

EVENT CALENDAR

August, 2018

Dear Students and Parents,

I hope this letter finds you doing well, in good health and spirit, and taking time to create memories with your friends and family during these final weeks of summer. On behalf of the entire Quince Orchard High School Staff, I would like to welcome you to the beginning of what is going to be an awesome 2018-2019 school year! We have been diligently working this summer to plan for student and staff arrival, and we can't wait for you to get here!

To accomplish our goals for the coming academic year, we have an unequivocal vision which guides our work. We create the conditions for all students to experience excellence. Our Instructional Leadership Team has utilized data, as well as student, parent, and staff feedback to develop a blueprint designed to provide students access and opportunity both to engage in rigorous coursework and receive the differentiated support they need to be successful. Our students continue to achieve at high levels and we are proud to share that during the 2017-2018 school year 1099 students took 2333 AP exams. This represents an increase both in students engaged in AP work, as well as the level of engagement for all. Of those students who participated in the exams, 63.9% earned scores of 3 or higher. This percentage INCREASED when we increased enrollment in AP! Additionally, Quince Orchard High School is ranked 5th within the state of Maryland by US News and World Report. While this is cause to celebrate Cougar Success, it also motivates us to provide access, opportunity, and focused supports so ALL students experience excellence.

Experiencing excellence is not just limited to the classroom, it includes excellence on the stage, on the field, and in our community. We are committed to helping everyone experience excellence in any and every arena.

The increases and accolades are directly related to our collaborative efforts as a school community. Our students, staff, and parents have demonstrated their commitment to our efforts and this will continue as part of the Equal Opportunity Schools Cohort. You can learn more about this opportunity here: <http://eoschools.org/>.

The QO event calendar is posted on our website and included in the student agenda book

- August 8 Fall Sports Try-outs and Practices begin
- August 28 Parent Meet & Greet w/ Mrs. Thomas 6:00 pm
Fall Sports Parent Mtg 7:00 pm
- August 29 9th Grade Family Cookout and Parent Meeting --- 6:00 pm
- August 30 New Student Orientation --- 7:45 – 11:30 am; Bus transportation provided. Bus schedules are on the Quince Orchard website. Pick up times are listed on the schedule. If you ride the bus, it will depart school at the end of Orientation at 11:35 am.
- September 4 First Day of School -- Welcome Back!
- September 6 Back to School Night - 7 pm
- September 11 Fall Play Auditions
- September 25 PTSA Mtg 7:00 pm
- September 27 Financial Aid Mtg 7:00 pm
- October 10 Schoolwide PSAT for grades 9 – 11
Boosters Mtg 7:00 pm
- October 15 Start of Spirit Week
- October 18 Homecoming Corners
- October 19 Homecoming Parade and Football Game
- October 20 Homecoming Dance

As we begin our journey together, I want to share what you can expect from us in terms of ongoing communication. Our goal is to tell the story of Quince Orchard through multiple venues and to share important information with you on a regular basis. To accomplish this goal, you can expect the following:

1. A weekly call out every Sunday night at 7:15 pm which will be supplemented with an equivalent email message. (Both are done simultaneously through the Blackboard Connect Ed System.)
2. All daily announcements will be posted to our website.
3. Daily updates will be made on the main page of the QOHS.ORG site with news, events and important dates.
4. Twitter will be utilized to communicate messages and share news with our community. Many of our teams, clubs, departments, staff members, and parent organizations have their own Twitter accounts so please contact them to access their specific Twitter handles. However, a view to get you started are below:
 - Beth Thomas @QOHSPrin_Thomas
 - Quincy the Cougar @QuinceOrchardHS
 - Quince Orchard Athletics @QOAthletics
 - Quince Orchard Boosters @QOBoosters
 - Class of 2019 @qoclassof19
 - Class of 2020 @qoclassof2020
 - QO Counseling @QOHSCounseling

The remainder of this letter includes information to help you prepare for the 2018-2019 school year. Please read the information under each category heading carefully. The information provided is our one, consistent communication vehicle that reaches every home. We have made every effort to answer all the questions we are anticipating from you; however, if additional questions arise, please feel free to contact me via email at Elizabeth.L.Thomas@mcpsmd.org.

In closing, I am thrilled to begin my journey as the principal of Quince Orchard High School. I am energized to begin my 24th year as an educator and I take great pride in saying that it will be as the Principal of such a dynamic school community. A Booster Sponsored “Meet & Greet” has been planned for Tuesday, August 28th from 6:00-7:00 in the school Media Center. I look forward to meeting many of you! Please know that I will continue to work diligently to build upon the gains our students have made over the years with a clear focus on creating the conditions for ALL students to experience excellence. And never forget...We can't hide our **Cougar Pride!**

Thank you again for all of your support and we wish you all the best during the remaining days of summer.

