Dear Eagle Hill Community,

As we head into the holiday season, there is much cause for celebration. On behalf of the Eagle Hill School Board of Trustees, I am thrilled to announce the appointment of Gretchen Larkin as our new Head of School beginning July 1, 2023. Based on a unanimous and enthusiastic recommendation from the Head of School Search Committee, the Board of Trustees also voted unanimously to appoint Gretchen as our new Head of School. This announcement is the culmination of an extensive search, reviewing numerous highly qualified candidates from schools throughout the United States in partnership with our search consultants at RG175.

While visiting our campus, Gretchen demonstrated that she is a dynamic, engaging leader with excellent communication skills. Her personal and professional experiences, as well as the time spent with members of our community, confirm her passion for the mission of Eagle Hill School. The Board is looking forward to working with Gretchen to build on Eagle Hill’s reputation as a national leader in LD education.

Gretchen has extensive experience in school leadership as well as in the classroom. Gretchen is in her 8th year serving as the Head of School at Charles River School, a PK-8 school in Dover, Massachusetts. During her time as the leader there, she created a new multi-age model for delivering early childhood education at the school. Gretchen has overseen a comprehensive strategic plan, increased enrollment, reduced attrition, and implemented a master planning process while leading a record-breaking capital campaign which resulted in a state-of-the-art middle school building and increased endowment. Together with her board, Gretchen also focused on building best practices for governance. In 2018 The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) selected Gretchen as the recipient of the Chief Executive Leadership Award, an award traditionally given to leaders of colleges or universities.

Gretchen’s colleagues uniformly sing her praises regarding work ethic, character, and leadership. They herald her as a “forward-thinking leader and educator” whose “long-term vision and strategic planning skills are remarkable.” She is described as “warm, charismatic, and welcoming.” As a leader, she is “highly attuned to the diverse needs of students and sees all children as unique individuals with unlimited potential.” And, of course, we heard consistently that she is an “outstanding Head of School.”

Prior to her Headship at Charles River School, Gretchen spent six years at Milton Academy in Massachusetts where she was a K-8 Assistant Principal, Head of Lower School, a grade 3–5 Division Head, and the founding K-8 Curriculum Coordinator.

Gretchen served in a variety of roles at some of the leading independent schools in greater Boston, including as the founding reading specialist for Fay School in Southborough, Massachusetts; founding educational coordinator for Dedham Country Day School; and K-6 Learning Specialist at the Advent School in Boston. Gretchen also served as a second-grade co-teacher at Brunswick School in Greenwich, Connecticut. Gretchen began her career as a lead teacher for grades 6, 7, and 8 from 1991 to 1997 for the Windward School in White Plains, New York. While at Windward, she founded the Windward Musical Theatre Program.
Outside of schoolwork, Gretchen serves on the Board of Trustees of Belmont Day School, The Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE), and the Advisory Board of CCS Fundraising Group. Gretchen also served on the board of the Northeast Association of Learning Specialists from 2006 to 2009.

Gretchen holds an M.A.T. degree with honors from Manhattanville College as well as a bachelor’s degree in French from Lake Forest College. She is a graduate of Greenwich Academy in Greenwich, Connecticut, and is excited to return to her hometown with her husband, Bill, a native of Darien, Connecticut. Gretchen and Bill are the proud parents of two adult daughters, Maisie and Lulu.

We are deeply grateful for the extraordinary leadership of Jim Heus, Interim Head of School, during these two challenging years and for his commitment to staying on for the 2022-2023 school year. During the next few weeks, the Board of Trustees will identify a Transition Committee to support the transition of leadership from Jim Heus to Gretchen. Since Jim has graciously agreed to remain at the helm next year, there is a clear path ahead for a smooth transition to new leadership.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, the Transition Committee will create opportunities for Gretchen to connect with the EHS students, parents, faculty, staff, and community. As those occasions arise, please join me in congratulating Gretchen and welcoming her, as well as Bill and their daughters, to our community.

Knowing Gretchen’s enthusiasm for Eagle Hill, her professional experience, and her commitment to students with learning differences, the Board is confident that she will lead Eagle Hill School successfully into the future. It’s time to celebrate!

Happy Holidays,

Patty Murphy
Chair, Board of Trustees