

Dear school staff and administrators,

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I am writing this letter to share the news that after nearly 30 years of extraordinary service as president and executive director of Schools for Children, Dr. Ted Wilson will be retiring on June 30, 2017. As a member of the Schools for Children board of trustees, I want to take this opportunity to personally commend and thank Ted for the exceptional service, dedication and leadership he has brought to the organization. As a personal friend of Ted's for nearly 20 years, I want to wish him great success and the enjoyment he deserves after so many years of hard work and service.

I came to know Ted when we moved into the same neighborhood in 1997. We spent time chatting about our work, children, interest in the same sports teams and politics. When Ted invited me to first join the Dearborn Academy advisory board and, later, the Schools for Children board of trustees, I accepted immediately. Over nearly 15 years, I have had the opportunity to watch Ted work, firsthand, and see the kind of leadership and success he has brought to the institution.

Leading a diverse set of constituents and an organization composed of several parts with sometimes dissimilar missions takes a certain kind of patience and vision. To do so for three decades is a testimony to someone who is truly dedicated to the mission at hand. This is no more true at SFC than in the past year, when we were faced with having to find new homes for two of our schools, transition leadership at Dearborn Academy and deal with the usual pains that go with running a multifaceted operation. Faced with all of these challenges simultaneously, Ted acted strongly, decisively and with compassion, ensuring that the institution he leaves behind is poised for a bright and stable future.

This past year wasn't an aberration, though. Ted's commitment and steadfast focus are two of the attributes that he brought to the table in year one of his tenure and that are central to his style now. Consider this small selection of his many accomplishments over the years:

- From his earliest days with Schools for Children, Ted has played a critical role in creating financial stability and establishing a high-level of professionalism throughout the organization.
- After leading the acquisition/merger of a Boston-based non-profit, Ted took on the challenge of managing and ultimately selling the *Spirit of Massachusetts*, a 125' wooden sailboat and "Tall Ship" central to one of our earliest programs. Schools for Children used the boat to offer students

unique maritime learning experiences for several years. This same acquisition brought a deed to space in the Navy Yard that has evolved into our Seaport Academy.

- Ted encouraged us to acquire additional space adjacent to the SFC offices and, after surveying the market, led the effort to create our unique STEP program, which has remained as a gold-standard program for the past 20 years.
- He transformed and grew our core programs, including Dearborn Academy, which has evolved into a renowned therapeutic day school; the Lesley Ellis School, which grew from a preschool program to an award-winning independent day school now serving students from PS to Grade 8; and Seaport Academy, now a highly respected program focused on the needs of young men. Most recently Ted expanded the Schools for Children portfolio into high-quality afterschool programming by bringing Winn Brook under our umbrella.
- With his ongoing commitment and efforts to generate new resources to support the work being done in our schools, Ted led a major assessment of our marketing and development efforts. The launch of the resulting National Institute for Student Centered Education (NISCE) had a goal of creating new revenue streams from activities tied to our core mission. While this effort proved to require investments beyond the scope of our resources, the body of excellent work done over a span of several years showed the potential value of the Institute to the profession and to our schools and programs. It was a bold and creative initiative, and his work to marshal support and build a new venture from the ground up was incredible.
- He led the way in our effort to acquire the Crosby Building, which required an incredible complex set of negotiations—an effort that has proven to be of critical importance to the future of our programs. He found creative ways to increase available space at Lesley Ellis and took advantage of an opportunity to acquire an adjacent house to continue that expansion effort.
- Year after year, Ted has consistently ensured that our programs are fully compliant with all required regulations, almost always meeting and exceeding the agency standards. Our programs regularly receive official commendations, high rankings and enthusiastic support from the community.
- With remarkable skill and foresight, Ted was able to secure a new home for Dearborn in Newton. He thoughtfully negotiated a very favorable lease, set in place a plan for renovation, and has ensured a bright educational future for some of our most vulnerable students.

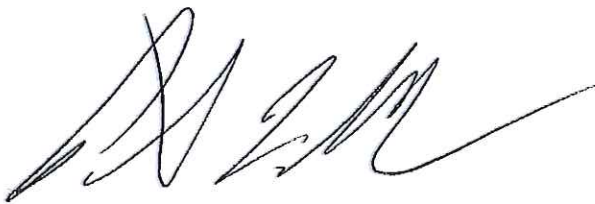
- Finally, he has ensured the stability of our programs by personally leading successful searches to replace departing leaders at each of our major programs (Seaport, Lesley Ellis and Dearborn), thereby ensuring smooth transitions at each school.

I will personally miss Ted's steady hand and thoughtful leadership. I have greatly enjoyed working with him. The good news for me is that we still remain neighbors and friends. So though we will no longer be colleagues in the traditional sense, we will stay in touch. I'm also delighted that Ted has agreed to act as a special consultant to the board after his official retirement, which will enable us to take advantage of his great thinking and deep knowledge of the organization, as we embark on the next chapter.

A search committee has been assembled and a search firm has been retained to assist the board in identifying a new executive director and I will keep you informed of future developments. I invite you to contact me with any questions and also to join me in thanking Ted for his years of leadership at Schools for Children and to celebrate his legacy with us.

Our organization is clearly growing and changing. We are welcoming new leaders, moving programs to new homes, and expanding and enriching the education and services we offer to students and their families. As we look to the future, we would do well to learn from our past and the exceptional people, like Ted, who have been so much a part of it. Thank you!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Prodromou', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Prodromou  
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October 21, 2016