

Dear DCD Families,

I hope you all are enjoying the slightly slower pace of summer. My family and I have been hunting trolls (art installations by [Thomas Dambo](#),) strawberry picking, and exploring all the best playgrounds in Massachusetts.

I write to you this summer with a few reminders and key dates. First, I wanted to reiterate what Diversity, Equity and Inclusion means at DCD, as these three words apply to every member of our community. Diversity means difference, and acknowledging the differences between people in our community. Equity is ensuring everyone has fair access to opportunities on campus, and Inclusion refers to that feeling of bringing one's whole self to campus.

Next year, we have two program changes that will not only help us embrace our motto "Learning Is a Way of Life" but will also continue fostering the sense of inclusion we want all children and families to feel at DCD. First, Culture Club will remain in its current structure, as an after-school offering once a month from 3:00-4:30 for students in grades 1-5. Culture Club has, historically, been an affinity space for students of color where students learn about different heritage months, holidays, and cultures. Next year, we are piloting a change in Culture Club, and will welcome any students in grades 1-5 to sign up on a monthly basis, first come, first serve. The learning that takes place in Culture Club is learning that all DCD students should have access to.

We also recognize the continued need for affinity spaces on our campus, and will also be piloting a students of color affinity space in the lower school; one space will be for grades K-2, the other will be for grades 3-5, and we will likely meet for lunch and occasional breakfasts throughout the year. These spaces will continue to support students of color in their time at DCD, and mirror the structure in our middle school.

A second program change we are so excited about is the intentional integration of SEL into our lower school and middle school. This past year, we reviewed our current SEL offerings, and had a visiting team come to campus to observe classes, look through survey data, and offer feedback. We were happy to host Emily Rabinowitz-Buchanan the Assistant Head of School for Student and Community Life and Director of Lower School at the Glen Urquhart School, Rachel Stevens who is the Responsive Classroom Coordinator & K-2 Reading Specialist at the Buckingham Browne & Nichols School, and Julie Perlow who is the Director of Student Life at Kingsley Montessori School. Based on their thoughtful feedback, lower school students (Pre-K to 5) will have one common SEL block every other week and middle school students (6-8) will also have a wellness block every other week to discuss a variety of topics including SEL. We are excited to pilot this program to support the social and emotional needs of our students on campus.

Finally, I want to invite DCD families to two events, so please save the date for the following:

Our [welcome back BBQ](#) for LGBTQ+ Families and Families of color will be on Friday, September 5th, 2025! Please save the date if you are planning to attend, and click the link to RSVP.

Our MLK Day of Service and Assembly, featuring *At the Table with Dr. King* will be on Friday, January 15th.

For all DCD adults, including parents and caregivers, our CommUNITY evening will be on Thursday, April 30th! More information about our featured speaker will be forthcoming, but please save the date.

As always, my door (physical and virtual) is open and I look forward to our work together for the 2025-2026 academic year!

All the best,
Ivy Alphonse-Crean