



SEATTLE GIRLS' SCHOOL

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Marja Brandon Announces She Will Step Down As Head of School

After a decade at the helm, Marja is ready to pursue new opportunities to impact education on a national scale.

Seattle, WA—Marja Brandon, Head of Seattle Girls' School (SGS) since its founding, has announced that she will step down as Head of School effective June 30, 2010. After 10 years dedicated to building an innovative and sustainable educational experience, Marja has informed the SGS Board of Trustees that she will move to new opportunities.

In her letter to the SGS community Marja shares, "I once dreamed of founding a school. And miraculously, I have had the rare opportunity to fulfill that dream, and to watch it become a glorious and joy-filled reality, a reality that has only just begun to change the world." Marja's future plans include continuing to expand on the success of Seattle Girls' School by pursuing her dream of impacting educational practice nationally.

Karen Lane, Sharon Hammel, and Harvey Rubinstein founded SGS in the year 2000. These founders had a vision for empowering middle school girls with a particular curricular emphasis on the subject areas of math, science, and technology - areas where, even today, women continue to be under-represented. The mission of the school has evolved to inspire and develop courageous leaders who think independently, work collaboratively, learn joyfully, and champion change. Seattle Girls' School is a member of the National Coalition of Girls' Schools and is an Accredited Member of the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools.

During Marja's decade as the Founding Head, the school has hit or exceeded all of the markers that were set at its founding, and in the process has created a ground-breaking educational model. "I am confident that the school is able to stand on its own, which was the ultimate goal of its founders. In short we have succeeded. The school is now ready to find a Head who will take it into its next decade, sustaining and strengthening everything we began," says Marja.

While the Board conducts a search for Marja's successor, it has asked Assistant Head of School, Rafael del Castillo, to serve as Interim Head beginning in July. Rafael is highly respected by faculty and staff and beloved by students. As Marja has taken on a more

external role in recent years spreading the word about SGS, Rafael—in collaboration with the school’s leadership team—has stepped up his involvement in running the school’s day-to-day operations. “We are grateful he so faithfully shepherds the vision of the founders and is willing to continue doing that through this transition,” says Board Chair Brenda Bauer.

Rafael is looking forward to this opportunity. “I am very excited to continue Marja’s work and fulfill her vision until a permanent Head is hired,” he says.

The Board will begin identifying members of a search committee and will work to engage students, faculty, staff, parents, and other supporters in selecting the next person to advance SGS into its second decade of success.

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