

Dear Purnell Community,

I hope you are finding ways to spend time with family and enjoy the sunny weather. As I do each summer, I'm reaching out today to share news about all things Purnell. While this has been a spring and summer like no other, Purnell approached these uncertain circumstances not only with caution and care, but also with an institutional recognition that this is an opportunity for us to innovate and grow. And that is exactly what we have done for the immediate, medium, and long term. Our staff and faculty are busier than ever preparing for your return to school!

### **Strong Fundraising**

I am pleased to announce that our Annual Fund proceeds exceeded expectations by 25 percent, and we are grateful for additional unrestricted gifts in the higher special gift category earlier this year. In addition, we are proud to be the recent recipient of a multiyear grant from the William E. Simon Foundation, as well as a very generous multiyear donation from a previous donor. We are directing these resources toward investments that directly benefit our students: faculty development, infrastructural improvements, department curriculum budgets, and our speaker series for students, staff, and families. The Leadership Team and our Board of Trustees are currently updating our strategic plans in light of these generous donations.

### **New Board of Trustees Co-Chairs**

Please join me in welcoming new Co-Chairs to our Board of Trustees: Martha Gallo P'21 and Genevieve Madigan P'21. The new stewards of our Board bring a wealth of knowledge in non-profit and corporate governance, finance, and independent school management. Most importantly, they are dedicated to Purnell's mission and growth. Martha and Genevieve are assuming their leadership roles at a critical time in our in our School's evolution, and we're grateful for the many contributions they are already making to ensure Purnell's bright future.

### **Reopening Plans**

We are finalizing our plans to safely reopen our campus for students, staff, and faculty. Our internal Reopening Task Force remains hard at work with the guidance of our Physician Consultant, [Dr. Allyson Agathis](#), local and state health authorities, the CDC, and our independent school partner organizations. Dr. Agathis is collaborating with our Task Force and Head Nurse Chrissy Schmidt to complete a Return to School plan that establishes standing orders for the Health Center and a detailed plan to protect the health of our entire community. It integrates the careful planning of all operations at Purnell. Dr. Agathis will continue with Purnell in an advisory role throughout the school year. We are grateful for her medical expertise and Miss Chrissy's knowledge and care of everyone in our community.

As a reminder, all families can expect to receive our finalized Reopening Plan within the next week or so. All questions should be directed to [reopening@purnell.org](mailto:reopening@purnell.org).

### **Our Growing Faculty**

Unlike most other schools, we continue to increase our faculty with qualified, dedicated professional educators. I will provide a separate letter of introduction to our new faculty additions, but for now I am thrilled to welcome our new Academic Dean, [Tracy Haswell](#), to our Administration. Ms. Haswell brings a deep and wide breadth of knowledge, teaching, administrative, and research experience,

particularly in STEM fields. She is also passionately dedicated to inquiry-based learning across disciplines. This perspective will certainly enrich not only opportunities for our students in STEM but also across all departments. She is already working with Dr. Martha Torres and the rest of our Education Task Force to construct meaningful and engaging learning opportunities for our students. I am excited to see all of our academic programs become even more robust with the leadership of our strong team of educators. In addition, [Dr. Clyde Beverly](#), counseling psychologist, has joined our Leadership Team as Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Over the last two years, Dr. Beverly has led our student affinity groups and – crucially – directed a group of students and staff to create Purnell's first [Diversity Statement](#) last spring. We are proud to add his expertise and experience to our Leadership Team.

### **Our Stance Against Racism**

Across our country - and in fact globally - we are witnessing a movement to bring justice to Black and Brown people. At Purnell, we are optimistic that the duration, scale, geographic distribution, and involvement of advocates of all colors signal a true turning point. This is an historic moment of opportunity for all institutions - educational, corporate, and legislative - to enact change that will begin to rectify the systemic racism that has existed throughout our country's history. It starts with recognizing and respecting the pent up rage caused by generations of discrimination and injustice that has been both codified by law and a conventional part of the fabric of this country. We are grateful to many of our alumnae and current students for sharing their experiences, thoughts, and suggestions to move Purnell forward. The Administration and Board are committed to doing the work to construct an academic and social environment that brings out the best in each of us, and a shared living space that ensures equity, safety, and belonging for each community member. Please expect our statement of commitment and action steps, including accountability measures, to be shared within the next week.

### **Professional Development**

Purnell is committed to encouraging and supporting the continued learning of our team and prioritizes this investment, which serves to enrich all of Purnell school life and your daughters' opportunities for growth and learning. Some examples of courses, institutions, and attendees:

- *How to Teach Diverse Learners Online*, Landmark College course: all of our student facing faculty participated in this course tailored for Purnell and our commitment to Learning and Wellness®.
- *Leading in a Time of Crisis* (NJ AIS): Anne Glass, Head of School
- *Head of School and Board Partnership in the Covid Crisis* (NJ AIS): Head of School, former Chair Jeremy Jeffery, and Co-Chair Martha Gallo, Trustee Lisa Loeb
- *Teaching Civility in the Age of Conflict* (NJ AIS): Zoë Hildenbrand
- *Certificate in School Management and Leadership (CSML)*, Harvard Business School: Vicky Browne (by application only)
- *Methods for Teaching Foreign Language Online*, American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages: Matthew McConnochie
- *Safe Food Service and Dining*, (NJ AIS): Vicky Browne, Chrissy Schmidt, Joe McPeak
- *Next Normal Enrollment Trends and Strategies in Uncertain Times* (NJ AIS): Robin Seiler, Interim Director of Admissions
- *New Faculty Onboarding* (NJ AIS): Joe McPeak

- *Teacher Credibility and Effective Teacher Efficacy*, The Center for Literacy Development, Rutgers Graduate School of Education: Jessica Moore, Humanities Chair
- *College Advising for Professional Counselors*, Columbia University, Teachers College: Lindsey Skerker, college counselor

### **Infrastructure Improvements**

Our Facilities team, led by Emmett Kresge, is engaged full-time in preparing our campus and buildings for the new school year. In addition to painting and regular repairs, Mr. Kresge, Mr. Sunday, and Mr. Head oversaw the replacement of cooking equipment in the Baker Dining Hall, which includes a char-broiler (new to our kitchen), burners, and cooktops. This equipment will provide more efficient, options in healthy food preparation and new menu options.

In addition, the team renovated apartments for current faculty and also to welcome our increased staff.

### **Admissions and Enrollment**

We are thrilled to welcome new students to Purnell this coming school year. Next week, we will host two orientation events for them and their families. In addition, the admissions team remains busy with inquiries, interviews, and applications. We spread the word about our reopening plans, individualized learning, and Purnell's mission and founding guidelines broadly in an email campaign, which you can see [here](#). Lastly, keep an ear out for Purnell sponsor announcements in WNYC beginning next Wednesday on *All Things Considered*.

### **Keeping Purnell Connected**

We held our first Purnell Connected Zoom after a month off on July 1. We hope to see all of you on July 15 for our next Purnell Connected when we will provide further updates on the start of school. We will provide a link via email prior to the meeting.

We are filled with excitement to welcome our families – new and returning - and staff back to an innovated, forward-looking Purnell!

My very best wishes to all for a safe and fun summer,

Anne M. Glass, Ed.M.  
Head of School