



FRIENDS' CENTRAL SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

Our all-school Testimony exploration for 2017-2018 (each year we pick one of the “SPICES*”) is Peace.

As a child, I recall early lessons about the notion of peace as demonstrating the absence of conflict - particularly physical conflict (I remember the exhortation to “use your words” from several of my saintly Lower School teachers). That understanding is a good place to start for many, but Quakers often think of conflict as providing a matrix for spiritual growth. Addressing either internal or external conflict, in this sense, is a crucial aspect of the Peace testimony - and a dimension that FCS excels in teaching from the earliest grades through high school.

Since last Friday, I have been thinking about the notion of internal peace - the kind of serenity that comes with peace of mind and the kind of peace of mind that opens us to learning from one another, living together in community, and gaining the courage to create change in the world. It is both a cliché and a truth that change begins with individuals, and at Friends' Central, we believe in the courage and the power of our students and graduates to transform the world, peacefully.

I know why I have been thinking about internal peace, and I know exactly when this awareness began. This past Friday, Jordan Burnham addressed the Upper School community and shared his powerful story of fighting depression and finding recovery. He has been doing this important work all over the country for the last eight years. He's spoken in 32 different states and three different countries. His presentation was inspiring and educational and urged all of us to know that we are not alone. Jordan is indeed peacefully transforming the world, one room at a time, by sharing his story and inviting us, his audience, to assess our levels of self-care in a stressful world. He was simply excellent with our high school students.

This week, a current senior, Caroline Weaver, sent [a message](#) to Upper School parents about a student group she is starting, with support from our Dean of Students and school counselor, to ease the potential stress of fellow students with learning differences and social anxiety. Another senior, Noah Benton-Condif, is starting a club called Minding the Mind, which students will be invited join. Middle School students will continue the mindfulness training they began last year, and at our Lower School, our counselor is working on conflict resolution strategies with all of our students.

Parents, you too are included in this peace of mind building. Please stay tuned to *Just the FaCtS* for information about the film *Screenagers*, the concept of “mindfulness,” and an impressive set of parenting workshops. Each of these gatherings represents a chance to build community, and work toward peace of mind!

I hope to see you on campus!

Sincerely,

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

Craig N. Sellers
Head of School

*Simplicity
Peace
Integrity
Community
Equality
Stewardship