

October 25, 2023

Dear Peninsula Community,

On behalf of the Peninsula School Board of Directors, I am thrilled to announce that the Head of School (HoS) Search Committee's recommendation of Johanna Aeschliman as our next HoS was approved by the Board, and she has enthusiastically accepted the position! Johanna's experience as a thoughtful, student-centered administrator, leadership in diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, and shared commitment to Peninsula's mission, vision and values make her the ideal choice to lead the school into its next 100 years.

This appointment is the result of a long and careful search that started this past spring. The Search Committee interviewed various search firms and ultimately selected Tracy Bennett and Joan Beauregard with Educators Collaborative to partner with us as we began our effort to recruit the strongest and best-matched candidates to our school. The position attracted wide-ranging interest from talented applicants across the US that shared a commitment to progressive education. Keenly focused on the leadership profile developed through a community-wide survey and conversations with staff, Board, and parents, the Search Committee reviewed dossiers, conducted reference checks, and selected and interviewed the top candidates. After completing a comprehensive process, two finalists came to campus for interviews and forums with parents, staff, students, Board, and an Advisory Committee that included alumni.

On behalf of the Peninsula Board of Directors, I want to express our sincere gratitude to all members of the Peninsula community for your active participation in this process, and thoughtfulness in sharing your insights in the surveys. I am particularly appreciative of my fellow members on the Search Committee for their commitment and dedication to this important endeavor. This entire process has truly been a team effort.

Johanna will be joining us from Redwood Day School, where she has spent the last 5 years as Lower School Director, while prior to that she was Head of Middle School at Brooklyn Heights Montessori School. She also has nearly 20 years of experience in the classroom, having taught various grades in both public and independent schools. In her administrative roles, Johanna has led efforts aimed at educating the whole child, diversity, equity and inclusion, enhancing evaluation systems, and spearheading transformation, while her many years in the classroom have given her in-depth knowledge of the experience of being a teacher and the joys and challenges that come with it.

We will welcome Johanna officially as our Head of School on July 1st, 2024. To help ensure a seamless transition, over the coming months she will partner with Erik Carlson, to whom we are truly grateful for his dedicated and experienced leadership during this interim year. Stay tuned for more opportunities for each of you to get to know Johanna prior to her official start date, and please see below for a note from Johanna to the community.

Sincerely,

Alethea Van Hiller
President
Peninsula School Board of Directors

Head of School Search Committee:

Davion Fleming	Board Member, Search Committee Co-Chair
Alethea Van Hiller	Board Member, Search Committee Co-Chair, Current Parent
Jesse Gillispe	Peninsula Upper School Teacher, Current Parent
Betty Achinstein	Peninsula Lower School Teacher, Parent of Alumni
Nina Greenblatt	Board Member, Current Parent
Maya Perkins	Board Member, Current Parent, Alumna
Elisa Neipp	Current Parent, former Board Chair, Parent of Alumni
Jason Pressman	Board Member, Current Parent
Kirstin Woo	Current Parent, Families of Color Affinity Group Co-Chair

----- A Note from Johanna Aeschliman -----

I am overjoyed to be joining the Peninsula school community on July 1, 2024 as the next Head of School. From the minute I set foot on campus, I could feel that the Peninsula community is indeed special. The joyful students and the dedicated staff were immediately evident and incredibly compelling. As a lifelong learner, and teacher by trade, I understand the kind of dedication and care that it takes to create a learning environment that centers students and that gives teachers the tools to make learning rich, connected and meaningful; this is what I have seen at Peninsula. I am deeply honored for the opportunity to bring my own commitment and leadership to this community and to the

future of Peninsula School.

As I think about joining the community, I am excited to listen and learn about how best to realize the school's mission, to center students in our decision-making, and to support the community at Peninsula. Already, I have had a wonderful opportunity, in the search process, to see the Peninsula community through your eyes. From observing in classrooms, to meeting with students, to speaking with parents, it has been particularly exciting to see Peninsula's commitments to developing the whole child and supporting academic and creative endeavors. On a personal note, my family and I are thrilled to be joining a community that values diversity, equity and inclusion.

Finally, I want to thank the Board of Directors, the Search Committee, especially Alethea and Davion, for thoughtful work and dedication during this search. I also want to thank the students, staff, and the entire Peninsula community, for sharing space and time with me throughout this process. It was immediately apparent to me that Peninsula was the right school for me. I look forward to working together to ensure a smooth transition and an exciting collaboration as we step forward together into Peninsula's future.