



Hello TCS Family,

I'm writing once again in a moment of grief as we all try to come to terms with last night's shooting at the Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park, which has brought such pain, such trauma to the Asian community and in the midst of the Lunar New Year, meant to celebrate family connection, health, and new beginnings. This is our instinct, to "come to terms" with something inexplicable and all too frequent: the taking of innocent lives. This is impossible, because there is no explanation, no logic, to justify it.

Our desire to do so, however, is logical. As rational and compassionate human beings, we want to understand each other, even in our pain. If we understand why something like this has happened, perhaps we can learn how to stop it from ever happening again. What has repeatedly been made clear, however, is that it will likely happen again, and for no reason. The Los Angeles Times says that the Monterey shooting is "one of California's worst in recent memory," and this phrase says several things: that the shooting is horrific on a grand scale, that such things happen with a measurable frequency in California, and the fact that it is a matter of "recent memory" implies a role in a much longer scale of time. In the face of this volume of time, geography, and cruelty, it would be all too easy to despair.

So what do we do in these moments? How do we find the strength to move forward in the face of yet more senseless tragedy? We become the light in the darkness. We hold one another tight and celebrate the beauty of our multifaceted community. We recognize what we share in common and what makes each of us gloriously unique. We pay kindness forward with radical generosity. We work.

The Country School will never shy away from asking big questions, the ones without easy answers. We stand against senseless violence of all kinds, and we will combat it with community, curiosity, and caretaking. We stand with our AAPI friends and neighbors, especially those within our TCS family. It is easier to share the burden of pain together, and together we will find ways to put love back into the world.

In gratitude for all of you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.