



Montcrest School

discover • develop • thrive

November 26, 2018

Dear Montcrest Community,

I am delighted to be writing to introduce you to Montcrest's next Head of School, Erin Corbett. Erin will be joining us in July 2019, upon David Thompson's retirement, after she completes her seventh year as Head of School at River Valley School, a progressive pre-kindergarten to Grade 6 school in Calgary, Alberta.

Erin has had many remarkable achievements at River Valley: tripling the school's enrolment, reversing a significant operational deficit, building the school's financial reserves, and leading the school's first accreditation with CAIS (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools). She led the introduction of many new curriculum initiatives focused on personalized and unique learning experiences for their 300+ students. She has accomplished all of this while cultivating a warm, caring, and safe school community where social and character development are just as important as academic development.

Highly regarded in the independent school community in Alberta and across the country, Erin has had a unique set of professional and educational experiences which make her a wonderful fit for Montcrest. For the last three years she has been a Director and Treasurer on the Alberta Independent Schools & Colleges Board, and has chaired two CAIS school accreditations and participated on a third. She is also recognized as a leader in her community, receiving Calgary's Top 40 Under 40 award in 2015. Before her career in education, she worked as a professional opera singer, and as a fundraising and development professional for charitable arts and health organizations. Erin's experience as an elementary teacher includes a focus on inquiry-based learning and technology in the classroom. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Music from the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, a Bachelor of Education from the University of Calgary, and a Masters in Arts, Educational Leadership and Management from Royal Roads University.

Erin has proven herself to be a dynamic and successful visionary leader who is warm, personable, and an excellent communicator, as illustrated in this excerpt from one of Erin's references at River Valley: *"Erin is the type of person who can see the big picture; she understands how multiple, very complex systems fit together, and she can keep track of these as she moves an agenda forward. She's a visionary...we are on the leading edge of education and are headed where our school should be headed. She's engaged as a community-based leader. She is able to motivate people and to propel us forward."*



Montcrest School

discover • develop • thrive

David Thompson has already spent some time with Erin, and offers this perspective on her appointment, *“Erin is a strong fit for the Montcrest community. She has positive energy and is clearly a big picture thinker with considerable experience at River Valley and around CAIS. She has also demonstrated her understanding that people are the most important part of any picture. I think our community will be delighted to get to know her and have her lead our school forward for many years.”*

Erin has recorded a personal greeting for the Montcrest community [here](#). We are working with her on plans to visit Montcrest in the coming weeks and months where faculty and staff, students, and parents will have the opportunity to meet her, and she can begin to get to know the school community, spend time with David, and prepare for her relocation with her husband Todd Corbett next summer.

Erin’s appointment follows a rigorous recruitment process which began with consultations last spring with students, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, donors and extensive Board discussions about our needs as a school over the next five to ten years. Our new Strategic Plan was foundational in our discussions. The Board appointed Colleen Keenan of Odgers Berndtson as our Executive Search consultant to guide this process, and created a Transition Committee led by Cynthia Eldridge, Board Vice-Chair, who is also a Montcrest parent and graduate. The committee was very impressed with the high calibre of applicants from some of the best schools in the country. The Board wishes to thank Colleen, the Transition Committee, and all members of our community who took the time to share their input into this process.

Over the coming months, we look forward to celebrating and honouring David’s contributions to Montcrest and his 45 years as an educator and independent school leader. In the meantime, I know you will all join me in welcoming Erin to the Montcrest community.

Warm regards,

Don Durno
Chair, Board of Governors