

HEAD OF SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT



To the Berkshire School Community:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I write to share that Pieter Mulder has informed us of his decision to retire as Head of School at the conclusion of the 2027–2028 school year. Thanks to Pieter's early transparency with me about his plans, we have nearly two full years to celebrate his tenure, support a thoughtful transition, and welcome Berkshire's next leader.

Pieter and Lucia Mulder arrived at Berkshire in 2005. After serving first as Dean of Academics and then as Director of College Counseling, Pieter was appointed Berkshire's 16th Head of School in 2013. He is now our longest-serving Head since John Godman completed his 20-year tenure in 1970, and before him, founder Seaver Buck, who led Berkshire from 1907 to 1943. I speak for the entire Board when I say Pieter will go down in Berkshire history as a legendary leader, both for what was accomplished during his tenure and for the way he carried himself while doing it.

On a personal note, Pieter has been a wonderful partner to me during my time as Chair, as he was to Lara McLanahan '86, Chip Perkins '73, and Alice Cole '76 before me. Together with Lucia—who herself devoted more than twenty years to Berkshire in roles including Director of Communications and Marketing, Editor of the *Berkshire Bulletin*, and Director of Campaign Communications—they have brought authenticity, warmth, and integrity to Berkshire and all of our Bears. I know I speak for many parents, including my own family, in saying how grateful we are for the experience each of our children had at Berkshire under their stewardship.

Pieter spearheaded Berkshire's 2015 and 2025 Strategic Plans, with priorities to strengthen admissions, academics, co-curricular programs, college placement, and faculty and staff support, while ensuring the school's long-term financial sustainability—and every one of those areas has shown marked improvement. The endowment, now \$268 million, has more than doubled over his tenure, with crucial growth directed toward financial aid and faculty compensation. Pieter has personally championed the recruitment and development of Berkshire's faculty and staff, raising compensation and benefits to attract and retain top talent.

Berkshire's Signature Programs—Aviation Science, Advanced Math/Science Research, Advanced Humanities Research, Advanced Environmental Science Research, the Ritt Kellogg Mountain Program, and Pro Vita Winter Session—were all strengthened during the Mulder era. On the physical campus, the renovated Soffer Athletic Center and newly built Campus Center, with combined funding of \$30 million in gifts, were transformative additions, alongside updates to the Kennard Visual Arts Center, The Warren Family Gallery, and the Geier Library.

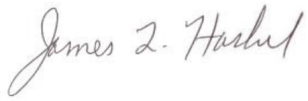
One of the clearest marks of the Mulder era is the growth in Berkshire's applicant pool—up nearly 45% even as our acceptance rate has halved, evidence of the school's rising standing among boarding schools nationally. Berkshire occupies a special place in that world, striking the rare balance of an ambitious school with high standards and a deeply supportive community, where students care for one another and build close relationships with faculty and staff. Students feel that connection every morning when Pieter greets them by name as they enter Berkshire Hall for the start of the school day. None of this happens without the full Berkshire community—students, faculty, staff, and the generosity of parents, alumni, and friends—but Pieter has been our clear and steady leader, and for that we are deeply grateful.

Perhaps the Mulders' greatest gift to Berkshire is the position of strength in which they leave us, a foundation we intend to build on as we navigate a changing landscape for boarding schools and search for the school's next leader. Pieter, together with our talented administrative team, faculty, and staff, remains committed to keeping Berkshire moving toward excellence through the remainder of his term and beyond.

I have already assembled a small group of trustees to consider the transition process, which resulted in our selection of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to lead the upcoming search. From the Board, I have asked Jennifer Hayes Johns '86 to co-chair the Search Committee alongside me. I have known Jen for decades, since our own years at Berkshire, and I believe she brings exactly the intelligence, balance, and wisdom this transition requires—one that is free of bias and where all voices are heard. In the coming weeks, we will share more about the process, including the members of the Search Committee, which will include trustees, faculty, staff, and alumni.

As we enter this period of transition, I hold two things at once: deep gratitude to Pieter and Lucia for their extraordinary tenure at Berkshire, and optimism that we will identify a great new leader to carry Berkshire into its future. In the meantime, our focus remains exactly where it should be—on making each Berkshire Bear's experience exceptional, today and every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James L. Haskel". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

James L. Haskel '86, P'20,22,'25

Chair, Berkshire School Board of Trustees