

# WaringSchool

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Geoffrey P. Hunt, Chair  
Waring School Board of Trustees

Dear Geoff,

I am writing to confirm my decision to retire as Headmaster of the Waring School at the end of the 2011-12 academic year. As you know, this is a step that Allegra and I wish to take together. Therefore, Allegra will also be stepping down from her teaching and leadership responsibilities in the school at that time.

As the successor to our founders, Philip & Josée Waring, I will, by the summer of 2012, have served as Waring's Headmaster for 22 of its 40 years. My retirement obviously marks an important transition in the life of the Waring community, one that will require attentive effort and leadership on the part of the Board. I am announcing my departure more than two years prior to the event in order to allow sufficient time for a thoughtful and orderly transition process that can identify and recruit the right leadership for the school at this important juncture in its history.

What drew me to Waring as a young teacher in 1978 was the opportunity to take part in creating and shaping an emerging school based on the values of learning in community. More than any other thing, the challenges and deep satisfactions of that creative enterprise have sustained me throughout my years at Waring. And they continue to draw and captivate my interest to the present day. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity I was given to be mentored by Philip and Josée for more than a decade and then for the privilege of assuming leadership of the school when they retired in 1990. It has been the great joy of my professional life to build upon what they began, to further articulate the Waring philosophy and to implement it through the program and culture of a growing school community.

When I assumed leadership of the school in the summer of 1990, Waring still had fewer alumni than students. As of this May, the school will have 460 graduates who are not only impressive in their academic achievements but who typically stand out from their peers for their love of learning as a life-long endeavor, for their compelling ability to express themselves, and for their capacity to engage the issues and complexities of an age driven by massive amounts of information. Waring's graduates are its most important legacy, and it has been deeply fulfilling to me to have played such an important role in bringing that legacy about.

I also want you to know how much being part of the Waring community has meant to me personally and to my family. This has, indeed, been a family effort. Over a period of 14 years, all of my four children attended and graduated from Waring. And, in one of its best-ever decisions, the Board itself voted to appoint Allegra to the faculty in 1991, thus securing her expertise and years of teaching experience for the lasting benefit of the school. My relationship with Waring, which goes back over 30 years, has formed and shaped me for the better. You are the fourth Board Chair that I have worked with during my tenure as Headmaster. I deeply value the collaborative relationship that I have enjoyed with each of these gifted leaders—Tom Burger, Dick Prouty, Andy Calkins, and yourself—who have given so generously of their

time and resources to the benefit of our school community. I have likewise been blessed to have the support of trustees who understand and are deeply committed to the Waring philosophy and mission. I could go on here to say similar things about my relationship with all the Waring constituencies—faculty, students, parents, alumni, and so on—but as I am not leaving quite yet, I will save this for another occasion.

All this said, I have from time to time over the years considered the intriguing possibility that there may be life after Waring. Though I suspect that this is true, Allegra and I are looking forward to the moment in our lives when we can actually put this radical hypothesis to the test. Knowing where this point lies on the horizon is important to us in planning our future, as I know it is for you, the Board, and the Waring community. But, as much as I may be looking forward to our “life after Waring,” please understand that, as long as I am still at Waring, the school will have first claim on all my energies and attention and that for the balance of my tenure I intend to exercise full leadership of the school with the full support of the Board. I am also committed to assisting the transition process in whatever ways you and the Board deem useful and appropriate.

With best regards,

Peter Laird Smick  
Headmaster