Spring 2019

PINPOINTS

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEXINGTON SCHOOL



With Gratitude:

THE BALDECCHI YEARS



Thanks to Mr. Baldecchi, bow ties are a popular TLS fashion statement.

HEADLINES

I have so many wonderful memories of The Lexington School. I have memories of the interview process and the energy and enthusiasm I felt for this school. TLS clicked in my heart from the start. I remember our first Holiday Concert with Bella in my arms, Alex in Erin's belly, and Cade not yet a thought. I remember our last Holiday Concert and tears streaming down my cheek as the sound of sweet voices singing "One Candle" wafted through the gym. This year's eighth graders were born the year we arrived at TLS, and the eighth graders I first handed a diploma to that first Friday in June fifteen years ago are now knocking on the big 3-0.

There are so many milestones to remember over the years like moving into the Lower School Building, Celebrating the 50th Anniversary, starting The Learning Center, and breaking ground on the new Academic Center. While those milestones are significant, the truth is they aren't what I have reflected on the most these last couple of months. It's the community. It's the students and their parents. It's the faculty and administration. It's the board of trustees and the alumni. It's the trust we share – that we have earned over time. The beautiful work of education and leading a school community is that each day and each decision is different. There is no "playbook" with the right answers, and when there is no "right" answer, trust is essential. Humans make mistakes, especially humans who are growing into young adults. Making mistakes is the only way a person learns, grows, matures. Adults make mistakes, too – parents, teachers, Heads of School. If we trust one another, though, we allow room for imperfection and, paradoxically, that leads to a "perfect" education. Like the students who have graced these "halls of learning," I, too, have grown up as a person, as a father, as a friend, as a leader. The Lexington School is my home. An old African Proverb says, "It takes a village, to raise a child." The Lexington School has raised me; it's my village. I share this experience with the thousands of children who have gone to school here since 1959, and I will be forever grateful to every member of this community – this school – for the rest of my life.

The term Alma Mater can be translated as "nourishing mother," and the idea is your school nourishes you – feeds your intellect, your character, your soul, your humanity. How can someone ever say thank you for that? The good news is a mother doesn't need a thank you. She gives love unconditionally. Because of this, I have been "nourished" by The Lexington School, and I love her back unconditionally!

With gratitude for a job I love (past, present, and future),

Charles D. Baldecchi
Head of School

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The Lexington School
Pinpoints
FALL 2004
New Faces, New Places
2
"We want our students to graduate with a respect for others, self-motivation, critical reason, fairness, and confidence."

Chuck Baldecchi Has Taken TLS from Good to Great.

Chuck Baldecchi announced in May, 2018, that this academic year would be his last at The Lexington School. He has served our school and our community for 15 years, and it is difficult to say goodbye to our leader and friend. The next step in his career will be Head of School at Charlotte Latin School in North Carolina.

In the midst of change, there is constancy.

The cover story of Fall 2004 *Pinpoints* was "New Faces, New Places." In the headline quotation, Chuck Baldecchi, then new Head of School, said, "We want our students to graduate with a respect for others, self-motivation, critical reason, fairness, and confidence."

Fifteen years later, his well-considered statement still stands.

Ann Eames, former *Pinpoints* editor and English teacher, opened that 2004 cover story: *Charles Baldecchi had a vision for The Lexington School even before he interviewed with the Search committee. He dreamed of making this vision a reality "by knowing each student and inviting him or her to know the school community, my family, and me. I would make it a reality," he went on to say, "by leading the faculty to form such a community. I would make it a reality by inspiring the alumni and parents to endow this community for future generations of students."*

Chuck has done exactly that.

As The Lexington School family begins to say goodbye to the Baldecchi family – Chuck, Erin, Bella, Alex, and Cade – the community makes time for warm reflection, for the sharing of stories, and for the opportunity to say a collective, heartfelt thank you.

The constancy of Good to Great at The Lexington School remains, of course, with Una MacCarthy, longtime Assistant Head of School and Middle School Head, who will become the eighth Head of School on July 1, 2019. The unanimous choice of the search committee, Una has been a dedicated, respected, and beloved leader at TLS since 1996.

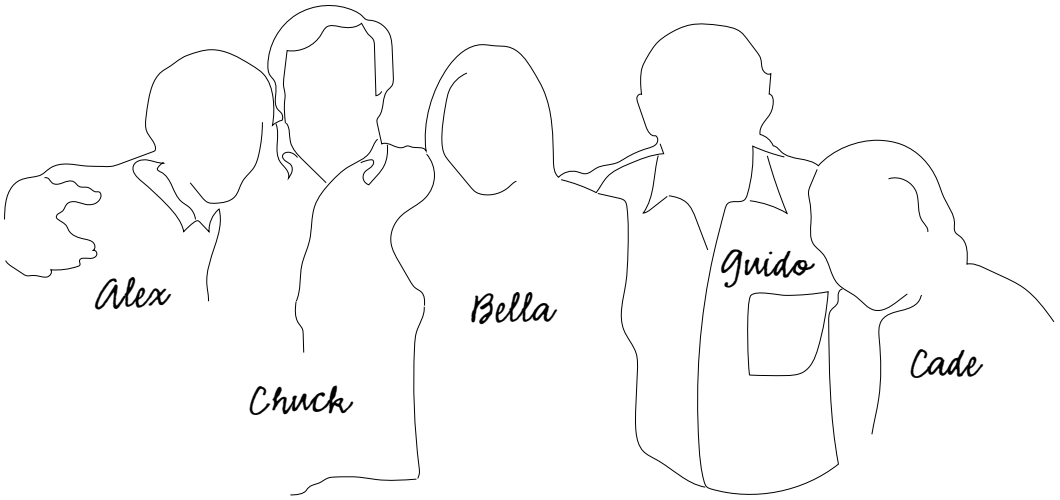
Chuck Baldecchi leaves The Lexington School in excellent hands.





With Gratitude:

THE BALDECCHI YEARS



la mia famiglia

By Guido Baldecchi, Father of Chuck Baldecchi

If there is one equation I like most, it is Baldecchi = Family. Charles grew up with three older siblings and a village of cousins. All were close, spent summers and holidays together at the family vacation home in Sherwood Forest on the Severn River in Maryland. Here, a summer camp of many generations where all youngsters could take part and excel, was the activity.



Above: The Baldecchi family, clockwise from front center; Mrs. Stu Baldecchi, Chuck, Jay, Mr. Guido Baldecchi, Danny, Pam

We spent the school year at the family home in Henderson, North Carolina, where I worked in the family textile business. All friends and family were welcome in our home there, and at one time or another, all came.

Life changed when Charles's mother died.

His siblings were away in North Carolina colleges. He was young and alone. There was no other option but to send him to boarding school. As it happened, later I would also leave Henderson.

Episcopal High School in Virginia had always been spoken of highly as a place of nurturing kindness, where the character of the boy was more important than his SAT score. Charles found a new family there, with a different environment, one that gently demanded discipline with honor and a passion to excel. With new boys, he was able to use the bonding skills that had developed naturally. His strong sense of compassion was encouraged with success in leadership.

Later, he completed four years at Denison University in Ohio. He then attended St. John's College in Annapolis, on the Severn River, close to the summer home. At St. John's, the curriculum was the 200 Great Books of western civilization. This was humanism. Where you learned "not the best answer, but the better questions."

His first teaching assignment was at the Asheville School in North Carolina. Here he met the lovely Erin Garden, who taught and lived in Asheville. Was it love at first sight? Well, the "better question" was asking Erin Garden to marry him. Maybe that became the transition from Charles to Chuck.

Charles's instinct for education took him to where he is now, The Lexington School, and that was a fine

fit for Erin and Chuck. If there was ever a team, they are it.

Three wonderful children, Bella, Alex, and Cade, were born and grew up in The Lexington School. I am proud of them.

Bella, tall and lithe, is wonderful at her studies and at baking cookies for classmates in Asheville and for her family – confidence in the kitchen is part of the Southern and my Italian heritage. Both Erin and Chuck are "awesome" cooks and hosts for the many receptions and parties they host in the beautiful Lexington School Headmaster's home.

Alex, my namesake, is a sports athlete and all-around-student. He is exploring the universe. His kindness is remarkable.

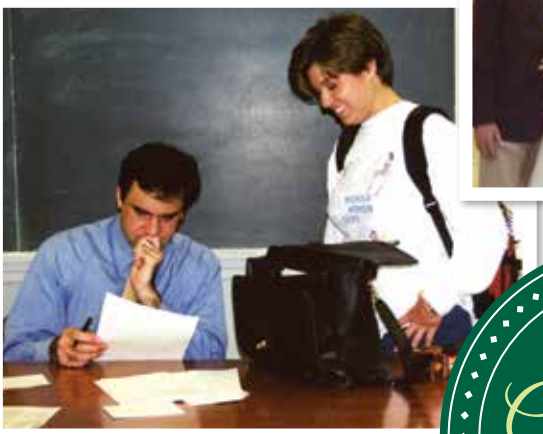
And Cade, the youngest, becomes more Cade every day, and that is a long drink of water.

Our Charles, now Chuck, is beloved son, brother, husband, father, teacher, and Headmaster.

As Chuck's dad, I will miss The Lexington School, as will the Baldecchi family.

Below: Chuck as an Asheville School English teacher; Chuck and Erin's wedding day





With Gratitude:
THE BALDECCHI YEARS



rise up!

"YOU ALL HAVE RAISED HIM PROFESSIONALLY; YOU REALLY HAVE."

By Pam Baldecchi Dickson, Sister of Chuck Baldecchi

At the family home in Sherwood Forest, Maryland, Pamela Baldecchi Dickson speaks of her youngest brother with love and admiration and warmth. She remembers how young Chuck was when he became the seventh Head of The Lexington School, the summer of 2004. With sisterly wisdom, she says, "You all have raised him professionally; you really have." She goes on to emphasize, "You've raised that family. The first thing I want to say is thank you to your community for doing that."

