Dear Parents,

I'm excited to welcome your student to our upcoming astronomy course. As we explore the wonders of the universe together—stars, planets, galaxies, black holes, and more—our goal is to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and equip students with a strong foundation in modern scientific thinking.

I also recognize that students come from a wide variety of worldviews and faith traditions. This course is designed to respect those beliefs while upholding scientific integrity.

Here's what you can expect:

🔭 Scientific Focus

This course teaches astronomy from a modern scientific perspective. That means we will explore evidence-based models such as the Big Bang, the age of the universe (estimated at 13.8 billion years), stellar evolution, and cosmology. Our emphasis is on how science works—through observation, testing, and modeling—not on making claims about theology or personal belief.

🧭 Respect for Faith and Worldview Differences

We understand that not all families interpret the origins of the universe the same way. Some students may come from religious backgrounds with different views on creation or the age of the Earth. We want every student to feel welcomed and respected. While this course will not engage in theological debate, we encourage respectful questions and critical thinking from all perspectives.

🧪 What Science Is—and Isn't

Science is a method of discovering how the universe behaves, not a philosophy or religion. It does not answer questions about meaning, purpose, or values. It describes patterns in nature based on testable evidence. Students are never required to abandon their personal beliefs in order to succeed in this course.

🌌 Awe and Wonder as Common Ground

Astronomy naturally inspires a sense of wonder—and that's something we all share, no matter our background. Whether someone sees the stars as the work of a Creator or as a product of cosmic processes, the night sky invites deep questions and exploration. That shared sense of awe can be a powerful bridge between science and faith.

🌟 Examples of Scientists of Faith

Throughout history, many leading scientists have also been people of faith. For example, Johannes Kepler, George Lemaître (who first proposed what became known as the Big Bang theory), and Francis Collins were all accomplished scientists who also held personal religious beliefs. We may also note contributions from Islamic scholars such as Omar Khayyam and Alhazen (Ibn al-Haytham), or Buddhist thinkers like Thich Nhat Hanh who engaged thoughtfully with science. These examples remind us that scientific discovery is open to anyone, regardless of background or belief.

📚 Open, Safe Environment

Students are encouraged to bring thoughtful questions and are expected to treat each other with kindness and respect. We ask for that same mutual respect in return, especially when discussing potentially sensitive topics like origins, the age of the universe, or human significance.

This astronomy course is not just about learning facts—it's about exploring the grand story of the cosmos through the lens of science. My goal is to guide students toward clarity, curiosity, and wonder, while creating an inclusive environment that welcomes deep thinking and diverse perspectives.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. I'm always happy to connect with you.

Warmly,

Aurora Lipper

Supercharged Science