



May 7, 2021: A Love Letter to Our 8th Graders

Dear CDS Community,

First, I want to thank all the families who played a part in celebrating our community this week by dropping off treats for the two brunches, as well as wine, cookies, coffee, tea, and many other surprises. Because of your generosity, we were able to create a bag for each employee packed with your love. You have offered such an abundant appreciation for our educators.

Class of 2021, what a year we have had. Who would have predicted that the photos from the year would all include masks? Your class has demonstrated flexibility, resourcefulness, and engagement throughout it all and I am very proud to know you all.

Life outside of CDS offered us all opportunities to stand up for justice and I know the conversations you had in your classrooms – over chat and in your social times – provided you with the chance to listen to one another and learn from the multiple perspectives you offer. You read works that stretched your minds; you built parklets; you played sports on the sidewalk; you mastered algebra and the X conjugation; you engaged in the Socratic dialogue; you expressed yourselves in words, motions, music, and painting. You inspired our community to *be* more and to *do* more.

It's been about a month now since we welcomed most of you back to full-time, in-person learning at the main campus. Luckily, we were able to dedicate two classrooms in St. Joseph's Hall to the cause, as we continued this year's game of musical chairs.

Some of my favorite memories have been seeing many of you over Zoom and now in person. I appreciate that you were open to being back in the lower school. Seeing our oldest students on the swings and play structures has brought me so much joy. When you are not in class learning how to change the world, you still know how to experience joy.

Your class has worked to find ways to connect even in our disconnected year, and I love

that you continued your group chats and worked to support one another in so many ways. I know that you will take the lessons learned at CDS and translate them into action in your high schools as you are all change-makers in so many ways. And just five weeks from today, the forty-four of you will be graduating – in person! I can't wait to be there with you.

In closing, happy Mother's Day to all who are mothers or take part in the mothering of others. As I said during assembly this morning, I know so well how our lives immediately shift when we hold our babies for the first time as parents. The work of parenting can be the most consuming, stressful, and joyful experience we take on. Students, I hope you do something special for your families to honor the grownups in your life this weekend. I wish you all a weekend filled with joy and love.

Warmly,
Shelly