The oldest of the four Baldecchi siblings, Pam gives family background, highlighting that, from the get-go, Chuck was "the joy of everybody's life." The first three sibs (Pam, Danny, and Jay) are very close in age, but there was a seven-year gap before Chuck arrived. She underscores, "With that much age difference, he wasn't just 'the next one.' He was practically the star of the show."

Pam continues, "The fact that he went into education is no surprise to any of us. He often says his educational experience – the schools he went to and the teachers he had – took care of him through a very difficult time." Chuck, 13 when their mother died of breast cancer, found the world of education his calling.

With Baldecchi humor that many TLSers know from Chuck, Pam laughs out loud as she mentions, "Chuck's got a pretty decent streak of plain old good luck. He'll show up at the airport, nearly miss the flight, be on standby, and then not just get on the flight after all, but be upgraded to first class. We always kid him about those instances."

She thinks it's worthy to note that Chuck is moving into the high school arena when Bella, Alex, and, soon, Cade are in that arena too. She admits, "I've told him more than once that the K through 8 world is pretty nice because you avoid some of those very tough issues of the later years. He is headed into it, both in his own life and professionally as well, and he's more than prepared for those challenges."

In recalling Chuck's teenage years, Pam points out, "I took on a not-your-typical sister role for him then." That early experience proved a big help to her, though, when her own daughters entered their teens. "I always told them they could thank

"With that much age difference, he wasn't just 'the next one.' He was practically the star of the show."

— Pam Baldecchi Dickson







With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS

Chuck for my heading them off at the pass, because I wasn't a rookie when they came along." Things come full circle, and the same has been true for Chuck, himself, as a parent. Each summer, three generations of the larger Baldecchi clan share the longtime family home outside Annapolis, all ages savoring their months together. With a knowing smile, Pam says, "He saw those teenage years with us and our kids, and with our other brothers and their kids, before he had to do it himself, so he knows what's coming down the pike and he's ready for it."

Always looking out for her youngest brother, Pam maintains, "The Lexington School has been a great place for him to grow up professionally and to be in a position, now, to be ready for that next step."

Bella's 2017 TLS graduation day. From left, Pam and Hearon Dickson, The Very Reverend Carol Wade, Erin, Chuck, Bella, Cade Garden, **Layton Register '78.**



welc

History Question: Since 1795, who has opened Scarlet Gate's front door to the most people in The Lexington School family? Easy answer: Erin Garden Baldecchi, always with her warm and welcoming smile saying, "C'mon in!"


With Gratitude:
THE BALDECCHI YEARS
me
"C'mon in!"



Erin with her family at Holiday Homecoming 2018; sisters Jennifer Barba and Mary Cade Mainwaring, and their parents Cade and Tom Garden



Erin has played an extraordinary role in the deep goodness of the Baldecchi years. She is, of course, loving wife of Chuck, and proud mom of **Bella '17**, **Alex '19**, and **Cade '21**. She is so many other things to so many other people in the TLS community – dear friend, trusted confidant, respected role model, encouraging teacher, thoughtful mentor, gracious hostess, and the list goes on.

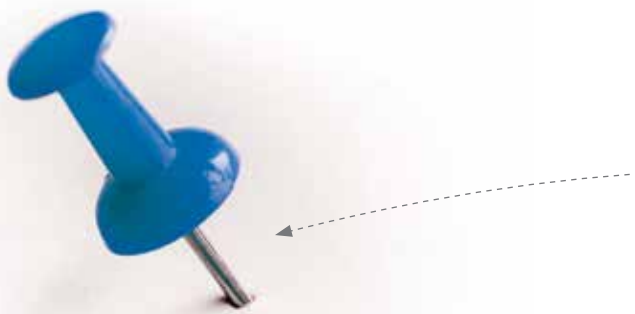
As one former teacher says, "Erin has the gift of hospitality, and she uses it."

Erin and Chuck began the tradition of entertaining faculty and staff – at their home on Ashland Avenue at first, and then at Scarlet Gate. Erin says, "We got the idea a long time ago from Billy Peebles (former Asheville Head of School), and that was the way I got to know the faculty, since I wasn't there every day." She smiles as she confesses, "I wasn't much of a cook at that point." Giving more background, Erin admits, "We wanted to have a chance to serve the faculty. They spend their days giving so much in the classroom. We invited six people at a time, since that's all our dining room table on Ashland Avenue would seat. We didn't include spouses because we couldn't hold that many people. The first eight years, we had every faculty and staff member every year, and it was especially fun since we always mixed up departments. We all got to know each other in a different way, more casually, outside the school day. I planned the menu and did the cooking, and we did it every other week or so, usually beginning in October."

Indeed, it often seems Scarlet Gate has a revolving door, though James Lane Allen could never have imagined such at his boyhood home. Throughout the years, Erin and Chuck have made their old Kentucky home the warm gathering place for countless Lexington School reunions, Fall Festivals, Holiday Homecomings, Board gatherings, receptions, commencements, breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, picnics, meetings, birthday parties for Ms. A and others, celebrations, and Celebrations, even with bottles of whiskey buried strategically throughout the yard to ensure perfect weather. At every instance, Erin has been more than welcoming, even when one guest had so much fun that a friend had to put a hand on both shoulders, maintain steadfast eye contact, and clearly explain, "The party is over. The Baldecchis have to go to bed."

Thank you, Erin, for bringing your kind sparkle to Scarlet Gate. We have all benefitted.

Thank you, Erin, for bringing your kind sparkle to Scarlet Gate. We have all benefitted.



FROM ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, TO LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

By Mandy Helton



I first met Chuck as "Mr. Baldecchi" when I was 14 and a ninth grader at the Asheville School, and he was earning a reputation as the tough English teacher for the grade above. Erin, then Ms. Garden, arrived a few years later in the Admission department. I still remember Chuck creating quite the excitement when he announced in morning convocation that he had proposed and she had said yes.

With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS



The Baldecchi-Helton friendship extends to the next generation with Mandy's son, Ronan Helton Johnson, and Alex on the soccer field.

We continued to know each other in my college years when first Chuck, and then later Erin, hired me as a counselor for the school's summer program. Our relationship might have ended there, but then The Lexington School entered all of our lives. The Baldecchis arrived in Lexington just as I was moving back home to Kentucky, and, with no family nearby, they needed a babysitter. The first time I visited their house on South Ashland, "sweetboy" Alex was a month old and Bella, my "princess peanut butter face," was nearly two.

Even before I began to work at TLS, I saw how deeply the Baldecchis were investing in the community. I marveled at Bella's stories from KinderKlasse, peeked in from the playroom as they hosted teachers at their table for semimonthly dinners, and led the kids in their pajamas up the stairs as they waved goodnight to Board members who were visiting in the living room.

By the time "Miss Cade" came along, I'd joined the staff at TLS. There's much to say about what we have accomplished in Chuck's years there and I certainly learned a lot from Chuck through all of those experiences, but I'll let others speak to those. From my teenage years all the way to the newest role as a mom, what I learned from the Baldecchis that I treasure most is about parenting.

As a regular babysitter, I watched the family grow and adapt over a decade, occasionally even staying overnight when both parents left town. The experience of getting three young children plus a grown-up out the door and to school in the morning is the closest thing to a parenting "dry run" that a person could have. I now have the same type of high chair and bib, the same books on sleeping and raising a boy, the default shopping list of family-friendly foods at Trader Joe's, and my cooking incorporates many Baldecchi recipes. I've seen how great these three very different kids turned out, so I'm holding to the same early bedtime and will do the same type of chore chart. For a long time, I probably felt my view of the family was exclusive and unique, but I realize now that through his monthly head's letters and sit-downs with parents, Chuck shared his children with all of us. Through candor, humor, and vulnerability, Chuck allowed everyone insight into his own parenting journey – a journey filled with challenges, mistakes, and growth, just as the TLS Philosophy Statement would recommend.

Chuck and Erin also shared their home with all of us, particularly once it was next door. Erin's generous nature has allowed the community to enjoy a unique and contiguous campus that includes both the school buildings and the warm home at Scarlet Gate. No matter what is going on with her own work, she is unflappable as guests visit the property, whether it be a science class conducting a nature walk or CELEBRATION chairs taking a shovel to the earth to bury a bottle of bourbon on the lawn. In my years at TLS, she made sure to leave her kitchen door unlocked as we constantly prepared to host more of the TLS family, whether it was a gathering of new parents, a faculty dinner, or the annual blowout that is Holiday Homecoming. The Baldecchis have made Scarlet Gate "the family home" for the entire TLS family, and I trust this will remain so, one of the many traditions they have established and part of the legacy they leave.

My own experience with Chuck and Erin as individuals speaks to their legacy as a family – Chuck and Erin, Bella, Alex, and Cade made you feel like part of the family, and made you feel at home. Now that I'm a mom myself, it's especially bittersweet for me to bid farewell to this family that means so much to me. But since leaving Lexington, I've already experienced what they've helped establish at TLS: a sense of family and home one can always count on and return to.



The Baldecchis have made Scarlet Gate "the family home" for the entire TLS family, and I trust this will remain so, one of the many traditions they have established and part of the legacy they leave.

—Mandy Helton

FROM **CHRIS YOUNG '90**, PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chuck Baldecchi has provided 15 years of wonderful leadership to The Lexington School. When he arrived in 2004, the school had recently experienced a period of much transition in the Head's position and needed stable leadership. Chuck, as always, met these challenges head-on. He worked conscientiously to recruit and retain strong division leaders, stabilized enrollment, and worked diligently to put the school on a path of growth. His love for children and their education guided his decisions throughout his tenure. Chuck's volunteer work in national educational organizations helped elevate our profile, and allowed Chuck to bring ideas and best practices back to TLS.

