

park century school

February 26, 2018

Head of School

Douglas E. Phelps

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Dear Members of Park Century School Community,

I am writing to you today with important news. After careful consideration of ways to optimize academic, social, and clinical support for our unique learners, the Board of Trustees has identified an organizational change that we believe will enhance the educational experience for our students and families while offering additional support for our cherished faculty and staff.

Over a six-month period, Doug Phelps and a group of trustees, administrators, parents, and faculty have met regularly to evaluate the current Park Century School operating model. The Board received updates during this process and now recognizes that a division of responsibilities at the leadership level will better enable PCS to fulfill its mission and serve our community.

As part of this enhanced model, the Head of School will focus exclusively on academic and clinical areas. To oversee the finance office, human resources, development, and other non-academic areas, a Chief Operating Officer will be appointed. We believe that this leadership approach will enable PCS to shine as a center of excellence for LD education.

In light of this significant change and to allow the school to move in this new direction without delay, Doug Phelps will be retiring as Head of School effective February 26. While this change appears to be sudden, I want to assure the community that a great deal of thought and planning went into this decision. Doug has chosen to take this opportunity to initiate a long-held plan to serve as a consultant to independent schools.

All of us at PCS are grateful to Doug for his leadership and thank him for his many contributions, most notably guiding the school through California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) accreditation and bringing the Wilson Reading Program, along with the Columbia Writers Project to the school. Additionally, Doug significantly enhanced our art, music and science programs and increased our visibility in the national independent school community. We will hold a reception for the PCS community to thank Doug (details will follow), and the students will be giving him a special send off at an all school assembly Tuesday morning.

I am delighted to announce that Judith Fuller, Dean of the Lower School and Director of Admissions and Community Outreach, will become our new Head of School, effective February 27. Judith joined Park Century in 1993 and was a classroom teacher and reading specialist before assuming her leadership roles in



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administration. Prior to joining our faculty, Judith founded and co-directed Brentwood Reading and Educational Therapists. Earlier in her career, she worked as an administrator for the LAUSD child development division and a consultant for the district after serving as a classroom teacher and curriculum enrichment teacher.

Judith earned her M.Ed. and reading specialist and administrative credentials at the University of California, Los Angeles and her B.A. in Asian Studies and Early Childhood Education credential from California State University Northridge.

I am also very pleased to announce that Jennifer Palmer, our current Director of Development and Community Affairs, with over 15 years in the field of fundraising and development, will become our new Chief Operating Officer, also effective February 27. Since joining Park Century School in 2012, Jennifer has increased the dollars raised by our school's Annual Fund by 20%, has gotten 100% annual fund participation from trustees and faculty and staff for the first time, and has increased family participation to 94%. And since 2015, she has helped to strategically advance the school's mission internally and externally by overseeing communications, facilities and the recent campus expansion.

Prior to joining PCS, Jennifer served as the Retreat's Director of Development, raising awareness about domestic violence, helping to secure the agency's first federal grant, and raising millions of dollars to help protect women and children. Earlier in her career, she spearheaded the development department of the National Breast Cancer Coalition. Jennifer received her B.S. from the State University of New York at Cortland.

Our school is fortunate to have this very seasoned leadership team as well as an exceptional faculty and staff to ensure a smooth transition. Trustees, together with Judith and Jennifer, will be holding information sessions about these changes and plan to continue refining the PCS model over the next few weeks. The first meeting will be held during a special Parent Association meeting on Wednesday, February 28 at 8:30am. A full calendar of events will be provided soon. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this transition, please email them to transitionquestions@parkcenturyschool.org.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you for entrusting your children to us. We are deeply grateful for your support.

Sincerely,



Hilary Garland
Board President

