Dear St. Albans Families:

I am delighted to announce that Jason F. Robinson will be the eighth headmaster of St. Albans School, starting in July 2018.

This week, Jason was approved unanimously by the St. Albans Governing Board and the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation Board, the governing entity on the Cathedral Close.

This announcement is the culmination of a thorough, six-month, international search that introduced us to a remarkable pool of candidates. Throughout the search, we looked for a uniquely gifted leader who had the heart and soul of a teacher, bore a steadfast commitment to honor and excellence, showed a love of and commitment to boys education, embraced the tradition and texture of an Episcopal church school, possessed significant leadership and management experience, and best matched the position description developed in consultation with our community. I am confident that Jason will stand for these qualities as headmaster of St. Albans, leader of our faculty, and a role model for our boys.

Jason comes to St. Albans from New Jersey, where he is the assistant head of school for academics and head of upper school at Princeton Day School, a pre-K-to-12 independent school. Jason has broad understanding of independent schools. He has been instrumental in advancing Princeton Day School’s curriculum and strategic vision. He has also partnered with the school’s leadership and advancement office in a comprehensive capital campaign, recruited and mentored faculty, and served as a dedicated teacher and advisor to upper school students.

Previously, Jason taught history, politics, and ethics at the Lawrenceville School, also in New Jersey, where he chaired the Interdisciplinary Studies Program; chaired the Discipline and Honor Committees; coached basketball, baseball, and golf; and served as the housemaster of a student residence in the school’s house system. In a historic feat, two successive years of graduating seniors at Lawrenceville voted him an honorary member of their class, recognizing his commitment to their formation and to excellence in teaching. Jason’s teaching career began here in the D.C. area, at the Landon School, where he taught government and a humanities course that spanned English, history, art, philosophy, and cultural studies, and coached basketball and baseball.

Jason graduated with a B.A. in philosophy from Washington and Lee University Phi Beta Kappa and magna cum laude. As a graduate student at the University of Virginia, he served as chair of the Honor Committee and was awarded an M.A. in government. He then earned a J.D. from Stanford Law School. Upon receiving his law degree, Jason held a judicial clerkship with the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit, in Baltimore, Md., and practiced corporate law with Covington & Burling and with Ross, Dixon & Bell, both in Washington, D.C, before following what he describes as a “calling” to become a teacher.
And Jason is, indeed, a gifted teacher who is beloved by his students. He is also a collaborative member of a school community, valued and admired by his colleagues, an insightful intellectual, a careful listener, and a person of strong faith and deep-seated integrity. I’m delighted such a thoughtful leader has agreed to join our school community.

I look forward to introducing you to Jason in person when he visits our campus this coming year. I hope you will join me in offering the warmest of welcomes to Jason, his wife, Olinda, and their family as they join the St. Albans community.

Selecting the right head for our school is the most important job our Governing Board faces, and I am grateful to all who participated in the process.

I extend great appreciation to the Search Committee, including the co-chairs — Governing Board Vice Chair Robert Musslewhite (P ’20), former Governing Board Chair and Cathedral Foundation Board Member Julie Miller (P ’08, ’12), and Governing Board Member and Finance Committee Chair Chris Gladstone ’75 (P ’12). These three served our school community with an intelligence, honor, and diligence that was remarkable. I also thank all the committee members — Peter Clare (P ’14), Casey Cooper (P ’19), Mary Crawford (P ’06, ’09, ’11), George Haywood ’69 (P ’15), Brooks Hundley (school chaplain), David Marriott ’92 (P ’20, ’22), Sherry Rusher (P ’22, faculty), Blake Sparrow ’00, Brendan Sullivan ’93, and Rob Wolfe (P ’25, faculty). Since Headmaster Vance Wilson announced in January 2017 that he would retire, this group has quietly dedicated hundreds of hours to listening to our community, composing the position description, vetting candidates, reading information about applicants, speaking with references, and interviewing and getting to know candidates.

I also thank the nearly three hundred members of the St. Albans community who attended community meetings on campus and in New York City or who contacted us by phone and email to share their recommendations. The input we received from the community was invaluable in shaping the position description and enumerating the qualities desired in the next head.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to Vance Wilson for his extraordinary leadership of our school. He was the best kind of partner we could have had in this search — helpful, humble, and humorous and always focused on what is best for St. Albans. I look forward to celebrating Vance in many ways with so many of you over the course of the coming academic year.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Donoghue Velleca
Chair, St. Albans Governing Board