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FROM THE

# Head of School

Dear Members of the Pingry Community,



According to *The Beginning of Wisdom: The Story of Pingry*, our founder Dr. John Pingry believed “persistence without anxiety is the best means of achieving a goal.” Given that appreciation for the proven connection between a healthy mind and personal accom-

plishment, I think he would be proud of the proactive approach our community is taking with regard to well-being — and of the plans ahead.

One of those projects is an exciting new partnership with Dartmouth. They hosted a landmark panel in September featuring Surgeon General Vivek Murthy and his seven living predecessors. This esteemed group convened to discuss the future of mental health and wellness, marking the first time in 25 years that all living surgeons general had gathered in one place around a shared purpose. In addressing our nation’s exploding mental health crisis, the panel discussed the importance of community and human connection — and noted that rebuilding both needs to become an immediate public health priority. Dartmouth has since released a comprehensive, institution-wide strategic plan (“Commitment to Care”) for supporting student mental health and well-being.

Several members of our Administrative Team joined me in meeting with some of Dartmouth’s leaders just before the holidays. Our visit confirmed the importance and urgency of reimagining the school experience with well-being at the center. There are remarkable similarities between Pingry and Dartmouth, including the belief that well-being and mental health in school settings cannot focus on students alone. It must instead be a community-wide effort. Students mirror the behaviors of adults, so from parents and alumni to faculty and staff members, we all have a vital role to play in helping

to improve the well-being of our community. Most importantly, Pingry and Dartmouth fully agree that exceptional academics and a campus culture that supports mental health and well-being are not mutually exclusive — they can and must exist in tandem.

In order to make data-informed decisions about campus well-being, Pingry has also embarked on a two-year pilot program with WHOOP and its wearable technology. WHOOP bands are the most advanced sleep, health, and fitness trackers available. With a combined 50 students, faculty, and staff members participating, our program will use biometric data to enhance our community’s collective knowledge around how our daily habits influence stress, sleep, health, and well-being.

Well-being remains a catalyst for everything that happens at Pingry. It drives excellence, achievement, happiness, compassion, gratitude, resilience, and so much more. It also involves many aspects of campus life, from schedules and benefits to spaces and cellphone usage policies. In the words of former Surgeon General Dr. Regina M. Benjamin, “health does not occur in the doctor’s office or the hospital only — it also occurs where we live, where we learn, where we work, where we play... so health is in everything that we do.”

Pingry is a profoundly human place. In order for it to be the best place to go to school and the best place to work, we want students and adults to be the best versions of themselves. There’s a direct connection between community, conversation, social connection, and well-being. Deep relationships are essential for unlocking hidden potential in both students and colleagues. For when we’re seen and known, when we’re healthy and well in body and mind — that’s when we’re all ready to do our best work and become the best version of ourselves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Lear'.

Tim Lear