January 17, 2019

Dear Members of the University School of Milwaukee Community:

As you are aware, Laura Fuller has recently announced her decision to retire at the end of the 2019–20 school year. University School of Milwaukee has benefited significantly from her dedicated leadership since 2011. University School is in an excellent position academically, administratively, and financially, to attract another extraordinary leader to shape the future of our school. At the request of Board of Trustees President Andrew Petzold, we are honored to serve as co-chairs of the search committee charged with the responsibility of managing the review and selection process for University School’s next head of school. We are writing to share information about the initial steps being taken in the search process.

Consistent with its responsibilities, the board has appointed a search committee to conduct a comprehensive, national search for the next head of school. The search committee is charged with identifying—with significant input from all constituencies within our community—a successor head of school and presenting that individual to the board for approval. Following independent school best practices, the committee is intentionally small yet it is also representative of a broad range of the school’s interests.

We would like to introduce ourselves, along with the other members of the search committee, and briefly outline the next steps in our search process. The members of the committee, along with their affiliation with the school, are:

- **Jackie Darr**, search committee co-chair; Board of Trustees member; parent of Jackson ’24 and Mia ’25
- **Michael W. Darrow ’86**, search committee co-chair; Board of Trustees member; parent of Charles ’24, Joseph ’24, and Addison ’26
- **Joseph Eason**, Upper School faculty (since 2009); History Department chair; parent of Madeline ’26, Samuel ’26, and Dylan ’28
- **Stephen B. Guy**, Board of Trustees president-elect; Board Risk Assessment Committee chair; parent of Stephanie ’20 and William ’23
- **Jennifer Keppeler**, Preschool faculty (since 1997); parent of Alexandra ’20 and Caroline ’20
- **Andrew A. Petzold**, Board of Trustees president; parent of Aaron ’16 and Grace ’19
- **Debra Pokel**, Parents’ Association president-elect; parent of Alvin ’20
- **William A. Wernecke Jr.**, Endowment Board member; past Board of Trustees president; past headmaster search committee chair; parent of Ellen ’02, Claire ’04, Chloe ’09, and Maxwell ’09
- **Sarah O. Zimmerman ’92**, Board of Trustees vice president; Board Committee on Trustees chair; parent of Joseph ’22 and Nathaniel ’25

The board has partnered with Educators’ Collaborative, a national consulting firm that conducts head of school and senior administrator searches, for our head of school search. The three individuals involved in this search process are John Mackenzie, co-managing partner; Marcus Hurlbut, co-managing partner; and Deirdre
Ling, partner. All three consultants have themselves headed independent schools, and together have more than 100 years of combined experience working in independent school education.

While the primary responsibility for managing the process of nominating the next head of school lies with the search committee, the board is committed to making this a robust and inclusive process. There will be multiple opportunities for current and former parents, faculty, staff, alumni, and students to provide input during the search process. Educators’ Collaborative will soon conduct a confidential online survey, seeking your thoughts about our school and its future leadership. In addition, their team will be on campus Feb. 6 and 7 to meet with members of the University School community, hear their perspectives on the future leadership of the school, and answer questions about the search process.

Using the information gathered from the survey and their February visit, the consultants will develop a comprehensive position profile for University School’s next head of school. They will begin to build the pool of candidates by listing the position with appropriate agencies and associations, contacting selected educational leaders to solicit recommendations for the position, and reaching out to potential candidates with whom they and their colleagues are familiar. After the candidate pool has been developed, the search committee will meet to review the credentials of the top candidates identified by our consultants.

Through this process we will seek to find an appropriate balance between involving community input and respecting the privacy of the candidates. This latter consideration regarding candidates is important to help ensure the strongest possible candidate pool.

The University School community will be kept apprised of the progress of the search process via updates on a designated “Head of School Search” page linked from our website home page and through other school communications. You can also visit www.usmk12.org/headsearch to access that search update page directly. Our next communication will provide information as to the specific times and locations that you will be able to meet with the Educators’ Collaborative consultants during their upcoming visit. We will also provide a link to the survey in that communication, which we hope you will complete. It is the board’s goal to conclude the search and announce the new head of school in the fall of 2019.

On behalf of the search committee and the Board of Trustees, thank you for your interest, support, and enthusiasm as we embark upon this important journey to identify our next head of school.

Sincerely,

Jackie Darr
Co-chair, Head of School Search Committee

Mike Darrow ’86
Co-chair, Head of School Search Committee