Dear Members of the Brearley Community,

We are writing to share exciting news concerning Brearley’s future. After a comprehensive evaluation of all our options, the Board of Trustees has voted unanimously to endorse the campus plan, having determined that renovating our historic schoolhouse at 610 East 83rd Street and adding new programming and instructional space on property we own at 70-74 East End Avenue is the best approach for the School.

By pursuing the campus solution, which includes Brearley’s existing field house on East 87th Street, we will solve the School’s chronic space needs and will create the modern facilities necessary to sustain Brearley’s legacy of excellence in education. In addition, we will preserve our traditional schoolhouse, which has welcomed generations of students and teachers and serves as a beloved point of connection for our alumnae. We are proud to be a part of our New York City community and are committed to working with our neighbors to ensure a smooth process as we move forward.

Announcing Our Project Architect
The affirmation of our campus approach is the beginning of a new journey, and we are pleased to announce that, after an extensive search, we have retained KPMB Architects, based in Toronto, to guide us from conceptual design to project completion.

The team from KPMB will be led by founding partner Marianne McKenna, one of today’s foremost architects. She has created the designs for many of the major cultural and educational institutions in the United States and Canada, with particular emphasis on sustainability, the blending of tradition and innovation and the creation of a positive impact on the urban environment.

Marianne McKenna and her colleagues are eager to engage with all constituencies in the Brearley community as they learn more about our educational program and begin to conceive the ideal configuration for the School. We look forward to introducing KPMB in the weeks ahead.

Our guidelines for KPMB’s work put a premium on creating thoroughly flexible and light-filled teaching and learning environments that maintain the intimacy and character that have always defined Brearley’s classrooms and common spaces. As outlined in our new Strategic Vision, we aspire to a more balanced, open and accessible way of living the Brearley experience, and our new facilities will help us achieve these goals.

A Rigorous Evaluation
As we indicated last spring, Brearley is in an enviable position: Our 2010 purchase of the East End Avenue buildings gives us the ability to address our space needs within an existing portfolio of properties located in close proximity and in the same neighborhood that we have called home for nearly 86 years.

That said, we have recognized that developing a neighborhood campus is a far-reaching decision and, during the many strategic planning conversations we had in 2013, Brearley alumnae, parents, students, faculty and administrators urged us to explore every option for the School, including constructing a new building that could accommodate all of our facilities under one roof.

The exhaustive review of all possibilities, which was ably and diligently conducted by the Building Committee of the Board, headed by parent and trustee Nick Bienstock, left no stone unturned. The committee identified 200 potential sites across Manhattan. From that group, we shortlisted 20 properties for further consideration and ultimately focused our attention on a few that showed the greatest potential.
Informed by our decision-making criteria, our evaluation process was meticulous and comprehensive, encompassing design, engineering, construction, environmental, legal, financial, demographic, safety and cost-benefit analyses. We also debated vigorously the potential ramifications a move would have on Brearley’s culture.

In the final analysis, the Board determined that no workable development opportunity would improve on the campus plan. We are confident that we can add the amount and type of space we need to remain a leader in the education of girls and young women and can do so in a way that reflects the values of the Brearley School and the dynamic socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural diversity of this great city.

Community Support
As we begin this vital new project for Brearley, we want to thank everyone who provided wise counsel and thoughtful encouragement throughout the evaluation process. We are especially grateful to the Building Committee for devoting so much skill and time to Brearley over the last year. Brearley also owes tremendous appreciation to the past Board members and generous donors whose foresight and philanthropic support have put the School in such a strong position today.

With the continued engagement and participation of our entire community, we will create new educational space that advances Brearley’s mission and promotes our values and philosophy. Please look for invitations to upcoming community gatherings where we will have opportunities to celebrate this milestone, collaborate with our architects and begin to translate our school culture into a vibrant three-building campus.

Sincerely,

Ellen Jewett ’77    Jane Foley Fried
President, Board of Trustees   Head of School