



a note from the Head of School

January 18, 2019

Dear EDS Family,

Most of us have fond memories of childhood. Some memories are a bit vague while others are so vivid they seem like they happened just yesterday. One of my fondest memories of childhood is of the street lights high on the aluminum poles that lined the streets of my neighborhood. Not that I remember much what they looked like or how far apart they were, but more that I remember what they represented: an expectation.

When I was growing up in, my favorite thing to do was to be outside "playing." Football, skateboarding, whatever - as soon as I got home from school, I was outside. Until the street lights came on. Then I had to go home...fast. Because that was the expectation. Play whatever with whomever, but when Mom or Dad looked out the front window and saw street lights, they better see me coming. The few times I decided to stay a little longer, there were consequences. So, way more often than not, I made it home in time.

That expectation helped me accomplish more than just getting home on time. It helped me understand the importance of meeting other expectations. Expectations are better than rules because rules don't always make sense. Expectations say, "This is the way we do things around here." Our students need to be successful at meeting expectations. We expect being on time to class. We expect paying attention in class and not being disruptive. We expect our students to treat their teachers and others with politeness and respect. If we do all that, we don't have to worry about achievement - it takes care of itself.

Does every student meet every expectation every day? Of course not. That would be an "unrealistic" expectation! But one would be hard pressed to find a student body anywhere that equals ours in terms of meeting expectations, and consequently, achievement. Our students have much to be proud of, because they are achieving beyond their peers at other schools. With that achievement comes confidence. That confidence will carry over to the next stop on their educational journey.

Our success could not, of course, be accomplished without our parent community. Those are the most important expectations of all. Students growing up in a loving environment with clear expectations - and fair and consistent consequences - become adults who meet the expectations of their college professors, employers, or clients. It becomes a pattern of success.

Even now, several times a year, when I am lucky enough to see a street light flicker on at twilight, I think about those days back on Briarwood Street - and the importance of meeting expectations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Stephens". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Stephens
Head of School