He leaves TLS in fantastic condition. Our enrollment is at 600 students. The new construction project will transform the campus, and has been made a reality in part due to Chuck's fundraising prowess. Financially, the school is on sound footing. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Una MacCarthy has already proven she is ready to step into the Head's position after Chuck's departure.

It has been a great pleasure to work with Chuck during my time on the TLS board, and I wish his family and him great success. The Baldecchis will be missed.



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THE SEARCH ENDED AND THE BALDECCHI YEARS BEGAN

By **Thomas W. Miller (H'07)**,
Board Chair 2004 - 2006

On November 6, 2003, Rob Brewer; Kim DeCamp; Gail Weissinger, former faculty member; and I drove to Asheville School to meet with one of the five final candidates for Head of TLS. We jointly prepared a memo of our collective observations and conclusions from our meetings with parents; administrators; faculty; trustees; Arch Montgomery, the Head; and ten students. Although we were concerned about Chuck's young age, it is remarkable how accurate our observations were about the man who morphed into the fantastic Head we have had for the last 15 years. I want the TLS constituents to enjoy our observations:



Tom Miller

- "Chuck is a big picture person who is described as a visionary and forward thinking."
- "Chuck is a very good person to work with who is all-inclusive and is open-minded about acknowledging when he is wrong, after which he apologizes."
- "When bad news has to be communicated to a family, Chuck will invariably call himself rather than have the assistant deal with the family members."
- "His enthusiasm and camaraderie appear to be infectious."
- "He is an outstanding teacher who enjoys being around people and selling the school so much he will unquestionably be a very successful fundraiser."
- "Chuck treats everyone well … he is able to get along very well with all parents and students regardless of their backgrounds."
- "He is a fantastic teacher."
- "All who work with Chuck find themselves having a good morale because he is pleasant and happy."

All of the adults with whom we made contact knew Chuck was ready to be a Head, and would be an excellent one. But, what sold us on him was our pizza lunch with ten students who were either in Chuck's English class or were his advisees. At first, we were having a very difficult time getting the students to speak. Eventually, one of them let us know that they were conspiring to avoid saying anything nice about Chuck because they were so hoping he would remain at Asheville School. Once their secret was out, they were effusive in their admiration and love for Chuck. Two particularly meaningful examples that made it into the memo are:

- One girl arrived at the summer program and immediately became so ill she was placed in the infirmary for a week. Even though Chuck hardly knew her, he would visit her daily and would spend up to two hours a day in her room watching television and talking with her.
- One of Chuck's advisees was a male in pretty much constant trouble academically and recalled Chuck having him in "academic games," which consisted of running laps and doing pushups. He had such a degree of trust in Chuck that, when he was being disciplined at school, he would have Chuck call his parents before the boy had to speak with them to "calm down his father."

What we have experienced over the past 15 years has been a Head who is exactly what he was represented to be.

Once hired, Chuck and I would very frequently meet to discuss how best to run the School, since I began my tenure as Board Chair his first week at work. We all know of his success as a fundraiser, as a leader of the faculty and administrators, and as an educator who has an abiding love for the students. But, what I have seen in my years as Board Chair and then as counsel to the School, is that he can and does make the hard decisions when dealing with personnel, students, and parents. I have never seen him delegate to someone else the tasking of communicating bad news. He always meets the person who has a complaint about the school or about him, or the person about whom he has a complaint, face-to-face. He is honest, straightforward, but compassionate.

While I have found his judgment to be excellent, he invariably struggles with making decisions that adversely impact people because of his compassion for the involved person or family. And, he is willing to give a second chance when there is a promised improvement.

When Chuck arrived at TLS, what we most craved was stability. Before he arrived, we had numerous Heads, a new building with a stalled Capital Campaign, and a lot of debt, teacher morale issues, and an inability to increase enrollment. We asked for one promise from Chuck: ten years of service. He was true to his word, and all the difficulties being faced were resolved. Working with Chuck for the past 15 years has been wonderful for me, and we have become very close.

I will miss him and his family.



Alison and **Elliott Miller '97** at Holiday Homecoming with Chuck

as a **SIDE NOTE**



With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS

Chuck

When Chuck first came to TLS, I quickly did the math and realized that he could easily be my son, and for 364 days each year, I managed to avoid "mothering" my boss. On May 1st of each year, however, I did allow myself to think of him in a different way. Chuck lost his mother when he was a boy, so I took a few minutes to fill in for her with a birthday wish expressing what I know she would have been feeling ... her pride in his successes, her joy in the family he and Erin have created, and her love for the man he has become.... We would laugh about these birthday messages, but what Chuck doesn't know is that I would always shed a few tears while writing them. I'm going to miss him so much.

Marijo Foster (H'16)
Administrative Team,
Lower School Head, Retired

THE **JUICY,** INSIDE STORY

By Mary Beth Noel, Assistant to the Head of School

When I first saw the ad for my position in the *Herald-Leader,* I realized this was my mother's former job at St. Stephens-St. Agnes School in Alexandria, Virginia. I thought to myself, "I know what this job is; I know how happy she was in her 25 years there; I can do it!" After I emailed my resume to Chuck, I thought it might be a good idea to check him out on The Lexington School's website. It was then I realized his Alexandria connection through Episcopal High School, a school I knew well. About that time my phone rang. It was Chuck. We sputtered our way through with a few "did you see," and, "I can't believe you know so and so," and "what a small world." Once we settled down and had our 1½-hour talk, I knew this was the right place for me and Chuck was the perfect match. Twelve years later, it is still the same. I have no doubt Chuck will always be the first one I call with life-changing events, asking those hard questions, and for overall advice. While he may be my boss for only a few more months, he will forever be part of my family. *Going out for a hamburger will never be the same ... and that, my friends, is our inside story!*







the RIGHT PEOPLE *in* THE ROOM



COMMUNICATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Having served as Head of The Lexington School 15 years, from 2004 to 2019, Charles Douglas Baldecchi has had the second longest tenure, behind **Norton G. Pritchett Jr. (H'81)**, Headmaster from 1961 to 1981. Today's Lexington School community is, naturally and in countless ways, a reflection of the Baldecchi family: Erin, Chuck, **Bella '17**, **Alex '19**, and **Cade '21**.

Former English teacher and wearer of many TLS hats, Ann Eames has worked with Chuck throughout the years, closely from afar. From her library in Portland, Oregon, Ann's reminiscences create a picture:

Chuck is a teacher at heart, thus embodying his title of Head of School – head teacher. His eyes always glow with satisfaction as he practices the Socratic teaching method of asking the question and letting his students – whether they be young people, administrators, or teachers – embark in lively conversations on tough issues that bring up a variety of opinions. He directs his questions toward understanding and consensus building, but this doesn't always occur. Then he pulls back and regathers the troops, encouraging more discussion until there is some resolution. It's a challenging process that takes both patience and faith in

the method, but it ultimately lets everyone who is willing be heard and, if a plan is formed, results in a group buy-in that has long term, positive results as evidenced by the school's accomplishments these past 15 years.

Chuck also has an uncanny ability to assemble the right people in the room, whether it be his office, a full faculty meeting in the library or theater, or his home, to share his vision with those assembled, to encourage lively and sometimes conflicting feedback, and to reach consensus. Once the vision becomes a plan, he trusts his associates to run with it. He leads, but he does not micromanage. He trusts his team.

In this era of "Information," one of the ways Chuck creates community is by communicating. He makes himself available by having Q & As with the Parents Association, holding open office hours for faculty, and encouraging small group meetings for the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. He attends school functions, interacting with students, their families, alumni, and friends of TLS. He writes a regular Head's letter to the school community and the board. He supports his administrative team and the faculty. One-on-one conversations while walking the halls of TLS are as valued as Pinpoints, *the Alumni Association, the school website, and the school presence on social media. Each day he shakes hands with the youngest to the oldest who all feel personally known by the head of the school.*

Chuck's handshake is enhanced by all the Baldecchis in residence at Scarlet Gate. Their gift of hospitality radiates throughout the property, warmly inviting all to join them in the community that forms The Lexington School family tree.

Below: At the 2005 Holiday Homecoming, Ann Eames presents her granddaughter Sara Grace Eames to an adoring audience of **Marijo Foster (H'16)** and Deirdre Lyons.

With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS





just right in the Neighborhood

Being the TLS Buildings and Grounds Superintendent has Todd Morrison available 24/7, but there are perks – having terrific neighbors is at the top of the list. Todd and his wife, Vanessa, with daughters Danielle and **Sarah '14**, thoroughly enjoy living in Scarlet Gate's Cottage, 1020B Lane Allen Road. Twelve steps away, at 1020A Lane Allen Road, is the 1795 house Scarlet Gate, home of the Baldecchis, Chuck and Erin, Bella, Alex, and Cade.

As Todd remembers it, "For the Baldecchis' first Thanksgiving [2012] at Scarlet Gate, they invited the four of us over. One of Erin's sisters and her family were there, too, so there were 13 or 14 people in all. It was such an unseasonably warm and sunny day that we decided to pick up their dining room table and carry it outside into the courtyard and set it up there. We brought all the chairs out and had our Thanksgiving lunch in the garden. Since there were so many of us, we put all the leaves in the table, extending it as far as it would go. None of us will forget that for a long time. It was a lot of fun."

Another year, Chuck's family came for the holidays, and the Baldecchis called the Morrisons fairly early one morning to come over right then. Because of the Baldecchis' longtime Maryland ties, they were serving Chesapeake Delight – a superb oyster dish – for breakfast, along with champagne.

In a stage whisper, Todd confides, "We always know when Chef Baldecchi's cooking because the smoke alarm goes off … but that's okay."

