

August 2023

Dear Lower School Families,

I hope you are enjoying a restful and rejuvenating summer. As we embark on the 2023-24 school year together, it is an honor to be writing to you in my third year as the Head of the Lower School at Wardlaw+Hartridge. Summer at W+H has been busy with Camp sessions occurring. We just completed an Admissions Information Session where we welcomed 15 prospective LS families to campus. The highlight was seeing three of our rising fifth-grade student ambassadors eloquently and confidently speak about their favorite parts of their classes in the various learning spaces we toured. Our guests were very impressed, to say the least! I look forward to these students helping to lead our school this coming year.

My summer has also been consumed by our busy teenagers' lives. For our daughter Julia, this involved a five-day National Dance Competition along with College Admissions tours. For Simon, we have been to many Graduation parties and are busy preparing for his "move-in day" at the end of August as he begins his first year in college. My wife and I can hardly believe that our oldest is ready to leave the nest. As trite as it sounds, it still rings true that these years have gone by way too quickly. While I know that we have prepared him for this next stage, I'm just getting myself ready for two things:

1. The quick goodbye
2. The 2.5-hour drive home of ugly crying

Suffice it to say, that we are taking advantage of being present with our kids this summer. It has given us pause to appreciate the limited time we have with them and not take for granted the moments we get to spend together.

Likewise, in reflecting on last school year, I sincerely enjoyed working with our students and look forward to seeing how much they have grown in these summer months. Parents, I also appreciated connecting with many of you, and am grateful for the work we did together to support your children's learning within our mission. At present, we welcome 20+ new families to the W+H Lower School community, and I am excited to continue that collective work with all of you.

One important announcement as we start the new school year:

Class Assignments will be shared in late August

As we prepare for Parent Partnership Conferences on September 5 and 6, you will be receiving an email with your child's assigned teacher and a designated time for these conferences.

As we turn our sights towards a new school year, I leave you with a light, scientific and imaginative poem by Betsy Franco.

Anatomy Class BY [BETSY FRANCO](#)

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| <p>The chair has arms. The clock, a face. The kites have long and twirly tails. The tacks have heads. The books have spines. The toolbox has a set of nails. Our shoes have tongues, the marbles, eyes.</p> | <p>The wooden desk has legs and seat. The cups have lips. My watch has hands. The classroom rulers all have feet.</p> <p>Heads, arms hands, nails, spines, legs, feet, tails, face, lips, tongues, eyes.</p> <p>What a surprise!</p> <p>Is our classroom alive?</p> |
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Betsy Franco, "Anatomy Class" from *Messing Around the Monkey Bars and Other School Poems for Two Voices*. Copyright © 2009 by Betsy Franco. Reprinted by permission of Candlewick Press, Inc. Source: *Messing Around the Monkey Bars and Other School Poems for Two Voices* (Candlewick Press, 2009)

I look forward to seeing you all in September!

In Joyful Learning,



JohnEric Advento, M.Ed.
Head of Lower School

