



## Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington

March 11, 2009

Dear Friends of AISGW:

We are pleased to announce that on February 18, 2009, the AISGW Board of Trustees appointed Thomas Toch as the Association's next Executive Director, effective July 1, 2009. Acting on the enthusiastic recommendation of the Search Committee headed by Doris Cottam, the Board selected Tom unanimously, confident that he has the experience, skills, and policy background to build upon the Association's remarkable history and lead AISGW and its member schools through both promising and challenging times.

Tom's notable career is steeped in education policy and enhanced by extensive experience in non-profit management, fundraising, strategic planning, governance, and media. And he has a deep connection to independent schools.

Tom is currently co-founder and co-director of Education Sector, an independent think tank in Washington, DC and a leading national voice on pre-collegiate schooling issues. Tom helped launch *Education Week* in the 1980's, serving as writer, commentary editor, and co-managing editor at the newspaper. He has authored two books on American education, [High Schools on a Human Scale: How Small Schools Can Transform American Education](#) and [In the Name of Excellence: The Struggle to Reform the Nation's Schools](#).

Before founding Education Sector, Tom spent three years as a guest scholar at The Brookings Institution. He has taught at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and has served as a senior educational consultant to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He spent a decade as the senior education correspondent at *U.S. News & World Report* and has contributed to *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Republic*, *Newsweek*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Washington Monthly*. He has been an education commentator on the ABC Nightly News, Good Morning America, CNN and National Public Radio.

Tom's career also reflects a strong commitment to, and in-depth understanding of, the mission, work, and challenges of independent schools. A graduate of the Choate School, he spent a post-graduate year as an English Speaking Union scholar at Malvern Boys College in England. He graduated with a B.A. from Kenyon College and earned a Master of Arts in English at the University of Toronto. After graduate school, he returned to Choate as a teacher and coach. Tom also has been an independent school parent at three Washington-area independent schools — Norwood School, St. Andrew's Episcopal School, and The Potomac School — and a trustee at Norwood and St. Andrew's. In addition, Tom has served as chair of the advisory committee of the Mid-Atlantic Teacher Institute, a teacher-training collaboration between Norwood and The George Washington University.

We also wish to share our deep professional and personal gratitude to Elizabeth Downes, Executive Director, who in her extraordinary nine years of leadership has made AISGW the gold standard of independent school associations. Tom's appointment concludes an extensive search conducted by Dr. Richard Jung of Education Access Strategies. On behalf of the AISGW Board of Trustees, we would like to express our gratitude to both Dick and the Search Committee for the work that went into helping us find the next Executive Director.

Please join us in welcoming Tom Toch to AISGW. We truly look forward to his leadership.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kosasky  
President, AISGW Board of Trustees  
Head of School, St. Andrew's Episcopal School

Doris E. Cottam  
Chair, AISGW Search Committee  
Head of School, The Langley School