Make It A Great Day,



Elizabeth L. Thomas
Principal

First Day of School, Ninth Grade and New Student and Parent Information

On **Wednesday, August 29th**, the school will host a picnic for incoming students and their parents in front of the school at 6:00 p.m. and hold a meeting for the parents of 9th grade students in the auditorium at 7:00 p.m. Incoming 9th grade students are expected to attend a morning orientation session on **Thursday, August 30th from 7:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** so that they can become familiar with Quince Orchard High School and the location of their classes prior to the start of school. Bus transportation is provided and the bus schedules are available on the school website. All students will begin classes on **Tuesday, September 4, 2018**. Students should come to school with something to write with and paper. During the first class in each subject, teachers will go over supply lists for their courses, as well as course expectations.

Back To School Night

Mark your calendars for **September 6th, 2018!** **This is one of the most important nights in the school year.** Our entire staff will be available to meet with you and discuss our instructional and extracurricular programs. This is an opportunity to meet your student's teachers and become a part of the Quince Orchard High School family.

School Hours

Please note that school hours for the 2018-2019 school year remain the same. Classes will begin promptly at 7:45 a.m. and dismissal will occur at 2:30 p.m. (We will begin every day with first period) Teachers and counselors not supervising extracurricular activities will be available to parents by appointment for 30 minutes after the conclusion of the student day to answer any of your questions or concerns prior to the end of the teacher workday at 3:00 p.m.

Student Emergency Information Form

Student Emergency Information will be available through the MyMCPS Parent Portal for verification or editing. We highly recommend that you complete this through the parent portal which should be available by the end of August. Please take a moment to complete it before the window closes which is the second in September. It is critically important that we have accurate parent contact information on file with the school and system as soon as possible.

PTSA and Booster Club Information

You will find useful information in this packet and on the website about joining our PTSA and Booster Club. I urge you to support these worthy organizations which do so much to support our school and help us provide the best education possible to our students. You will find your involvement with one of our parent groups will help increase your student's sense of belonging and pride in Quince Orchard High School.

A Note on Military Recruiting and Directory Information

If a parent does not wish to have his/her child's name made available to military recruiters and/or does not wish to have their child's directory information included in the student directory, they should complete the form, "Request to Withhold Directory Information for the 2018-2019 School Year." As with most of our forms, it is available online and may be obtained in paper format in the Main Office. The form must be returned to the school by September 14, 2018.

Attendance

One of the most important issues that we face as a school is student attendance and punctuality. Because the State of Maryland awards the high school diploma to all graduates in the state, those seeking a high school diploma must comply with state attendance regulations. Students are expected to be on time and in first period promptly at 7:45 am. Acceptable reasons for excused absences in high school are defined by the state and are more limited than in elementary and middle school. Please see the *Quince Orchard*

Student Agenda Book for a detailed list. An alarm clock failing to sound, being caught in traffic, visiting a sick relative, and/or missing the bus are all unexcused absences. It is a fact that only 78% of students who miss between (8) and (16) days of school in ninth grade graduate from high school. Parents, please support us in providing your students the best possible education that we can give them by ensuring that they are in school and on time every day. Our school calendar is available in the student agenda book and online to help you plan family trips and activities that do not conflict with school. **Students who miss class assignments due to an unexcused tardy or absence will not receive grades or credit for those missed assignments. Students will remain responsible for the content of those assignments, as they prepare for culminating assessments.**

Lockers

Lockers will be distributed to 9th grade students during Advisory. All returning students (10th, 11th & 12th grade) will continue to use the locker assigned to them last year. If a student doesn't remember their locker information, they should provide their name and ID # to the main office and check back in two days.

Lunch on Campus and Open Lunch

Hot lunches, sandwiches, salads, soups, desserts, snack foods, and beverages are available to students during the lunch period. Students may also bring lunches from home to be eaten in the cafeteria, courtyard, or hallways. Students must stay in the immediate area of the building. Students are not allowed on stadium fields or parking lots. Students are expected to keep the school clean, sit in designated areas, follow posted directions, dispose of trash appropriately and recycle items in the marked bins. Students are asked to remember that loud or disruptive behavior or language in the hallways prevents teachers and students in Lunch & Learn from accomplishing work.

Open lunch is a privilege only for juniors and seniors who have met the following requirements:

- Students must have officially earned junior (11th grade) or senior (12th grade) status
- Eligible 11th and 12th grade students must submit the Open Lunch Privilege Form which must be signed by a parent (available in the main office) and;
- Must be academically eligible for extracurricular participation and;
- Be clear from any financial obligations and;
- Be in Good Standing and;
- Have earned at least 55 SSL hours and;
- Be on time to each class every day and;
- Serve any assigned detentions.

A student who violates the open lunch rules/regulations will lose the open lunch privilege for a semester. Open Lunch stickers will be given to students upon approval of their open lunch privilege, and must be displayed on their student ID. (Ms. Jackie Kumiega will distribute open lunch stickers). Open lunch stickers are not transferrable and students may not borrow or lend them. We will distribute first and second semester stickers.

