



August 22, 2017

Dear Bay Farm Community,

Every new school year is full of promise and potential. This year, as we wave goodbye to summer at Bay Farm, the air is full of purpose and excitement. This week, our faculty and staff return for two weeks of preparation; setting the environment up just right to receive our students.

Joy - Purpose - Compassion

Three very important terms in the Bay Farm Mission. Combined, they make up the spirit of our school. It is this spirit that attracted me to Bay Farm from the start, and I am certain it played a role in your decision to enroll your children at our school. All three are plainly visible in the staff, students, and parents I meet every day.

Compassion, like sympathy and empathy is rooted in understanding the experience of others. Compassion is all about how we respond to other peoples' struggles and suffering. A compassionate person responds with warmth and care. Unlike sympathy and empathy, compassion is framed by the desire to act. Compassion is a quality that our world seems to sometimes have in short supply.

There is no doubt that our screens and airways are increasingly filled with reports and descriptions of people who decidedly lack compassion. The acts of violence and hatred that ring in our ears each day demonstrate that other people's compassion is not guaranteed. As an educator and school leader, I will not accept this as normal, and I will not permit anything other than compassion from our school community. It goes without saying, but racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, xenophobic, or sexist attitudes and behavior have no place in our society, community, or our school.

Given the current climate, the start of our school year is a vital time to reiterate that, here at Bay Farm Montessori Academy, we will continue to do everything in our power to develop young people who will go out into the world equipped with an understanding of difference, with compassion for all kinds of people, and with determination to change their communities for the better.

Navigating the steady flow of today's media is daunting for all of us. Please know that the staff at Bay Farm are here to help. We will be discussing many of these issues as a group. Please feel free to reach out to me or any member of our staff if you have questions or concerns. We are all thrilled to partner with you to ensure the bright future of our children. It's going to be a great year.

Sincerely,

Conrad
Head of School