Dear HRIMS Community,

Like many of you, I watched yesterday’s events in Washington with a mix of feelings: dismay, anger and fear.

The peaceful transition of power is the hallmark of our democracy. Yesterday's terrorism stands in direct opposition to the values of our nation and the mission of our school. As we entered into the new year with hope for our country, this has hurt many of us in many ways. I ask that you take care of yourself and others.

We have always aimed to prepare our students to seek truth, work toward justice, carry themselves with humility and patience, and exercise self-control in the face of disagreement or opposition. We will continue to do this.

In working through this, another unprecedented event in modern times, children and students will need our clear voices and resolute hearts. They are watching and listening closely — ready to learn about good sportsmanship and democracy, about the line between freedom of expression and violent crime. In the words of Dr. Christina Cipriano at Yale’s Center for Emotional Intelligence, “If there ever was a horrific teachable moment to lean into our nation’s history, it’s now.” Dialogue and questions are a natural and an important part of students’ development and are constructive when done with civility and respect.

Our children and students need to hear, see and know from all of us that:

* we will keep them safe
* we are here for each other
* we are resilient, and our country is resilient
* we have hope for the future — one that they can help build.

Teachers, I am grateful for your willingness and ability to walk with our students through even the most challenging circumstances. I know you will find age-appropriate, authentic ways to reinforce our values, help students learn from this chapter of American history, and let them express their feelings and aspirations.

Parents, we support you as you discuss this situation in the context of your own homes and values, and we count on you to communicate directly with teachers, if needed. We’re here to help.

Today and throughout the spring — as we navigate the democratic process, along with the national racial reckoning and the COVID-19 pandemic — we will need to find strength in each other and in our global, national, local and school communities.

We will remain focused on the health, safety and well-being of the children and our community. Thank you for partnering with us, tomorrow and always.

Sincerely,

Michelle D’Antonio

Responses from Families:

From: **Mary Flaherty** <flahertym444@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 7, 2021 at 6:11 PM
Subject: Re: Response to yesterday's events at the Capitol
To: Hampton Roads International Montessori School <hrims@hrimontessori.org>

Hey Michelle! Thanks for being on top of it.

Izzy came home today speaking so well of how Ms. Christian addressed the issue in class this morning.

I'm so grateful that HRIMS has helped Mike and me raise 2 smart, insightful and socially conscious kids.

2021 so far is a little 2020 hangover. 2 advil and a Bloody Mary and hopefully the fog will lift! 

- Mary

From: **Wolsh, Joe M.** <Joe.Wolsh@nscorp.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 7, 2021 at 9:33 PM
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Response to yesterday's events at the Capitol
To: Hampton Roads International Montessori School <hrims@hrimontessori.org>

Thank you for sending this out. This is one of just a few reasons we are so amazingly happy at HRIM. Keep up the great work!

Joe Wolsh

From: **Rebecca Duckett** <rebeccaandersonduckett@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Jan 8, 2021 at 10:02 AM
Subject: Re: Response to yesterday's events at the Capitol
To: Hampton Roads International Montessori School <hrims@hrimontessori.org>
Cc: Katie Q. Duckett <kqduckett@gmail.com>

Dear Michelle,

Thank you for addressing this and for not making excuses for the terrorists and their pathetic attempt at a coup earlier this week. This email was very much appreciated.

Respectfully,

Rebecca

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Rachel Bitecofer** <bitecoferrachel@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 7, 2021 at 2:38 PM
Subject: Re: Response to yesterday's events at the Capitol
To: Hampton Roads International Montessori School <hrims@hrimontessori.org>

This email makes me very, very happy. I want you to know that in case it has the opposite effect on anyone else.

Rachel

Rachel Bitecofer, Ph.D.
Subscribe to [*The Cycle-On Substack*](https://thecycle.substack.com/) where you'll also find my pod, *The Election Whisperer*

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RachelBitecofer (skype)

"Do not go gentle into that good night...

Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

-Dylan Thomas