

James Newman, Ph.D., Head of School

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Dear Academy Families and Friends,

"If we teach today as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow." So wrote John Dewey, the famous American educational reformer of the 1900s. Preparing our students for the unique challenges of the 21st century was foremost on our minds when 11 Academy science and technology teachers and four administrators gathered on Wednesday for the initial meeting of our school's "Science Summit."

As part of the Academy's commitment to continuously review our instruction and curriculum, our faculty commonly meet to discuss (and debate!) how and what we teach. Our 14.5 days of school-wide professional development are dedicated to this all-important activity. For example, as a result of our two-week in-service last August, we prepared grade-level lists of 21st-century learning competencies.

The goal of Wednesday's Science Summit was to reflect on the portions of our five-year strategic plan, [Challenge 2013](#), that address our integrated science/technology education and to think as broadly as possible about its role in preparing our students for tomorrow. We continue to focus on making our science/technology instruction increasingly more "hands-on," applied, environmentally-based, and student-driven. John Dewey would have been pleased with our brainstorming.

We plan to hone Wednesday's thoughts — and I expect many more thoughts to come — into a well-articulated grant proposal to the Edward E. Ford Foundation, to be submitted during the coming 2012-13 academic year. In 1984 and 2007, the Academy received \$50,000 and \$100,000 respectively from the Foundation. Now, our focus is on one of the Foundation's mega-grants of \$250,000. We want to use an E. E. Ford grant to turn today's dreams of our science and technology teachers into a future reality — and create engaging and exciting new opportunities for your children to experience the joy of practicing science experimentation and research.

This week's Science Summit was the first step of a lengthy process. If you have ideas about science education at the Academy, please let me know. I'd certainly enjoy speaking with you about them.

Please mark your calendars for Wednesday evening, January 25, to participate in our annual discussion of [Challenge 2013](#) and our progress within this strategic plan. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the Meeting Room (and I promise the discussion topics will include more than science education). I hope you can attend; that night we'll be invoking the spirit of John Dewey!

With warm regards,

Jim

Challenging our students in an environment that nurtures and inspires.