



September 23, 2009

Dear Friends,

I am writing to inform all of you that this year will be my last at Friends School. I cannot imagine a better place to have begun and extended a career. Over the years I have taught full time in the middle school, directed the admissions office and the middle school, and even spent a few summers in charge of the maintenance crew! The common thread running through each of those years are colleagues and parents who have devoted countless hours to insure that the education at Friends School is first rate, allowing our students excellent options for their future. I will miss such dedicated collegiality most of all.

This September begins my twenty-second year at Friends School Mullica Hill. I arrived two days after my college graduation, interviewing with T. Hanshi, who at that time was Middle School Coordinator. The most common question during that day long, first visit, was "you are how old, exactly?" My day apparently impressed Hanshi enough to be offered my first job. My plan was to teach at Mullica Hill for a couple of years before entering law school to begin my actual career! Needless to say, my plan changed.

I am most proud that during my tenure as Head of School, over ten alumni have returned to teach at our school. At larger, more historically prominent independent schools, one mark of their success is the sheer number of alumni who return to work, to serve on Boards of Trustees, and/or to send their children to their alma mater. Friends School is gaining significant ground in this respect, and I believe this speaks volumes about the high quality of the school experience we have provided here since 1969.

The current Board of Trustees is an outstanding mix of current and former parents and grandparents, Quakers, and friends. Their profile represents a wide swath of economic and social experience and I know that they will work diligently to hire a new Head of School who will continue to move the school forward into what will be its bright future.

I want to assure all of you that I am firmly committed to serving the school to the best of my ability during this year.

There are hundreds of you who have made this school my home for twenty-two years. I thank all of you, and deeply appreciate the defining role you have all played in my life.

Very truly yours,



Drew Smith  
Head of School