

I hope everyone is enjoying the long weekend. Today would be a great day to check-in with your student about classes and how their organizational systems are working. Taking today to make sure they are caught up in all classes is time well spent.

Thank you to the folks who made Saturday night's first annual Johnston High School honorary football game a halftime success. Coach Howard for getting us the Johnston retro uniforms; Meghan Griffith for the terrific half-time announcing and Christal Hood-McDonald for watching over and making sure the alumni felt welcome and appreciated. During this event we recognized two outstanding Johnston alumni athletes. Sheila Coy, who was a member of the tennis, basketball, and volleyball teams, as well as a drum major in the Rams band. Ms. Coy went on to become a softball coach at both Travis and Del Valle High Schools. Mike Washington, who was a star quarterback for the Rams and went on to lead Texas Lutheran College two National Championships. He was named MVP and later inducted into the NAIA Hall of Fame. Mr. Washington now works at The University of Texas at Austin as the Associate Director of Admissions.

## Weekly Schedule

- **Monday** – Labor Day, No School
- **Tuesday** – Regular B Day
  - Senior Parent Night – Virtual 6:00pm
  - PFLASA Study Groups begin after school
- **Wednesday** – Regular A Day
  - Lunchtime Lecture with Austin Public Library
  - CAC (Campus Advisory Council) 4:05pm
- **Thursday** – Regular B Day
- **Friday** – Advisory B Day
  - District Cross-Country Meet
  - PFLASA Meeting 8:15am

Yep, it's a short, but B day filled, week ahead!

## Permissions

Thank you to everyone who has already completed the three permission forms. If you have not completed them yet, here they are again. These new permissions are now required in order for your student to receive physical health care, mental health care or participate in clubs.

- [Permission for Physical Health Related Services](#)
- [Permission for Mental Health Related Services](#)
- [Club Permission Form](#)

## Lockdown Drill

As per state law, we held our first lockdown drill last week. A lockdown is implemented when there is a dangerous issue within one of our buildings. These drills can be anxiety provoking for students since they are most commonly used when the school has reason to believe there is a weapon on campus. Maybe take a minute this weekend and ask how your student is feeling.

Weapons on campus can be one of the scariest issues for students to think about. However, we can all, students, staff and families, do a few simple things to help keep everyone safer. This first is following the “see something, say something” motto. If anyone sees a student with a weapon, sees a disturbing post on social media or hears someone talking about bringing something dangerous to school – tell someone. Students can talk with a teacher, counselor or administrator – really, any adult they see and we will take it from there.

The second thing we can all do to help keep campuses safer is ensuring any guns are stored safely at home. I grew up in rural Pennsylvania where the first day of buck season was a school holiday. It was common for families to have at least one rifle in their house for hunting. Because of this gun storage safety was drilled into our heads from the time we were small. Attached to this message, I’ve included a flyer that has important reminders about safe storage. If you are a gun owner, I encourage you to take a look and double check that you are doing your part in keeping your weapons secure at home and our students safer at school.

## Time to Have a Schedule

Most students do this already, but if your kiddo is not yet back in the swing of things in terms of organization – now is the time to set up a management schedule. Our advice is for students to pick one particular time *every day* to do these things. However, if the Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Tuesday, Thursday pattern works better for your student – that’s fine. What’s important is that they do these four things like clockwork.

1. Check emails. Ensure they have read any emails from teachers or the campus. This means both their AISD email and any personal email account they might have.
2. Check BLEND for the teachers they have that day. Look for any BLEND announcements; be knowledgeable about upcoming assignments, quizzes, tests, and projects.
3. Check ERP/Frontline. If they have a zero, students should email their teacher with a plan for turning in that work.
4. Check their calendar. Look for upcoming extracurricular activities that might make some nights harder to study or get work done. Make a plan for either staying on track or getting ahead.

Again, the key is to do these things regularly. Then the checks are quick. If students wait and only do them occasionally, then these checks will become cumbersome.

If while doing these checks your student decides they need assistance, here is where they can start.

## Academic Assistance

**\*\*Office Hours** – All teachers have office hours. Students can go to the office hours of their teacher or to a different teacher of the same subject. Sometimes the days/times of a different teacher work better in your student’s schedule or sometimes it’s helpful to hear the concept explained by a different person. Teachers typically have their office hours in one hour increments. During this time

students can ask questions, work on homework or ask the teacher for resource recommendations to help them understand the concept better.

**\*\*PFLASA Study Groups** – Another option are the UT students hired by PFLASA to assist with Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The undergrad or grad students are interviewed by the LASA teachers in the subject were they would like to tutor. Here is the schedule for the study groups

- **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

Because sometimes life happens and a tutor needs to cancel, last-minute changes are communicated on Blend and the LASA website here (<https://lasa.austinschools.org/students/student-support>).

