



March 12, 2010

Dear Families,

I can't believe how far we have come in such a short time and how much we are continuing to grow. Our 320 students last year grew to 400 students this year, and we anticipate surpassing 500 students next year. As wonderful as all of this is, it also presents a challenge for us to effectively manage that growth. Our administrative team has been engaged in this discussion all year and we have planned a course of action that will allow us to carefully build the school we want to become.

As with all plans, change is inevitable. We are a school built on continuous improvement and creative innovation therefore change is part of our culture and is embraced, not feared. Collaboration and compassion are also part of our calling, so change is very rarely dictated. Rather it is a collective movement shared by all.

Our administrative team is at the heart of this change – not only as architects of change, but as active participants. We have been extremely fortunate to have had a wonderfully talented and dedicated administrative team leading us these past few years through their sheer determination, dedication, and willingness to wear so many hats. But we have reached a time in our organizational evolution where these talented men and women get to make a choice – to decide what they want to be doing for the next few years that will stir their excitement and feed their passions.

For **Anne Buechler**, who has served as Director of Admission these past two years, and **Brad Laatsch**, who has lead our Upper School as its Division Head for the past three years, that choice is leading them back into the classroom here at DDS. Anne has turned over direction of the admission office to **Lauren Marlis**, an experienced Admission Director who came on board in January. They are teaming up through the remainder of this year to guide our school through its busiest admission season ever. Next year, Anne will teach full time and help direct student social activities, and initiate our alumni programming.

When I hired **Brad** three years ago to lead our very small Upper School and teach science, I told him he had three years before he would have to choose between administration and teaching. We are of a size now that it is impossible to do both. Brad has chosen the classroom. He is one of the most amazing teachers I know and I am absolutely thrilled by his decision to reach more kids through his talents in the classroom than he could by splitting his time. Brad has actively been involved in helping me fill the Upper School Head position for next year. We have completed a national search to find an experienced independent school division head with the skills to guide us through our next phase of growth and development. An announcement will be forthcoming.

Two years ago when I brought **Kevin Buechler** to our school, I didn't exactly have a specific role for Kevin in mind, but I knew he had so many talents that the school needed him. He jumped in immediately as Athletic Director, Dean of Students, Director of Community Service, Dean of Student and Community Affairs, and any other number of hats I asked him to wear. Most notably, in his role as Athletic Director, he took our young and emerging middle school athletic program and built the foundation for an explosive varsity program. He coached just about any and every sport himself with enthusiasm and character; he coaxed students into playing multiple sports to enable us to gain entrance into the Independent School Athletic Association; and he helped recruit some amazing coaches to the school and is continuing to bring in extraordinary talent. He helped all of us see what Davidson Day athletics could become – and that vision is exciting! Beyond athletics, he helped develop our community service program, gave meaning to our character education commitment, and has represented our school out in the community with energy and professionalism. He has taught history, advised student government, and been an important voice on the administrative team. Kevin's desires, unfortunately, are leading him away from Davidson Day toward a new path that even Kevin doesn't know where it will lead him. He will be leaving us at the end of this school year as a DDS employee, but will remain an active and engaged DDS parent and a loyal and proud Patriot.

Please join me in wishing Anne, Brad and Kevin well in their new roles at Davidson Day, as teachers, and as parents.

I can't thank each of them enough for their enthusiastic belief in our DDS vision and all they have done to get us to where we are today. They helped build our school and I am so proud to have them remain part of our DDS family as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

Warmly,
Bonnie Cotter
Head of School