



## Campus History and Symbols Task Force Guiding Principles

- 1) **We will be guided by the mission of Belmont Hill School which is to educate boys in mind, body, and spirit to develop men of good character.** All actions taken with respect to our campus, its history, and our symbols should reflect this core mission. It is our North Star. We also will look to the School's motto: "Providentia – Studium - Fidelitas" [or Foresight, Zeal, Loyalty]. Our actions should reflect these foundational aspirations.
- 2) **All members of the Belmont Hill community – students, faculty, parents, alumni, staff, friends, visitors – should be welcomed and respected at our campus and in our traditions.** The Belmont Hill School community is caring, diverse, inquisitive, and often passionate. Our remarkable campus is the home for all our community members. We should consistently strive to identify and embrace opportunities – in naming, in construction projects, in practicing old traditions and in developing new ones – to be sure our campus and traditions are inclusive and welcoming to all. **Working Together**, as always, we should consistently embrace ways to ensure a welcome and a home for all.
- 3) **We should consistently pursue a dynamic engagement with history.** History and facts are real. We will resist attempts to re-write or oversimplify complex or ambiguous moments. We also recognize that our understanding of history can change over time, and be informed by new perspectives, rigorous scholarship, and subsequent events. We should embrace and celebrate the encouraging and not hide from, but rather learn from, clear-eyed assessments of shortcomings. We must endeavor never to stop learning and seize opportunities to continue to grow.
- 4) **Our campus, symbols, and traditions are gifts from past and present generations who cared – and care – deeply for the School.** We maintain abiding gratitude for these gifts. We are stewards of remarkable gifts, often given with great personal sacrifice. A spirit of gratitude is part of the essence of Belmont Hill School. Even as we consistently examine and contextualize our history – and recognize our shortcomings with humility – we will remain grateful for the gifts and opportunities we have received.
- 5) **Named spaces, endowed funds, and campus symbols should reflect our community's highest ideals, as well as the generosity of our community of donors. Any consideration of the renaming of (or removal of) a donated campus space, endowed fund, gifted artifact, or school symbol should be undertaken only if such naming or symbol clearly undermines our credibility as a moral institution and stands in stark contrast to our mission.** We should preserve the naming of buildings, campus spaces, and funds given to the school as a fundamental, general operating principle. We will continue to be grateful for gifts and new named spaces and funds from our remarkable community of donors. We also should actively look for opportunities to have new buildings, campus spaces, and endowed funds be ever more reflective of our increasingly diverse community and the people who embody the mission of Belmont Hill School. We recognize that the context of certain donations, names, or symbols can be complex and that conduct we deem appropriate now (or deemed appropriate in the past) may be viewed differently in the future. The School recognizes that its donors and those we honor with named spaces and funds are human and imperfect; they also cared deeply for the School and have benefitted our community. In general, we support education and presentation of historic facts to place gifts, names, artifacts, or symbols in context where there are complex or troubling elements that come to

light. We should not seek to erase history. With respect to renaming of (or removal of) a donated campus space, endowed fund, gifted artifact, or school symbol, the bar for any such action would be high and must be based upon rigorous scholarship, and outreach to and input from the School community and the donor (or its surviving representatives). Renaming of a donated space or an endowed fund would require Board of Trustee approval, after review of such scholarship and of the input from the community and donor.

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In closing, our Task Force strongly supports the sextant as a symbol of Belmont Hill School. Our founders chose well. Some history here is instructive and we share remarks from the founding Head of School, Dr. R. Heber Howe on June 6, 1924:

*About a year ago, when the organizers of Belmont Hill School were discussing various plans and projects for launching the new institution successfully, they were confronted by the problem of finding a satisfactory emblem. To be appropriate, the devise would have to symbolize some fine ideal in education. It would have to express, in one way or another, the spirit that we wished to propagate – namely: that of service through scholarship.*

*And so, in the course of many weeks, quite a number of emblems were suggested. Curiously enough, perhaps because several of us loved the sea and everything connected with it, nautical devices seemed to be favorites. Some of these, like the compass and the capstan, were apparently suitable; but one by one, either through too great intricacy or because of the lack of originality, they were rejected.*

*Finally, however, it occurred to some one that the sextant might be used. The sextant was a symbol of orientation, and the chief purpose of education was, of course, to orientate. For it is only by “finding ourselves”, by discovering our capacities and aptitudes, that we can be of service to the community. Thus, after some discussion, the sextant was adopted, and was made into the present School Seal, enameled red and blue, with the legend, “Providentia, Studium, Fidelitas” around the border.*

### **Campus History and Symbols Task Force Membership**

Gretchen Cook-Anderson, *Trustee, Co-Chair Campus History and Symbols Task Force*  
Emmett Lyne '77, *Trustee, Co-Chair Campus History and Symbols Task Force*

Bill Achtmeyer '73, *Vice President, Board of Trustees*  
Jon Biotti '87, *President, Board of Trustees*  
Jason Hurd '90, *Trustee*  
Greg Paul '09  
Greg Schneider, *Ronald M. Druker '62 Head of School*  
Herb Wagner, *Trustee*  
Chris Zellner, *Faculty Member*  
Juliette Zener, *Faculty Member*