



April 23, 2021: A Friday Note from Shelly

Dear CDS Community,

It was a little more than a year ago when we were gearing up for our annual fundraising effort, the *Bid & Bash* auction, when we were interrupted with a pandemic. In fact, *Bid & Bash* was the first event we had to cancel and figure out how to repurpose. And we did just that, with our community rallying together with a record number of donations.

Like last year's auction, this year's Spring Fling Festival will look different, as we still cannot be together in person. Yet I'm filled with gratitude knowing that our virtual celebration benefits the entire CDS family. It feels like our community has become stronger than ever as we have supported each other so much in these past many months!

Fund-A-Need for Our Sliding Scale Tuition Program

We are committed to further strengthening our community with this year's [Fund-A-Need](#). Through our virtual festival and paddle raise, we hope to raise \$250,000 in support of our sliding scale tuition fund, which ensures that we maintain an economically diverse student body and helps us live our belief that Differences Lift Us. In 2020-2021, we provided nearly \$3.5 million in financial aid to 26% of our students. I believe that our sliding scale tuition program has helped the school to weather the pandemic, allowing us to continue to offer the CDS education to a broad range of diverse families.

Much in the same way that we were interrupted in March of 2020 as we planned *Bid & Bash*, as we were preparing to launch this year's auction, we were again interrupted. This time by a different disease: ongoing racism and continued police violence.

On Tuesday of this week, we awaited the verdict of George Floyd's murder trial. I had the news streaming on one screen while having a meeting on another. I breathed a sigh of relief, as we experienced "a brief taste of justice," as someone said. Yet, as the guilty verdicts were announced, we heard the news of another young life lost to violence. There is still work to be done. And I believe the past year has activated our country to

action. That morning, I had told my boys that before they left for school, I wanted them to *talk* to me (not with text or a voicemail). They knew why: I was worried about the upcoming verdict. I knew that Derek Chauvin was guilty and I was not trusting that the justice system would deliver accountability. My perspective is grounded in the experience of being the parent to white boys and knowing that they walk through the world with little fear of police. If you have never had “The Talk” with your child about what to do if they are stopped by the police, I encourage you to give two minutes of your time to [this video](#).

As I’ve reflected on this emotional week, I take some comfort knowing that at CDS we believe strongly in changemaking and activism. I want to recognize the action taken by Darnella Frazier, who recorded the video that led to the conviction. Her video inspired protests and louder calls for justice and engagement. This young person could have been one of us or one of our own students, realizing that something was not right and taking action in the moment. Our work for racial justice starts with seeing the problem and then coming together as a community and individuals to take action. Anthony shared some resources on Tuesday, offering opportunities for you to explore ways you can learn more. As a community, we will continue to talk, learn, share resources, and stand together with a focus on justice.

I hope to see you all in just a few hours for the [Dance-a-Thon](#) which kicks off the Spring Fling Festival. We have special guests, including several of our teachers as DJs and hosts, and surprise dancers. And my wish is that this event will inspire all of us to remember that there is hope, and joy, and the possibility of a better future for all if we – children and adults alike – are willing to stand up and be voices for justice.

My note today is reminding the community of an important event, the Spring Fling Festival, and it also acknowledges the growing racism and violence that is infecting our country. I believe that CDS values can live on their own and can also align with each other. And today, those values allow us to *share kindness and joy* while also *being just and courageous*. See you tonight.

Warmly,
Shelly