It's no surprise to hear that Snow Days are pretty exciting for anybody at Scarlet Gate. Todd says, "Chuck does the drive around the neighborhood, and I check out school walkways to get the salt and plows going. No matter how bad it is, I have to assume we're having school, because by the time Chuck returns from his rounds, if I've waited and if we do have school, that's not good. Regardless of the temperature, if it snows, Chuck and the kids are outside playing, even if it's 5 degrees. When the wind chill is at minus 20, I look outside and there's Chuck, pulling the kids down the driveway and all over the place in an inner tube. It was so cold that day you didn't even want to go to the mailbox, but there they were, with Chuck leading the way, and the kids loving every minute of it."

No matter what season, those living in both houses on the delightful Scarlet Gate property might not concur with Robert Frost's saying, "Good fences make good neighbors."

With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS

"Regardless of the temperature, if it snows, Chuck and the kids are outside playing, even if it's 5 degrees."

—Todd Morrison, TLS Buildings and Grounds Superintendent



Previous Page: Bella and Sarah share a neighborly hug on Sarah's graduation day. **Above:** It's a Snow Day for Mr. B, Cade, Alex, and Bella.



STRATE

During the last 15 years, two Strategic Plan Committees have given wise and firm direction for the future. Both groups were composed of dedicated individuals who gave countless hours, delving deeply into myriad aspects of The Lexington School. As they sought ways to assure a positive trajectory, it was a grand honor in 2015 when TLS ranked second among best private schools in the United States, according to Best Schools.

2006 STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE:

Judge Wilson, Chair
Charles Baldecchi
Holly Bandoroff
Angela Beck
Rob Brewer '85
Whitney Martin Collins '88
Sonya Feist-Price
Una MacCarthy
Tom Miller (H'07)
Janette Moloney
Jessica Bell Nicholson '64
Layton Register '78
Billy Simpson
Jaci Sloan
Lisa Trawick



2012 STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE

Margaret Graves '79, Chair
Shannon Bishop Arvin '90
Chuck Baldecchi
Brady Barlow
Angela Beck
Rob Brewer '85, President of the Board
Jane Childers
Brutus Clay '85
Andrew Grimes '95
Una MacCarthy
Dominique Metze
Tom Miller (H'07)
Toi Morton
Tomi Ann Pulliam
Quisha Ray
Tracie Sturgill
Jane Warner
Woodford Webb
Chris Young '90
Leanne Zimmerman

GICALLY POSITIONED



The report of the 2006 committee, chaired by Judge Wilson, states, "The SPC reaffirms the recently revised TLS Mission Statement and School Philosophy … as the twin cornerstones upon which all school policy and the strategic plan of The Lexington School are premised."

Rob Brewer '85, on both the 2006 and 2012 committees, first as board member, then board president, says, "Strategic thinking carried TLS through a very tough time during the 2008 financial crisis. There's no doubt about that. When we acquired Scarlet Gate in 2010, that put TLS in a whole class by itself. Scarlet Gate is a tremendous addition to our campus, a place we're all proud of."

The last paragraph of the 2012 Strategic Plan maintains, "This plan reflects the ideas of the school's parents, past parents, alumni, faculty, students, administration, and trustees. The committee took its role seriously in collecting information from every segment of the school, distilling the priorities of the community, and presenting an articulate plan – a roadmap for the future of The Lexington School."



"WE **DREAM** OF A SCHOOL THAT **EMBRACES DIVERSITY** AT EVERY LEVEL."

The first line of the number one goal for The Lexington School's 2012 Strategic Plan is quoted above. The current admission number of 22% students of color has nearly doubled from 2004, when Chuck Baldecchi became Head. TLS is a school where ethnic and socioeconomic diversity is encouraged and supported, as reflected in the 2015 Mission Statement on Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion: "An education of the highest quality demands that our students understand how they are a part of and impact the larger global community. In a thoughtful and nurturing environment, we build a culture of understanding the human experience from the perspective of others."

Dr. Eunice Beatty, current Board of Trustee member, Interim Head of Lower School for 2019 - 2020, and proud grandmother of **Kennedy '18**, **Peyton '23**, and **Embry '23**, has been at the forefront of helping TLS become more welcoming to all. "I recall conversations with Chuck as he shared his vision and goals about diversifying The Lexington School. Anthany and I both have personal and professional diversity experiences, thus we really felt we could help." It was Chuck's idea several years ago that Eunice and her husband, Anthany Beatty Sr., former TLS Board of Trustee member, invite prospective families, with a focus on families of color, to their home to learn about The Lexington School. Eunice recalls, "The first year invited guests were mostly families Anthany and I knew personally, and we asked TLS parents to serve as hosts. The past two years, current parents have taken the lead and served as TLS ambassadors by sharing their experiences and their children's love for the school with prospective families. This year, with approximately 40 people in attendance, we nearly outgrew the gathering space in our home."

Eunice gives accolades, as well, to Geriann Blevins, Director of Admission, saying, "Geriann does a phenomenal job organizing the reception, interacting with families during the reception, and sending a follow-up letter that is thoughtful and prompt to each family. In my opinion, she's really the glue that holds this effort together."

Andrew Schwartz '00, Director of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion since 2016, has attended and spoken at each diversity admission reception. He says, "From the first day I accepted the role of Director, it was clear that Chuck was dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion. With his guidance, TLS established the Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion Committee, which helped create the Diversity Mission Statement. The committee hosts diversity and inclusion discussion nights, helps with admission events, and serves as a think tank for topics regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion for the school community."



2018 DIVERSITY, MULTICULTURALISM, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Andrew Schwartz '00, Chair
Falguni Amin-Zimmerman
Danielle Backers
Chuck Baldecchi
Brady Barlow
Anthany Beatty Jr.
Eunice Beatty
Joe Conley
David Cooper
Anne de Castro
Chris Flores
Neomia Flores
Donna Hutton
Sanjay Jeyarajasingham
Teisha Jones
Fahmida Kahloon
Jory Karthikeyan
Diane King
Tiffany Luhman
Matt Lutz
Una MacCarthy
Mark Mehrizi
Kristi Middleton
Grace Newsome
Allison Peevy
DeWayne Peevy
Shubin Saha '92
Sarah Sandberg
Daniel Sussman
Brookti Tesfaye-Arms
David Thomas
Griffin VanMeter '96
Sarah Wylie VanMeter
Shannon Wampler-Collins
Lisa Williams
Chris Young '90
Tony Youssefi
Leanne Zimmerman

2013 SECURITY TASK FORCE

Anthany Beatty Sr., Chair
Paul Bailey
Chuck Baldecchi
Jane Childers
Marijo Foster (H'16)
Margaret Graves '79
Donna Hutton
Allen Love
Una MacCarthy
Jervis Middleton
Tom Miller (H '07)
Todd Morrison
Kara Police
Quisha Ray
Mario Russo
Kelly Telech
Bob Thompson
Woodford Webb





With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS

Left: Anthany Beatty Jr. and Sr. **Above:** Anthany Beatty Sr.

SAFETY 1st

The security of students and adults is of utmost importance at The Lexington School. Chuck Baldecchi and TLS are fortunate to have the "in-house" knowledge, expertise, and experience of Anthany Beatty Sr., former Lexington Chief of Police, former TLS Board of Trustee member, and proud grandfather of **Kennedy '18, Peyton '23,** and **Embry '23.**

An impressive group of individuals with deep understanding of both security and The Lexington School composed the 2013 Security Task Force. Chaired by Chief Beatty, the committee included another former chief of police, a former member of Homeland Security, a Lexington police lieutenant, current police officers, legal counsel, IT consultants, board members, faculty, and administrators. At the outset, the committee studied current security operating procedures and security systems already in place at TLS. Members agreed that effective crisis management requires strong and clear policies, procedures, and practices, yet these should be kept as simple as possible to ensure safety and easy compliance. The committee worked diligently to strike the balance of controlling access to school, all the while maintaining a welcoming atmosphere throughout the TLS campus. Their thorough and detailed report addresses all aspects of school security and has been a valuable tool in enhancing the safety of The Lexington School.

In reviewing the collaborative work, Chief Beatty says, "Chuck provided the vision and support to make TLS a safe campus for all. The opportunity to assist with increasing the safety of our school community and securing The Lexington School campus was and continues to be extremely important. The outcome has provided reassurance to parents, faculty, staff, and students, and having a safe school continues to remain one of TLS's top priorities. Chuck's vision speaks volumes to his leadership, demonstrating a school must be safe, as well as academically successful."



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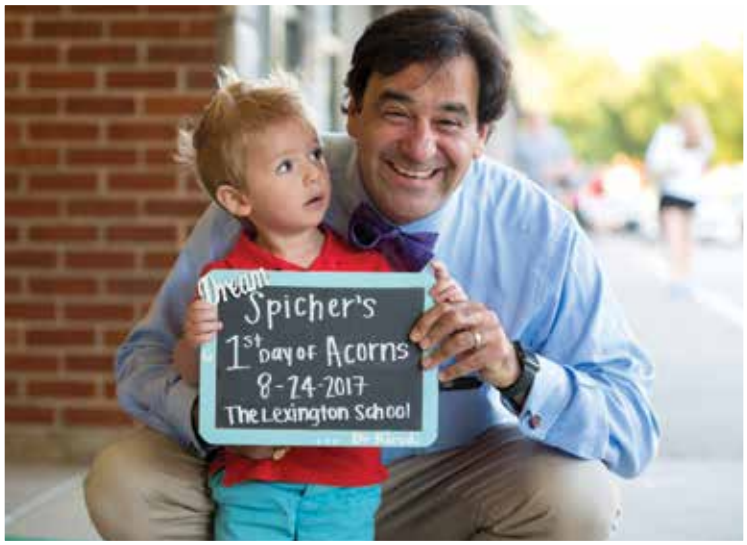
makes GOOD CENTS

2006 ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMITTEE
Rob Brewer '85, Chair
Chuck Baldecchi
Craig Bandoroff
Angela Beck
Tom Miller (H'07)

Everybody wants to keep tuition costs down. That's much easier said than done. By growing non-tuition income, through deft guidance from the Board of Trustees, however, TLS administrators continue to make that a strong priority.

