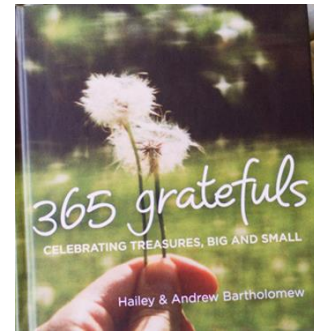


November 17, 2023

Marlin Families,

Someone I highly respect told me, "You have to see this book!" Today, as we find ourselves immersed in the season of Thanksgiving, I want to highlight this unique book with you, '[365 gratefuls](#),' and share the inspirational story of Hailey Bartholomew.



This is Hailey Bartholomew. She describes the start of her gratitude awakening as follows (this is in her words): *'A few years ago, I was struggling with life and feeling really down. I felt like I had everything that I needed, but I just wasn't happy...My husband was loving, my two kids were amazing, but I felt that life was a treadmill...I felt lost and didn't find much joy in my being. I knew in my head I had it good, but I really wasn't enjoying life!'*

On the advice of a friend, Hailey went to visit a nun who was living on the campus of a local church who did life-coaching and counseling. During their conversations, the nun provided Hailey a life changing perspective when she shared that the secret to happiness: according to her, was all about *reflection* and *gratitude*.

The nun then asked Hailey a specific question...*'What are you grateful for?'* Hailey couldn't really come up with an answer. The nun then asked Hailey to take the next 10 days to be purposefully grateful. She challenged Hailey to keep a gratitude journal and intentionally seek out things to be grateful for. Hailey agreed and each night she wrote down at least one

note of gratitude from each day. By reflecting on her days, Hailey realized there were amazing moments that she might have missed, or unappreciated, if she hadn't been actively looking for them.

Captured by this new focus of her attention, Hailey decided to continue her journal, but with a bit of a personal twist. She loved photography and decided that her new journal would be a picture journal.

Hailey committed to take a polaroid picture of one thing she was grateful for, every day, for an entire year. *365 gratefuls* was what she called the project. That endeavor changed her life in ways she could not have imagined. Taking one photo every day of something she was grateful for re-programmed her brain.



At first, the project felt more like a chore, but the more Hailey sought out moments of gratitude, the more she began to enjoy it. After a while, it was hard for her to take only one picture a day.



Wonder-filled bits of nature she otherwise would have rushed past, were brought right into the moment. The beautiful things around her life that were on display every day for her to see, like heart-shaped rocks washed up on the beach - became focal points.

Celebrating the good in her life - like focusing on the colorful umbrellas rather than the rain - affected not only the way she felt spiritually and physically, but it improved her relationships with others, as well.



At the conclusion of her year-long project, Hailey gathered her pictures and posted her *365 gratefuls* project on Flickr and people began to

notice it. Individuals from all over the world saw Hailey's photographs, found inspiration in her idea and began doing their own grateful project's...

...people like Lori Portka. Lori was captivated by Hailey's *365 gratefuls* and she decided to paint 100 paintings to give to 100 people as a way to express her gratitude for them.

With her passion for painting, Lori wanted to live a life of gratitude and she saw this challenge as a way to commit to share her appreciation with others.

Her [100 Thank-Yous](#) included a painting for her mom to share how grateful she was for all her mom taught her...A painting for Tony, her mechanic, to share with him how grateful she was that she could trust him to be honest with her repairs...A painting for Jasmine, her hair dresser, who always makes Lori feel special when she visits the saloon...And a painting for Amy whom Lori had actually never met in person prior to completing the painting.



Lori had read a story about Amy and how Amy's daughter passed away shortly after she was born. Lori was so touched by Amy's story, she reached out to her via email to ask permission to paint her a picture. Amy agreed and when the two met, at Lori's gallery exhibit, Amy was moved to tears. When asked about the impact of Lori's gift, Amy responded by saying, *'One person can make a difference, because gratitude grows. I am so grateful for her!'*

Purposeful gratitude led Hailey out of a difficult time in her life, enriched her relationship with her family, forever changed how she looks at the world around her, and inspired others to do the same.

## A Spirit of Gratitude Around Campus



The question of the season presents, 'What are you grateful for?' This November, I am grateful for the meaningful connections that have been cultivated around campus. Our Parents Organization hosted a potluck dinner in our school gym that encouraged families to fellowship and share a meal. Also, in our

gym this month, our students celebrated Veterans Day with a musical performance for parents, grandparents and local veterans.

I am grateful for the enriching experiences our teachers facilitate for our students. This month, Ms. Becky Schroeder led our elementary school chess team to a first-place finish at the South Carolina Independent School Association competition where, out of a field of 140 competitors, two of our students finished in First and Second place.



