



July 2017

Dear Bay Farm Community,

I am thrilled to be the new Head of Bay Farm Montessori Academy. Last fall, when I first visited Bay Farm's village-like campus, I felt a special feeling of warmth and welcome. This feeling grew with each classroom visit. The moment I stepped on campus, I was genially welcomed. I saw teachers proud of their work and their students' work. I observed happy, engaged children. I met with parents, administration, and board members who hold the school in high regard and take ownership of its well-being. After my initial interactions with the school, I knew that Bay Farm was the place for me and my family. It is clear that this is an exceptional environment where children thrive. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the Bay Farm community.

Earlier this month, my wife Kristen, our dog Moxie, and I made the 2,000 mile move from Austin, Texas. We are beginning to settle in to beautiful New England. Duxbury makes Austin feel like a distant country. We are trading scorching 100 degree heat, thorny cacti, creepy armadillos, and prehistoric scorpions for life at Bay Farm. The three of us couldn't be more excited. Everyone we meet is kind and welcoming. Moxie loves the campus and listening intently to all of the sounds coming from the Toddler House. She has even had occasion to meet a few of our summer camp toddlers, who are all very enthused to have a dog around.

Promptly after arriving at Bay Farm, I flew off for a week-long, intensive institute for Heads of Independent Schools. One of the sessions I attended spoke at length on schools and innovation. The premise of the talk was that schools need to innovate to stay relevant. The speaker emphasized the need for schools to shift to student-centered, experiential-based learning. There were a few other Montessori heads in attendance, and we chuckled knowing that Montessori schools have been living this for over 100 years.

I am now back on campus settling into my daily work, meeting with staff members, board members, parents, and learning as much as I can about the history and culture of the school. Bay Farm's mission and philosophy speak to my beliefs about how children best develop and grow. I value our school's commitment to joy, purpose, and compassion as a foundation for our work. I can see that a dedication to the Montessori educational model clearly guides Bay Farm, helping to make it a stimulating instructional experience for all children. Also important to me is Bay Farm's history, particularly as the school approaches our 45th anniversary next year. I look forward to honoring our history while continuing to grow our community.

I am excited to dive in and begin working closely with the outstanding faculty, staff, trustees, students, and families in supporting the growth of our children. My wife, Kristen, and I feel lucky to become a Bay Farm family and are eager to get to know everyone. Please don't hesitate to stop in the office and introduce yourself. I am also always available by phone and email. Have a peaceful, relaxing summer. It's going to be a great year.

Conrad Wildsmith  
Head of School