Incorporating each of the Mission Skills taught in every TLS classroom every day, the original Entrepreneurial Committee, chaired by **Rob Brewer '85**, Board President from 2008 to 2012, called on combined teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity, and time management. Thinking back to those years, Rob says, "Chuck and I had a lot of fun and did a lot of good together. Generating non-tuition revenue through the entrepreneurial curriculum – Acorns, College Planning, High School Fair, and others – helped carry TLS through the 2008 financial crisis. Working with so many great people in the TLS family, I'm proud of what we accomplished throughout the nine years I was on the board during Chuck's tenure."

By any measure, the Acorns class for two-year-olds is a grand addition to the TLS community. Begun in 2011 with ten students, under the watchful and loving care of Emily Stout and Flora Platt, Acorns has grown now to include 21 precious ones, warmly and tenderly looked after by Laura Murray and Sarah Sandberg.



At the other end of the building is College Planning Services, with Dr. Laura Bonzo-Sims, Pre-AP English teacher, as Director, with Linn Jefferson, seventh grade math teacher and advisor. Begun in 2005, CPS has 70 clients, 37% of whom are non-TLS alumni. Bringing national acclaim to the program, Laura was a presenter at NACAC, National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Camp Curiosity is a summertime tradition for hundreds of students, three-year-olds through eighth grade, both longtime TLSers and those new to the community. Alumni return as counselors, while some current Middle Schoolers relish being junior counselors.

Over a decade, intramurals has been the go-to after-school activity, headed by Jonathan Herrington, sixth grade advisor. Indoors and outside too, three-year-olds through third graders enjoy a wide array of choices – Awesome Inc Coding, Kidstrong, Bricks4Kids, and Tennis, among them.

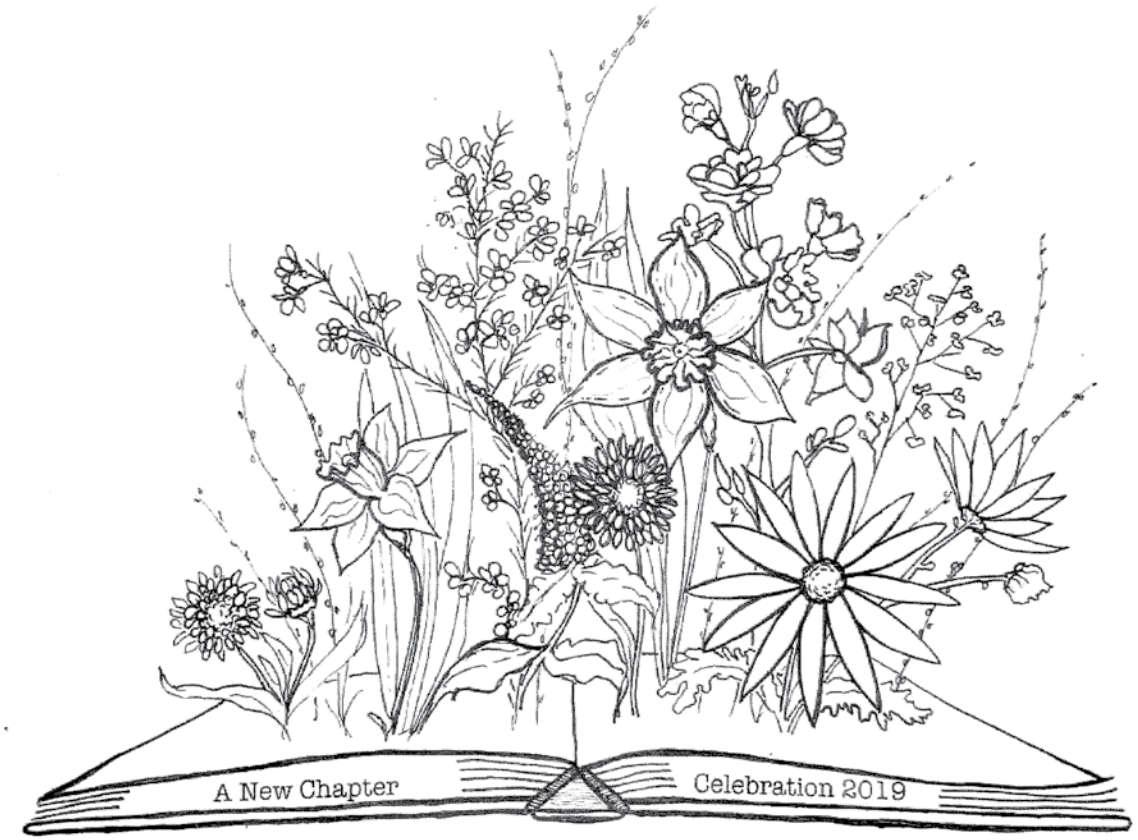
With 40 piano students and 14 on the guitar, Applied Music Lessons fill the halls with the sound of music. Jonathan Herrington orchestrates schedules for the music teachers and the student musicians; Kindergartners through eighth graders play the range from beginner to advanced.

Each October, the High School Placement Fair fills the gym with 60 to 70 local and national day and boarding school representatives and booths. Free and open to the public, the Fair serves as the prime opportunity for middle school students, throughout the Lexington and central Kentucky area, to consider their many options for high school.

TLS Voyages takes the TLS classroom to Costa Rica, France, Spain, and England, among other destinations, as current students and alumni travel nationally and internationally with their teachers. Exploring new regions and countries through this opportunity is a natural extension of the ever-popular middle school trips.

With his entrepreneurial spirit, Rob takes a macro-look at The Lexington School and says with justifiable pride, "TLS has a bold story as a school. It's wildly successful. It has changed a lot of lives."

With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS



New Chapter. New Location.

CELEBRATION '19

Friday, May 10th

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McDonald's
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Schnabel Cashman Interiors
The Webb Companies
West Sixth Brewing and Barlow Kubota
Wildcat Moving



IN STARK CONTRAST TO OTHER SCHOOLS

2009 NUTRITION TASK FORCE

Lucy Barrow Calhoun '75, Chair
Chuck Baldecchi
Kristin Beers
Amy Duzyk
Angie Falcone
Hillary Halpin
Donna Hutton
Alicia Kazee
Una MacCarthy
Tomi Anne Pulliam
Heather Stark
Vicki Tannir
Tina Thompson

With Texas-sized enthusiasm from her home outside Houston, Heather Stark speaks with tremendous appreciation for the years her son, **Will Stark '17**, was a Lexington School student.

"The Lexington School as I knew it – and I knew it very, very well -- doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. TLS so progressive," Heather says. "It is a wonderful, accountable, enjoyable, place to be a part of, and I was a complete outsider."

Heather and Will lived in Lexington from 2006 until 2011, Will's KinderKlasse through second grade years. Heather was a single mom. Will is diabetic, had specific food allergies, and was in and out of the hospital often. Life was challenging.



Will Stark '17

She emphasizes, "It was easy to become involved at school. Chuck Baldecchi has an incredible mindset and ability to identify with multiple types of people. He found people within the TLS community who had different perspectives on the same subject and said, 'This is why I got you all together. How can we make things better?' He is excellent at identifying what each person is good at and interested in where the energy is."

Understandably, Heather's energy was in seeing that Will's health and nutrition needs were addressed in the best possible way. As Heather recalls, "Nurse Kristin Beers played a huge role in taking care of the kids who had issues. Quite honestly, she was Will's first teacher regarding food. Kristin spent a lot of time in the lunchroom with the children, making sure the little ones were eating the right foods, and educating them the whole time."

Heather continues, "I was, and still am, amazed that Joyce Baker could feed that many people with the kitchen she had AND that the food was good. She fed hundreds of kids and adults, yet always took special care of the allergy kids, keeping them safe and maintaining their nutrition. She and I met regularly about Will, and I will never forget her kindness."

Heather was part of the Nutrition Task Force, along with Director of Preschool Donna Hutton, Nurse Kristin, and others interested in the quality of lunchroom food. Conversations from those meetings brought nutrition lessons into the classroom more regularly. Heather remembers, "Because of the Task Force, kids learned about food groups and how to make better choices at meals. There were more vegetable and salad options than before. The group's ideas and suggestions evolved into change. It was fantastic."

Nurse Kristin, who has helped keep thousands of TLS children and adults healthy since 2000, points out, "We teach that variety is important in food choice – variety in types of foods, in textures, in preparation, raw versus cooked. The way we eat here in the dining room as a community embraces conversations at our round tables. We have important – and fun – discussions about foods we enjoy and foods we are learning to enjoy, emphasizing our three-colors-on-a-plate idea. Well, yes, sometimes we do count orange juice, even though it's not on the plate! We give ownership to each child for what healthy foods he chooses to eat, and we celebrate when kids try a new taste, even if they don't like it.

A Stark reminder, Heather says again: "That attitude of strong leadership and warmth of community is rampant at TLS, and it doesn't exist anywhere else in the world."

NOT YOUR REGULAR CHUCK WAGON



With Gratitude: THE BALDECCHI YEARS

Lunch time has been a favorite of Lexington School students since 1959. Mr. Baldecchi didn't invent it, but he's nurtured it, and brought it to the current day.

Older alumni remember lining up single file for Mr. Gravitt's cafeteria trays. A food service group then catered hot lunches. In 1980, Florine Moore took the ladle; younger, older alums remember her vegetable beef soup. After a decade, Florine passed the kettle to Joyce Baker, her daughter, who'd been sous chef nearly that whole time. After 20 more years of dedication, Joyce is a lunchroom legend whose name still evokes delicious memories in two generations of TLS students, plus their parents and grandparents.

