



OUR MISSION IS STUDENT SUCCESS...ACADEMIC, ARTISTIC, AND HUMANISTIC

45 Prince Street at University

Rochester, NY 14607

242-7682

August 20, 2025

Dear SOTA Families,

As summer winds down, we stand on the threshold of another exciting school year at School of the Arts. Time has flown, but our readiness and enthusiasm have only grown. We're eager to welcome our students back to a vibrant environment where creativity, learning, and personal growth thrive. This year, we continue our commitment to fostering student success—**Academically, Artistically, and Humanistically**.

The **2025–26 school year** begins **Thursday, September 4, 2025**, and we are thrilled to have you with us for what promises to be another exceptional year of learning, growth, and achievement.

We're excited to welcome **Ms. Shannon Mullins**, Associate Director of Special Education, to our administrative team! Ms. Mullins will split her time between SOTA and World of Inquiry School #58, supporting our students' diverse needs. In addition, SOTA will benefit from the wisdom of seasoned, retired administrators **Kelly Nicastro**, **Teresa Root**, and **Tom Pappas**, who will periodically serve our school as substitute administrators.

We also continue our practice of *administrative looping*, where high school administrators follow their assigned grades for multiple years, ensuring continuity of relationships and support for student success.

Your Administrative Team for 2025–26:

Alan Tirré, Principal

Emily Buss, Academy Director, Grades 11–12

Richard Roche, Athletic Director

Vacant, Assistant Principal, Grade 9

Brian Chandler, Assistant Principal, Grades 7–8

Luke Wilson, Assistant Principal, Grade 10

A full listing of administrative responsibilities can be found on our website under the **STAFF** tab.

School Day Schedule & Arrival Procedures

School hours are **8:30 AM – 3:30 PM**. The building opens at **8:05 AM** for breakfast and security scanning. Students who walk or are dropped off should plan to arrive as close to 8:05 AM as possible so they are ready for first period. Grab-and-Go breakfast is available only for students arriving between **8:25 AM and 8:45 AM**.

Traffic Safety & Morning Drop-Off: Please follow the morning traffic pattern included in your back-to-school mailing. This ensures safety and keeps traffic moving smoothly.

End of Day & After-School: There is no student supervision after 3:30 PM unless participating in an approved after-school activity with faculty supervision. Students will not be allowed to re-enter the building after dismissal—those in activities should report directly to them at 3:30 PM. All other students must exit the building at this time.

Protecting Instructional Time

We are committed to maximizing classroom learning. **Tuesdays** are dedicated to teacher collaboration and professional learning through classroom walkthroughs and instructional coaching. Therefore, we cannot hold parent, committee, or other meetings that pull teachers from instruction on these days.

We also do not accommodate walk-in meetings. All meetings must be scheduled in advance with a stated purpose so we can prepare and respect everyone's time.

Nuts & Bolts for 2025-26

- **Schedules** – Mailed home the week of August 25 and uploaded to PowerSchool. Students will also receive a copy in first period.
- **Attendance** – Call Ms. Sewell in the 2nd floor house office between 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM for all absence reporting. Written notification is required upon return.
- **Chromebooks** – Students are issued a Chromebook and charger, to be brought to school fully charged each day. Under the new NYS Cell Phone Ban, personal devices such as laptops, iPads, and tablets should remain at home.
- **Personal Electronics** – Cell phones, smartwatches, headphones, etc. are prohibited during the school day. All students will use a personal **Yondr Pouch** to store devices. If forgotten or lost, the phone will be collected and returned at dismissal.
- **Breakfast & Lunch** – Provided daily at no cost. Outside food delivery is prohibited.
- **Security Scanning** – All students are subject to random scanning. Prohibited items include glass bottles, perfumes/colognes, permanent markers, scissors, lighters, weapons, drugs, or alcohol. Confiscated items may be retrieved by parents from the grade-level administrator.
- **Athletics** – Visit our website under **School Life/Athletics** for details.
- **Student Info Sheets** – Return corrections to your grade-level secretary.
- **PowerSchool** – New passwords were emailed. Directions are on our website under **Parents/PowerSchool**.
- **Transportation & IDs** – Temporary passes will be mailed; permanent IDs will be issued once school begins.
- **Health Services** – Required health exams for grades 7, 9, and 11. Call (585) 242-7682 x1460 with questions.
- **Work Permits** – Request through your house office secretary.
- **Release of Student Info** – New opt-out forms are required each year; see letter in your packet.

Family & Community Engagement – We Need You!

Our school thrives because of our incredible families and community partnerships. This year, we are seeking volunteers for:

- **Morning Traffic & Welcome Crew** – Helping students arrive safely and start the day energized.
- **Parent Ambassadors** – Supporting field trips, concerts, and school events.
- **Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO)** – Collaborating on school-wide initiatives.
- **School-Based Planning Team (SBPT)** – Partnering in school improvement planning.

If you own a business or are connected to an organization that can support our students or our mission—whether through mentorships, internships, donations, sponsorships, or in-kind services—please reach out to us. Your partnership can open doors and create opportunities that make a lasting impact.

A volunteer interest survey will be sent out soon. We invite you to share your time, talents, and enthusiasm—your involvement makes a tremendous difference.

This year, let's work together to create an environment where every student is inspired to reach their highest potential. Every day is an opportunity to move closer to our goals and dreams. Let's make it count!

With appreciation,



Alan Tirré,
Principal