

Hathaway Brown gave me the opportunity to find my own path. It gave me a deep, rewarding sense of purpose: the noble cause of girls' and women's education.



Dear Friends,

As the Board of Trustees and I make the announcement of my retirement following the 2015-2016 school year, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude to the entire Hathaway Brown community for the privilege of serving as Head of this beloved, venerable school, and for the extraordinary adventure these years have brought me. What a gift it has been!

I deeply appreciate Paul Matsen's most generous letter, as well as his strong leadership and support. The sustained excellence of our Board and its members' unswerving commitment to advancing the trajectory of our school have been among the signal reasons for our continued success. Paul is the 10th Board Chair for whom I have had the pleasure to work, and I have taken inspiration from each: Ella Hornickel Quintrell '45, Martha Shierson Harding '61, Sally Stecher Hollington '50, Madeleine McMillan Offutt '58, Jane Quayle Outcalt '55, Meredith McDaniel McCreary '70, Loyal W. Wilson, Jane Rosenthal Horvitz '70, and Ginger Brown Van Wagenen '74. All have contributed greatly to HB's growth and development.

As I have said more than once, I don't think anyone has gotten more out of an HB education than I have. I fell in love with the place and its people when I first visited back in 1986 as a 35-year-old, green-as-grass candidate for the Head of School position. My mentor, Adele Griffin Sands, happened to be HB's interim head at the time, and everyone was so thoroughly captivated by her that, when she suggested to the search committee that it might do worse than to give her young protégé from Philadelphia a chance as Head, they ventured an enormous leap of faith. The Board's courage and confidence sparked an utterly transformational moment for me. This has not been a job; here I discovered my life's work and was summoned to a vocation that unleashed more passion and imagination than I ever knew I had.

But that's the way it is with Hathaway Brown. It's a place that brings out the best in people—not only students, but adults as well. My mother used to tell me, after I had been basking in the HB Effect for a while, "It's amazing what that school has done for you." I'm the first to admit how true that is. As is the case with countless HB students, being here for me has been a life-changing experience. This has been my second home. HB gave me the opportunity to find my own path. It gave me a deep, rewarding sense of purpose: the noble cause of girls' and women's education. And it taught me just about everything I know about leadership.

Over the years we have been blessed to gather together teachers and administrators of unmatched distinction who, like me, also have reveled in the opportunities for creativity that HB so amply provides—who are here to teach students, not just subjects, and who believe in the unbounded potential of HB girls. We have a bedrock certainty that we were put on earth to reinvent girls' education; to build the best girls' school on the planet. That quest continues with our new Strategic Plan, *Lighting the Way: Defining Excellence in Girls' Education*, which was born of the faculty and staff and officially adopted by the Board in October 2014. The fact that we have in place such a bold and exciting vision for HB's future is a key reason why this is a propitious time to pass the torch to the next generation of leadership.

But ultimately, of course, HB is all about its amazing girls who are such a source of pride, along with their Early Childhood brethren. It has been so rewarding to help launch 27 senior classes (so far) out into the world to accomplish things great and good. Beyond their academic prowess and leadership, HB girls possess an earned confidence and an ability to apply what they've learned in the classroom to their lives. They know how to test themselves, find beauty in outlandish places, implement creative solutions, and lend a hand when needed. They are our most inspiring innovations, and it has been endlessly gratifying to know and to teach them.

Just last week I was chatting in the hallway with one of those students, a senior who is a graduate of our Aspire program. She was telling me how excited she was about the distinguished New York City college she hopes to attend. "But Mr. Christ," she said, "if you would open HB University, I would really rather just stay here." Now that would be an interesting second act! But for now I am thrilled to savor the moments—and to do all in my power to help shape a smooth leadership transition and a future for HB that is even more remarkable than its past.

With profound appreciation,

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Bill Christ". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

BILL CHRIST
HEAD OF SCHOOL