

Dear Holton Community,

Next year will be my sixteenth year at Holton-Arms, and with enormous gratitude for all the people with whom I have worked and for all I have learned, I have decided to retire at the end of the 2022-23 school year. I have spent longer at Holton than any institution in my life and it is hard to describe the significance of its impact on me as a person and a professional. From the time the Board offered me the Holton-Arms Head of School position in December 2006, I have felt blessed to have this opportunity. I stand on the shoulders of great leaders who came before me, leaders, especially my immediate predecessor, Diana Coulton Beebe, who bequeathed to me a great School. My responsibility has been to build on that legacy and eventually pass the School onto the next leader with its mission kept sacred and its programs strong.

Schools are, above all else, communities, a fact the pandemic has made us appreciate all the more. I have met so many kind, generous, smart, and inspiring people who are members of the Holton community and count myself lucky to have forged lasting friendships with a number among them. Schools are also, of course, fundamentally places of learning, and through those wonderful people I have learned so much. I am indeed a different person in many ways than when I arrived more than fourteen years ago.

With colleagues and students, I have travelled to Senegal, Costa Rica, China, India, and Peru, all places that have left lasting impressions on me. Each place expanded my horizons and broadened my world view, making me more empathetic, culturally aware, and a little more cosmopolitan.

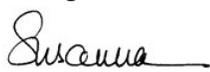
Through the School's ongoing commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI&B) work, I have travelled on a different journey, one that has changed some of my most deeply held beliefs about this country, a place I hold dear. This is a journey that I will never complete, however I remain committed to doing what I can to make Holton—and indeed the larger community—a more just and equitable place. The interest I developed in positive psychology has helped me to be a better leader while emphasizing the importance of all our community members' wellbeing. As we all know, a healthy, positive state of mind enables us to learn better, embrace those around us, and realize our potential fully. It is my hope that I have modeled the virtues of life-long learning and that my own learning has had a positive impact on the larger Holton community.

I am so proud of all the work we as a School have done on our institutional priorities: global education, DEI&B, and health and wellbeing, including the development and implementation of Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well (LW3). This spiralled approach to robust and rigorous curriculum stands out among our peers as some of the best-in-class, while unique offerings like Seminar are distinctive to our institution. I'm proud of helping to found the Online School for Girls, now One Schoolhouse. I am proud of how we have repeatedly found a way or made one as we navigate the pandemic. I am proud of our recent fundraising successes, including doubling the donor-restricted endowment. Most of all, I am proud that we continue to honor Mrs. Holton's commitment to putting our students and the realization of their individual potential at the center of all our work.

Of all that I've learned, perhaps the most significant is the power of gratitude. I am grateful for so much about my time at Holton: for all the opportunities to learn and grow; to the parents who have entrusted us with their children's education; to the alumnae for their inspiration and all the ways they continue to support their *alma mater*; all our volunteers who strengthen our community and help us to be all we can be; to all our donors who allow us to provide a superior education now and "far into the distant future"; to the students for their enthusiasm, creativity, and love of learning; to all our employees for their unflagging dedication to the School and to the students' wellbeing and success; and to the Board of Trustees for their abiding commitment to Holton and for all the resources they share in support of that commitment as well as for their support of me, personally and professionally. Holton would not be the place it is today without all these people. Finally, I am grateful to my husband, Rob Béguelin, and son, Aaron, for their love and support over the years, along with our dogs, currently Percy (and Clío).

I know that I will leave Holton in the excellent hands of the Trustees and our employees. I have every confidence that the Board will find an excellent person to carry on Holton's long and distinguished history. In the meantime, I look forward over the next 18 months to treasuring Holton's traditions and people as we continue to educate the minds, the souls, and the spirits of our students.

With gratitude,



Susanna A. Jones  
Head of School



Dear Holton Community,

With sincere gratitude and appreciation for her extraordinary tenure and leadership, the Board of Trustees congratulates Susanna A. Jones on her decision to retire at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, marking her sixteenth year at the helm of Holton-Arms School. We meet this bittersweet moment with great confidence that Susanna's indelible legacy will carry us forward.

From the beginning of my re-engagement with Holton as an alumna, I would walk away from every encounter with Susanna, wiser and ever more confident that my alma mater was in good hands. I would also walk away with at least three good books or articles to read thanks to her enthusiastic reviews. In her decade and half here at Holton, she has led us through many accomplishments and several difficult periods, including the most recent health, racial, and economic pandemics. As Trustee and now Board Chair, I have the great fortune to meet with her regularly. I will miss her keen perspective on the important academic and social emotional development of our students and her in-depth knowledge on the trajectory of 21st century education and strong institutional management.

Specifically, Holton has achieved several milestones under her leadership. Alongside her leadership team, Susanna has evolved Holton's curriculum to be reflective and responsive to the students on our campus and the world around them. She led the integration of the School's educational philosophy known as Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well (LW3) which manifests through school-wide goals and competencies across all subjects, along with an innovative 3-12 spiraling curriculum known as Seminar. This evolution of the School's pedagogy is deeply rooted in our founder, Mrs. Holton's desire to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the "education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit."

She spearheaded the creation of the office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that over the last six years has become enveloped in the fabric of how we operate as a community of diverse backgrounds and thoughts. Along the way she has demonstrated incredible humility, integrity, and commitment to striving to ensure every student feels that they truly belong at Holton. The Global Education Program she seeded has been instrumental for students as they develop global competencies, skills, and habits of mind to be leaders for a better tomorrow.

Many may not know this but Susanna has a wide breadth of experience in fundraising. In the 1980s she led development efforts at Union Theological Seminary and St. Hilda's and St. Hugh's School in New York. In fact, she co-authored *The Complete Guide to Capital Campaigns for Historic Churches and Synagogues*. This experience shone through as she led the fundraising efforts that have doubled the endowment and boosted unrestricted giving, raising more than \$24,000,000 to date, including the establishment of the first two endowed Instructorships.

She is a leader among her peers as well. She led Holton-Arms to be one of the four founding members of the Online School for Girls, now One Schoolhouse, a best-in-class provider of online education for students and professional development for independent school educators. She currently serves as President of the Board of Head Mistresses of the East and as a member of the Board of the Association of Independent Maryland and D.C. Schools. She formerly served as Vice-President of the Board of One Schoolhouse, President of the Independent School League, and as Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington.

The work of a Head of School is tireless and can often lead to long days, early mornings, and busy weekends shuttling from athletic competitions, student performances, parent events, donor meetings, Board retreats, and the like. Recognizing it takes a village, I would like to acknowledge and thank her husband Rob Béguelin and son Aaron for the role they each played in supporting our fearless leader all these years.

The Board of Trustees, led by search committee co-chairs Cathy Johnson Butz ('87, '18, P '21) and Mark Israel (P '20, P '22), is beginning an international search for Holton's 8th Head of School. *Issacson, Miller*, a highly regarded national search firm, has been selected to partner with us in this work. The Board is committed to an open and transparent process that seeks input from the community. To that end, more information regarding the search will follow in the coming days.

Over the next year we will look forward to many moments to celebrate Susanna as she continues her day-to-day leadership of Holton through June 2023. For today, please join me in gratitude for her service and her unwavering commitment to our students and their boundless potential.

With gratitude,

*Adrena Ifill Blagburn*

Adrena Ifill Blagburn '87  
Chair, Holton-Arms Board of Trustees

