September 23, 2016

To the Nobles Community,

This morning in assembly I had the great honor of announcing that the Board of Trustees has appointed Dr. Catherine J. Hall as Nobles’ seventh head of school. Cathy was in assembly, where she received a warm welcome and expressed her excitement about joining the Nobles community.

Cathy brings a range of experiences to the role, as has long defined Nobles’ leaders. Over the course of her career in education, Cathy has been an upper school English teacher, a middle school math teacher, and a varsity soccer coach. She was the academic dean and director of technology at The Episcopal Academy before assuming her current role as assistant head of school. Both the search committee and the trustees were inspired by her intellect, perspicacity, humor, work ethic, and kindness. Cathy’s track record of innovating while securing traditions and sense of community holds great promise for Nobles as we begin our next 150 years.

Cathy received her bachelor’s degree in economics from Princeton University in 1997, where she also played varsity soccer. She earned a master’s degree in the social foundations in education in 2001, and her doctorate in education in 2007, both from the University of Virginia. She was the technology director at the Langley School in Virginia before moving into a technology leadership role for the Arlington, Virginia public school system. For more than a decade, she has also served as a consultant and conference leader for independent schools across the country in the areas of diversity, multiculturalism, equity, and justice.

At Episcopal, Cathy has overseen curriculum for pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, hiring, professional development, enrollment management, financial aid, communications, diversity and community life, experiential learning, and student support services, among other areas of the school. She plays a key role in constructing the school’s budget and supporting fundraising efforts. Cathy works directly with Episcopal’s board of trustees, sitting on the Finance Committee, the Financial Aid Committee, the Campaign Committee, and is co-chairing a task force on school size. She led the school in its move from downtown Philadelphia to its current, suburban campus. She also pioneered an
innovative, upper school interdisciplinary program. She has frequently published on issues in independent school education and has presented at numerous national conferences.

Most importantly, Cathy’s values and vision for education align with Nobles’ own values and mission. She is intellectually curious, collaborative, decisive, calm, and compassionate. She matches rigorous, disciplined analysis with an open mind, keen intuition for people, and a strong sense of community. A strategic thinker with a nuanced, nimble mind, Cathy is also a caring person who has the strength of character and judgment to lead the Nobles community in the coming years.

Dr. Hall’s appointment is the result of a thorough search process that attracted highly qualified, talented school leaders from across the United States and abroad. The pool of candidates was deep, including heads of independent, public, and charter schools, leaders in higher education, and accomplished professionals from within and outside of education. The search committee was unanimous in recommending Cathy as the best-qualified among them and the best-positioned to lead Nobles into the future. The trustees saw the same exceptional leadership qualities in her and unanimously appointed her as Nobles’ next head of school.

We are incredibly fortunate to have had the benefit of Bob Henderson’s leadership for the past 17 years. We will continue to benefit from his leadership in this, his final year, while Cathy Hall completes her work at The Episcopal Academy. Throughout the year, we will have numerous occasions to celebrate Bob’s extraordinary legacy and express our gratitude to him. We will also work closely with Cathy to integrate her into the Nobles community and ensure a smooth transition.

For now, please join us in welcoming Cathy and her family to Nobles.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees,

Elizabeth M. Reilly ’87
President, Board of Trustees