

New year brings changes

Policy updates support students regarding health, identity, workload

by CLARE O'CONNOR
Editor-in-Chief

Students and faculty returned to a school year schedule on Sept. 6, adjusting to this year's minor changes and updates. Many of the changes focus on promoting wellness through clarification and extra support for both students and teachers.

One addition to this year's student handbook acknowledges students' difficulty balancing homework load and reminds students to consider the expected time commitment for their chosen courses. Last spring's program of studies introduced an expected time commitment for classes.

Dean of Students Ana Campos said many of the changes focus on student wellness. This addition, under the "Workload at U-High" section of the handbook, addresses wellness by giving students agency to limit certain stressors.

"We have a population of kids that really are in some ways overtaxed — they just have too much going on," Ms. Campos said. "This was an attempt to try and help kind of normalize that it's OK to not do it all, it's OK to have some balance. Those are some personal choices that students make, and the school is trying to help students make those choices."

The handbook also codifies U-High's mental health day policy. Students have been allowed mental health absences in the past, but now mental health days are listed as a type of absence in the handbook. According to the handbook, mental health days will count toward absence thresholds.

While the handbook focuses on how students should address the issue of homework balance, the administration is also asking teachers to help students navigate their work.

Every teacher was provided an assignment planner listing days where assignments are not allowed, like Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks and the two days following each break.

The planner also includes religious holidays and U-High extracurricular events. Teachers are not required to alter their assignment schedule around these listed dates but are encouraged to con-



NEW ON THE FIELD. Ninth graders Rayan Omar and Simon Iyi-Ojo participate in a passing exercise during practice on Jackman Field on Sept. 7. Both are members of the team of ninth graders and sophomores. U-High athletic teams returned to practice Aug. 8, marking a new school year that started to resemble pre-pandemic times.

sider these holidays and events as they plan their assignments.

The handbook also clarifies the assignment regulations put in place during the previous school year.

The handbook outlines that all assignments due the next day must be posted before 4 p.m. on a weekday, and that homework can not be due on weekends outside of extensions.

Other changes this year fo-

cus on affirming students' gender identities.

These changes are detailed in the new "Gender Identity Support" section of the student handbook.

Students can add their correct pronouns and names in PowerSchool and Schoology, helping teachers and other school adults avoid incorrectly referring to a student. Students who want to change how they are referred to

in the schools' systems can use a form to request the changes they want.

The form allows students to request that their teachers be informed of a different name and set of pronouns.

The form additionally asks that their name be changed in the schools' electronic systems, to be given a new ID card with corrected information or for P.E. accommodations.

Laboratory Schools enrollment stabilizes, tuition increases

by WILLIAM TAN
Editor-in-Chief

For the 2022-23 school year, 31 new students have joined or returned to U-High: 21 ninth graders, 4 sophomores, 4 juniors and 2 seniors.

In U-High, there are now 152 ninth graders, 158 sophomores, 150 juniors and 162 seniors, bringing the total number of students to 622. Enrollment across all of the Laboratory Schools is 2,203 students.

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According to Brent LaRowe, director of registrar services and in-

formation management, enrollment is steady and increasing, especially in grades that commonly see new admittances: sixth grade and ninth grade.

"The standard sort of entry points as we call them, grade nine ... grade six, we're seeing very similar new student numbers in those classes as well," he said.

To Mr. LaRowe, the class sizes across the school community are encouraging, especially given the impact of COVID-19 the past few

years.

"This is a very boring-looking set of numbers. But that's good. Things are going as we expect, and I'm really pleased that our community is as resilient as it is," he said. "We went through a pretty tough couple of years, and things are looking very similar to where they were before [COVID-19] started."

High school tuition this year is \$40,488, a 4% increase from \$38,376 in the 2021-22 school year.

From the Editors...

Midway style evolves with revised goals

by CLARE O'CONNOR,
TÉA TAMBURRO, WILLIAM TAN
Editors-in-Chief

For nearly a century, the U-High Midway has stood for the core values of informing, educating and serving the U-High community with accurate and timely reporting. This year, we will uphold and build upon these standards by reporting accurate, reliable and timely stories, highlighting a diverse array of perspectives and presenting content that corresponds to the interests of the student body.

We have expanded our social media presence over the past year, but there's room for improvement. By maximizing content on platforms like Schoology, Facebook and Instagram, while keeping our website as the dominant information hub, we aspire to make content as easily accessible as possible.

Improving our presence on these platforms will allow us to interact with you, the reader, in a way that is more personal and meaningful. Better polls, quizzes and updates on newsworthy events will hopefully engage the wider community online and create a more inclusive environment for all our readers.