**\*\*Peer Tutors** – Some students are most comfortable asking questions of their peers. Many subjects interview and train students who were in the class previous years to act as peer tutors. Right now, math and the writing center are beginning this process. Chemistry, physics, biotechnology and many other subjects also have a peer tutoring option. Tell your student to keep an eye out on BLEND or ask their teacher if their subject has peer tutors.

## Wellness Assistance

Sometimes the struggle is less with any specific content and more with the stress that comes with being a teenager at an academic magnet or with what is today termed “executive functioning”. If your students would like assistance in these areas, we have people available to help them.

**\*\*Wellness Counselors & Wellness Suite** – Both of our Wellness Counselors are Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC). Although they do not meet students on a regular basis to do “therapy” (there just isn’t enough minutes in a day with 1600ish students) like outside private counselors do, they are available to help students talk through difficult situations and problem-solve ways to move forward. Please remember, in order for your student to take full advantage of all the services our wellness counselors offer, you must have completed the Mental Health Permission Form.

Our Wellness Counselors have offices in what we like to think of as the “Wellness Suite”. This is a cozy area between the 400 hallway and the North (T) Annex. It has relaxed lighting, a couch and comfortable chairs. When all your student needs is five or ten minutes to breathe – this is the place for them to go. Oh, and this is where both of our therapy dogs, Bean and Juney, hang out.

**\*\*Academic Counselors** – Although our academic counselors are certainly trained to talk with students regarding socio-emotional issues, where they truly shine is their ability to help students navigate the world of academic rigor. With strategies for managing time or organizing calendars, they can help students find a way to get done both their schoolwork and have time for extracurriculars and family. The academic counselors run the Raptor Guides, a group of upperclass students who have found systems that work for them to be successful. These students are paired with ninth and tenth grade students who are still looking for the right system for them. Since fellow students tend to know what is needed for particular classes better than anyone, they can often help younger students to create systems that work for their various classes.

## **Change in back parking lot process – If you drop off or pick up your student this is an important one for you to read!**

Beginning Monday, September 8 the gate closest to the baseball field will be closed in the morning during drop-off. The gate closest to the theater will be an “enter only” gate. Because of the accidents and almost accidents we’ve had in that area, there will no longer be the possibility for cars to both enter and leave the back parking lot in the morning. At dismissal, the back parking lot will only allow for exiting vehicles. No entry will be permitted.

If you are dropping off or picking up your student from school, please do so in the South (G) parking lot. Or, you can wait until after the busses are gone and pick-up or drop off in the front bus loop.

Speaking of the South (G) Annex... please be cognizant that you are a driving role model. Your student and the students around them are watching what you do. If you cut people off or pull out without looking – so will your student when they start to drive. Yes, we all seem to be always in a hurry, but if you want your student to have fewer accidents (or almost accidents) in the future, then paying attention to your own driving now can help.

## **PFLASA No-Hassle Fundraiser**

PFLASA is kicking off its annual No-Hassle fundraiser this week!

Let me take a minute while I have you as a “captive audience” to remind you why the money this organization raises is so important.

This year, our non-staffing budget, when divided by the 1605 students on campus, comes out to about \$57.45 per student. That’s right, just \$57.45 per student to do everything else we need to do on campus, except pay staff. As you can imagine, we need much more than that to offer the educational experiences students need and deserve.

The funds PFLASA raises supplement what the school’s budget can do, and primarily support us in 4 areas.

1. instructional materials and professional development for teachers and staff—including for counselors
2. tutoring and AP testing support for students
3. major recognition and celebration events like Coffeehouse and Senior Salute
4. student wellness – covering the cost of one full-time LPC on campus

Last year, PFLASA was able to help pay for instructional materials including chemistry workbook packets, Planet Earth field supplies, marketing simulation software, Webb telescope feed subscription well as 300 copies of the Odyssey. PFLASA also supported 12 teachers and staff with professional development expenses and paid for more than 650 hours of tutoring for students. PFLASA is aiming to raise a minimum of \$135,000 this year. These funds will allow PFLASA to continue doing what it has been doing, - helping to ensure LASA, and your student, have what’s needed for a top notch education.

Many parents ask me how much they should donate – honestly that’s up to you. Some people like to outdo the State and donate just over what they give per student (this year that would be around \$60). Some people are dollar a day folks, so they donate \$365, others prefer a monthly amount like 50 bucks a month. If you have it, some families like to “fund the gap” between what the State actually gives us and what we would get if AISD didn’t have to give money back because of recapture. I haven’t done the math this year for that, but it’s typically between \$1500 and \$1700. Truly, the amount is up to you.

If you’d like to participate in this year’s No Hassle Fundraiser, you can do so by visiting [www.pflasa.org/give](http://www.pflasa.org/give).

