



April 17, 2020: A Message from the CDS Board of Trustees

Dear CDS Community,

We hope this finds you in good health and decent spirits as the spring break that none of us imagined comes to an end.

Last June, the CDS Board of Trustees officially adopted the school's new [mission, beliefs, and values statements](#). These are more than words on a page. Rather, they reflect the school's dearly held culture and aspirations, and during this time of uncertainty they provide reminders of what truly matters and guidance for facing the future.

As the unsettling COVID-19 crisis continues to unfold, the CDS Board of Trustees is grateful for our strong, collaborative relationship with Shelly and the administrative leadership team. We have been able to make informed decisions quickly in order to support Shelly and her team as they provide an exceptional education for our students without compromising the health and safety of our community.

Gratitude

At the beginning of January, a CDS virtual/home learning program was inconceivable. As the COVID-19 pandemic began to intensify in mid-February, Shelly and our incredible staff and faculty started to put plans in place to deliver online learning should the need arise. When the shelter-in-place order came in mid-March, school administrators and faculty sprang into action to distribute iPads and laptops to students and formulate lesson plans and strategies for online/home learning. We appreciate the thoughtful feedback that families have provided and applaud efforts from faculty and staff to respond quickly as we all learn and adjust to new systems.

Throughout this trying period, CDS faculty and staff have demonstrated resilience, adaptability, curiosity, and deep caring for our students. They have

artfully showcased their creativity and problem-solving throughout, bringing continuity to classroom rituals, specialist classes, and aftercare activities. **The Board could not be prouder of, or more grateful for, this team of professionals.**

Likewise, Shelly's steadfast, calm, and collaborative leadership style has been on full display. Whether developing a response plan well before the crisis hit, reading books to students virtually, or comforting members of the CDS community, Shelly has navigated challenges with the intellect, poise, creativity, and passion we have come to know well. CDS is incredibly fortunate to have a leader of Shelly's caliber.

Finances

CDS remains in a strong financial position. While the spring has brought unanticipated and significant change, the school is on track to meet budgetary goals thanks to years of preparedness, emergency reserves, and the philanthropic generosity of our community.

In keeping with our values, CDS continues to pay hourly and contract employees through the shelter-in-place order and has provided assistance to families who have been hit hardest by this crisis. If your family needs help during this time, please complete the survey we recently shared so that the school can work with you to find a creative plan.

The CDS Board of Trustees is entrusted with providing strategic oversight, financial stability, and fiduciary duty to the school. Members of the finance committee are closely monitoring financial indicators and developing plans to address challenges as they arise.

Community Matters

The great irony of these difficult days is the shared experience we are all having despite being apart from one another. Everyone has been affected in both similar and different ways and, though physically isolated, this community has proven that it is possible to socialize at a distance. We have enjoyed virtual assemblies, Zoom playdates (and happy hours), and even video messages from sheep and chickens. Our resilience as a school is deeply embedded in our core belief that community matters.

We have not yet committed to closing the campus for the remainder of the school

year. The Board will continue to support Shelly and her team as they assess the possibility of coming back together physically before the end of the school year if it can be done safely.

Let us continue to be active learners, to let our differences lift us, and to share kindness and joy with one another as we navigate the days ahead in pursuit of our collective mission to make CDS a place where **what you learn and who you become are equally important.**

With wishes for health and comfort,

Sincerely,

Jeanette Perez (Luna '25 & Pax '29)
Co-Chair

Carl Schneebeck (Leo '22 & Silas '25)
Co-Chair