



# A.N. McCALLUM HIGH SCHOOL

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Brandi

Hosack

*Interim Principal*

Dear McCallum Families,

I wanted to make sure that I connected with you all about the wonderful first week we had back at McCallum High School! I could not have asked for a better start to the 2019-20 school year. I feel extremely lucky to be a part of this amazing place with these amazing people!

Please allow me to take a moment to clarify and provide rationale to some of the actions/decisions that have been made leading up to this school year. As your Principal (Interim or otherwise), it is my job to make sure that everyone not only knows what to do, but also why we are doing it. So, please, let me go back and provide some rationale.

During my first parent meeting back in May, I went through my “entry plan” for transitioning into this role. Part of that plan was to meet with as many people as possible this summer so that I could learn all about McCallum High School. I have always believed this to be a special place, however, those one-on-one meetings with stakeholders only deepened my understanding of why it *is* so special. (A big thank-you to everyone who took the time to meet with me and share your experiences!) I got to learn all about the diversity of the campus, how welcoming and supportive everyone is of one another, and the overall quirky vibe that makes McCallum GREAT. I am simply thrilled to be a part of such a unique community!

That being said, I am not out to change any of the great things happening here at McCallum. I only want to cultivate and nurture the positives. It is incredibly important that students feel at home, that parents feel welcome, and that staff feel valued and supported.

So about the few changes that have occurred – please let me provide some background and rationale. (To be clear, I’m referring to the tardy and cell phone policies introduced via email a couple of weeks ago.) During my summer meetings with staff, I asked them for some specific areas that we could tighten up to improve the teaching and learning experience. There were some common themes that came through very clearly. A great number of staff expressed that it would be helpful if they we (admin) could provide a written policy regarding cell phones and tardies – two issues that can turn into major classroom distractions if not addressed. It is important that I listen to those concerns, remove barriers, and put structures in place so that teachers can do what they do best – TEACH! Most students will have no issues, whatsoever, with these systems. The policy is only in place to provide transparency regarding the procedure we will follow, should we have to do so.

As for FIT, it’s going to be awesome! This is about more than just academics! We have carved out 25 minutes during the school day so that students can take care of needs that would have previously

had to be handled before/after school or at lunch. The options for students on FIT days are plenty: team/club meetings, time with his/her counselor, extra tutoring, make-up work, SEL/mindfulness sessions, college application help, etc. It is true that we took 5 minutes off of lunch to make this time happen, but the potential benefits are incredible. (And lunch is still a healthy amount of time...48 minutes from the end of 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of 3<sup>rd</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>).

I could not be more proud to be a part of this learning community. It is an honor to lead a school with such talented students, from our amazing Fine Arts Academy to our clubs, teams, and organizations. The talent pool is deep! I will always be fiercely protective of the things that make McCallum great, I assure you. I will also, however, continue to look for ways to make it even better for our students and staff.

I look forward to seeing you at Back-to-School Night on September 4<sup>th</sup>. I will kick off the night with a short informational meeting before sending you all out to meet our wonderful teachers. More detailed information will be in a separate attachment.

In addition, I have scheduled monthly parent/principal coffees so that we can engage in productive dialogue about your students and their educational experiences at McCallum. I have included a picture of the flyer below for your reference. I do hope you will join me once a month – your voice is important!

Respectfully,

Brandi Hosack  
Interim Principal  
McCallum High School

