



PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL

January 7, 2021

Dear Lower School Families,

This morning I observed an exceptional Fourth Grade Zoom conversation about the events that transpired in the Capitol yesterday. As a former fourth grade teacher, I always love visiting fourth grade classrooms because it reminds me of why I fell in love with teaching so long ago. Unlike younger Lower School students, fourth graders are at that age when they are beginning to care deeply about the world outside of their immediate personal circle. Still concrete in their thinking and very mindful of the concept of fairness, they are beginning to experiment with the idea of “Who am I?” in the context of the vast and, often confusing, bigger world. While learning about the world outside of their own family and friends, they are starting to think, “What can I do to make the world a better place?” and “How can I make a difference?”

Between the ongoing pandemic and the civil unrest in our country, we have all (children and adults alike) been doing our best to manage our fears and anxieties, while simultaneously trying to live life as ‘normally’ as possible. As Lower School educators, our daily priority is relatively simple and constant—listen to our children and reassure them that they are safe.

Today, our Third and Fourth Grade homeroom teachers hosted conversations about yesterday’s events centered around a variety of concepts, all driven by the students: peaceful protesting, media literacy, empathy, peaceful transition of power and the fact that different opinions are important, but never an excuse for violence. As always, the teachers and I were so impressed with the level of understanding and grace displayed by our students. Teachers of our youngest students, in PreK through Second Grade, did not host formal conversations about this topic. Rather, they did what they always do—they listened to their students and were prepared to answer questions and clarify misunderstandings if they came up.

As parents and caregivers, you may have questions about how to talk to your children about events such as those that occurred yesterday. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's homeroom teacher, [Dr. Ashleighann Young](#), [Daniel Cohen](#) (Fourth Grade teacher and LS CMDT representative), or [me](#).

A [letter from the PDS Student Services team](#) emailed to families today provides several resources for family conversations. In addition to the articles linked there, here are a few more resources focused on helping support younger children:

How to Talk to Children about Politics

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-children-about-politics>

Talk with Kids about Politics and Elections

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/talk-with-kids-about-politics-elections-4107285>

GMA - How to Talk to Kids about Protests

<https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/family/story/parents-talk-kids-racism-george-floyd-protests-70992137>

All my best,

Sandy Wang, Ed.D.
Head of Lower School