lot will be used for another event.

Campus Entrances ([Map](#)):

- **Main Entrance:** Located at the front of the school on Arthur Stiles Rd.
- **Lot A Entrance:** Located on Mayhall Drive.
- **Lot C Entrance:** Located on Gardner St.

PTSA Meeting:

You are invited to attend the PTSA meeting, which will begin at 5:30 PM in the cafeteria. Doors will open at 5:15 PM to allow you time to enter and find the cafeteria.

To ensure a smooth preparation for Back to School Night, we kindly ask that you refrain from entering the classrooms or disturbing the teachers as they finalize their preparations. Teachers' classrooms will open at 6:00pm.

Signature Courses

Signature courses are semester-long, double-blocked courses, meaning they span two periods. Visit the Second Semester Signature Course during the corresponding period on B day.

For example:

- **Period 02:** First semester signature course.
- **Period 06:** Second semester signature course.

See the example provided in the [Back to School Night Schedule Form](#).

Classroom Relocations:

Teacher	Course	Room
Ms. Aguayo	Psychology	Library
Ms. Bailey	Fire/EMT	708B
Mr. Burford	Theatre I & II+	104
Mr. Escandel, Jason	Eng II	Theater
Mr. Word	SciTech	T214

Announcements

Raising Healthy Raptors: Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders in Teens

Whether your kid is new to LASA, or adjusting to new teachers and new expectations, or in the thick of college applications, there are lots of reasons that their anxiety may be spiking right now. Please check out this Google slide presentation "[Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders in Teens](#)" which was put together by PFLASA's Raising Healthy Raptors Committee. In it you will learn strategies to help your teen manage the physical and mental manifestations of anxiety (including panic attacks), and get some insight into whether your teen's anxiety responses seem to be at a normal and productive level or may be shifting into a more disordered, non-productive cycle.

If you would like to be connected with other families supporting a child coping with anxiety (or with any other health struggles), please reach out to Kristi Schmalz, chair of PFLASA's Raising Healthy Raptors, at wellness@pflasa.org

Johnston Homecoming Football Game

Saturday, August 30, when the Raptors take on Manor New Tech, we will be honoring alumni from Johnston High School! On the field, your LASA Raptors will wear the colors of the Johnston Rams. Alumni from the first graduating class of 1961 through the last to call themselves rams when they crossed the stage as the Class of 2008 will be recognized. Spread the word to your neighbors, work colleagues and wherever you go. The alumni from Johnston are all around our Austin community and we want them to know they are welcome and wanted at Saturday's game.

Back to School Night Dinner

Help PFLASA feed the teachers who will be staying to talk with YOU at Back to School Night. Sign up at the link below.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0F4AAAFAB23A46-58133449-back>

PFLASA Study Groups

Our PFLASA Study Groups program is back! These started a number of years ago to give students another place to ask questions and receive support in specific subjects. The tutors are college students who were interviewed by the teachers of the subject in which they want to tutor. Think of it as small group private tutoring – free to the student! We have seen this service help students make great academic strides when they attend regularly.

We are slated to start on Tuesday, September 2nd. Tutors will be available to work in small groups or individually with students from 4:15 pm to 6:15 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the classroom located adjacent to the library. Just tell your student to look for the signage as they enter through the library.

The general schedule for subjects offered is below:

- **Chemistry:** T, W, Th from 4:15 pm - 6:15 pm

- **Physics:** T, W, Th from 4:15 pm - 6:15 pm
- **Biology:** T, W, Th from 4:15 pm - 6:15 pm

Changes and last-minute cancellations will be communicated on Blend and the LASA website here (<https://lasa.austinschools.org/students/student-support>).

Need a Carpool? Complete the Interest Form Today!

LASA is working with SchoolPool, a carpool matching program. This is a program which can help you find others in your area and set up carpools to and from bus hubs and/or LASA. It can also be helpful to coordinate for afterschool activities, or LASA sporting event (like Saturday's football game).

To get started, simply fill out the interest form using [this link](#).

SchoolPool will also be at Back to School Night to answer your questions.

Accolades

Raptor Research Published

Senior Victoria Khazhinsky co-authored an article on planar graphs "Odd list-coloring of graphs of small Euler genus with no short cycles of specific types" that was recently published by Cornell University's arXiv journal . Victoria participated in PReMa program (research program in mathematics for talented high school students) sponsored by Texas A&M supported by National Science Foundation during her junior year and the publication is the result of the collaboration of the PReMa students and Texas A&M. Whoo Hoo, Victoria! Way to represent!

