

HSA Column
May 8, 2012

As everyone knows (I hope), this is teacher appreciation week. Why it's only one week of the year, is beyond me. My children (like yours) have been fortunate to have some truly amazing and wonderful teachers over the years at Lafayette. (You may remember I mentioned a few weeks ago how inspired one of my daughters has been this year by her teacher.) In honor of teacher appreciation week, I thought I'd recount an experience we had a couple of years ago while on summer vacation. It speaks to the reciprocal bonds that develop between our children and this incredible group of professionals.

We were at the beach. We were driving, I'm not sure where or for what reason, but we were pulling into a parking spot along the side of the road.

I was driving and out of the corner of my eye, as I parked, I saw a woman walking right along the curb by the back passenger-side door. I remember thinking, who's the crazy person practically climbing on the minivan as I park? I finished parking and then her face popped into view in the front passenger-side window.

The face was familiar but I didn't immediately place it because it had been over a year since I had seen her. My wife opened her door and shouted Xan's name as I opened the back door for the kids. My older daughter, Gabi, then about to enter third grade became uncontrollably giddy as she saw the smiling face of her first grade teacher peering in at her. I said hello and Xan tried to engage Gabi in conversation as we all started walking down the street together. Gabi remained speechless and beside herself with joy as her former teacher talked. Soon we all realized that Xan's friends had grown weary of the delay and were beyond ready to move on. Xan had been as enraptured with seeing Gabi and hearing about the rest of her former students as Gabi had been seeing her.

Some months later we ran into Xan again. This time at a swim meet. Gabi's team was competing against a team Xan coached. When it was time for Gabi to race, I'll let you guess whether Xan cheered for the swimmers on her team or for Gabi. While I know she adored Gabi, both incidents speak to me of Xan's abiding affection for that class of students and for Lafayette. And Xan's affection and loyalty is a single example of how passionately devoted the teachers of Lafayette are to their students. And Gabi's loss for words illustrates the gratitude and affection Lafayette students in turn feel for their teachers' devotion.

On behalf of the HSA, Jenny and I want to thank the teachers and staff of Lafayette for everything you do for our children. Thank you. *-Dan*