

Dear friends of Anna Julia Cooper,

I want to update you on the search process and timeline for hiring the new Head of School at Anna Julia Cooper. When Mike Maruca announced his well deserved retirement, we created a Search Committee. We have met many times already and I feel so fortunate to have such a strong group of people working on this. Board members Fleet Wallace, our next Board Chair, and Billy Peebles, who has headed 4 Independent schools, co-chair the committee. Additional Board members include Mary Desch, Elizabeth Wallace, Gussie Bannard, and myself. We have all been a part of AJC for a number of years and have spent time each week working with children there. In addition, Garrett Sawyer who served on our Board as well as the Richmond School Board and Gaylon Layfield a longtime AJC supporter who served as Board Chair at Collegiate round out the team.

We discussed what would work best for the school and spent time developing a list of attributes we hoped to find in our new Head. Anna Julia Cooper is unique and we want to be sure that candidates understand our culture and the community of love that is here. We decided to hire an experienced consultant to help with this process. We were fortunate enough to engage Katherine Whitney with the firm Warren Whitney. In her long career, Katherine has had great success in matching schools with the right Head of School. She also knows the Richmond landscape which is very helpful.

With Katherine's help, we have developed a job posting that is comprehensive for perspective candidates. We will list this in many different places in early June. Katherine will begin to receive and review applications over the next several months. In August, the Search Committee will review recommended candidates and select 8-10 semi finalists whom we will interview in early September. Our plan is to then invite 3 or 4 people to move into the final phase of our process. These candidates will visit campus, meet with the administrative team, faculty, Board members, and have a thorough introduction to AJC. Our plan is to announce our new Head of School in October who will begin in the summer of 2026.

We would ask your help in this. Perhaps you know of someone that might be a good candidate. Please share the attached job posting with those who might be interested or may have some recommendations for us. We feel positive about our process and appreciate your support and good wishes as we undertake this important task.

Meanwhile, as you would expect Mike Maruca and the Building Committee are going full steam ahead on our Lower School building project. There is no grass growing under our feet here on 29th Street! Our ground breaking took place on May 29th and we will have a new building in the summer of 2026. We can then increase the number of students we serve. Thank you for being a part of growing the hope.

Sincerely yours,
Jill Hunter
Board Chair