



April 9, 2021: Ya Gotta Believe!

Dear CDS Community,

I have often shared my stubborn optimism this past year. The term is inspired by [Christiana Figueres](#), a climate expert and “stubborn optimist.” This framing has resonated with me as we continue to be faced with uncertainty, emerging science, and differing perspectives.

Christiana defines stubborn optimism as “the mindset that is necessary to transform the reality we are given into the reality we want.” This wisdom has guided me for the last year as I have been called to make decisions with limited information to protect the health and safety of our entire community. The stubborn optimism is not negligence or blind faith; rather, it is a focus on knowing the current situation and then visioning a pathway through the current moment to the future.

When I was a skinny girl with braces, thick glasses, and vibrant red hair in the style of the times (think Dorothy Hamill), my family of baseball fans had a deep connection to another stubborn optimist. A very close family friend who had a difficult childhood lived with my mother and her brothers in a small house in Vallejo, CA.

Baseball dominated my uncle’s life, as he and his buddy played ball for the local Catholic high school. My mother remembers the days when this friend moved from first base to his true calling as a pitcher. He, my uncle, and my mom spent hours in an empty lot, the friend learning how to focus his pitching arm as my uncle caught and my mom shagged the wild balls. Later as a pitcher, Tug coined the phrase “Ya gotta believe” while playing for the New York Mets in the early 1970s, inspiring the team all the way to the World Series. I grew up celebrating his characteristic smacking of the glove on his leg at the end of an inning and was present in the dugout for his final game with the Philadelphia Phillies as he was celebrated for his pitching and his positive attitude.

I reflect on this as a sign of spring. Today’s Opening Day for the Giants brings a hint of what is to come for all of us this summer. My children were asking me last night when I

thought the pandemic would be over and I have no answer for that. However, I do see hope in the signs of spring, blossoms, warmer weather, longer days, and the start of baseball. We are planning a much more “normal” start to our next school year and I am looking forward to taking the lessons we have learned forward as we recover, regroup, and realign our mission as a community.

This week offers us a chance to take deep breaths, sleep a little longer, and come back to school ready to embrace the final weeks of the year. I am so looking forward to the change for the middle school to a more normal schedule and for many who will rejoin us in person. I know some in our community will remain online and what I have seen this year is that the connections we have can endure through a screen and I look forward to continuing our assemblies, classes, and other events with our entire community in person and at home.

Updates

Spring Fling Festival Fundraiser: Parents have been sharing opportunities to come together in joyful and social ways through our Spring Fling. I look forward to seeing you dancing and playing together.

While it has been nice to have some time on Friday mornings, I do miss our weekly get-togethers for assembly. We will resume this wonderful tradition two weeks from now when we hear from the First Grade Owls and also enjoy another live report from the farm when Sunny and Frisco get their annual haircut. Here's to spring!

Warmly,
Shelly