From Prep’s Board Chair and President:

Dear Members of the Prep for Prep Community,

The start of this fall marked 25 years of Aileen Hefferren’s exceptional service to Prep for Prep, and shortly after that anniversary she informed us that she felt it is the right time in her personal and professional life for her to explore the world outside of Prep. We accepted her decision to step down as Chief Executive with very mixed feelings given Aileen’s many contributions to Prep, but we understand her desire to apply her talent and broad experience in another mission-driven setting.

Aileen is a true believer in Prep’s mission and a zealous advocate for our students. When you think of the full scope of what Prep does today – supporting 700 independent school students each year, engaging our growing population of 600 undergraduates and over 3,000 college graduates, deepening partnerships with our valued 70 partner schools, and leveraging $35 million in financial aid annually to support our students – you start to get a sense of the scope and importance of the Chief Executive role.

During her time as Chief Executive, Aileen expanded the program and its reach, cemented Prep’s leadership in the field, and strengthened our financial foundation. Among her many accomplishments are new and improved programming, including an expanded PREP 9, our boarding school program, and the launch of Smart Connections, which enabled other organizations around the world to benefit from our knowledge base. Aileen spearheaded the addition of important new resources to support emotional and psychological health, in addition to academic resources. She instituted new opportunities to engage and deploy our growing alumni population in support of the organization; increased our STEM offerings through key partnerships with Bloomberg and Google; and, crucially, helped recruit the ten alumni who currently sit on the board. Finally, she helped raise a total of over $230 million from private sources, which allowed us to increase our reserve funds from $1.5 million to more than $40 million. For all this, which means we proceed into the future with a solid foundation, we can all be grateful.

Consistent with her decades of commitment to Prep, Aileen volunteered to remain in place through the 2020 Lilac Ball to give us enough time to execute on our long-standing succession plan and help assure the success of our biggest annual fundraising event. We will use the time to conduct a thoughtful search process that will be broad-based and inclusive.

In that spirit, we have established a search committee with representation from multiple generations of Prep trustees and with diverse perspectives. In addition to the two of us, members include: Frank Bynum, Yahonnes Cleary (P9 V), Chris James (IX), Sue Meng (XV), Jeannemarie O’Brien, and Chris Ortega. We have initiated discussions with leading search firms to assist us with this important task, and we will be reaching out to members of the community for their input.

Since its founding more than four decades ago, Prep for Prep has launched thousands of leaders, each imbued with the excellence, integrity, commitment and courage that represent our values. There is much more work to be done and we expect to take time to identify the right leader to guide Prep into the future. We know we can count on this special community to support Prep in this important transition and to join us in wishing Aileen all the very best in the next phase of her life.

Sincerely,

Scott Bok
Chair, Board of Trustees

Lisa Cashin
President, Board of Trustees