# Announcements

## Athletic Drivers Wanted

Know someone who loves high school sports, has some extra time and wants to earn a little money? AISD (and LASA, in particular) are looking for people willing to learn to drive either an athletic bus or a school bus to aid our athletic teams in getting to competitions on time. Best part? You only need to drive for the teams you want! Interested? Send me an email at [stacia.crescenzi@austinisd.org](mailto:stacia.crescenzi@austinisd.org) and I'll connect you with the people who can help get you started.

## Gifted and Talented

Ms. Goekel, LASA's GT Advocate, will be sending out an email next week to Welcome Back families of students who are identified in AISD as GT or an invitation to start the referral process. There will be GT transfer instructions for families who have students who were identified as GT in another school district.

Secondary GT students in AISD are served by being enrolled in advanced-level courses according to their areas of identified giftedness. At LASA every student takes advanced-level courses across the curriculum in all core areas and many electives.

## Yearbook

The 25-26 Stetson Yearbook is now on sale! Here is the link to reserve one. Price increases throughout the year, so buy your copy now!

Link to Yearbook Sales: <https://www.yearbookforever.com/school-store/l109dY24rF1rhrqD59Dyu99d>

## Yearbook Prices:

- \$80: 9/2 through 1/31
- \$90: 2/1 through 5/6
- \$100: 5/9 and after

Also, mark your calendars, school pictures are happening soon!

**Portrait Day - Underclassmen:** 9/19

**Portrait Day – Seniors:** (LASA will provide the graduation gowns for these pictures) 11/15

## Try Archery!

Come to one of our Try Archery events. These are first time classes for students who have never shot archery before or for archers that have never used a Genesis Bow.

- Tuesdays: Sept 2nd and 9th
- Wednesdays Sept 3rd and 10th
- 6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

<https://lasa-archery-tryarchery-signup.cheddarup.com>

There is no cost to attend a Try Archery event. They will be led by LASA archery coach, Kat Davis. A few members of the LASA archery team will be there to assist. For more about the lasa archery team check out: [lasaarchery.org](https://lasaarchery.org)

## PFLASA Meeting

Please join us for our next PFLASA meeting, we'd love to see you!

- Date: Friday, September 5
- Time: 8:15 AM
- Location: Portable by the tennis courts

We'll share what PFLASA is doing, opportunities to volunteer, committee updates and as always we'll have coffee and tea.

# Accolades

## Raptor Research Presented in Spain

Senior, Soumik Chemudupati presented at the 38th IEEE International Symposium on Computer-Based Medical Systems (IEEE CBMS) in Madrid, Spain, this past June. His work titled "MindMap: ML-Based Mapping of the Progression of Alzheimer's Disease Using Human Expression as a Behavioral Biomarker" leverages machine learning and advanced modeling techniques to enhance prediction and forecasting of Alzheimer's Disease. Well done representing LASA on the international stage, Soumik! Congratulations!

## 2025 Science Olympiad National Tournament Results (From LASA SciO Captains)

We had an amazing finish to our 2024-25 Science Olympiad season, placing **15th overall out of 60 teams**, at the 2025 Science Olympiad National Tournament in Lincoln, Nebraska from May 23-24, 2025.

We'd like to thank all the parents and especially our coach, Ms. Cong, for helping our team throughout the year and bringing us to this amazing moment. Additionally, thank you to all the National Team members for studying hard and bringing us to the top!

Finally, we'd like to give a special shoutout to our seven seniors who graduated last year: Aaditya Bhat, Aaron Gu, Edwin Liu, Guha Ekambaram, Khush Lalchandani, Leonard Kim, and Yunxi He. We couldn't have done it without y'all!

LASA SciO placed in the top 6 in **four events**, earning medals, with **seven additional** top 15 placements:

- **4th Experimental Design** - Edwin Feng, Isabel Liu, Pragya Baskaran
- **4th Helicopter** - Guha Ekambaram, Henry Liu
- **5th Towers** - Guha Ekambaram, Yunxi He
- **6th Write It Do It** - Isabel Liu, Pragya Baskaran
- **8th Anatomy and Physiology** - Archith Venkatagiri, Tanish Alluru
- **9th Bungee Drop** - Khush Lalchandani, Prahalad Prithivathi
- **11th Disease Detectives** - Isabel Liu, Pragya Baskaran
- **11th Ecology** - Aaron Gu, Edwin Liu
- **12th Botany (Trial)** - Aditya Adapa, Zoya Sharma
- **14th Entomology** - Aaron Gu, Edwin Liu
- **14th Optics** - Aaditya Bhat, Leo Kim

Congratulations to these students! Full results can be found [here](#).

Attachments:

[SafeGunStorageDevicesEnglish.pdf](#)