



April 2, 2026

Dear Foothills Community,

When the Foothills Board of Trustees (Board) announced the start of our Head of School search last fall, we made a promise to our community to carry out a search process that honors everything we love about Foothills. Today, we, on behalf of the Board, are proud and excited to share the result of that process: **The Board has unanimously appointed Mary Dobroth as the next Head of School**, effective no later than July 1, 2026.

We look forward to Mary's introduction in this new capacity, the honoring of Nick's tenure with us, and more in the coming weeks. Today, this letter shares the news of Mary's appointment and the process that led us here, as well as an update on Nick and what's ahead for him.

### ***The Search Process***

Upon learning of Nick's departure in October, the Board formed a Search Committee tasked with developing a search process that was fair, robust, and designed to work on multiple timelines. What we also knew — even before Nick's announcement — was that Mary had expressed a desire to one day take on a school headship. Nick and the Board were happy to support Mary's continued professional development and her enrollment in the NWAIS Pathways to Leadership Program, a competitive initiative designed specifically for women educators with their sights set on headship. So when Nick's announcement came, the Search Committee knew it had a candidate worth considering.

The Search Committee then selected Joan Beauregard of Educators Collaborative as our search consultant in January, in part because of her specific experience guiding searches that include internal candidates. In early February, Joan visited Foothills, holding listening sessions and gathering input from students, faculty, staff, parents, and trustees — and conducting a community-wide survey. From that work, she developed Foothills' [Leadership Opportunity Statement](#): a profile of our next leader, as envisioned by our community.

The portrait that emerged was clear. Foothills needs a leader who is approachable, accessible, collaborative, and warm. It needs someone who will be a champion for faculty and staff, who understands this school's values, who brings a compelling vision, and who meets challenges with both compassion and curiosity. Mary exemplifies and demonstrates every aspect of the leadership profile, and everyone who took part in the interview process saw and felt it.

Joan was direct with the Search Committee about the necessity for any candidate — including an internal one — to earn the role. Foothills and the candidate both deserved no less. And Mary earned it.

Mary submitted an application packet, interviewed with the Search Committee, completed a robust series of case studies with the Executive Committee of the Board, and presented her vision for Foothills to the full Board of Trustees. At every stage, the people in the room left energized and moved by Mary's systematic thinking, infectious optimism, and appreciation for what Foothills is now as well as what it can become.

It is worth noting that the Search Committee had the full support and funding from the Board to conduct a national search if the process pointed that way, but with Mary's review process completed, it didn't need to. The Committee recommended Mary's appointment unanimously, and the Board approved it unanimously. We believe wholeheartedly that this is both the best choice and the right choice for Foothills. We hope you will join us in our excitement for Foothills' next chapter and congratulate Mary on her much-deserved appointment!

### ***A Word About Nick***

With joy and a hearty dose of bittersweetness, we also share that Nick has accepted a Head of School position at Billings Middle School in Seattle and will conclude his tenure at Foothills at the end of this school year. We are thrilled for Nick and his new community, even as we will miss him and all he has given to ours.

We recognize the joint timing of this announcement may take some by surprise — but as we hope this letter makes clear, the Search Committee and Board built a process that was designed from the start to handle exactly this kind of timeline with care and intention.

Nick's impact on this school is hard to overstate, and he has been equally thoughtful in the time he gave us to find his successor. He will leave us in the best hands. There will be a proper moment before year's end to gather as a community and celebrate him. More on that in the coming weeks!

### ***What Happens Now***

In many respects, the transition process to Mary as our next Head of School will begin immediately. Mary will work alongside Nick across every major decision between now and July 1, supported by a transition team committed to continuity for our faculty, staff, and families. We are confident this handoff will be as thoughtful as everything else that has defined this process.

### ***Looking Ahead***

Foothills has always been defined by its people and community — from the teachers who show up every day with creativity and care to the families who trust in project-based learning, and the students themselves, who show us on a daily basis how learning can be both a joyous and courageous adventure, as our mission holds. And so it feels fitting to appoint Mary as our next Head of School. She has lived and championed Foothills' values for many years, and she embodies everything this community asked for in its next Head. We could not be more delighted or grateful to make this announcement today.

Please join us in congratulating Mary on her appointment and Nick on his exciting next chapter!

With gratitude,



Liz Urban, Board of Trustees Chair



Alison Williams Sremack, Search Committee Chair