Upon Joyce's retirement, Chef Ryan Laudenschlager and his crew have been stirring it up ever since. After serving a second grader's Chef-for-a-Day selection of chicken parmesan to 700-plus, Chef explains, "Mr. Baldecchi appreciates the importance of ownership of the job. He is not a micromanager. When great things are going on, he is always the first to give praise. When there are challenges, his words and his actions say, 'I trust you to fix it.' Because of his leadership style, we have it the best of both ways."

Chef goes on to explain, "Whenever parents have had a dining room concern, Mr. B says to them kindly, 'Why don't you join us for lunch?' Parents have accepted his invitation and, without a single exception, have enjoyed the opportunity. They've left knowing there are more than enough healthful food choices for their children. They have a better understanding of how we incorporate our dining experience into classroom learning here at The Lexington School."

Living up to Mr. B's expectations, Chef is almost as much a teacher as he is "the big man with the tall white hat," as a young admirer referred to him. A culinary Pied Piper, Chef Ryan is known for turning lunchtime into something special. Stir Fry Day was one of his first events, with chicken stir fry stations and chicken teriyaki. Super Bowl chicken wings and World Series chili dogs are annual hits. "Tropical themes in January shake the cold blues off," he says, "with Cubano sandwiches, pineapple salad, tostones [fried plantains], and kid-friendly mojitos." Moving with the calendar, St. Patrick's Day brings brine-our-own corned beef with cabbage and potatoes.

Far and away, Thanksgiving's traditional luncheon is the schoolwide favorite, drawing an SRO crowd, in addition to the over 700 students, faculty, and staff, with at least 100 lower school parents balancing their plates as they line the walls, overflowing up the stairs, into the conference room.

Chef admits it's hard work for his team and for himself, of course, but he confesses, "I have as much fun with the students as I could possibly have, teaching them about all manner of foods, widening their horizons about nutrition. I try to make it enjoyable for everybody, and we all learn together. I appreciate the confidence and trust Mr. Baldecchi has placed in me. I never want to let him down."

Chef explains, "Mr. Baldecchi appreciates the importance of ownership of the job. He is not a micromanager. When great things are going on, he is always the first to give praise. When there are challenges, his words and his actions say, 'I trust you to fix it.' Because of his leadership style, we have it the best of both ways."



LIVING BY THE INDEX









MISSION SKILLS

It's who we are. It's always been a part of who we are. We just didn't know how to measure it before.

In addition to core academics, The Lexington School teaches children life skills they remember long after they've left the classroom. The Independent School Data Exchange (INDEX), of which Chuck Baldecchi was a founder in 2005 and is currently Chair of the Board, in turn founded Mission Skills Assessment. MSA measures six character strengths – Teamwork, Creativity, Ethics, Resilience, Curiosity, and Time Management – that have proven essential for success in school and in life.

Lisa Pullman, INDEX Executive Director, gives background: "Chuck worked energetically and tirelessly to launch the group and set it on its successful path forward. In doing so, he enabled not only The Lexington School but schools across the nation to evaluate and improve their institutions more thoroughly, systematically, and analytically." She goes on to explain, "With Chuck's guiding hand, the MSA grew to include over 200 schools, both nationally and internationally, and over 30,000 students."

Daily, from TLS's youngest Acorns to the eighth grade "lifers," each student is enriched and empowered in every classroom by the scientific research behind Mission Skills. Grounded in academics, MSA radiates to the arts and sports as well. Teachers and administrators, too, are strengthened by the scientific ability to measure curriculum success and to meet goals outlined in both the Mission and Philosophy Statements.

As MSA has established the rubric to evaluate excellence through measuring non-cognitive traits within independent schools, The Lexington School has benefitted from Chuck Baldecchi's leadership in educational organizations on the national stage.

Brutus Clay '85 is the first to say his experience as a student at The Lexington School was not easy. One of the things he learned at TLS in the late 1970s was that the school did not offer opportunities for those who had learning differences. With perseverance as a strong suit though, during business school at the University of North Carolina, Brutus determined he was going to remedy that situation.

It took time and collaboration with the right people.

Brutus and his wife, Sarah, parents of **Quin '16**, **Catesby '18**, and **Caroline Anne '20**, treasure their friendship with Chuck and Erin Baldecchi. Brutus gives background, reminiscing, "Sarah and I have priceless memories of late nights with Chuck and Erin, discussing education, religion, politics, and life. Of all our memories, the most indelible is the journey we took in founding The Learning Center. It began with the seed of an idea, was nourished over dinner at Malone's, and took root in the research of its viability. We built a business case for the program, and once we had completed our due diligence with the adjunct committee, it was time to get the rest of the trustees on the bus."

It wasn't easy, just as Brutus's childhood years at The Lexington School had not been easy.

Brutus and Sarah persevered, working closely with Chuck, and forming a mighty combination. Brutus says, "The moment I remember like yesterday that speaks to Chuck's resilience and positive nature was when we presented the committee findings to the Board of Trustees. The trustees continued to have reservations about moving forward with the program. Our committee members were devastated and thought, 'How can this not go forward?' Not Chuck! He came out of the meeting saying, 'We can do this! We just need a little more time.'"

Brutus and Chuck were both right, of course.

The Learning Center opened on August 25, 2010, with 16 students. At the podium that morning Jane Childers, Director of The Learning Center, proclaimed, "Through the vision and perseverance of Brutus and Sarah Clay, we are changing lives." A fourth division of The Lexington School – with Preschool, Lower School, and Middle School – The Learning Center, has earned a national reputation for excellence. Today, The Learning Center is changing the lives of 65 students in grades one through eight.

Brutus confirms, "Chuck's vision for TLS has profoundly changed the school. It has become a place that works with students who learn differently. TLS celebrates diversity. We are grateful for Chuck and Erin's contributions to TLS and for their friendship. If it weren't for Chuck's leadership, it is doubtful The Learning Center would ever have come to fruition."

2008 LEARNING CENTER TASK FORCE

Brutus Clay '85, Chair
Chuck Baldecchi
Craig Bandoroff
Rob Brewer '85
Jane Childers
Sarah Clay
Elizabeth Patterson Coons '82
Sonja Feist-Price
Julie Hamilton
Donna Hutton
Tracy Kostelic



WE ARE **CHANGING** LIVES.

we are who we say we are

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of The Lexington School is to provide an education of the highest quality to students in preschool through middle school. In a structured, nurturing environment, The Lexington School seeks to instill integrity, a life-long enthusiasm for learning, and a strong work ethic.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Because we are a nurturing environment, children feel confident.

When children are confident, they will take risks.

Because risk taking is inherent in learning, the possibility of failure exists.

When a nurturing community exists, challenges lead to growth.

Our success is defined when our students have the life skills to make wise choices and overcome obstacles.



Janette Moloney, Chuck Baldecchi, Leanne Zimmerman

A keystone of Chuck Baldecchi's first year as Head of School was the revision of The Lexington School's Mission Statement and the creation of our Philosophy Statement by faculty, administration, and trustees. Taken together, these statements are the North Star for determining our day-to-day and our year-to-year plans and actions.

It was Chuck's initial idea and bold determination to include the word "failure" in the Philosophy Statement. Though failure is often a part of success, a necessary step toward success, there was pushback. In 2005, some felt it ill-advised to use that word. The test of time has shown Chuck was at the forefront, as The Lexington School's Philosophy Statement is cited by many parents as the "reason we chose TLS."

ISACS Self-Study; 2007 and 2014

Janette Moloney, Co-Chair; fifth grade language arts/ social studies
Leanne Zimmerman, Co-Chair; fourth grade science

Janette and Leanne, two-time Co-Chairs, give highlights of working together with Chuck during the ISACS Self-Studies.

Janette: Chuck's including "failure" in our Philosophy Statement was a visionary act of leadership. By adding that, we were putting our toe in the water of Mission Skills Traits, and it was all because of Chuck's insight 15 years ago. We were ahead of the curve. It was a hot topic back then, but he embraced it, and TLS has

matured with the Statement. In speaking of the Mission and Philosophy Statements during our second ISACS Accreditation, the Visiting Team said, "We sensed it. We felt it. We lived it at TLS."

In 2005 - 2006, I was on the Strategic Planning Committee, which Judge Wilson chaired. *Good to Great,* by Jim Collins, was a guidebook of sorts for us. Our 2007 ISACS Visiting Team Chair used that book as the basis for one of her exit comments: "Not only does The Lexington School have the right people on the bus, they have the right driver."

Chuck is an inspiring leader; he is not just talk. He taps on the expertise of those around him. He knows how to lead, never becomes complacent, and always strives for improvement.

Leanne: Chuck is a visionary and always an educator at heart. He understood how to move us forward, how to see where we needed to go, and how to educate us to get there. He is an incredible inspirer. He reminds us to keep moving the finish line. Because of his leadership, we now have a new definition of what embodies "great": The Learning Center, Mission Skills, state-of-the-art science classrooms, athletic fields, scholarship programs, and ONE School.

The Conclusion of the 2014 ISACS Accreditation Report was especially strong, from "And truth be told, you had us at 'hello'! We were so deeply touched and impressed by your students!" to "You have much to be proud of at The Lexington School. You are a beacon of shining light for ISACS; keep it going. You are a school that is to be reckoned with and you are a school in which ISACS must be very proud, congratulations!"

The Baldecchis – Chuck, Erin, Bella, Alex, and Cade – will leave a special place in our hearts.

AND: Chuck knows how to laugh at himself … as evidenced whenever Amanda Hale begins to sing!

TAKING A CHAPTER FROM THE READING TRAIN

Librarians agree that Mr. Baldecchi has written great chapters for The Lexington School.

