



October 26, 2020

Dear Worcester Academy Community,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Kevin Breen as the new Head of School of Worcester Academy effective July 1, 2021. The Search Committee's enthusiastic recommendation of Kevin aligned with the overwhelmingly positive response of the WA community to his candidacy including the Board which met this recommendation with their unanimous vote of approval.

Kevin Breen is currently in his 8th year as Head of School at the Marshall School, a grades 4-12 school of approximately 350 students in Duluth, MN. In his time at the Marshall School, some of his notable achievements have included introducing a new tuition strategy, successfully completing a capital campaign, renovated facilities, expanding their international boarding program from 12 to 40 students, cutting attrition in half, and improving classroom engagement. A believer in distributed leadership, Kevin has created many "leaders within" who have helped to transform the School, especially in the areas of governance, academic assessment, equity and inclusion, and external relations.

Kevin is a Massachusetts native having attended public school in Westwood, MA, and then going on to Notre Dame where he earned his BA in American Studies, and later earning a Master's in Writing from DePaul University. After an early-career teaching internship at Andover and two years teaching in Chicago, Kevin spent the next 14 years at the Brooks School in North Andover, MA, moving from teacher, dorm parent, and coach to English Department Chair and ultimately Director of Admission and Financial Aid, raising the bar for applications, test scores, selectivity, and yield. He then moved back to the Midwest as Associate Head of School for External Relations and Director of Enrollment at University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods, MI. There he led a rebranding effort that, along with increased outreach efforts, grew enrollment by 13% overall and 40% in the Upper School on his watch. He also worked closely with the Head of School and Trustees on a capital campaign, creating materials, building community support, and helping to secure a seven-figure gift.

With the tremendous support of our search consultants Tony Featherston and Bob Henderson of RG175, and the valuable contributions of the WA community, a comprehensive and compelling Head of School Position Statement ([Head of School Position Statement.pdf](#)) was developed well reflecting WA's mission, community, programming and the exciting opportunities ahead for the school. The Search Committee received 51 applications from New England, across the country and internationally. This was an impressive and diverse group. The group was narrowed down to 10 semi-finalists and ultimately four finalists who each spent three full days meeting with Trustees, faculty, staff, students, parents, and senior administrators. The Search Committee's strong belief in the strength of Kevin's candidacy as WA's next Head of School developed from months of information gathering and consideration from in-depth application materials, multiple interviews, skills survey data, references, background checks, participation in Trustee and parent forums, as well as valuable feedback survey data from WA community members who met with Kevin during his visit.

The Search Committee was impressed throughout the recruitment process with Kevin's extensive experience and expertise in the priority areas of opportunity for WA and the new Head of School. Kevin's career has been marked by a remarkable track record of success as an educator and senior administrator. His work has reflected his commitment to educational excellence, his strategic approach to school management and systems, his compelling communication skills, his ability to attract and retain talent, his commitment to leading a community that prioritizes diversity and inclusion as part of its rigorous and supportive programming and culture, and his demonstrated fundraising success.

Kevin's appointment marks the culmination of an exhaustive search process which began in August 2019 with Ron Cino's announcement of his intent to resign as Head of School after the 2020-2021 academic year. We look forward to celebrating Ron and continuing to express to him our deep gratitude for his leadership and unwavering dedication and service to WA throughout his career and in these particularly challenging times.

We wish to recognize and express our gratitude to our fellow members of the Search Committee and Trustees who worked tirelessly with us throughout this process to bring us to this wonderful decision point: Jamie Lavin '02, Meg O'Leary P'20 & P'22, and David Shamoian '70. Their deep commitment to WA and the search process were integral to this successful and exciting outcome.

In the coming weeks, we will assemble a team to assist with the transition and welcome of Kevin and his wife, Dana, to Worcester Academy and to help ensure Kevin's successful preparation and onboarding into his new role beginning July 1, 2021. We couldn't be more excited to welcome Kevin and Dana to the Worcester Academy community!

James J. Pietro
WA Board President

Susan C. Puryear
Search Committee Chair & Board Member