



SCOTTSDALE PREPARATORY ACADEMY

A Great Hearts Academy

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Dear Scottsdale Prep High School Families,

On September 14, after the seniors were given their Blazer and charged with being leaders of the Academy, I had the privilege of walking them down to the Ice Den for an hour of broomball. It was a privilege not only to spend some time away from school with them, but also to see them as their unguarded selves. With a ferocity I have not seen before did they chase that ball. With an intensity of desire did they shoot it. And with civilized but unrestrained yawps did they celebrate their goals. It was wonderful.

Additionally, and only after reflection, was it wonderful to see them fall. The ice has a way of bringing to light the struggles of balance. I could see one young man fearlessly chase towards a ball, his eyes focused entirely on it though he knew he was being pursued. Then, as one foot lost its grip, his eyes turned in all directions and the ferocity of the game changed into an embarrassed expectation of defeat. He fell.

And then he got up. Everyone got back up. The falls were wonderful to watch, because I saw each and every student get back up, often with the help of their friends. Though for a moment they competed, in the instance of a fall, they helped each other back up.

The high school experience can be slippery. The balancing of life, academics, clubs, friends, family, and all other sorts of obligations is remarkably difficult. The weight on the shoulders of our students is significant, and the footing is not always solid. Yet the friendships and relationships built here at school are always directed towards helping people get back up. Every teacher here at Scottsdale Prep knows that students will fall. Every teacher here at Scottsdale Prep is ready to help them back up.



As we focus on habits of virtue this year throughout the Academy, the idea of getting back up is incredibly important. Habits, especially the most important ones, take a long time to develop, and even with dedication we all fall short. May we all work together in pulling each other back up.

If there is any way that I can help your students “get back up” this year, would you please let me know? Periodically, throughout the year, I will be sending out short updates about the high school experience. This is not meant to be an update on upcoming events, but a general reflection on the high school experience in light of our theme of habituating virtues for the sake of our community. Thank you for your support of Scottsdale Preparatory and for entrusting you child’s education to us.

Best,

Brett Gilfillan, High School Assistant Headmaster