In his first year, as conductor of the TLS Reading Train, Mr. B immediately was on board with the librarians' idea. Attired in his striped engineer's hat, with signature red bandana at his neck, the Head of School was indeed head of the locomotive. Keeping to the precise departure schedule, at the appointed hour, everyone came out of classrooms and offices with a favorite book. Mr. B began the itinerary in the Preschool, outside the former classroom of Miss Barbara Bale; some thought it was Paddington Station. As he blew the wooden train whistle to announce "All Aboard," the concatenation moved down the long hallway, wound around through Middle School, and over into Lower School. The passenger list, numbering well into the hundreds, was impressive – every student, teacher, and staff member, side-by-side, nonstop, in both buildings, the entire school. For 15 minutes, non-bibliophile activity ceased at TLS and everyone sat in the hallways, reading. Middle Schoolers read to their preschool friends; Lower Schoolers read their own books; staff members swapped stories with teachers. When Mr. B blew the whistle again, at the terminus, readers felt transported. They had shared a journey like no other; of course that's one of the gifts of reading. Alumni who were little ones that day remember it still and can recall specific lines from their books.

Hats off to Mr. B for getting everyone on board TLS's Reading Train.



Conductor Baldecchi with librarians Lori Hancock and Kim Naylor



Coach Parlanti and Mr. B

TLS ATHLETICS extends the classroom

Tom Parlanti, whose name is synonymous with TLS sports to at least three – sometimes four – generations within TLS's family, says, "Chuck Baldecchi has encouraged The Lexington School to develop a powerful athletics program, on par with our strong academics." The Athletic Director explains, "It is important to Chuck, as it is to all of us, that athletics supports TLS's Mission and Philosophy Statements. His vision is for athletics to extend the classroom."

In every aspect, the Athletics Department has prospered under Chuck's tenure. Early on, Chuck said, "Tom, your coaches are your team now," and he has fostered that teamwork all the way through. Chuck has consistently been involved in the program but makes a point not to micromanage the process.

Chuck's mantra has always been, "I want to provide a quality athletic program that offers multiple options to our families. Let's keep it in our backyard." He is keen to expand programs and offerings to round out the athletic offerings, including varsity-level sports that prepare student athletes for the next level. At the same time, TLS still maintains the inclusive nature for teams, for which the school has long been known.

Tom says, "Chuck has let me build a larger program, which takes forethought and the efforts of many. With hard work from many, many people, especially the Parent Athletic Committee – which was Chuck's idea – we have developed lacrosse, football, volleyball, basketball, archery, soccer, and running programs that have garnered community-wide and state-wide respect."

The Athletics Department has a long history of former students returning as coaches, including **Chris Johnson '89**, **Griffin Miller '07**, **Andrew Schwartz '00**, **Meg Grossman Sutton '03**, **Emma Samuel '17**, and **Robert Dence '10**, some of our current alum coaches and assistants. It's often the case that TLSers, no matter their age, still feel at home in the gym or on the playing fields.







2015 PARENT ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

Chuck Baldecchi
Brutus Clay '85
Anne de Castro
Darren Duzyk
Phil Holoubek
Jim Kaiser
Una MacCarthy
Meredith McCoun
Toi Morton
Alex Neuman '86
Celeste Neuman
Tom Parlanti
Chad Pennington
Kathleen Rogers
Suzanne Truitt
Woodford Webb

Two heads are better than one. A 2007 conversation between Chuck Baldecchi and Meredith Carrithers (now Meredith McCoun) began the ball rolling for The Lexington School's robust intramural program for PreK through fifth grade. Mr. B knew whom to tap for energy and all-inclusive enthusiasm to carry out his idea of offering after-school opportunities.



TLS INTRAMURALS *extends the backyard*



He had only to ask Meredith if she were interested; she took it from there. A dozen years and a thousand students later, the TLS hallways/gyms/lunchroom/playing fields/theater – almost every nook and cranny, indoors and out – have been host to after-school activities.

Meredith emphasizes, "I appreciated Chuck's strong sense of mentorship, direction, and advice when I first started the intramural program. He was visionary in wanting to provide for our kids at TLS during after school hours." Meredith was visionary, too, in introducing, as she says, "a smorgasbord of items they could sample." She continues, "I wanted to give them an opportunity to try a wide array of choices in a safe place. We had something for everybody – fencing, floor hockey, dance, tumbling, taekwondo, yoga, football, art, cooking, and that's only the beginning." The summer before the first year, as she remembers, "I got a huge calendar and filled it with all sorts of cool things for our kiddos."

In many ways, Meredith created the feeling from a generation ago when neighborhood children of all ages, in charge of their own free time, played together outdoors. She explains, "This was their backyard in a social and emotional way. We adults purposefully stood back a little and let the young ones learn for themselves about rule making and conflict resolution. They used their imaginations to figure things out."

The TLS intramural program – everybody's favorite backyard – is still the go-to place, under the dynamic leadership of Jonathan Herrington, sixth grade advisor. He has taken Chuck's idea and Meredith's carry-through and has added his own creativity. It all started with a great idea. Thank you, Mr. B.



A BROAD WAY OF THINKING

"Chuck Baldecchi's Vision Adds Color, Music, Dance, and a Broader Appreciation for the Fine Arts at TLS."
— Alex Simpson '14

Melanie Simpson, former trustee, and her daughter, **Alex Simpson '14**, are strong and dedicated voices for the arts world in general, and most specifically for the arts at The Lexington School. Together, and working closely with Chuck Baldecchi, Melanie and Alex created the Simpson Fine Arts Fund in memory of William J. Simpson, Alex's father, former trustee.

After a visit to see Alex, now a freshman at Dartmouth, Ms. Simpson gives background, explaining, "Alexandra and I hoped to create something tangible in her father's memory since he served on the board, loved her school, and respected Chuck Baldecchi, her headmaster, as a dear friend. Alex was a theatre kid and believed The Lexington School should offer more options to students who were stimulated by the fine arts. We set up the Simpson After-School Arts Program in his name, and Chuck helped us turn our dream into reality. Chuck sat through presentations from the Lexington Children's Theatre, the Ballet, and other local arts organizations, took direction from the Task Force, and embraced the opportunity to give our students a broader education."

In the midst of study time for her upcoming chemistry midterm, Alex emphasizes, "I'm proud Mr. B is stretching his imagination so children can find their focus in photography or turn inward to share creative thoughts on paper or on the stage. I am grateful Chuck learned to love the arts for students like me."

Ms. Simpson, adds, "TLS is an amazing school today because our headmaster was open-minded about so many positive changes, including the arts. Chuck Baldecchi may not realize it, but he is an artist – his leadership is painting a brighter future for his students filled with culture and a broader artistic horizon."

With great warmth and deep appreciation, Alex shifts the conversation to a much more personal area, saying, "Mr. Baldecchi was always my #1 cheerleader throughout my time at TLS. He was incredibly supportive during my father's death and my own health problems."

FINE ARTS TASK FORCE
Melanie Simpson, Chair
Margaret Graves '79, Co-chair
Martha Anderson
Chuck Baldecchi
Kelly Brewer
Lucy Barrow Calhoun '75
Jane Childers
Anne de Castro
Marijo Foster (H'16)
Marnie Clay Holoubek '82
Donna Hutton
Una MacCarthy
Leslie MacDonald
Tracie Sturgill

they FOUND HER *delightful*



Ms. Abercrombie enjoys CELEBRATION 2012 with Chuck and Erin.

Josephine Abercrombie (H'00), founder of The Lexington School in 1959, and Erin and Chuck Baldecchi have enjoyed a treasured friendship these last 15 years. It will continue, of course, as solid friendships do, despite the Baldecchis' move to North Carolina. They will take memories of her with them, and she will keep warm thoughts of them with her as well.

As Chuck says of Ms. A in his February Head's Letter, "The students at TLS know her and love her." She's part of the fabric of TLS. It has come naturally for Chuck to include her at school, when her schedule has allowed. Throughout the years, she has enjoyed walking the halls, stopping to visit with fourth graders between classes, spontaneously joining a class, being a part of the everyday energy, witnessing first-hand the goodness and the excellence that is The Lexington School.

It hasn't been all school work; she's had fun too. An enthusiastic birthday woman, she has thoroughly enjoyed celebrating January 15th at annual parties in her honor at Scarlet Gate and, with a larger crowd, in the gym, when the entire school sang "Happy Birthday, Dear Ms. A; Happy Birthday to You."

Knowing TLS's history since the days of Bud Pritchett of rarely canceling school because of snow, Ms. A was the featured speaker of TLS's 2019 snow day video, "It's a Hard Knock Life." The camera focused on Chuck at his desk, receiving an important call: "This is Josephine Abercrombie. Chuck, this is your last year. Gee Whiz! Give the kids a SNOW DAY!"

From her office at Pin Oak Stud, Ms. A takes time for a TLS Q&A.

What is Chuck's most important accomplishment for The Lexington School?
Chuck's 15-year tenure has been very significant. Through these years, he has provided us with outstanding leadership, dedication, and optimism, which has strengthened the school tremendously.

What personality trait do you admire most about him?
I admire Chuck's commitment in developing a strong connection with his staff, the students and parents, and the alumni, which has reinforced the principles of TLS.

What will you miss most about him?
I will miss his positiveness, his kindness, and his smiling face.

Please tell us about a happy time you've enjoyed with Erin and him at Scarlet Gate.
I've enjoyed lots of delightful dinners with Chuck and Erin, especially when it was my birthday!

At every Commencement Day, Chuck quotes you, "Our graduates are ready to leave the nest on their own and fly." What advice do you give Chuck now that he's leaving The Lexington School?
Chuck, your loyalty to TLS has been incredible. I hope your experience with us will be your foundation for continued success at Charlotte Latin School. You leave the TLS nest with all my best wishes!



good to great

WHY ENDOWMENTS MATTER

The title of Chuck Baldecchi's Fall 2011 *Pinpoints* cover story introduces his thoughts and explanation of why endowments matter: "Solid endowments, commensurate to the number of students enrolled, push good schools to the top of the rankings across the nation. It seems preposterous to reduce a school's effectiveness to one data point. An endowment is, nonetheless, the one factor that distinguishes a school and allows it the freedom to become one of the best. In other words, endowments allow good schools to become great."