With the U-High community at the forefront of our mission, the Midway has been redesigned to better represent the continuous growth of the Midway's style and content alongside the ever-changing student body we represent. Stylistic decisions for colors, fonts and layout choices reflect our wish to present a newspaper that is progressive and contemporary in addition to the professionalism and readability that the previous newspaper design carried.

We hope our choices honor our intended evolution as a newspaper while maintaining the foundation of the Midway's previous aesthetic and values.

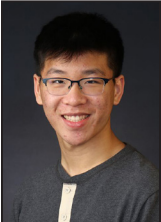
Finally, we will strive to continue to shed light on the multitude of voices in the community, across all our platforms, and we acknowledge our community's diverse activities, interests and opinions. As we begin the new school year, we encourage students to stay informed by seeking credible, mainstream news sources, and we encourage our readers to actively contribute to the Midway's content.



Clare O'Connor



Téa Tamburro



William Tan

Fresh Faces:

High school welcomes 9 new faculty

By LOUIS AUXENFANS
and TÉA TAMBURO

Aaron Arreguin



Makerspace

Previously:
Carl Schurz High School and After School Matters

What should students know about your style of teaching?

“I can be very supportive and I can be extremely capable of finding ways to solve an issue that maybe I don’t know of. I’m a very resourceful type of person that even if I don’t know the answer to something I work together with everybody to make sure we like find a solution to a problem. And I’m pretty laid-back. If people come in with interests I get excited about whatever you have interest in and then through that excitement we together just build something fun, new or repeat something that was already fun.”

Shannon Barker



English

Previously:
English teacher at the Latin School

“I like it to be student centered. We are a community of learners who are constructing our knowledge together, and so what does that look like in a class — well you might sit in a circle that I am part of, engaging in conversation that I don’t want to go through me where I have to call on people. I like conversations that happen among students that I can just listen to, so I like a lot of collaborative work, and in classes I like to give students choice.”

Issac Berrueta



History

Previously:
History teacher at Carl Schurz High School

“I’m all about making mistakes. I’m all about taking risks. I am all about putting our errors and the process of learning, I’m all about making that visible and transparent and showing and really celebrating our failures and, you know, things like that, like really enjoying the process of learning. I want them to know that I’m gonna be the guy that’s gonna tell them like, ‘Hey you get this wrong, you know what’s gonna happen, nothing. We’re learning, it’s great.’”

Cody Boukather



Music

Previously:
Substitute teacher at the Laboratory Schools

“I appreciate student input, and I value student input and I value fun, and I think all that is key to the learning experience. I want to be present in more ways like beyond the classroom — I don’t really put on like a teacher coat when I come to the classroom, I’m very me — so if students ever want to take classes, like, I would encourage them to be just themselves and grow along through like the process and experience.”

Deb Donely



College counseling substitute

Previously:
College counselor at New Trier Township High School

“I’m a little blunt, and I am a partner with you in your post-secondary planning. So I might make suggestions, but it’s always up to you, the student, to tell me what you want and to steer me in your direction. It’s your path, and I’m merely waving to you from the sidelines.”

Matthew Insalaco



Mathematics

Previously:
Taught at UIC College Prep

“I think teaching is collaborative. I think especially math, the way that you get good at math is through getting your hands messy, right — like getting in there trying things out, failing, getting it wrong, going back, double checking your work, figuring out where you lost that negative, figuring out what misconception you’re having about whatever topics in front of you — but I think that idea of that collaboration and that conversation I think is really important.”

Quinn Menchetti



P.E.

Previously:
Teacher at GEMS World Academy Chicago

“I try to keep my students relaxed ’cause I think that’s when they do their best work. I’m also very, very committed to making sure my students feel seen and heard for who they are in my classroom and I also think one of my philosophies as a teacher is to get students thinking about big issues and big problems as early as possible. I think you all are capable and ready to think about and to try to tackle some of the world’s biggest problems, and I want to give students a chance to think through those things.”

Fiona Murphy



English substitute

Previously:
Teaching at boarding school in the Swiss Alps

“I think that the relationships and the rapport are really important. Especially for someone in my position because I’ll be taking over for Ms. Himmelfarb, and I think it’s really natural and understandable in that position that students want to feel reassured that their substitute teacher for a few months, me, is really qualified and really invested and is absolutely there for them, is not just kind of signing in and out of for a couple of months.”

Jason Pallas



Fine Arts

Previously:
Director of public practice at the Smart Museum of Art

“Very discursive, right? So it’s student-centered, student-led. I’m less interested in form and function of art than I am in sort of its real-world use value, if that makes sense. Sort of like how we might approach problems and use our creative capacities to propose solutions, and I tend to have a baseline overview of some of the things we could accomplish, but try and have students co-create that as much as possible.”

