



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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Thoughts for the Week

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This I am writing my column early since I will be attending the Heads of School Conference, in Mohonk, New York. Each year the Heads of School from New York State gather together for a three-day conference to discuss, study, review and try to resolve issues in independent school education. We also examine some of the latest ideas for developing our schools, our curriculum and our approach to our students.

This year's conference begins on Wednesday and will end late Friday afternoon. Our agenda for this year is focusing on social issues and pressures that have an impact on education. We will begin with a session on equity and justice. Our keynote speaker, Frank Bruni, from *The New York Times*, will begin our conference with a talk about the pressures and the realities of the college admissions process and the importance and the effect of college admissions on the life of the student.

From this point, there will be a number of smaller workshops, using the keynote address as a starting point. There will be detail discussion about the nature of the college admissions process, the preparation for students and the pressures that may or may not be necessary for success throughout this process.

After these sessions, our focus will shift to more social issues, such as the role of race in our schools, how racial differences are addressed throughout the curriculum and the mission. How do our schools react to difference in cultures, economic levels and academic differences? These questions drill down into the independent school philosophy and experience.

We will address other social issues such as transgender students, creating school leaders who understand the role of differences in our schools and the important role that understanding others has for all of us in our academic and social lives.

All in all this should be a provocative and productive conference. This is all in keeping with my strong belief that we are all live-long learners and Heads of School also have a lot to learn.

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