



Dear TCS families,

This year, as we all well know, has been a difficult one. In many ways, it feels like we have been collectively holding our breath since March. We have been waiting, and waiting, and waiting, for so many things. The end to the pandemic, real racial equity, safety from natural disasters. We yearn for a return to “normal,” to ideas and ways of being that feel familiar and comfortable.

This year’s presidential election has been unprecedented. Though familiar in its stump speeches, campaign rallies, and media advertisements, it has been deeply troubling in the level of social unrest and discord between the two parties. We watched, we debated, we worried, we voted, and then we waited some more. And today, something has finally happened.

This is the important part. What has happened is not about who won and who lost. It’s not about whether your candidate is on top. It is about democracy in action. For all the uncertainty and unrest in our country right now, at its core is our commitment to the democratic process and the unassailable human rights of the American people, whose voice has now been heard clearly.

The bedrock of our American identity is democracy, and the bedrock of democracy is work. And that is what we do here at The Country School. We work to improve ourselves, we work to better our community, we work through disappointments and disagreements, and we work toward a better future.

Today, something finally happened. Our country has taken the first step in the work of the next four years. As we continue to navigate the uncertainties of this year, let us remember that, and know that we are the ones who make things happen, together, and that work is the key to positive change. That’s the Country School way.

We must also admit that work is hard, especially when the battle feels uphill. This is when we really dig in, for our children and their future children, to model what democracy means. To our young people, we are the models for how to be in the world, and that may be our most important role, to demonstrate grace and compassion, patience and collaboration, compromise and commitment to our collective humanity in the face of strife and turmoil.

There is a lot to talk about today, and I have found [this article](#) to be an excellent guide for leading that conversation well. It begins with these words from Terry Tempest Williams: “The human heart is the first home of democracy. It is where we embrace our questions. Can we be equitable? Can we be generous? Can we listen with our whole beings, not just our minds, and offer our attention rather than our opinions? And do we have enough resolve in our hearts to act courageously, relentlessly, without giving up—ever—trusting our fellow citizens to join with us in our determined pursuit of a living democracy?”

Thank you for being part of this great work, and for courageously bringing your whole being to the effort.

In community,

Holly Novick
Head of School

