



Admittedly, it feels a little icky dumping this into a Facebook post, but without a more appropriate vehicle for getting this in front of all the right folks, here's my open letter to the GWA family:

Dear George Walton Academy Staff, Faculty, Families and Contributors,

Our family is new to the GWA community; if we haven't met you, we're looking forward to it!

As we quickly become involved with the school, finding ourselves serving on committees and supporting the school in various capacities, I realize that the following could be perceived as insincere or obligatory. This is my attempt to tackle the task of putting into words the gratitude our family feels for what you, and all those before you, have collectively created and shared with us; this rare place, rich in tradition, yet relevant today with a plan for the future. I keep waiting to be disappointed, but on the contrary, our expectations continue to be exceeded; talented faculty and staff work tirelessly to make the experience seamless for the student and their family. We're getting to know other families who share similar values and our kids take pride in their new school. So, before we are labeled "insiders", I want to express our appreciation to all of you for creating this truly extraordinary community and education experience for our family and so many others to come.

Searching for the right school for your children is a frustrating process; emotions run high, the stakes are immeasurable and the clock is ticking. Yet, in our first minutes on the GWA campus, we could feel the stress being pushed aside by feelings of peace and pride. Student smiles are sincere, they know the answers to our questions and they make eye contact! Staff and faculty strike all the right chords, but it isn't scripted – these people are just doing it right! As our visit continued, a steady barrage of stimuli pegged the needle deep into YES territory. Rapidly, without a word between us, my wife Mikelle and I were arriving at the same indisputable conclusion; there is no other place our kids are going to school. We've found home, at last.

Today, we carry the torch with you, promoting the success of the school and students, and introducing GWA to other families. But please know that we will forever be grateful to each of you for the opportunity to join this community. Our family is better for the experience. We are in with all paws! Dawgs for life!

Perhaps it has been a few years since your family discovered GWA or maybe it was pre-ordained. Whatever the case, please know that your hard-earned tuition dollars and unquantifiable contributions of time, treasure and talent have cultivated something impossible to describe in words – the result of decades of dedicated work. I hope you take pride in what you have helped build. Thank you for the chance to join you in continuing the good work.

Sincerely and with great appreciation,

Justin Brady

#gwaproud