

STEVENSON

Dear 9th Grade Families,

On Sunday, September 22, the entire ninth grade class, accompanied by faculty and the 45 seniors who comprise Senior Forum*, will depart campus for the annual Grade 9 Retreat at [Camp Koinonia](#) in the Santa Cruz mountains. Once there, we'll hike, participate in a challenge course and evening activities, and spend the night before returning on Monday afternoon in time for sports and other co-curricular obligations.

The Grade 9 retreat is an important class bonding event that provides time for the entire class to develop a sense of community, unity and inclusion. Senior Forum leaders facilitate much of the retreat, building on the transition and orientation process that began with new student orientation and continues throughout the year in Community Forum. Grade 9 students practice teamwork, patience, and collaboration on the challenge course, explore what it means to be a good friend in group discussions, and learn to be brave by stepping outside of their comfort zone to perform in a talent show that takes place in a redwood amphitheater. By the retreat's end, students have taken a deeper dive into what it means to practice our school values of safety, respect, trust, inclusion, and belonging.

Please know that all 9th graders are expected to participate in this annual bonding experience. Absences will be excused only under extraordinary circumstances and should be cleared in advance with the Student Life Office. Those with special dietary restrictions, or with questions, should contact Phillip Koshi, the dean of students. If day students require prescription medications, please have them packaged, labeled, and given to the dean of students on Sunday morning to hold onto and distribute during the trip; the Health Center will provide all medications for our resident students. For your reference, the number at Koinonia Conference Center is 831-722-1472 in case of an emergency.

Retreat Schedule

Sunday, September 22

9:30 a.m.	Senior Forum leaders assemble on Wilson Field
10:00 a.m.	9th Graders assemble on Wilson Field
10:15 a.m.	Depart for Camp Koinonia
11:15 a.m.	Arrive at Camp Koinonia
11:45 a.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	Initiatives, activities, challenge course elements, and discussions
5:30 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Evening Activities
10:00 p.m.	Quiet activities in cabins
11:00 p.m.	Lights out

Monday, September 23

8:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Morning Activities
11:30 a.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Depart for Stevenson
2:00 p.m. Return to Douglas Hall (approximate time)

Clothing checklist:

- Comfortable clothing for outdoor activities (long-sleeved shirt and jacket for challenge course)
- Layers for warmth – sweater, jacket, sweatshirt (it will likely be warm during the day and cold at night)
- Tennis shoes
- One change of clothing

Supplies checklist:

- Sleeping bag or warm blankets and sheets.
- If you need a sleeping bag, email Galen Merigliano no later than Wednesday, September 14th.
- If you have extras and would like to help by donating please email Galen Merigliano.
- Pillow
- Towel
- Toiletries (keep it simple; include sunscreen)
- Medication (prescription or over the counter) should be placed in a labeled package and given to Phillip Koshi
- Playing cards, a book, a small board game
- One backpack large enough for all of the above
- Water bottle
- Electronics — Do not bring electronic devices, such as hand-held games, computers, personal music players, or cell phones (Koinonia has no cell reception).

Sincerely,

Phillip Koshi
Dean of Students

** Senior Forum enlists seniors (who have been carefully selected and trained by members of the dean of students' office) to help ninth graders make a healthy transition to high school. The program, directed by the dean of students' office, began with the Wendy Ann Hayward '86 New Student Orientation in late August, and includes this Grade 9 retreat, and ongoing peer-to-peer discussions.*