<https://arxiv.org/html/2508.15255v1>

Raptor Leads at Summer National Hispanic Institute (NHI)

Maren Stokes (junior), in her 2nd summer participating in the NHI youth leadership summer camp, was elected to Speaker of the House of NHI's 2025 Texas Lorenzo De Zavala Youth Legislative Session held at Trinity University in San Antonio. Here are the IG posts highlighting her achievement.

https://www.instagram.com/p/DMjPUFoRVYI/?img_index=5&igsh=NDdwdWFjMmt1cWVn

Way to go, Marin! Welcome to LASA!

Raptor Receives Actuary Award

Aziel G. Quezada (11th grade), was recognized on the national stage through the *Organization of Latino Actuaries (OLA)* “Desafiando el Riesgo” Math Case Competition.

This competition is a prestigious, nationwide program for high school students in grades 10–12 that introduces them to the field of actuarial science through real-world math case studies. Its mission is to foster Latino representation in the actuarial profession, encourage a love of mathematics, and inspire the next generation of problem-solvers.

Among participants from across the country, Aziel G. Quezada distinguished himself as **the youngest high schooler to receive recognition and the only student representing Texas**. He was selected as one of the **Top 5 finalists** nationwide and awarded the honor of “**Best in Show**.”

In recognition of his accomplishment, Aziel and his parent were flown to **San Diego, California, this August 2025** to attend the OLA Avanza Conference, where Aziel received his award alongside leading professionals in the field.

Congratulation Aziel, we are all very proud of you!

Youth and Government National Success

LASA was proudly represented in the **YMCA National Judicial Conference (NJC)** at the end of July at the Minnesota State Capitol & State Senate buildings in St Paul. The team of 7 rising juniors from the Youth in Government (YAG) club competed in the Mock Trial division and placed 3rd in the country overall out of 17 state-winning teams from around the country. They did this after placing 6th in the state competition back in March as sophomores – amazing!. Their hard work over the summer to learn and strategize the new court case for NJC really paid off, as they successfully argued four times over the course of 3 days at the national conference.

Please congratulate:

3rd Place Mock Trial Court Team:

- Anne Bromm (Lawyer, 5th place)
- Lilah O’Dair (Lawyer, 7th place)
- Allie Sears (Witness)
- Leah Lashus (Witness)
- Orla Tower (Witness)
- Sofie Moon (Witness)
- Caroline Halloran (Witness)

Wow, way to put LASA on the map! We can’t wait to see where you go from here.

Water Polo Blasts into the Season!

The LASA Water Polo team dove into the season full speed ahead! Practices kicked off on August 3rd at Westlake Pool, and we’ve already made waves with two scrimmages and a full tournament in Houston under our belts.

The **LASA boys** are off to a blazing start with a **6-1 record**, dropping only one heart-pounding match against Southlake Carroll—last year's #2 team in the state—falling 11-10 in sudden death overtime at the CyFair Houston Tournament. That narrow loss came alongside **dominant wins over Conroe, FB Travis, and Clear Springs**, plus local victories against **Johnson HS and Cedar Ridge**.

On the **girls' side**, we're thrilled to see a **huge turnout**, including many returning athletes and an exciting crop of newcomers. Their current **2-5 record with wins over Johnson HS and FB Travis** doesn't capture the incredible progress, team chemistry, and competitive spirit led by Coach Pressler. The team is building fast and playing hard, showing great promise as the season heats up.

We're also excited to introduce our **new assistant coach, Rebeca Guerrero**—welcome to the LASA Water Polo family!

Upcoming scrimmages include matchups with **Westlake, McCallum, and Anderson**, as we gear up for our next big challenge: the **Ridgewood Rumble** on **Friday, September 5th and Saturday, September 6th** at the **Round Rock Aquatic Center** (schedule TBA).

Let's go LASA!

Remember, if you want to see something highlighted in the Accolades section, send me an email before Saturday evening with PM and your topic in the subject line.

Attachments:

[SB 12 Parental Permission Forms Letter.pdf](#)

[Austin ISD Personal Communication Device Policy .pdf](#)

[Annual Parent Notification Letter Pest Management.pdf](#)

[Annual Parent Notification Letter Asbestos.pdf](#)