



Summer 2022

Dear Friends of Great Plains Yearly Meeting,

I am excited to share some information with you about our 2021-2022 school year.

First, a bit about myself, since this was my initial year as Head of School at Wichita Friends School. I bring to WFS 25 years teaching experience in public schools and 11 years at the college level. My master's degree is in Curriculum and Instruction, and my doctoral degree is in Educational Leadership with licensure as a building principal and district superintendent. I am thrilled to be at Wichita Friends School, and truly feel God has placed me here. I am a life-long learner, and am finding my immersion into the Quaker Education tradition and practice to be exciting. With the assistance of some key people from GPYM each week – Jim Perkins, Connie Adams and Aaron Fowler -- I have learned a great deal this year, and I look forward to deepening my knowledge and awareness with these Friends and others in coming years.

At Wichita Friends School we've been in-person all year, thanks to diligent attention to good health practices both at school and by our families at home. WFS is approved as a COVID testing

site and a vaccination site. I am especially proud of our children and parents for their patience during the weeks when we wore masks, took temperatures and endured nasal swabs each morning.

Both Covid and our current economy are having negative effects on private school enrollment, and we are working to weather this storm at WFS. We are working to offer as much financial assistance as possible to families who want to be a part of our Friends educational experience. Our finances are especially challenging this year, and I am very grateful for the support we receive from Great Plains Yearly Meeting. You are helping us remain viable.

One of the strategies we are using to strengthen our finances is increased attention to grant-writing. I have been fortunate to find monies this year to help sustain us through the effects of the pandemic. Our grant awards are helping us keep our tuition affordable to most families. This is important since the Wichita Friends School Board of Directors wishes to have a diverse student body and to be as accessible and inclusive as possible in our Wichita area.

I sing praises about our WFS staff in my heart every day. All our staff are truly wonderful, teaching and caring for our children with love and affirmation. Our teachers operate like a family, often staying after hours and coming in on weekends to work on special projects together. I am especially thrilled with their enthusiasm for our weekly all-school worship and our Quaker

SPICES curriculum. I know our children and parents see the spirit and camaraderie of our staff, because I regularly receive appreciative comments from parents about their child's experience in worship and Godly Play. Helping our children connect with the Sacred inside themselves is very special ministry for all of us.

This year, with leadership from Aaron and Connie, I saw both our young children and our teachers grow in their comfort with settling into the Quiet during Monday morning worship. To sit in the Heartland Meeting Room with 20-plus young children and experience quiet peace and grateful sharing out of the silence fills my soul, and I believe our WFS worship will stay with our students as a nourishing memory of their time at our Quaker school.

Our Mission Statement is: ***Wichita Friends School seeks to provide a high-quality academic experience within a supportive learning environment that reflects the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship.*** I am blessed to be led into this mission at this point in my career.

Thank you for your love and care of our school.

Dr. Shelly Hoffman, Head of School