Jim Kenan, trustee emeritus and volunteer manager of the school's endowment from 1981 through 2017, has played a key role in the financial stability of The Lexington School. Jim was honored at Scarlet Gate with the unveiling of a bronze plaque bearing his likeness. A portion of the tribute reads, "In recognition of a lifetime commitment for his stewardship, counsel, and growth of the endowment, The Lexington School community recognizes James G. Kenan III. Mr. Kenan's vision to start the school's endowment with excess funds from a capital project in 1981 secured and shaped the future of The Lexington School."

Early on, Chuck respected and embraced the history of The Lexington School. Amanda Hale, Director of Development, says, "Chuck developed close relationships with **Josephine Abercrombie (H'00)** and with those families who helped TLS grow and thrive from the beginning. He felt a deep responsibility to continue their vision to make TLS become its best self."

Reconnecting TLS's future with its past, Chuck enlisted the help of past parents Blythe Clay, Nancy Grimes, and Cathy Miller to organize and plan the 50th Anniversary celebration, a weekend full of activities which were attended by nearly 1,000 TLS enthusiasts. Blythe and Nancy helped him conceptualize the 50th Anniversary Endowment Campaign, and then reconnected with many past parents and alumni as they planned a weekend of events and raised funds for the endowment.

According to **Rob Brewer '85**, Board Chair from 2008 to 2012, "We judge a school by how it holds up. Navigating the 2008 financial crisis, the worst economic climate since the Great Depression, the 50th Anniversary Endowment Campaign helped sustain the school by reinforcing support for tuition assistance and faculty salaries. We are so proud of that endowment."

Continuing Rob's sentiments, **Margaret Graves '79**, Board Chair from 2012 to 2016, says, "Chuck's efforts to increase the endowment are among his lasting accomplishments that will benefit TLS for decades. TLS raised over $11-million during a very difficult economic period. The Beck Family's $5-million gift and matching challenge was transformational. TLS now has one of the highest endowment-per-student levels in the country. This is a legacy that will benefit the school long-term."

Unprecedented for TLS, Chuck has been a part of three campaigns. He closed out Preserving Excellence, the campaign that built the Lower School; he initiated the 50th Anniversary Endowment Campaign; and he launched ONE School, TLS's current campaign.

Chuck's tenure has had a legacy impact on The Lexington School's campus and financial health. He has been a thoughtful steward of the school's resources and has prepared The Lexington School for success as he hands it over to the next generation of leadership.



James G. Kenan III

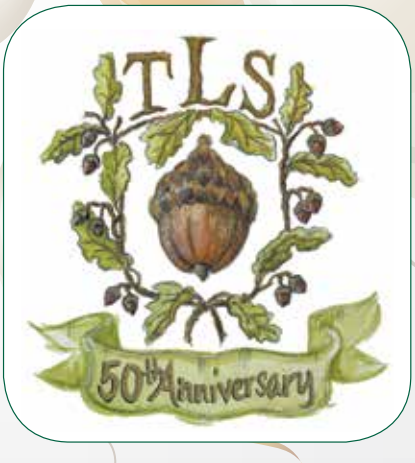
At Top: The Brewer family; **Jean Brewer '77**, **Robert M. Brewer (H'72)**, Kathy Brewer, Chuck Baldecchi.

50 AND FABULOUS

Three dynamic, creative, hard-working women devoted untold hours toward making The Lexington School's 50th Anniversary Celebration an undeniable success. Ten years later, each has warm memories:

Everything about the 50th was a joy because of Chuck's leadership and enthusiasm – and his appreciation of everyone's hard work. He not only successfully led the charge on our $10-million endowment campaign in the midst of a serious recession, he worked to reconnect alumni, past parents and grandparents, former teachers, and administrators to TLS. — **Blythe Clay**

Charlotte Latin School is lucky to have Chuck, Erin, and their children. The Baldecchis will bring another school together just as they did TLS at a critical time in our history. Charlotte Latin will be grateful they had the good fortune to get him as their Head of School. — **Nancy Grimes**



How incredibly fortunate the entire TLS family has been for fifteen years to have Chuck, whose insights allowed him to push into unchartered waters, seeking to establish a school where learning, curiosity, diversity, exploration, excellence, acceptance, and a nurturing environment were at the very core. … Now the torch is being passed to the next Head, Una MacCarthy, and, rest assured, we are in wonderful, capable hands.

— **Cathy Miller**

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS IS ALWAYS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

ONE

ONE SCHOOL | ONE FAMILY | ONE GOAL

Watch us grow.

https://oneschool.thelexingtonschool.org/page/home







Erin and Chuck Baldecchi host the 2005 Holiday Homecoming.



Jawanna Herd, Jack Brost, **Alex McIntyre '02,** Martha Anderson, Marijean Long

HOME *for the Holidays*

For six decades, members of the TLS family have felt school is an extension of home. After students and teachers alike leave their daily schedule on Lane Allen Road, it's not unusual for them to return soon and often. Early in his tenure, Chuck Baldecchi recognized the strong and lasting sense of community that has been a trademark of The Lexington School since its founding in 1959. Since 2004, Erin and Chuck have been hosts for Holiday Homecoming, with the inaugural gathering in the lower school building to celebrate its opening. Scarlet Gate is now the warm and welcoming location for this favorite biennial tradition. Parentheses signify new designation since 2005.



Callie Brooks (Picardo) '99, George and Kathy Brooks



The Bromagens, Sandi and Glenn, **Bo '98, Tyler '02**



Leanne Zimmerman, **Heidi Zimmerman (Simons) '03, Sean Zewicke '04** in middle



Rob Brewer '85, Rod Bussey (H'03), Charlotte Gay Stites '82


1



2


3


6


4


5

WHO?
WHAT?
WHERE?

| PIN PRINTS |

1 Pumpkin math allows first graders the opportunity to count seeds and measure and weigh the pumpkins. **2** "One Candle" is a longtime favorite song of the Holiday Concert. **3** The eighth grade boys varsity team defends the home court against crosstown rival Sayre. **4** TLS steals the ball from a St. Leo player and breaks fast down court in the girls varsity eighth grade game. **5** Fall Festival celebrates TLS friendship. **6** In the sixth grade play, *Flying High: The Story of Daedalus and Icarus*, Daedalus warns his nephew, Talos, against wasting time with worthless inventions.









| PIN PRINTS |

7 The production of Kentucky Heritage Day with its centerpiece musical *My New Kentucky Home* has become the fourth grade's rite of passage. **8** Beside the Red River Gorge bonfire is the place to be for the OAK, the middle school Outdoor Adventure Klub. **9** Fourth grade Writers' Celebration encourages TLS authors of tomorrow. **10** Begun in the Baldecchi years, the Honor Code ceremony signifies that TLS middle school students create an environment of trust. **11** A KinderKlasser is tickled to make her footprint. **12** With great intensity, this Montessori artist creates a painting for his parents as a holiday gift.





On my desk I have a montage of photos from my 15 years at TLS. The photos are covered by a glass protector and various pictures were shoved in from the edges as I was given them. In the middle, one of the first, is a photo of two babies strapped tightly into their car seats bundled up for winter weather. It is a picture of my son, Alex, and his oldest friend, George Freeman, Una MacCarthy's younger son. They aren't even a year old. Earlier today I went into Una's office to ask her a question. I was greeted by a poster-sized photo of two seven-year-olds in their Lexington School sweatshirts. If I were to guess, it was taken on the morning of the 50th Anniversary 5K. The two children are Justin Freeman and Bella Baldecchi. These two photos speak to how The Lexington School is not only just a school or a place of work, but also a community. The MacCarthy-Freeman family has been a huge part of the Baldecchi family's TLS experience. Una and Reid are special people who are dedicated to community and making the world a better place.

The Lexington School is in great hands under Una MacCarthy's leadership. Not because Una will be a continuation of my vision, but because she has her own vision for The Lexington School. I have always appreciated Una's thoughts and views on school and community; in fact, I have depended upon her advice and counsel. Even when we didn't see eye to eye on issues, I never doubted her love for the school or that she had the best interest of its students and faculty in mind. I am excited for TLS, and I am excited for Una MacCarthy. She and TLS are destined for great things.

With gratitude and respect
for a job I have loved,

Charles D. Baldecchi
Head of School



turning the PAGE

Fifteen years ago, Chuck arrived at 1050 Lane Allen Road with a bow tie and whale pants as a young new Head of School. Molly Strassner had just finished her second round as the Interim Head of School, and we were excited about Chuck's arrival.

Chuck's enthusiasm, friendly nature, and easy laugh were exactly what we needed. Fifteen years later, our initial excitement has grown to respect. Over the years, Chuck has been a great colleague and Head of School, but he has also become a good friend. For the majority of his fifteen years, TLS has enjoyed a stability in her faculty and staff. Occasionally someone would move away or retire, but it did not happen often. Chuck has helped create an atmosphere where TLS is a wonderful place to be, for adults and children. Chuck believes in the power of community. He would meet kids every morning at the door, take a roam around the halls to say hello to faculty, and not be shy to teach a lower schooler the best way to build the ultimate lunch plate on hotdog day. Everyone knows and loves Mr. B.

I have been lucky to work side by side with Chuck for the past decade and a half. TLS has benefited from his time here. We have a strong and vibrant school. I am excited to step into the position of Head of School and continue to build on this positive momentum.

I will miss the Baldecchi family, all of them. Our children have grown up next to each other. Justin and George's childhood memories are woven with experiences with Bella, Alex, and Cade. They will always be part of this TLS family. Charlotte is not that far away. We hope to see the whole family back here for a visit soon.

Sincerely,

Una MacCarthy
Eighth TLS Head of School

The Lexington School

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The Lexington School admits students of any race, religion, color, sex, national, or ethnic origin.

Thank You



Chuck.