April 28, 2020

Dear Highlander Family,

I am extremely pleased to share important news about the LHPS Board of Trustees, our school’s presiding board that provides governance and strategic oversight of our school, its mission, and its fiscal health. Leadership succession planning is an essential component of the board’s responsibilities.

With profound appreciation and utmost respect, I announce that Chairman of the Board David Jablonski ’84 is retiring from the Board of Trustees effective June 1, 2020, and Vice Chairman Jeff Derry ’82 will become the new Board Chairman on that date.

Our school owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Dr. Jablonski for his dedicated service and insightful leadership as Chairman since 2013, and as a Trustee since 1998. A member of the Class of 1984, David went to the University of Virginia for college and then medical school at the University of Florida. David is a board-certified urologist with Orlando Health Medical Group. David and his wife, Janet, have three children who are charter members of LHPS. Their son, Ben, will soon graduate with the Class of 2020. Daughter Rachel ’17 is a junior at Rollins College, and son David ’15 graduated from the University of Florida last year and is now completing his first year of medical school at UF, continuing another family tradition.

I am very thankful for David’s intelligence, thoughtful nature, willingness to listen, quiet courage, and total devotion to our school’s mission. These critical leadership qualities have served him well throughout his board service. His caring mentorship, readiness and ability to tackle problems, and impeccable integrity were enormously valuable during his term as Chairman. Thank you, David, for your extraordinary service and unwavering love for our school and its mission.

Reflecting on LHPS and his service, Dr. Jablonski shared, “Lake Highland has had an enormously positive influence on my entire extended family since we arrived on campus in 1972. That influence inspired my willingness to serve as a Trustee and my deep sense of gratitude for the school. Simply put, I love Lake Highland, I love what it has meant for my family, and I love its mission. I am confident in the strength of Lake Highland’s future under the exemplary leadership of Admiral Harms, incoming Chair Jeff Deery, and the most talented and engaged Board of Trustees in our history.”

I look forward to working with another highly accomplished and devoted alumnus, Mr. Jeff Deery ’82, when he assumes the position of Chairman on June 1, 2020. Jeff is the current Vice Chairman of the Board, and he was elected a Trustee in 2010. Jeff has also served as Secretary of the Board, and as Chairman of the Committee on Trustees, where he led efforts to expand the board and rewrite the by-laws. Jeff also enjoys serving as Assistant Coach for the LHP boys’ varsity basketball team. Jeff’s family connections at LHPS are also extensive - he joined LHPS as a first grader in 1970-71, the school’s first year of operation. His aunt was the first Director of the Lower School, his mother, Barbara, taught fourth grade here for nine years, and his sister-in-law, Debra, taught in Lower School for more than 20 years. Jeff’s brother, Todd ’86, and his niece Harper ’15 are also Highlander alumni. A graduate of Auburn University, Jeff received his law degree from Mercer University Law School. He is a shareholder at Winderweedle, Haines, Ward, and Woodman, specializing in complex business litigation. Jeff has also
served as a board member at the YMCA and is an outgoing Board Chairman for ELEVATE Orlando. He and his wife, Jennifer, have three children, including two LHP alumni—daughter Erin ’14, a graduate of Rhodes College, and now a second-year med student at the University of Central Florida’s medical school, and son Jefferson ’17, a junior at Auburn University. Daughter Katherine is finishing her 8th grade at LHPS this year.

Chairman-Elect Deery shared his excitement about his new role, “As a Lake Highland charter member, an alumnus, a Trustee, and a coach, I appreciate what makes our school unique. I look forward to serving our students and families as Board Chairman. We have a rock-solid foundation and a bright future.”

I know you join me in thanking David Jablonski for his extraordinary service as Trustee and Chairman, and in welcoming incoming Board Chair Jeff Deery to his new role! As we approach our distinguished 50th birthday in September, and as we embrace an exciting plan to elevate the LHPS learning experience, our LHPS family is assured of the continued strength of our school governance and the great promise of our future!

Warmest regards,

Alfred G. Harms, Jr.
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
President
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Celebrating 50 Years: A Tradition of Success