US Class Dean Update

November 19, 2026

To the families of the Class of 2028,

It was great to see so many of you last week at the 11th-Grade Parent Forum. Because junior year brings so many key milestones, we covered a lot of ground. I wanted to pass along the presentation slides and a recap for everyone, whether you were able to join us in person or not. As always, please let me know if you have any questions!

Parent Forum Slides here

Highlights and Helpful Information

A Message from the Upper School Principal

We had the opportunity to hear from Principal Choi about what brought her to D-E. One of the major takeaways was Ms. Choi's personal commitment to getting to know Upper School students, which is why she has been inviting students to her office each week to answer the "Food for Thought" question posed at the end of Monday morning meetings. The Class of 2028 has been wonderful about popping in to welcome her, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. I look forward to continuing to support you and all of these great students in partnership with Ms. Choi!

The Future of APs at D-E

Dr. CW and Ms. Kim Lalli walked us through the rationale behind our shift away from AP courses and how it will specifically impact the Class of 2028. Here is a quick breakdown of what this means for our current juniors moving into senior year:

- Current juniors will still have access to AP courses in the History, English, World Language, and Human Development departments next year.
- Students will have access to Advanced Studies (AS) courses in the Science and Math & Computer Science departments. Those enrolled in AS courses may choose to take the corresponding AP exam on campus the following spring.
- For these AS students only, we will offer optional review sessions outside of the school day to help them prepare for the AP exam. These sessions will be provided at no additional cost to families, and more details are forthcoming.

Regarding the college admissions process, colleges will receive an updated school profile that clearly explains our curriculum and the student's transcript. Admissions officers are far less concerned with an "AP" label than they are with seeing that a student challenged themselves relative to the highest offerings in a given discipline. For example, even without an AP Chemistry course, a student taking AS Chemistry is still taking the most rigorous level of Chemistry offered at D-E, which is what matters most to colleges. For a deeper look at this transition, please refer to the slideshow linked above.

The College Timeline During Junior Year

Ms. Sutton-Skinner spoke to parents on behalf of the College Counseling Office (CCO) about timing for the college process during junior year. You can find that exact timeline in the slideshow linked above, and here are a few major takeaways from her presentation:

- **Initial Student Meetings:** Students have begun scheduling their initial meetings with their college counselors to get to know one another. The goal of this first meeting is simply to build a relationship before diving into college logistics, allowing counselors to best support the whole child.
- **Parent Orientation (January 7):** The CCO will host a parent orientation to walk you through the admissions process and what to expect in the months ahead. Please note that this meeting is for parents and guardians only, so students will not be in attendance.
- **Family Meetings (Starting in February):** Around February, you will schedule a family meeting with your college counselor, where you and your student will work closely together to begin mapping out an individualized plan for college. The CCO will be reaching out with more details and scheduling instructions as that time approaches.

Upcoming Dates to Note

Here is a snapshot of upcoming dates to keep on your radar:

- **Nov 20:** All-School Thanksgiving Assembly / Turkey Bowl
- **Nov 23–27:** Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)
- **Dec 10–11:** Family–Teacher Conferences
- **Dec 19 – Jan 3:** Winter Break (School Closed)
- **Jan 15:** End of Semester 1
- **Jan 18–19:** School Closed (MLK Jr. Day / Faculty Workday)
- **Jan 20:** First Day of Semester 2

I know there are a lot of thoughts and feelings surrounding the college process, especially with the AP curriculum changes taking place right now. I will do my best to continue supporting both you and your students every step of the way, and please know that my door is always open if you have questions or just want to talk things through. Wishing you and your families a wonderful and restful Thanksgiving break next week!

Best regards,

Dylan Bryant
Dean, Class of 2028