



**Harbor Country Day School**  
*Embracing the extraordinary in every child.™*

March 4, 2021

Dear Members of the Harbor Country Day School community,

I write to you tonight with a bittersweet message. After a decade of shaping the tone and spirit of Harbor, John Cissel has decided to retire at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, just over one year from now.

John embodies the Harbor mission. During his time as Head of School, he has guided the school to reach so many milestones, including:

- Ensuring the school cherishes childhood every day
- Building an administrative and faculty team of highest caliber
- Overseeing a full review of the curriculum of each and every grade
- Implementing a five-year strategic plan
- Launching the Capital Campaign for Harbor's future
- Leading us all through COVID, including ensuring in-person school could continue as much as possible
- ...and most importantly, shaking hands with each student each morning - an estimated 20,000 handshakes over ten years - thousands of moments of connection with a child to start their school day

We will be conducting a search for John's replacement beginning this month, with a goal of completing this search by the end of 2021. I have asked two key leaders at Harbor to co-chair the search: Adrienne Owen, immediate past Chair of the Board and mother of Grant Owen '20, and Cynthia Lippe, co-chair of the Parents Association and mother of Rachael and Jacob, current students. Together, Cynthia and Adrienne will lead the school through a careful selection process for our new Head of School that includes input from the community. Once the Head is hired by the Board, he or she will begin their job on July 1, 2022.

I know that this news may take a bit to sink in for you and your family - especially for the children at the school - and I encourage you to reach out to John with any questions at any point. However, we look forward to a wonderful year ahead under John's continued leadership.

Please join me in thanking John for all he has done to make the future of Harbor so bright. I look forward to the opportunity to celebrate him in person with all of you closer to the time he retires.

Warmly,  
Corinne Hammons  
Chair, Board of Trustees