

New Family Dinner 2026

REMARKS FROM GREG O'MELIA, HEAD OF SCHOOL



BUCKLEY IS A SPECIAL PLACE. I believe this special connection and affection for Buckley is based on our core values of honor, truth, respect for others, teamwork, personal integrity, service, and the concept that Buckley is about every boy experiencing multiple disciplines and activities with his peers.

This creates a brotherhood where classmates help each other out. I see this in all areas of school life, whether it be conducting a science experiment, playing a football game, performing in a play, designing an art project, giving a speech, or sharing at family-style lunch.

From Beginners to our Academy year, our boys often have opportunities to express gratitude.

You might be surprised (or not) to hear that they most mention their parents (and their family—brothers and sisters, grandparents). They will mention such reasons as *driving me to an event; making me a special meal; helping me stay organized; taking care of me when I was sick.*

Their answers remind me of the words of author and school psychologist Michael Thompson:

What you will find, between the lines, almost invariably, if you listen well and listen hard, is that most of all what your child wants, right then and there, is you.

He wants a person who can play with him and not [always (my word)] be on his case, who can hear him without being too full of advice, who can explore with him without telling him where to go, who can offer guidance without minding if it is heeded right away.

Basically he wants a person, a connection.

In this disconnected world, that can be hard to come by. For these disconnected kids, all the fancy plans and all the fancy places and all the fancy tests return inevitably to the need for a human connection with a good person.

So much connection happens for our boys in the course of just a few months.

Although they are the youngest, our Beginners boys are radiating Buckley pride. They sit with enthusiasm in the front rows of Lower School assemblies and are active participants when called upon.

I love how they watch the older boys process into the auditorium and, of course, how excited they are to see someone they know, such as an older brother.

They are learning that conversations are about listening, taking turns, and making sure everyone feels included and heard. They are beginning to build these important skills, and with them a kind, thoughtful classroom community.

They are learning not only to take care of themselves and follow directions, but also how to work together as a team

and how their actions contribute to the well-being of the whole classroom.

The progress of all the boys, from Beginners to Class VIII and Academy, is a constant source of amazement. I meet almost every day with older boys, and their ability to listen, discuss ideas, and connect never fails to impress me.

They often talk to me about learning to set limits on technology. The world has changed dramatically. Our youngest children have more access to technology, and use has only increased.

As parents, you need to be very thoughtful about parameters. I had always recommended that there be no televisions in students' bedrooms, but now children can often be connected by phone, tablet, or computer to the internet everywhere in the house. How and when they use these devices are important decisions.

I would say that our high-achieving students (including our alumni in high school and college) tend to grow up in households that had relatively strong restrictions on screen time and what they watched, particularly when the boys were young. For instance, I firmly believe Beginners boys should not be watching PG-13 movies. Their brains are not developed enough to understand what they are watching.

As the boys move into higher grades, an increasing amount of their work outside of school involves a computer or tablet.

Even then, as they and I discuss, it is not always easy to drown out the disruptions, just as it isn't for us, as adults. They still need our help in learning how to balance the use of these important tools.

In closing, I would like to share highlights from a speech from Pete Upham, the former Executive Director of The Association of Boarding Schools, about the importance of our top schools to our country and to our world and what lies at the heart of a true education.

The best schools teach:

To stand for principles with conviction yet humility; to disagree with graciousness and deep respect; to communicate clearly in writing and in speech; to make arguments based on evidence; to empathize with those in despair; to discover in quiet friendship the marvel of another human being; to strive for the common good; to plumb the world's philosophy and poetry for the waters of life; to theorize and experiment; to master today's technologies and design tomorrow's; to explore the world's cultures and histories; to find peace in nature; to search for God; to imagine, invent and build.

May Buckley continue to be one of those best schools!

Floreat semper ludus Bucklianus!