



Head of School Search and Transition FAQ

Why are we making a Head of School change?

After decades of service in the roles of founding Principal, Head of School, and Advisory Board member, Debbie Butler decided not to renew her contract beyond June 30, 2010. Debbie will be seeking a future career opportunity that affords a different life/work balance.

Who will be the 2009-10 Head of School?

Debbie Butler. Debbie will remain Head of School through June 30, 2010. The Board of Trustees structured Debbie's contract so that a comprehensive and thoughtful search would be conducted during her final year, whenever that occurred, to ensure continuity of leadership and continued stability.

How is a new Head hired?

The Board of Trustees creates a Head Search Committee (HSC) that includes representatives from all SJCS constituencies – Trustees, faculty/staff, parents, alumni parents, and community partners. The chairperson of the HSC reports to the president of the Board. The HSC is responsible for creating a job description and candidate profile; designing and leading a national search; designing and leading an interview process; and, making a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board is the hiring entity.

Will the community receive updates during the process?

Yes. The process will be as broad, inclusive, and transparent as possible. There will be a Head Search page at www.sjcs.net, in addition to communication via tools like the *Ki Tov* and blast e-mails. Interview opportunities will be available for all constituencies. At any time during the process, questions are welcomed by the Board President via boardpresident@seattlejcs.org.

Is there a timeline for the transition?

As a first order of business, the HSC will set a timeline to be approved by the Board.

Is our school's Head turn-over rate normal?

No! Nationwide, independent schools see a much higher rate of turnover than SJCS. On average, a Head's tenure ranges between four and seven years. Since our 1991 inception, SJCS has benefited from the inspired and inspiring leadership of two permanent Heads – Debbie Butler and Joyce Shane. Clarity of vision, philosophical consistency, and deep and abiding passion for the mission and values of our school have been the hallmarks of both Heads and their tenures.

What does this change mean for SJCS' future?

Debbie's calm and clear-headed leadership has been pivotal in every SJCS success since April of 2006, when she became Interim Head of School. From programmatic enhancements to the purchase of our property, Debbie's contributions will long outlast the number of years of her service. The SJCS Board, Head, and institutional and individual supporters have successfully collaborated to take bold and decisive action consistent with the school's strategic plan. SJCS is poised for continued growth and success as we embark upon the next chapter of school leadership.