

August 2019

Dear Lower School Families:

July 1st marked the beginning of a new journey for my family. Escaping the hustle of our lives a few months ago has been a welcomed and smooth change, especially as I have taken the summer to joyously embrace shorter commutes. During one such commute—my early morning walk to school—I found myself thinking about the passage of time and I am in wonder of where I was around this time last year. Weeks before the start of the school year, I was learning about a well-known Providence school, trying to figure out how my teaching and learning philosophy aligned to theirs, all while wondering if my family could actually make a move a little farther north. Given that New York snow days were last on my list of city-living perks, it all seemed far fetched that I would eagerly begin a life of New England winters. However, time is a gift that allows for reflection, learning and building. In the time between my first interactions at the Farm and revisiting Hope Street, I found myself eager to join the community. I was enthralled by the sense of collegiality and palpable joy that emanated from students, teachers and families when they spoke of Wheeler. This summer, I continue to reflect on time again and what I would hope for the year as we move forward together:

Time to visit classrooms and see the impactful work teachers do with students daily.

Time to sit with students during lunch to learn about them as the enthusiastic members of lower school.

Time to learn more about the families that have entrusted us to guide, support and nurture their students.

Time to think with teachers about how we live our mission to learn our powers and be answerable for their use.

It has become clear with each conversation this summer that relationships are at the center of what makes Wheeler special. I am grateful to be working alongside teachers who are invested in building a strong rapport with students and families, a shared value that I have held at the forefront of my own practice as an educator. To that end, I invite and encourage you to visit with me so that I can hear about what makes Wheeler a special place for your family. I am excited to continue the good work of the lower school and look forward to a fruitful school year together.

Warmly,

Felicia M. Vines

Director of Lower School

Important Reminders

**Wednesday, August 28 6:00- 7:00 p.m.**

Orientation for Nursery through 1st grade families. Please go directly to your child's homeroom.

**Drop off**

School starts for all students promptly at 8:00 a.m. Please arrive on time.

Nursery through Kindergarten families may drop off children for early supervision beginning at 7:30 a.m.

Also beginning at 7:30 a.m., students in 1st through 5th grades may visit the Library or wait with me on the first floor until the bell rings at 7:55 a.m.

You may walk your children into class the first day of school. For the remainder of the year, 2nd through 5th grade students walk independently to their homerooms.

**Book purchases**

Students in Nursery through 3rd grade do not have to purchase books.

Grades 4 and 5 need to purchase all books for the year. Login to Wheeler's website to connect to our online vendor, Follett Virtual Bookstore. The link can be found under the 'Resources' tab. You may also access the bookstore through [www.bkstr.com](http://www.bkstr.com). If you have any questions regarding book orders, you can contact the Wheeler store.

**Communication**

Email correspondence is the best method of communication for your child's teachers. You can expect a reply within 24 hours during the school week. You can expect a response to emails received on weekends or during vacations on the day classes resume.

Last minute changes to dismissal plans should be reported to Pat Glendinning, our Lower School Assistant. Call the office directly at 401-528-2138.