

# CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Vassal Lane Upper School

Jamel Adkins-Sharif

*Head of School*

Tanya Benzan

*Assistant Principal*



197 VASSAL LANE, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

617-349-6550 (MAIN OFFICE)

617-349-6686 (FAX)

<http://vassallane.cpsd.us>

May 19, 2015

Dear VLUS Graduating Class of 2015, Parents and Families:

This is a wonderful time for the Vassal Lane Upper School community as our eighth graders look ahead with great anticipation to completing middle school and graduating to a new phase of their lives filled with exciting opportunities for academic and personal growth. We are proud of the accomplishments of your soon-to-be graduate, as I am sure you are.

In preparation for the June 23, 2015 graduation ceremony and end-of-year activities, we are providing the information below as an overview of the schedule and upcoming events. I hope you will use this letter as a reference while you make plans to celebrate this special time.

### **Schedule of Events**

#### **Tuesday, May 26th:**

**Cap and Gown Order Form and Payment Due** - Students will be wearing caps, gowns and tassels during the graduation ceremony. An order form is enclosed and should be returned with a \$20 **CASH** payment to your child's advisory teacher by Tuesday, May 26, 2015. Caps and gowns will be distributed to students on June 18<sup>th</sup> provided they have returned all school materials or reimbursed funds for lost items (i.e. text books, library books).

**Graduation Ticket Request Form Due:** Based on the large graduating class and the available seating, each graduating family will be guaranteed up to three (3) seats in the auditorium. **Children sitting on laps will not require a ticket.** Additional guests may view the live broadcast in the library. Please complete the Ticket Request Form and return it to Sam Nwaoshai in the main office by May 26<sup>th</sup>. Graduating families will be notified the week of June 8<sup>st</sup> should there be additional tickets available. Extra tickets will be distributed evenly on a first come basis. If you would like to request additional tickets, please complete the attached form and return it to the main office. Tickets will be distributed to students on Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Media Release and Baby Pictures Due** - We are putting together a graduation slideshow that will include pictures of your child. Please complete the enclosed Media Release form by Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> so that we may include photos of your child. We are asking students and families to bring in or email one (1) baby or childhood photograph to Nora Clooney at [nclooney@cpsd.us](mailto:nclooney@cpsd.us) with your child's full name and the age they were when the photograph was taken. .

#### **Friday, May 29th:**

**Student Graduation Speakers** - Students interested in speaking at graduation must submit their speech to Ms. Burbank by Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. Entries must be typed. Guidelines will be provided to students in the coming week. Teachers will read the speeches anonymously and select two speeches to be read at graduation. Selected students will be expected to revise and practice their speech with a teacher.

#### **Saturday, May 30:**

**Car Wash and bake Sale Fundraiser-** The car wash will take place in the VLUS/ turnaround driveway between 11:00-1:00 pm. Teachers are signing up students for shifts but we need your support too! **Please contact Tony Tauber to volunteer for the car wash at [ttauber@comcast.net](mailto:ttauber@comcast.net). Please contact Nancy Akbari at [nkabari@yahoo.com](mailto:nkabari@yahoo.com) to volunteer baked goods or to work the stand.** The proceeds from this event will solely benefit the 8th grade dance and end-of-year trip.

#### **June 11th, 15th, 18th:**

**Graduation Rehearsals** – Rehearsals will be held during the school day on June 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:50, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:45-2:55, and June 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:20.

**Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>:**

**Semi-Formal Dance** - The Semi-Formal is an evening of dancing and food especially for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders! The dance will be held at the West Cambridge Youth Center, 680 Huron Avenue between 6:30-10:00 pm. We will need your help to transform the theatre space at the WCYC. Please contact Diana MacArthur at [ddmacarthur@gmail](mailto:ddmacarthur@gmail) if you can volunteer on the day of the 12<sup>th</sup> or have time to research party elements.

**Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup>:**

**Materials Return and Sign Off** - Students are expected to clean out lockers and desks and return all school materials/supplies to their teachers or the librarian. Families are expected to replace the cost of any lost or damaged school materials (i.e. textbooks, locks, etc.).

**Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>:**

**Class Trip** - The class trip to Six Flags is Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Students attending the trip must be at school by 7:30 am. Students will return to VLUS at 7:00 pm. Permission slip and the \$20 payment should be turned in to your child's advisory teacher by May 26<sup>th</sup>. Please make checks payable to FOVL. Please make arrangements for dropping off and picking up your student at these times.

**Monday, June 22:**

**Award Ceremony and Potluck** - The Award Ceremony and potluck lunch is a student-teacher gathering where graduating students are recognized for demonstrating excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, citizenship, mindfulness, leadership, service, resilience and perseverance. Following the ceremony, students and teachers will have lunch in the classrooms. Students/Families are asked to bring in a dish (salad, main, side or dessert course) or purchase paper goods (napkins, plates, cups, utensils). In the past, the potluck has been organized and run by parents. We are looking for at least two parents to coordinate the details of the lunch. **If you are interested in helping to organize this event or prepare a dish, please contact the Lisa Laskin at [elaskin@fas.harvard](mailto:elaskin@fas.harvard).**

**June 23<sup>rd</sup>:**

**GRADUATION CEREMONY- 3:00 PM**

**12: 00 Dismissal:** Graduation Day, Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> is an Early Release Day. All VLUS students will be dismissed at 12:00.

**2:15:** Graduates should report to their assigned classroom at 2:15 (Ms. Burbank, Rm. 342 or Ms. Montanez, Rm. 343) for the graduation procession.

**3:00: Graduation Ceremony** - VLUS auditorium, 3:00. Doors will open at 2:30.

**Post-Graduation Reception:** Immediately following the graduation ceremony, family, guests and staff are invited to relax and celebrate with the graduates in a post-ceremony reception in the VLUS cafeteria.

**Seating and Parking Accommodations** - Guests needing wheelchair accessible seating on graduation day should contact Sam Nwaoshai at [snwaoshai@cpsd.us](mailto:snwaoshai@cpsd.us) in advance, to reserve a chair.

Parking is available in the lot directly behind the school. There is also ample street parking for Cambridge residents. We request that residents park in Resident Parking spaces when available to allow room for non-residents and those needing handicap parking. The turnaround driveway directly in front of the school will be closed off to general parking. **Please do not park directly in front of the school.**

**Ceremony Photographs-** Color photographs of graduates receiving their diploma will be taken by a professional photographer and will be mailed to families at no cost. **Because of this, we would appreciate your cooperation in taking most of your personal photos before and after the ceremony.**

**June 25: LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE (8:55-2:55)**

Graduation promises to be an exciting time at the Vassal Lane Upper School. It serves to commemorate the important achievements of our graduates. The VLUS faculty looks forward to celebrating this special occasion with you!

Best Regards,

Tanya M. Benzan  
Assistant Principal  
Vassal Lane Upper School