



June 25, 2018

Dear Pingry Community,

Fourteen years ago next week, I attended my first Pingry Board meeting as a new trustee; it was a special meeting called to inform us that we would be commencing a search for a new head. That search resulted in the successful recruitment of Nat Conard. With the conclusion of the 2018-19 school year, Nat will be stepping down as headmaster, completing a 14-year tenure at Pingry. The fourth-longest serving headmaster in Pingry's history and the longest in some 50 years, Nat has effectively led the School through a period of extraordinary intellectual and pedagogical growth and physical plant expansion and renovation, all while building our financial resources and smoothly operating an ever more complex organization. I cannot overstate the positive transformation that Nat has championed and implemented, and it has been an absolute privilege to serve alongside one of the most talented and accomplished school heads in the country.

Among the many highlights of his accomplishments at Pingry is an impressive increase in the diversity of our community, including both families and faculty. The success of the *Blueprint for the Future* campaign was extraordinary, with the final tally of \$76.7 million substantially surpassing both our target as well as our previous campaigns. Our new athletics center in Basking Ridge, completely modernized Short Hills Campus and significant makeovers on the Basking Ridge Campus (particularly to the outdoor athletics spaces and science wing) all testify to Nat's commitment to providing superior facilities for our students. We have never offered a more compelling and inspiring curriculum, whether evidenced by the cutting-edge independent research in the sciences and humanities in the Upper School, our STEAM initiative in the Lower School, or innumerable other examples. Nat's leadership has been particularly essential over the past two years in compassionately engaging with survivors of sexual abuse from Pingry's past.

During Nat's final year, he will continue to focus on advancing the recently-completed strategic plan with its focus on five core themes: Purpose and Disciplines, Global Education, Student Well-being, Faculty & Staff Growth and Development, and Maximizing Impact. We are also fortunate to have an extremely strong faculty and administrative team who are committed to the implementation of the plan and to delivering, every year, the best possible education to our students.

After Nat and I first discussed his transition, the Board of Trustees established a search committee co-chaired by Trustees Stuart Lederman '78 and Katie Procter P '22, '26. The committee has already interviewed several potential executive search firms with extensive experience in head of school searches, and we expect to retain one within the week. While the search committee and retained search firm will be extremely busy over the course of the summer conducting the preliminary steps of the search process, we will also engage the broader community. Specifically, we will establish an advisory group composed of parents, faculty and staff, alumni, and students to assist with our search. We look forward to recruiting our next Head who will build upon the School's strong foundation and take us to an even more exciting future.

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In the coming months, we will be announcing ways in which we will be celebrating Nat's legacy and contributions to the School. In the meantime, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to express my deepest appreciation for all Nat has done for Pingry. Following this letter you will find the letter of resignation Nat wrote to me. We look forward to celebrating his 14-year legacy at Pingry in the coming school year.

Best wishes for the summer,

Jeffrey N. Edwards '78, P '12, '14, '18
Chair, Board of Trustees