

December 2017

Dear LILA Parents:



Season's greetings! As 2017 comes to a close, we want to reflect on some of the events that have helped shaped LILA this past year and to share with you some plans for 2018 and beyond.



Thanks to successful PTO fundraisers, the Lower School is installing artificial turf on the playground, to replace the well trampled muddy areas that are a result of 700 pairs of feet scrambling across the space each day at recess.

The fall Boosterthon fundraiser also raised money for student microwaves and a vending machine at the Upper

School, which will be installed over break! Despite this success, many unmet needs remain. We were fortunate to receive a \$100,000 grant and an additional \$75,000 challenge grant from a family foundation this year. This means if we can raise \$75,000 or more, the foundation will match those earnings, dollar for dollar, with the stipulation that the funds be used to create outdoor classrooms and similar items that promote healthy activity and life balance for students at both campuses. We are well on our way to reaching the financial goal and have started the process of comparing and evaluating outdoor classroom designs for each campus. Some sample ideas:



On a related note, LILA has once again been awarded a State Health Incentive Plan (SHIP) grant, providing some funds to projects designed to encourage students and staff to make better food and activity choices to get and/or stay fit.

At Upper School, students have presented their end-of-semester music concerts. Many students are also preparing for dance and theater

performances in January. Sports and activities are going strong as well. Athletics and Activities Director Jenni Muras is developing a lettering system for all sports, activities, and academics, so look for high school students to be sporting their LILA letter jackets later this school year.

Sixteen LILA high school students participated in an exchange with students from CASVI, an IB school in the suburbs of Madrid, this fall. First, students from CASVI spent six weeks attending classes and living with their host siblings in Minnesota, followed by the whole crew of CASVI and LILA students heading over to Madrid for six weeks in October and November. It was an amazing opportunity for these students, as well as for their classmates and families, and we hope to offer the program year after year for Spanish immersion students. We're also in development of a parallel program for the Chinese immersion students.



Teachers and students in grades 6 - 10 are looking forward to an IB assessment team visit in late February. With that visit, we hope to be named an authorized IB Middle Years Program (MYP) by the end of the school year. The IB Diploma Program (DP) is on schedule, one year behind the MYP authorization. We had our assigned IB consultant visit in October and received excellent feedback. The consultant was genuinely impressed with the knowledge of and support for IB that the staff, students, and parents demonstrated to him. We're excited that this well-respected and internationally minded two-year program will be available to all students currently in grade 9 or younger by the time they get to grades 11 and 12.

For an introduction to the IBDP from CollegeVine, a website that helps students select and get into the right fit college, [click here](#).



The current Upper School building (above) was originally designed to house about 300 students in grades 4 - 6. Before it opened, those plans were changed when the LILA school board voted

