



April 10, 2019

Dear Parents,

As April takes hold and the pace continues to quicken at this time of year, I am glad to have this opportunity to check in as we move in the direction of an increasingly full calendar. I always find it a bit daunting to look too far ahead with exciting events and culminating moments of all kinds scheduled on what is virtually a daily basis in the spring. Yet, we somehow find our way to doing it all well, as we share and draw a great deal with and from one another during this final stretch of the year. With what is now less than seven weeks to go until Prize Day and graduation for the class of 2019, we have a lot to do!

I want to begin by thanking so many of you who contributed to the Community Appreciation Lunch and raffle that welcomed us back to school following spring vacation. The food was amazing and the incredibly generous prizes made available to all of us mean a great deal on a number of levels. I know that many of my fellow employees are very much looking forward to enjoying what has been shared with them. Thank you.

By the end of the day today, we will have heard from all our admitted students who have been revisiting and thinking about whether to enroll at Brooks. Our revisit days on Tuesday and Friday of last week welcomed more than 150 students and their families back to campus for one final look. It was fun to share the school with all of them over the course of both days. While our guests certainly gleaned a lot from visiting classes, school meeting, and hearing from students and faculty members sitting on panels of different types, there is no question that these days would fall well short of what we need them to be without the level of parent involvement we are so fortunate to have. Many thanks to all of you who spent some time on campus last week welcoming families to Brooks and sharing your own views and experiences with them. We are looking forward to adding some terrific students to the school in 2019-2020.

Over the first half of this week, I have been on the move from New York to Washington, D.C., visiting with alumni and alumnae, and enjoying a school reception in Washington, D.C., last night. We always have a nice group at this event and the nation's capital is a lovely place to be in the spring! I will be back on campus tonight and do not have much more travel in store over the balance of the school year.

Tomorrow, we will hold our annual Kippy Liddle Chapel and continue the tradition of inviting what has usually been a younger alumna back to campus to speak. For those who do not know, Katherine "Kippy" Liddle started as a faculty member and crew coach at Brooks in 1982. She died while coaching her team on the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia during a spring preseason trip in 1984 when the launch she was in lost power and was swept over a waterfall. At about this time each spring, we turn our attention to Kippy and women's athletics with a message from someone who knows the school well. This year, Alexandra "Lexi" Caffrey '06, will return to campus to share some thoughts with us. Among many other things, Lexi was an outstanding student and member of the crew team while at Brooks, and

she did her undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania. Her father will celebrate his 50th Brooks School reunion this spring, and both of her sisters attended Brooks, as well. I am certain her message and time with us will be memorable.

This coming weekend, I will join fellow School Year Abroad trustees for spring meetings. We are fortunate to be a member school with SYA, as it is known, and a number of our students have participated in programs in France, Spain, Italy, and China, through the years. Aside from enjoying the privilege of contributing in a small way to SYA's thinking about how to improve and deepen its program, I learn a tremendous amount from participating in strategic conversations about another school's challenges and opportunities. When these meetings wrap up on Sunday, I will return to school with a lot in mind that I hope will add to our own strategic thinking in helpful ways.

In the coming week, Kim and I are looking forward to spending time with some of you who are part of our Latino community at a dinner at Café Azteca in Lawrence, Mass., on Monday evening. To have a chance to catch up and enjoy some wonderful food together will be great fun. On Wednesday of next week, we will be excited to welcome many of you to campus for our annual Cum Laude Induction ceremony beginning at 10:40 a.m. in Ashburn Chapel. This annual spring event celebrates academic excellence and inducts our top scholars into this society full of impressive and highly accomplished students. We will host a luncheon in the Frick Dining Hall for inductees, their families, and the faculty immediately following the service. I will look forward to seeing a number of you there and to celebrating this accomplishment with you.

At the end of next week, we will hold [Grandparents and Special Friends Day](#) on Saturday, April 20, beginning in the morning and running through afternoon games and activities. If we can help any of you with logistics involved in allowing your parents and/or close family friends to attend some classes and have a tour of our campus and Center for the Arts, please let us know. This is always a really nice day and opportunity for us to share the school and all the impressive work our students and your children do with family members who care deeply about them. Our fingers are crossed for some nice spring weather!

After games and afternoon activities wrap up that day, we will head into Easter weekend and a scheduled holiday on Monday, April 22. This will be our final scheduled holiday before the end of the school year and should give all of us a short break to be with family and friends as we gear up for what is always a sprint to the end of the year. We shall see if a Head of School holiday might somehow fit into the equation at some opportune moment during this sprint. Stay tuned.

Our spring trustee meetings will take place on Friday, April 26, and Saturday, April 27, and this will allow for another occasion to [celebrate our new Center for the Arts](#) with so many who helped turn the notion of this facility into a reality. We have some fun events scheduled for Friday evening with alumni and alumnae getting involved and sharing their talents. Beyond this Friday evening celebration, we will also be spending time engaged in a range of strategic thinking about near-, medium-, and long-term campus priorities, as we identify projects we would like to take on this summer and in the subsequent few years. A piece of this work will center on looking at the value of engaging in a marketing and identity study with a consultant scheduled to spend some time with us. This work should dovetail nicely with the beginning of work we will be doing later this spring, summer, and throughout 2019-2020 on a self-study required of us by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) as part of our reaccreditation process. This will eventually involve surveying all school constituencies in the coming year, and I will look forward to sharing more about this important process with all of you as it takes shape.

I hope that we will have a lot of time and opportunity to spend with many of you on campus this spring, and particularly with those of you who are closing in on graduation for your child in the class of 2019. To do all we can to ensure these final weeks at Brooks are full and fun

for this group that has done so much during their years here is a primary goal. I will look forward to being in touch again at the end of the month, and will be glad to hear from you if you have any questions or concerns you would like to discuss with me. Have a great April!

Best,

John R. Packard
Head of School

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