

October 29, 2019

Dear Upper School Families,

This morning as I visited with your children in the hallways, I was struck by two scenes, back-to-back, which delightfully represent the best of our school's character and culture. Two of our freshmen were waiting for class in the bustling hall, locked intently in discussion of some important matter. Their books were in their hands, and it was only seconds before class. In a flash, the two students stepped out of the hallway to rip a paper towel from the automatic dispenser nearby set to work sketching some geometrical proof, holding the paper towel against the wall and appealing to the same lines and angles to defend what seemed to be opposing arguments in a fever of excitement.

Down the other end of the hallway, full and buzzing with morning conversations, a seventh-grade student was being trailed by a swiftly advancing sophomore. By the time she reached him, the two were close enough for me to overhear their conversation. She had rushed the full length of the packed hallway in order to stop him and apologize for having stepped on his foot at the far end of the hall. She had tried to apologize to him at the far end but feared that he hadn't heard her amid all the jolly noise. In the course of the short conversation, they learned that they shared a House (Pericles!) together.

Your children are in the company of good young men and women, striving with the support of caring parents and dedicated teachers to make the best of themselves and those around them. These humble scenes are happening all over our building—these subtle ornaments and fruits of a beautiful culture in the making. I share them here because we so often focus on the “big happenings” on the calendar from one week to the next in the newsletter. For a change of pace, I thought to show off something “little” instead.

Thank you all for contributing your part to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Althage', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Althage
Headmaster, Upper School
Great Hearts Irving