

THE BROWNING SCHOOL



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John M. Botti
Head of School

Dear Browning Friends,

If we are lucky, summer is a time of fun and family, of rest and rejuvenation, and I had hoped to be greeting you with a letter as sunny as a bright July day. As excited as I am to be entering our wonderful community, and as much hope as I have for the coming school year, my prevailing mood today is one of deep sadness and frustration. This is not the way I would wish to greet you all, but I cannot escape my sense that we must consider the news of recent days with profound seriousness.

Like so many of us, I have been disheartened and frightened and angered by the violence of the past month—and by the hate, division and lack of empathy that encourages this violence. From Orlando to Baton Rouge, from Minnesota to Texas, inside our borders and across the globe, we have been witness to tragedy and suffering that we would like to be unimaginable, yet which has become all too frequent. For me, it brings a grief and a weariness that sometimes verges on despair, and perhaps you feel the same. Where can hope be found in our times?

There are no easy responses to such a question, but all the same, I cannot imagine failing to search for answers. There is so much these days that is uncertain; what is certain, however, is that I want our school to be active in the struggle for a world more just, a world more loving, for all of us. As a community, we recognize that these are hard days, that many of our number may hurt, and that this hurt cannot be wished away. But I believe that we can find meaning in wrestling with difficult questions, in honestly seeking the perspective of others, and in listening with openness and care.

Our mission calls us to rise to the challenges which emerge from our nation's history, and which now live in our present. A Browning gentleman is sensitive, respectful and responsible to others, and I cannot think of a time when our friends and fellow citizens are more in need of what our community values. We cannot change our world in one grand gesture, but with your commitment to living and modeling our mission, our school can play a role in making our times more peaceful, understanding and compassionate.

Thank you,

John M. Botti