With the new school year comes the regular tide of new students, schedules and lockers, but also new teachers. This year, U-High welcomes nine new faculty in part or full-time roles, from college counseling to the makerspace.

What do you hope your students will say about you and your class at the end of the year?

“I just hope that they continue to do the things that we practiced in class at home, with friends, after they all go to college or wherever you go. Just kind of keep referring back to problem solving and remembering how to solve things on your own.”

“To me, there’s something really beautiful about being able to foster empathy and relationships among members of a community in the English class. You know, it’s the first year of high school for all the students I’m teaching and so I guess by the end of the year, I want them to feel that the class contributed to their feeling of community here.”

“I would hope that at the end of the year they found me to be a kind person and human being, and I would hope that they found the content challenging. So somehow a balance of ‘what a nice guy, but what a hard teacher.’ Something to that effect would be my dream.”

“I think there’s two things: either it’d be I generally care about something I didn’t know I cared about, or I can engage and communicate in something I care a lot about and now I have the tools to do so. I know it sounds like music, especially the class I’m teaching — orchestra — are performance classes, but I can’t think of any other class in the school where you’re actively listening to one another and you’re in a giant team and you’re working with someone and a conductor and the people around you to create a large experience.”

“While the goal is certainly to get students into colleges and give them plenty of options in terms of whatever post-secondary plans they want, it’s also about thinking about who you are and how you want to represent yourself in college applications. It’s about helping students find their authentic selves and presenting that to colleges in a way that students can look back and say, ‘I did the best job I could. I represented myself in the best manner that I could and I feel proud of the way I represented myself to the colleges.’”

“Ideally, I want them to come out feeling like they learned a lot of math, but also have a lot of joy in the math classroom. It’s gonna be work, right, like it’s gonna be work. Again, like that idea of ‘You’ve got to get your hands dirty,’ so it’s gonna require students to do quite a bit of work at home and in class as well, but I think at the end of the day, I want that to be like a joyous place and a place of discovery.”

“I hope students will say firstly that they had fun. But I also hope that every one of my students is able to accomplish something that they didn’t think they could. A lot of that is goal setting, so I really work hard with kids to help them set goals for themselves and when I am lucky enough to see a kid achieve one of those goals, that’s my favorite part of teaching.”

“I’m hoping that they would say that I was really supportive of them intellectually and academically and personally. I hope they would say that my class was fun. I want students to have a good time. There’s a famous line by Maya Angelou, who’s a famous poet and memoirist, but the quote is, ‘People might not remember what you said, they will remember how you made them feel.’ And so hopefully students will remember the instruction that they got in my class and can make a lot of connections with their classes in other disciplines, like history and science, et cetera.”

“I would hope that they would say that they had the agency and the freedom to explore ideas, but also the support and love to accomplish those goals in a realistic way. Yeah, I think that would be the mark of success.”

vox pop.

For rising ninth graders at U-High, the first year of high school can have both its worries and its rewards. Eight ninth graders shared what they are most excited for about high school, as well as how they’ve prepared for their first year.

In **Cruise Lickerman’s** first week of high school, Cruise was most excited for taking harder classes and having more freedom within the school day. To prepare for ninth grade, Cruise spent the summer resting and relaxing.

Daniel Wu is most looking forward to everything in high school and, a few days into Daniel’s ninth grade year, are enjoying it so far.

Leon Dhal is most excited to meet new people and anticipates the “great experience” of ninth grade. Going into high school, Leon improved organizational skills, mainly through gaining homework experience.

In the first week, **Cecilia Siegel** is looking forward to meeting new people and having new experiences in high school. To prepare for the year, Cecilia read and talked to a lot of people over the summer.

Like Cecilia, **Evelyn Halbach** is enjoying having more freedom in high school. Evelyn feels “like there’s no way in middle school that you would ever have free periods because teachers would never trust you with that.” To get ready for the start of high school, Cecilia prepared binders and supplies for classes.

Zuri Cossey Gay is looking forward to the social aspects of high school, specifically “the sports games and the dances.” Starting the school year, Zuri is trying not to cram or wait too long to complete assignments.

Frankie Bishop is looking forward to meeting new people and joining the high school’s athletic teams and clubs. To maintain organization, Frankie has been using a planner, which he says helps.

Grace LaBelle is most excited for English and thinks “there’s a lot of good opportunities in English.” For ninth grade, Grace has practiced organizational skills and signed up for tutors.

Dennis Asher is anticipating more challenging classes than what was available in middle school. “My dad made me read some of the high school material,” Dennis said, “like the math book and the science book, and that prepared me for what we’re doing right now.”

Compiled by Chloe Alexander, Mia Lipson, Clare McRoberts and Téa Tamburo.