



October 27, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, ISACS has been spending a great deal of time engaging members in discussions focused on the ISACS Board decision of 2014 to revise our accreditation standards to more clearly prohibit discrimination in admission and hiring practices in member schools on the basis of sexual orientation.

I thank each of you who participated in the regional meetings on this equity initiative that took place throughout the Central States from January to May. Over half of the Heads of member schools – upwards of 110 -- joined ISACS President Claudia Daggett in discussions.

As a result of the feedback from those discussions, ISACS commissioned a group of school leaders to determine the best way for our Association to advance this vision of equity and remain a pluralistic member organization embracing secular and religious schools with diverse missions. In addition, the Board drew on the counsel of Eboo Patel, founder and executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core and a nationally-recognized advocate for moving institutions forward while embracing pluralism.

From this work emerged a new resolution, adopted at the Board's October meeting:

Resolved, that:

Through accreditation and other services, the Association will require and support the work of each ISACS school to provide an equitable, affirming, safe, and just environment.

This broader framework incorporates both accountability and support using the full breadth of ISACS services while allowing us to focus on an aspirational goal regarding school climate. This new resolution also shifts the intention to caring for the well-being of all members of our school communities.

Steps toward implementation of this resolution will include review and enhancement, as needed, of all aspects of ISACS functions, including all standards of accreditation, self-study writing prompts, ISACS School Community Survey, Visiting Team training, professional development programs, and other resources offered to member schools.

The Board has charged Claudia with the responsibility of developing a timetable and action plan for moving this work forward. She will provide regular updates on progress through her monthly *President's Updates*, at the Heads of School Conference, and in a series of regional heads meetings.

In addition, the Heads Conference will offer an opportunity to interact with Eboo Patel, who will present a keynote entitled "Educating Leaders for A Diverse Democracy: A Look at Religious Identity, Sexuality, and More" and follow-up discussion session. I hope to see many of you there.

With best regards,

John Farber
ISACS Board Chair
Head of School, Old Trail School