Building Bridges:
Practical Tips for a Successful Head’s Transition

Moorestown Friends School
NAIS Annual Conference
February 27, 2020
Introductions

Julia de la Torre, Current Head of School
Larry Van Meter, Former Head of School
Barbara Caldwell, Board Chair
Peter Baily, Board Member, Head of Transition Committee
Session Agenda

- Post-Appointment
- Structuring the Transition
- Communication
- Community Entry
Post-Appointment
Planning the Waiting Period

- Transition committee
- Formal announcement
- Supports for a new Head of School
- Acknowledgements, events, fundraising, tributes
- Regular meetings and key topics
- Key personnel transitions
- Avoiding lame duck syndrome
Time With the Leadership Team
Soft Touches
Structuring the Transition
Planning Formal & Informal Supports

- Campus visit + separate visit as parents, spouse visit
- Get-to-know-you time with Board Chair
- Getting the residence ready
- Move-in day, first night on campus
Joint Meetings With Donors
Soft Touches

Moorstown Friends School

WELCOME NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL JULIA DE LA TORRE
Communication
Making Communication Personal

- Assessing the communication culture
  - Existing avenues for communication
- Finding your style
- Early and often
- Personal messages from the Head on Day 1
- Key relationships
Multiple Platforms for Communication
Community Entry
Authenticity & Humility

- Convocation or other ceremony
  - Choosing speakers, student role, school culture
- Other events
- Alumni gatherings and road show
- Acknowledging the former head
- Inviting the former head to campus
- Considering traditions
Thanking People
Questions?