

Dear Preschool and Lower School families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year at Episcopal Day School as we begin our 78th year of partnership with the families in the CSRA. Over the past several weeks, I have developed tremendous respect for this community and have been deeply moved by your kindness and care, especially as we continue to hold Gwen Snead and her family in our hearts and prayers. I enjoyed meeting those of you who attended the grade level parent sessions this summer and look forward to getting to know all of the families in our community. In preparation for the school year, let us remember that we are blessed by the strength of the EDS community and that when we join together in spirit we truly exemplify our theme for the year, “new spirit and one heart” (Ezekiel 36).

Communication

Our entire team is committed to this renewed spirit and has thoughtfully considered ways to improve communication and connection with families. We want to provide timely information in a way that makes it easy for you to know what is happening with your child, in their classroom, and in the EDS community. In that spirit, we will provide several levels of streamlined and standardized communications so that you have an easier time finding the information that you need to support your child(ren) and their success. Please be sure to review all of the information on the [Back to School](#) link on our website.

Your child’s classroom teacher is your first point of contact when it comes to classroom communication and events. Grade-specific activities, as well as units of study, will be shared regularly through classroom newsletters and SeeSaw. Teachers will also use SeeSaw to share student work. If you are unfamiliar with SeeSaw, your child’s teacher will gladly provide you with the information you need to quickly become familiar with this tool.

Academics and Student Support

Math

We are already off to a wonderful start in PK-6 with the [Singapore Math](#) initiative. I am grateful for the growth mindset of our faculty for embracing this curricular change with positivity, professionalism, and enthusiasm. Faculty members will engage in targeted training sessions before school begins as well as ongoing training and support throughout the school year to deliver an optimal learning experience for all students. This will allow us to provide grade-appropriate instruction and support for students which will allow them to develop a deeper understanding of math concepts as well as confidence in their critical thinking skills.

Language Arts

We will also be carefully reviewing our English Language Arts curriculum to ensure that all reading, writing, speaking, and listening instruction is research-based and differentiated to support all learners. Skill-based learning in these areas is critical and we will focus our efforts on practices that build student engagement and knowledge in vocabulary, literature, history, geography, and the arts.

Flowing Wells Campus

We will continue our initiative to integrate Flowing Wells Campus into teaching and learning at each grade level, with developmentally appropriate experiential learning opportunities for students. Our work at Flowing Wells will include powerful routines that foster a foundation of exploration, discovery, and wonder in nature studies that include all disciplines. In addition, thematic-based learning specific to each grade level in preschool and lower school will foster the habit of critical thinking and building character values essential to problem-solving. We look forward to leveraging our access to an 8.5-acre forest grove adjoining our larger 30-acre Flowing Wells Campus to provide meaningful learning experiences and a beautiful space for students to explore, wonder, study, and play.

Student Support

We are dedicated to providing support to our students both academically and emotionally. With that in mind, our learning specialist, Gilchrist Phillips, will have a more expansive role in serving students by performing foundational skill screenings and providing academic support both in and out of the classroom. In addition, we are thrilled to welcome Alyssa Johnson as our school counselor. Alyssa will work in partnership with teachers and parents to provide social and emotional support for our students so that all are cared for and well served. David Perkinson (Head of School) will share more details about these new and expanded roles as well as other staffing in an email early next week.

Expectations for Success

As we begin a brand new year full of renewed energy and expectations, we will model and teach respect for rules, classmates, teachers, and one another both inside and outside our school community. We will work together to elevate academic expectations striking a balance between challenge and support so that each child is provided with a developmentally appropriate learning environment in which to reach their full potential both academically and socially. With the added support of our learning specialist and school counselor, we do not doubt that our students will demonstrate positive behaviors and academic success.

Uniforms and Dress Code

School uniforms promote a sense of community and belonging. Just as an athlete or artist puts on their uniform for a game or performance, school uniforms and dress codes help children create a mindset for learning. Although our dress code was relaxed a bit over the past few years, this year's reset will support students as they readjust to a regular school environment. You will find specific information outlining school uniform and dress code requirements in the [Back to School](#) link on our website.

Back to School Day-August 9

In the spirit of celebration and the anticipation of an exciting school year, we will be welcoming families back to school in a new way. Your family will have the opportunity to return to campus, meet your child's teacher(s), and celebrate the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. Specific information about this event is available on the [Back to School](#) link on our website.

I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school as we embrace a new spirit and one heart!

In partnership,

Amy Tomblinson