Rules and Regulations for Open Lunch

- Students must display their own lunch stickers on their IDs.
- Students must cross at the official crosswalk at all times.
- Students are to respect community members while off campus
- Students are not permitted in cars or the parking lot during the school day, including open lunch.
- Students must report on time to all classes.
- Students are expected to adhere to the student Code of Conduct while off campus.
- Students are not to use abusive or profane language.

- Students are not to litter.
- Poor attendance or frequent tardiness results in the loss of the privilege.

Open lunch will begin during the second or third week of school.

Student Parking Information

It is a PRIVILEGE for junior and senior students to park on school grounds. All students wishing to park a private vehicle at school must complete an application for a parking permit. **Students must be clear of all obligations including detentions and have at least a 2.0 (unweighted) GPA.** Grades are subject to review throughout the semester. Permits are limited to one per family.

Technology

All electronic items which are brought to school may only be used for **educational activities** during the school day. Because Quince Orchard High School is a wireless and “Bring Your Own Device” school, students may use their personal laptops and tablets to support their learning. The school uses the Acer Chrome Book. Prices vary from around \$270 to \$340 for touch screen technology. Students can also use the E Mini Travel Size Bluetooth 3.0 Wireless Pocket Keyboard for PS3, tablets and Smartphones, which will allow students to use their phones much like a Chrome Book. At approximately \$12.50, it is a cost effective alternative and much easier to replace should it be damaged or lost.

Cell phones and smartphones must be **turned off during class periods** unless students are invited to use them by their teacher. We ask parents to refrain from calling or texting their students during class. In case of an emergency, family members who need to reach a student during the instructional day should contact the Main Office and school personnel will contact the student to respond. Cell phones may be used during the lunch period. Students are reminded to let parents know that if they need to contact them, they may call or text during lunch (11:15 – 11:55 each day).

Testing Accommodations for the College Board Tests (AP, SAT, PSAT)

In order to receive accommodations on these tests, a student must request the accommodations by submitting a Student Eligibility Form. The form must be completed by both parents and school officials and then mailed to the College Board **at least seven weeks in advance of the student taking the first test.**

The criteria established by the College Board for granting testing accommodations differs significantly from those used by Montgomery County Public Schools. Students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan are not guaranteed that the College Board will provide accommodations. The College Board requires current neuropsychological testing (within the past three years) which documents the specific need for each requested accommodation. Please contact Mr. David Mullaney in the Counseling Office (240-740-3620) in order to obtain the forms and to ask questions about this process.

Student Agenda book and Calendar

This year we are excited to be using a combination of agenda book tools to better meet the need of all of our students and parents. On the first day of school, students will receive a smaller, printed agenda book that they can use to record homework, assignments etc. It also contains many of the policies and procedures in place at Quince Orchard High School. Please encourage your student to read the handbook carefully when it arrives. We also encourage parents to become familiar with the information provided as well.

In addition, as a school, we will be utilizing MyMCPS classroom to help keep us organized. There is a QO classroom available to all students, staff and parents, with a master school calendar that can be added to other digital calendars. Teachers will also be using each of their classroom calendars to note due dates and deadlines for all assignments. Students can also add notes to their own calendars, which allows them

to be able to see personal, class and school events and deadlines in one place. This also allows parents to see all student assignments and events in one place. We are anticipating that many students will choose to use MyMCPS classroom as their digital agenda book, so we encourage both students and parents to download the Canvas Student and Canvas Parent apps to be able to access this information easily on their phones. It can of course also be accessed on the computer. Visit <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/mymcps-classroom/> for more information.

A Statement about Hazing and Bullying

Hazing and bullying are strictly prohibited at Quince Orchard High School. Students should be aware that acts of hazing or bullying in any form will not be tolerated. If students carry out such acts, they risk suspension from school. The school administration and coaches appreciate your support in stressing with your students the importance of refraining from and/or tolerating such behaviors and reporting them immediately when they occur.

Good Habits for Student Success

At Quince Orchard High School we will be working very hard to provide our students with a rigorous and relevant educational program. We believe all students can achieve at high levels. There are several habits and behaviors that contribute to success in high school.

- Successful students attend school daily and go to class on time.
- Successful students have good study skills and keep track of homework, projects and activities with an assignment book, calendar, or the student agenda book (which they will receive in the first day Advisory).
- Successful students ask for help when needed and persevere when things are tough.
- Successful students seek challenging courses and programs.
- Successful students get involved in positive activities, clubs, and sports, both in and out of school.
- Successful students work cooperatively with school staff and fellow classmates and follow school rules.

Home-School Communication

Effective home/school communication is important to us at Quince Orchard High School. Our entire staff is available to help you with your questions and concerns. The main school number is 240-740-3600. A more complete list of important contact people and numbers is published in the student handbook, on our website, and calendar mentioned above. Please do not hesitate to call or make an appointment. Our website, www.qohs.org, is another excellent source of information about school events with which I hope you will become familiar.