



LAWRENCE DONOVAN
Head of Lower School

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Dear Lower School Parents:

Welcome to the Start-of-School web page! We hope you find the information you need here to begin this September as prepared as possible. Welcome also to the start of school, my second at Poly Prep. I would like to share in this letter some of our accomplishments from this summer.

We have been working hard to prepare the building and grounds for the arrival of our students. New signs for the Lower School have been placed—one on Prospect Park West and the other on Second Street. Pre-Kindergarten B underwent significant renovations this summer, including having a new floor put in and new tiles and sinks installed in the bathroom. We've hung a monitor in the reception area to display photos of the children for our admissions guests. A new basketball backboard is being installed this week in the playground, using funds from Recycle for Recess. Three new Smart Boards are being installed, one in the science room and two in second grade, bringing our total to eight. Finally, the maintenance staff has done a terrific job of scrubbing the building from top to bottom to ensure that everything is in great shape for the students and teachers.

We have also completed some hiring this summer. Our new science teacher, Dan Wood, has already had tours of both campuses. He was very impressed with the facilities, and together we are already planning to take even more advantage of the green house on the Dyker Heights campus with our students. Chris Peters and I also met with the new learning specialists, Laurie Maher and Rosemarie Pico, to prepare for this year. We are initiating a plan to maximize coverage for all of our students, specifically in reading from Kindergarten through Grade Three. Haley Harvis has moved to second grade to teach with Sarah Davies. The new associate for Grade One, Isabel Galassi, is actually not new to Poly. Last year, Isabel worked as a substitute teacher at Poly in addition to working in our afterschool program. We are thrilled to welcome these folks to Poly, either as newcomers or as familiar faces in new places.

We have also been putting together a plan for curriculum review. Our main focus during faculty meeting time will be on writing, though we will discuss all subjects as we do every year. In the middle of the spring, the faculty began to consider a better-delineated set of expectations for behavior for the children. We have decided to focus on the theme of "respect" this year. We will work as a community to define what that means and what can happen when we don't treat ourselves and each other with respect. We feel this will be beneficial for all of our students. Of course, learning about respect will also provide a stepping-stone for the character education that will continue as your children progress to our Dyker Heights campus for Middle and Upper Schools.

This is just a partial list of what we have done. You will hear more about what we've completed, and what we have in store for the students and you, in the next few weeks. Despite all this work, the Lower School has been very quiet this summer. We are all excited to have the students—and you—back here soon!

Cheers,

Larry Donovan
Head of Lower School