

Dear Purnell families,

We are more than halfway through our fall semester and there is a lot of good news to share!

### **Safe, In-person Reopening**

First and foremost, we successfully reopened our campus for in-person learning. This is in large part to our school's and families' commitment, which enables our students to learn together on campus. We sincerely thank you for your partnership and support.

While other schools are still remote or offering a hybrid model of school attendance, we have been in session since August 31 without – knock on wood – any incidence of the coronavirus. Thanks to your prudent vigilance and that of our faculty and staff, we are keeping our campus safe. This has enabled Purnell to offer personalized instruction and enrichment for all of our students. The American Academy of Pediatrics and our own experiences as parents tell us that being at school is best for academic learning and social-emotional development.

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), recently interviewed me about Purnell's decision-making and planning process to reopen safely. That podcast will be available on November 2. We will provide the link at that time.

Our reopening would not have been possible without the hard work over the summer of our Administration, including Joe McPeak, Emmett Kresge, Vicky Browne, Tracy Haswell, Dr. Martha Torres, and Jaclyn Shaw, among others. Our faculty deserves special mention for their attentiveness in this pandemic and their relentless dedication to providing a rigorous, student-centered education for our students. Their work has been tireless and faithful to Purnell's mission. They all deserve our gratitude.

### **Successful Open House**

Last Tuesday evening, we held a virtual Open House for prospective families, many of whom are looking to transfer quickly. We had a record-breaking number of attendees! We presented our [Learning and Wellness<sup>®</sup>](#) program and the benefits of in-person, individualized support. Special thanks to our Admissions team for their outreach and execution: Robin Seiler, Olivia Hunt, Meghan Coates, and Noelle Gray.

We also welcomed families by appointment to tour the outdoors of our beautiful campus. As a result of these visits and the Open House, we are excited to share that we have several students joining us as mid-year transfers and in September for a richer educational experience. In fact, this Sunday, we will welcome a new 11<sup>th</sup> grader from Michigan! We know how daunting it can feel to start a new school mid-term. I am certain that we will all give her a warm Purnell welcome.

### **Purnell Traditions**

Last Wednesday morning, we held our annual breakfast for our 9s and 12s. The event was held on our quad with many pumpkins, gourds, and joyful students! This is a time for our seniors to look back on their personal growth at Purnell, and for our 9s to look ahead at what they can accomplish. Jaclyn Shaw, our residential life coordinator, said: "We are a small, close-knit

community that encourages young women to befriend one another regardless of their grade. No matter where life takes you or how much time may pass, you can always reach out to your Purnell community. If you find yourself with a new job or in a new city, we will always do what we can to connect you with local Purnell sisters professionally and socially. Once a Purnellian, always a Purnellian."

### **Student Participation in SDLC**

As part of our commitment to cultivating leadership skills among our students and to creating an equitable, anti-biased community, we are thrilled to announce that six student delegates from Purnell are virtually attending the annual NAIS Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) this December. Now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, the SDLC is a multiracial, multicultural gathering of upper school student leaders (grades 9-12) from independent schools across the U.S. and abroad. SDLC focuses on self-reflecting, forming allies, and building community. Led by a diverse team of trained adult and peer facilitators, participating students develop cross-cultural communication skills, design effective strategies for social justice practice through dialogue and the arts, and learn the foundations of allyship and networking principles.

We are proud to send the following six delegates and an alternate to represent Purnell in this national virtual forum: Mary Clare M. '21, Shannon T. '21, Mcky D. '22, Isabel F. '22, Esther O.'23, Caicee C. '23 and Sabrina K. '22 (alternate)

We are so excited for these students to engage with their peers. After the conference, they will present to the school community about their experiences and wisdom gained. Congratulations to our delegates!

### **Purnell December Mini-Term**

We intentionally started our fall semester early to avoid a possible surge in the coronavirus later this fall. Knowing that we would have a long winter break, we designed a Purnell December Mini-Term to provide structure and learning during this time off. There will be seven courses to choose from, as well as a group therapy option. Courses are non-credit and not graded, but meant to build skills, keep students engaged, in contact, and supported. Please look out for a registration email within the next few days.

In the meantime, we continue to enjoy a beautiful fall here in Pottersville – where the leaves are turning an array of gorgeous colors – as we complete our first semester!

Warm regards,

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