



THE URSULINE SCHOOL

June 18, 2020

Dear Members of The Ursuline School Community,

At a regularly scheduled Board meeting on June 11, 2020, Eileen Davidson confirmed her decision to retire at the end of the next school year, effective June 30, 2021. The Board of Trustees, while thrilled for Eileen, has reluctantly accepted her decision to retire.

Valued Leadership

President Davidson has been an exemplary leader, committed champion and beloved member of the Ursuline faculty for nearly 40 years. In 1983, Eileen joined the faculty as a Science teacher. After serving as department chair, Eileen assumed the role of Assistant Principal. In 2005, Eileen was named the first lay Principal of Ursuline. In 2012, after a competitive search, Eileen was unanimously named President of The Ursuline School, the first lay President in the school's then 115-year history.

Ursuline has been blessed by Eileen's leadership, vision and passion in each of her roles. Her many contributions are too lengthy to list, but some of her notable achievements over the years include:

- Championed Ursuline's all-girls Catholic identity and reinforced our vision, mission and values;
- Spearheaded the Building on the Tradition of Innovation capital campaign in support of the amazing building project that is nearing completion;
- Inspired greatness in academics, service and athletics;
- Managed the development of an extraordinary group of faculty and staff;
- Created Ursuline's Global Education Program, which welcomed countless accomplished individuals of varied backgrounds to educate and widen the world view of our students;
- Planned for Ursuline's future by doubling scholarships, updating the campus footprint and implementing sound fiscal practices for many generations of Ursuline students to come; and
- Received several awards and accolades for advancing women's education, such as her Woman of Excellence Award for Business and Professional Achievement in Education from the City of New Rochelle, the United Hebrew Community Service Award and recognition by the NY State Senate.

National Search Process

Several years ago, the Board of Trustees, together with Eileen, included leadership and succession planning among its goals. At the beginning of this school year, the Board appointed a Board Search Task Force to help facilitate the succession planning process. This Task Force, chaired by Trustee Janine Daughtry (P'20), researched best practices for school leadership searches. In March, the Task Force made several recommendations which the Board began to implement, beginning with the creation of a President Search Committee.

Ursuline's new President search process, which could take up to eight months, will seek the input of all key constituents including faculty, staff, administration, students, alumnae, current and former parents and extended friends of the community. We especially welcome hearing from each of you as this is a strategic and critically-important Board-led initiative.

The President Search Committee is being co-chaired by Ann Gillin Lefever, Chair of the Board of Trustees and Robert Gomprecht Sr., former Trustee and former Administrator at Fordham Preparatory School and Albertus Magnus High School as well as current Ursuline grandparent.

In addition to Ann and Bob, the other members of the President Search Committee are:

- Sr. Susan Conte Ph.D., O.S.U., former Trustee and former Faculty Member
- Mrs. Janine Daughtry (P'20), current Trustee

- Dr. Mary Driscoll ('74), former Chair of the Board of Trustees and current Chair of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula
- Sr. Jane Finnerty O.S.U., current Provincial, former Trustee and former Faculty Member
- Mr. Michael Hoffman (P'14 and '20), former Trustee
- Mrs. Belinda Palmer (P'14), former Trustee
- Mrs. Sheila Sohr (P'12), Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees also directed the Search Committee to involve an outside executive search firm to ensure an extensive national search of diverse and highly qualified candidates. A thorough review of several experienced firms is underway and the Search Committee expects to make an announcement shortly on the chosen search firm.

In addition, the Board's Strategic Planning Oversight Committee will be launching a broad-based Community Survey later this month seeking feedback on a variety of key issues affecting Ursuline as it prepares the development of its next Strategic Plan. Leadership succession feedback will be included in this Community Survey. We encourage every member of the Ursuline community to complete this anonymous survey.

And finally in the coming weeks, we will also be launching a webpage dedicated to the President Search process where we will post news and updates on our progress. As always, it's important to keep our community apprised of all developments as we proceed with our efforts.

We ask for your prayers as we launch this important search and survey process and we look forward to celebrating Eileen's extraordinary leadership in the coming year. Please join us, on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, in thanking Eileen for her unwavering stewardship and ensuring a seamless transition for the continual advancement of Ursuline moving forward.

St. Angela, watch over us all our days.

St. Ursula, protect our future.

Sincerely,

Ann Gillin Lefever, Chair (through August, 2020)

Sheila Sohr, Vice Chair (Chair beginning September, 2020)