



June 21, 2017

Dear Parents,

It is always true that time begins to fly once summer takes hold, and we can hardly believe that four weeks have passed since graduation weekend and final exams. I certainly want to take this opportunity to look back at this year's Lawn Ceremony and Prize Day, along with some of what all of us at school have been up to since the beginning of summer vacation. In addition, I want all of you to know that the campus has been bustling with construction activity of various kinds that have us excited about the progress we are making with the school's physical plant. We have remained very busy through this month of June.

I would like to start with the Class of 2017 and the wonderful weekend we enjoyed with the group and so many family members and friends who attended. There is always so much to celebrate when reflecting on the combined contribution of a graduating class, and this year's 103 recently minted Brooks School alums were no exception. While noting a wide range of achievements throughout the weekend is always a lot of fun, I find myself drawn to the following when thinking about the highlights:

- During Lawn Ceremony, we were incredibly privileged to hear three members of the Class of 2017 reflect on different aspects of their Brooks experience. [Gio Vargas](#) spoke of the importance of the arts during his years and emphasized that all of us are artists. [Gabi Hillner](#) gave a fantastic talk about the power of athletics, coaches, teammates, and experiences on fields and rinks that will stay with her for the rest of her life. [Kyle Helfrich](#) celebrated the academic strength of the school and the many teachers and peers who are so eager to offer help, which is made that much easier when the recipient of the help is someone of Kyle's work ethic and character.
- [Jack Yang's Prize Day address](#) as the Class of 2017 speaker was truly extraordinary. As much as any area of growth, we hope that our students will come to know themselves and their strengths well while at Brooks. We hope they will become better versions of themselves. Jack's talk revealed an incredible journey of discovery and growth and profound contribution to the school along the way. He has certainly become a far better version of himself.
- Prior to Lawn Ceremony, we had a lovely dedication of the remembrance garden that was built with gifts given to the Anna Trustey Memorial Fund. Along with Kris Trustey P'13, P'16, P'19, Caroline Trustey '13, and Claire Trustey '19, we had about 100 in attendance. It was nice to enjoy the space in full bloom with our thoughts on Anna and all Brooks School students who died young. This will be a special space at our school for years to come.

- Finally, the highlight of any Prize Day for me is the privilege I enjoyed of bestowing the real prize of the day, a Brooks School diploma, to all 103 members of the Class of 2017. I am still working on what to do with all the matchbox cars the class left with me!

Once exams and some SAT testing wrapped up during the week that followed Prize Day, we moved into faculty meetings. By now, you all have final academic reports, and I hope the outcomes have provided your daughters and sons with both a sense of accomplishment and some helpful food for thought moving forward. We welcomed the board of trustees to campus for our June meetings just two days after finishing with the faculty, and spent much of our time noting the progress on all dimensions that has been made on the Center for the Arts. If you have been following the live camera looking at the work site, you will immediately see that the auditorium and all of the spaces that housed our theater, visual art, and music program have been razed to the ground! While it will take much longer to build the new building than it took to eliminate the old buildings, we have felt a tangible sense of accomplishment through these weeks. We also are pleased to report that the expansion and total renovation of the student center is well underway. This will dramatically improve both the form and function of a space that we are confident will draw even more students to it when school begins in the fall. Finally, we enjoyed the 19-acre parcel of land and home the school purchased two weeks ago at 1116 Great Pond Road, which is adjacent to our campus. While we will use the home in the near-term for faculty housing, we will begin to do some medium- and long-term thinking about how best to incorporate this beautiful piece of land into the campus. In sum, we had a full two days of meetings!

As we move more fully into the summer, we will be in touch with information pertinent to the coming year. While this always includes forms and agreements of many sorts, I would highlight a couple of areas at this time:

- I noted in my last letter that we will be revising the school's dress code in 2017-2018. We will have those revisions fully vetted by the early part of July and intend to share that information with new and returning students and parents alike at that time. As I noted in late May, this next iteration of the dress code will hope to address both the widespread frustration we feel with the current approach, along with the range of interests and opinions many have shared regarding what we wear to school.
- I know that your daughters and sons have already been made aware of the summer's all-school read, *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. We hope you will join us in reading the book over these summer months, and then participate in our consideration of the book during the school year. Our English department chair, Dean Charpentier, did a terrific job previewing the book for all of us before the year ended, and I know there will be a number of opportunities for group discussion of Ishiguro's work once school begins in the fall.

Before closing, I do want to make one final pitch on behalf of the current year's Brooks Fund. We are deeply appreciative of the support we have received to date from parents, and we are working hard to meet our goal for the fiscal year. All gifts made by midnight on June 30 will make an important difference. The combination of a successful Brooks Fund and sound stewardship of resources allows us to be the school we aim to be. Again, thank you for all of your support.

Finally, I want to wish those of you who are parents of members of the Class of 2017 the very best moving forward. While some of you will stay with us with a younger daughter or son still at Brooks, the majority of you will be leaving, and this is my final letter of the

year. I cannot thank you enough for all that you have done to support the school and the experience your kids have had here through these years. Take good care and we will certainly hope to keep in touch.

For those who are returning for another year, I will look forward to being in touch with you and all of our new parents at some point in mid-July. Until then, have a great beginning to the summer.

Best,

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Head of School

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