

# DERBY ACADEMY

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December 18, 2019

Dear Members of the Derby Academy Community:

As co-chairs of the Search Committee, we are looking forward to leading the search process for Derby Academy's next Head of School. We write to introduce ourselves and to give you an overview of what to expect in the coming weeks and months. As Derby parents who love this school, both of us are honored to be serving as chairs of the Search Committee. Jeff is a member of the Board of Trustees and serves on its Governance Committee. His son, Blake, is currently in fourth grade. Caroline has been an active volunteer assisting with various roles in the Parents Association, including Grade Rep, the Development Committee, Athletic Rep and Derby Auction Co-Chair; she has two children at Derby: James is in seventh grade and Reed is in fourth grade. We intend to keep the community well informed throughout the search process and will be relying on the broad participation of the community in a number of ways to ensure a successful outcome to our work. All of us are deeply committed to the ongoing and future well-being of Derby Academy.

After careful consideration of several search firms, we have retained the highly respected educational consulting firm of Educators' Collaborative to help us with our search. This firm has conducted over 1000 successful head of school searches since 1971. Marcus Hurlbut, Co-Managing Partner and Deirdre Ling, Senior Partner with the firm, will be our consultants. Both have served as heads of independent schools and are well respected by educators throughout the country through well-developed professional networks. Both Marc and Deirdre feel that Derby Academy presents a very attractive professional opportunity that will produce an excellent pool of candidates.

The Search Committee will be announced in the coming weeks. The success of this search will depend in large part on the input the Search Committee and the consultants receive from the Derby Academy community. Marc and Deirdre will be on campus on January 15-16, during which time they will meet extensively with members of the Derby community: students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, Derby Council members, and Trustees. These meetings will help frame the opportunities before us and inform the development of a leadership opportunity statement for Derby's next Head of School.

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. We fully realize that not everyone will be able to participate in the on-campus interviews, and so the consultants will make available to everyone an on-line survey that will address the following questions:

- What are the strengths of Derby Academy?
- What are the main challenges that the School needs to address over the next 3-5 years?
- What specific personal and professional qualities would you like to see in the next head of Derby Academy?

You will be invited to participate in the survey shortly after the first of the New Year. Comments shared with the consultants will not be attributed to individuals. This input will be extremely helpful in developing the leadership profile for the next Head of School.

Our consultants anticipate considerable interest from a well-qualified group of candidates. They will advertise the position extensively in the coming weeks and access their extensive database and

professional networks to solicit and encourage applications from well-qualified prospective candidates. During the summer, the Search Committee will review dossiers and invite 8-10 candidates to in-person, confidential interviews with the Committee. From this group, the Committee will invite the top candidates to the School in September for two full-days of interviews. There will be opportunities for representatives from all constituencies in our community to meet the candidates and provide feedback to the Search Committee on their impressions. Ideally, a single candidate will rise to the top and be recommended to the Board for approval in late September or early October 2020.

With guidance and support from Marc and Deirdre, we have full confidence that we will identify the right candidate to lead Derby into its next chapter. We look forward to introducing you to Marc and Deirdre during their campus visits. Details will follow.

In the meantime, we are grateful for your support and will continue to keep you informed about our progress.

Sincerely,

Jeff Alexander P'24 and Caroline Counselman P'21, '24  
Co-Chairs  
Head of School Search Committee