



VIRGINIA BEACH
FRIENDS SCHOOL

Knowledge. Character. Community.

October 6, 2022

Dear Friends,

Over the last five years, Virginia Beach Friends School has seen significant changes leading to the thriving Toddler through 8th-grade community it is today. The school's recent Back-to-School Night, with over 100 families in attendance and more than 50 students joyfully running and playing on the front playground, was a watershed moment. This moment captured the essence of Friends School, a joyous learning environment. If you were in attendance, I know you felt it too. *There was something special in the air!*

The feeling of warmth and belonging at Friends School is due to the collective efforts of many. Because of these efforts, Friends School now sits in a very strong position in the Hampton Roads independent school market. The school has carved out a niche as the neighborhood independent school educating students to be the best versions of themselves while academically preparing them for wherever life leads. The Friends School faculty and staff are second to none. Their collective passion for their craft speaks to what they do as an avocation, not a vocation. They love what they do and do it as their life's work. To this, we, and especially me, are eternally grateful for the community built over the last five years. As I look to the future of the school, it is positioned to shine brightly for years to come.

After teaching in Quaker institutions for more than a decade between two schools, Moses Brown School and Friends School, the values of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship have made me a stronger educator and person. These same Testimonies are what make Friends School so strong. Knowing VBFS is stronger than ever and will thrive with or without me, I have decided the conclusion of the 2022-23 academic year in June will be my last year as Head of School. I am eternally grateful to the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, the Board of Trustees, Friends School administration, faculty and staff, and most of all the Friends School students and parents past and present for making the last five years of my professional career so memorable.

As of the 2023-2024 school year, I will be assuming the role of Head of School at Nansemond-Suffolk Academy. My family and I are thrilled to join NSA but will sincerely miss our Friends family. The Board of Trustees has been overwhelmingly supportive of my next opportunity for which I am incredibly grateful. Over the course of the school year, the Board and I will be working hand-in-hand to ensure the school's success despite my departure. With the leadership of the Board of Trustees and brilliant faculty and administration, Friends will surely continue to flourish!

Sincerely,

Michael Barclay
Head of School