



Dear FA Families,

I wanted to write this morning in our first 2022-2023 Sunday email to update you on our campus *Gateway Capital Campaign* construction projects. All of these campus improvements have been made possible through the generosity of donors who support the school's mission and who are eager to help the school continue to flourish through healthy growth as we strive every day to enhance every student's FA experience. We have not used tuition revenue for any of these campus investments.

As we approach the end of most of these construction projects, the devil is in the details; and getting those details right the first time around takes a bit of time. Not surprisingly, the majority of the areas that have required so many hours and so much attention are subterranean, but many of those are the essential systems that need to function without fail throughout the years. Hopefully, the time invested will be well worth it as we get into full operations.

As we anticipated all along, the Lower School extension is finished and, as the result of Mrs. Pruitt and all of the Lower School teachers' efforts, will be completely ready for children and learning on day one. That extension also houses an Upper School classroom (for one year) and the Flanagan Counseling Center (Rachael Lee's office). We are very excited to unveil the renovated and expanded Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms, as well as the new Piazza Pre-K Courtyard, an outdoor learning and play space. An unfinished underground infrastructure system related to the adjacent cafeteria requires us to cordon off the northern strip of that play space with construction fencing for a few days. Despite that yet unaddressed challenge, what is available on the first day of school in the Piazza Pre-K Courtyard is stunning and has all come together even exceeding our own expectations.

The pedestrian walkways and landscaped areas on the west side of the campus adjacent to the Sea Island Green and connecting Corn Hall to the rest of the campus are complete. Students attending events in Hamilton Hall and the Berte Bistro on Monday and Tuesday should use the West Campus Parking Lot to access these venues.

The new Hodnett Plaza, which sits between the Sea Island Green and the new Berte Bistro, is finished except for a fifteen-foot high, four-sided street clock that will be the centerpiece of this wonderful new pedestrian artery and gathering spot. The clock is being fabricated and soon on the way. The Hodnett Plaza and its clock are named in memory of Brian Kelly Hodnett, who tragically passed away as a Frederica student in 1972. He was a member of the FA Class of 1976 and his family has remained deeply involved with the school over the past five decades.

The Berte Bistro is complete. That covered space between the gym and Hamilton Hall has a seating capacity of almost one hundred students, and with the lighting and air circulation that we have embedded in the space, will be comfortable—rain or intense sun—throughout the year. We will turn our attention to the renovation of Hamilton Hall in due course, but having terrific covered outdoor seating between the Berte Bistro and the new east campus Pavilion addresses the seating challenge at lunchtime.

The Pavilion and the adjacent landscaping and hardscaping projects (including the Windolf-Johnston Performance Plaza) will not be complete by August 10th. Truth is we will need to work diligently, be the beneficiary of an uninterrupted supply chain, and experience favorable weather to have that area completely ready by the first varsity home football game on September 2. Bryce Brock and her talented

creative team at The Vine have been patiently waiting to begin the hardscape and landscape work, and they will truly transform that space once they get started in the coming days.

The challenge of creating a pedestrian pathway to allow those who park in the East Campus Parking Lot to directly access the gym or Ralston Fine Arts Center will be an ongoing one this first month of school. Know that construction fencing (which will be in place on Wednesday morning) will identify the optimal pathway around construction and inform anyone who requires that route where to travel. When the Pavilion is finally completed, including the landscape and hardscape companion work, I am confident that all will agree that this is the signature piece of this entire construction effort. We appreciate Tim Mickelson and his team at Turnkey Lumber and Millwork for all they have done to make the Pavilion such a unique and special structure.

The East Campus Parking Lot will be finished by August 10th. Capacity has been expanded considerably and new routes/protocols for picking up for afterschool Middle School car line have been adjusted. Please be on the lookout for a traffic-specific communication from Sandi Channell before Wednesday. When using the parking lot on Monday and Tuesday, all pedestrian traffic should be limited to Benefield Hall, the south end of Fleming Hall, the Administration Building, and the west part of the campus. The usable pathways will become clearer on Wednesday once the construction fencing is in place.

Additionally, as I mentioned in a previous correspondence, several internal adjustments have been made as an interim solution until the new Upper School building has been completed, hopefully by the opening of school in the fall of 2023. Three Upper School classes, formerly housed in Fleming Hall, have been moved to the second floor of Ralston Fine Arts Center; the Music Suite, where Dr. Jordan Taylor and Dr. Tess Nielsen instruct students, has been moved to a cleverly crafted space in a portion of the gym lobby; and there is one Upper School classroom in the Lower School extension for this year.

All in all, I am very proud of the work done both last spring and this summer. Transforming a campus like ours in the narrow window of time that we have had to work within, requires hard work, thoughtful planning, creativity, compromise, and collaboration. It also requires flexibility on the part of many, many people, beginning last spring with last year's Pre-K and Kindergarten parents who graciously accepted the necessary move of those classrooms and the Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers who generously aided in that transition.

Heading a long list of other people who have made this construction process successful are: Brandon Derrick, who led a crew to construct the new Mitchell Press Box and made possible the creation of the Ralston classroom conversion and the new Music Suite; Charles Day, the architect who has worked with us from the very beginning on both big and small design moments; Dan Denney, the Construction Manager and Job Superintendent from Overholt Construction, who is largely responsible for orchestrating the sequence of events and securing the myriad subcontractors required in this process; and John Pope and Sandi Channell, who have worked these last seven months to ensure that the projects were funded and finished in a timely manner and executed as they were intended. Attention to detail and ensuring that a job has been completed as envisioned are but two of many of John and Sandi's strong suits, and never has their devotion to the school been more evident and valuable than in their management of this construction effort.

We all can't wait to host your children in a few days. Our teachers, coaches, and staff have returned, prepared and are ready to go, and the train is about to leave the station. All aboard!

Respectfully,

[Scott L. Hutchinson](#)  
Head of School