I am grateful to our entire community for actively participating in Raise Craze and prioritizing a secure and supportive environment. This month, students throughout our school community performed more than 1200 acts of kindness on campus and around the community. The display of generosity has been truly inspiring and the impacts of those good deeds continue to ripple and encourage others.



## Family Satisfaction Survey – Fall 2023

Each year, Lowcountry Prep sends out family satisfaction surveys in October and March. As partners in this process of education, your parental feedback is essential for the continued growth and development of our program. The following is a summary of the just completed Fall 2023 Family Survey that included questions about mission and vision, prioritizing a secure and supportive environment, implementing enriching experiences and cultivating meaningful connections. Each question was rated on a five-point scale with (1) lowest and (5) being highest. The calculated scores are the average of the responses to each question. We are grateful to the 39 families (some who had students in multiple divisions) who participated in this Fall survey and we invite all families to provide feedback in our March Spring survey.

Total Respondents	Lower School	Middle School	Upper School
39	24	15	9

Questions: On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 5 (highest),	Avg Score
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<b>Mission and Vision</b>	
How successful is Lowcountry Preparatory School at fulfilling the mission to foster an ideal learning environment for your child(ren)?	4.12
How do you rate the quality of the academic program that Lowcountry Preparatory School provides our students?	4.28
How likely are you to recommend Lowcountry Preparatory School to another family?	4.26
<b>AVG</b>	<b>4.22</b>



# LOWCOUNTRY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

*The Ideal Learning Environment*



<b>Prioritizing a Secure and Supportive Environment</b>	
How do you rate campus security?	4.4
How do you rate the welcoming and nurturing environment at Lowcountry Prep?	4.49
How do you rate communication at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.33
How do you rate the buildings and grounds (not to include information technology) at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	3.38
How do you rate the uniform and dress code standards for our students at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.36
How do you rate the consistency of the enforcement of rules by faculty and staff at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.03
How do you rate character education at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.21
How do you rate admissions standards at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.08
How do you rate RenWeb, which includes the parent portal and our online lunch ordering?	4.31
<b>AVG</b>	<b>4.18</b>

<b>Implementing Enriching Experiences</b>	
How do you rate the art program at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.61
How do you rate the music program at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.55
How do you rate the PE program at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.29
How do you rate athletics program at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	3.52
How do you rate Lowcountry Preparatory School's implementation of the Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum in the Upper School?	4.15
How do you rate the use of technology in support of curricular programming at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.03
How do you rate the quality of field trips and travel experiences at Lowcountry Prep?	4.00
On a scale of 1 ( <i>less than expected</i> ) through 5 ( <i>more than expected</i> ), how do you rate the amount of time your child(ren) spend on nightly homework?	3.90
<b>AVG</b>	<b>4.16</b>



<b>Cultivating Meaningful Connections</b>	
How do you rate the quality of the faculty and staff at Lowcountry Preparatory School?	4.41
How do you rate your interactions with the Head of School?	4.64
How do you rate your interactions with the Head of Middle and Upper School?	4.46
How do you rate your interactions with the Middle School Director/Testing Coordinator?	4.55
How do you rate your interactions with the Head of Lower School?	4.64
How do you rate your interactions with the Finance Officer?	4.44
How do you rate your interactions with the Athletic Director?	4.00
How do you rate your interactions with the office staff?	4.71
<b>AVG</b>	<b>4.48</b>

## 2024 – 2025 Academic Calendar

Looking ahead to next year, we are delighted to share our academic calendar for the 2024-2025 year. To give you some insight into the construction of the calendar, each year we designate at least 175 days of academic instruction. Additionally, we have also identified the major holidays and days off from school. You will see the 2024-2025 calendar is similar in construct to this current year. To take away some of the mystery, the first day of school next year is scheduled for Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. To see the rest of the calendar, follow this [link](#).

## Holiday Blessing

As we step away from school for a well-earned break, we wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving. As Rabbi Naomi Levy captures in her seasonal blessing, we have much to be thankful for.

For the laughter of the children, for my own life breath, for the abundance of food on this table, for the ones who prepared this sumptuous feast, for the roof over our heads, the clothes on our backs, for our health, and our wealth of blessings, for this opportunity to celebrate with family and friends, for the freedom to pray these words without fear, in any language, in any faith, in this great country, whose landscape is as vast and beautiful as her inhabitants. thank you, God, for giving us all these. Amen.

— Rabbi Naomi Levy

Regards,

Wes Wehunt  
Head of School  
Lowcountry Prep