

**THE NAIS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNOUNCES**

DEBRA P. WILSON

AS THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF NAIS

National Association
of Independent Schools



DEBRA P. WILSON
INCOMING NAIS PRESIDENT

“Independent schools are a vital part of the education ecosystem, and I’m excited to represent our community on a national level. Our schools are wonderfully different from one another, each providing unique opportunities and environments. This diversity of options meets the varying needs of families and students. It also makes our NAIS network stronger. As we consider the opportunities ahead, I believe that the NAIS community can serve as both a catalyst for growth and a hub of support that helps all schools thrive.”

Dear NAIS Community,

It is with tremendous pleasure that we announce that the NAIS board of trustees has selected Debra P. Wilson as the next president of NAIS. Debra's unsurpassed depth and breadth of knowledge of all aspects of independent school leadership—along with her passionate advocacy for schools and the students they nurture—make her the right leader at the right time to guide our organization into the next phase of our shared future.

When we began the search for the next president of NAIS, we asked you, our members, to describe the qualities and experiences that would enable someone to best lead our community into the future. You encouraged us to find a courageous, inspirational, systems-level thinker able to build consensus while also challenging the status quo—and one who, above all, had a passion for the mission of NAIS. In Debra, we have found that extraordinary leader.

Debra is currently serving as president of the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS). She began her tenure there in 2019 after serving as counsel/general counsel for NAIS for 19 years. Before joining the NAIS staff, Debra was a tax litigator at the Department of Justice. She received a B.A. in English from Sewanee: The University of the South, and a J.D. from the University of South Carolina at Columbia. In addition to serving on the boards of several schools, Debra's board service includes The Enrollment Management Association (EMA), Global Education Benchmark Group (GEBG), Mid-South Independent School Business Officers (MISBO), and National Network of Schools in Partnership (NNSP).

Debra's appointment follows a comprehensive, seven-month search process informed by input from the NAIS community. The response to the search was positive and strong, allowing us to meet with many talented leaders. At the conclusion of this process, both the presidential search committee and the board of trustees were unanimous in their strong support for Debra as the next leader of our association. She will begin her term on August 7, 2023.

The strength of the NAIS community played a significant role in attracting an outstanding slate of candidates. Equally critical in attracting such an exceptional president-elect is the foundation laid by our current president, Donna Orem. We thank Donna for all that she has done for NAIS and will continue to do in her final months as president.

You will have several opportunities to meet—or reunite with—Debra in the months ahead, including at the NAIS Annual Conference. In the meantime, she will begin to work closely with Donna, the staff, and the board to facilitate a smooth transition in leadership. In the summer, she will begin a Member Connections Tour designed to ensure that your voice is part of the vision for the future of our organization.

We look forward to welcoming Debra Wilson and celebrating the launch of this next chapter of NAIS.

With joy and gratitude,

RANDALL DUNN, JOAN BUCHANAN HILL, AND MICHAEL NACHBAR

Co-Chairs of the NAIS Presidential Search Committee

NAIS MISSION

AS THE LARGEST ASSOCIATION
OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS,
NAIS CO-CREATES THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION
BY UNITING AND EMPOWERING
OUR COMMUNITY.



National Association
of Independent Schools

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