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Mr. Chairman, our principal report to you tonight is not in words - it is our senior class. There are, however, certain "facts of life" with which the Park School family should be acquainted.

My first reference is to a factor in the life of the school which does not seek or claim its share of public recognition. I refer to our Board of Trustees.

During the past two years the Board has reluctantly bid farewell to some of its long important and long useful members. The principle and spirit of rotation has declared them ineligible to succeed themselves. This year with strong appreciation the members of the Board said farewell to

Mrs. Grace D. Heller
Mrs. Dorothy Melby
Mr. Henry E. Niles

The list of services which these three members have performed is eloquent. Each one has made a place for himself in the history of the school and deserves our gratitude.

I also report that new strength has been added to our Board of Trustees. During the year we welcomed into membership the following:

Dr. Carola Guttmacher
Dr. Helen Harrison
Mr. Walter Sondheim, Jr.
Mrs. Harriet Terrell

All four of our new members are parents and they have already made records of strong contribution to the life of the school. Mrs. Harriet Terrell joins the board under an amendment to our by-laws which makes the President of our Parents Group, ex officio, a member of our Board. Representation of the Parents Group is testimony to the development over the years of an extraordinarily constructive relationship between the school and its parents, a relationship in which our parents have become a natural part of the school, performing useful functions, without in any sense impeding the daily life and usual work of the school.

Mr. Walter Sondheim, Jr. rejoins the Board after a period of retirement. Everyone in this audience will sense the strength which he adds to the group.
The Trustee personnel is background. The significant work of the Board this year lay in its grasp of the problems of the school and its unified and firm determination to solve these problems. A year ago Mr. Louis Kohn presided here and at the conclusion of his term of office, (June 30,) he presented to his successor a thorough definition of the problems of the school and an understanding of the school and of its efforts. On July 1, 1955, Mr. Sidney Lansburgh, Jr., who is presiding tonight, took over the presidency. I know he was selected because he had the reputation of getting things done, but in the year that has passed he has created for himself and for the Board an entirely new reputation. He has managed to employ as nearly as possible the insights, background, and capabilities of the Board. Some of the projects undertaken are completed. The selection of a new Head Master was done with a thoroughness of judgment and promptness and in a way that augurs well for the future of the school.

Three years ago under the leadership of Mr. Kohn and Mr. Benjamin Katzner we began the Park School Sustaining Fund and set out on the first three years of an annual giving program that should always be part of the school's life. Its intention was to enable the school to improve salaries and to restore to a better place the working capital of the school. This has been accomplished in its first three years. Under the leadership of Mr. Lansburgh there is developing an "orchestration" of the Budget and financial opportunities of the school. On this there is only to report now a clear and manifest understanding and the beginning of a program which should advance the security of the school each day.

The Board has had a long and thorough look at the capital needs of the school, the most notorious of which are the gymnasium and a place for activities like those in the Shop, the Studio and the Domestic Science laboratories. Over the summer I confidently expect that the program now under study and formulation will take form and will show the way for the school in the area of housing and equipping its intellectually prosperous organization. Mr. Lansburgh is one of those prudent progressives who will not promise before he can fulfill and will not formulate before he is sure. When the story is written, though, the work done this year by him and the Board under his leadership will inaugurate a new epoch in the life of the school. As far as the Board is concerned the school is "ready to roll."

The school is "ready to roll" on the inside as well. The pangs we have known in losing longtime members of the faculty into forms of retirement and change are less than our thrill at having now a thriving, problem-solving, ambitious faculty. In it are enough of those on whom we have long relied to warrant constancy for the future.
Record of Work, 1955-56

On this platform tonight you will see some of my colleagues. Mr. Thomason is here because he is here to stay and because he is ready to assume the primary responsibility for the school. Miss Coe is here because she is my alternate in the direction of the school and because she is the fact and symbol of the school's constancy to a purpose. Mr. Tompkins is here because he is advisor to the Class of 1956. This is an important function but as you and I well know his great service is to make practical sense out of ideals and to insist day in and day out that every soul in the school gets the best break possible. We honor Miss Van Order tonight on her 30th birthday as a member of the Park School faculty. The aesthetic perception which is in the baggage of every Park School graduate stems from various sources but none more potent than the studio where Miss Van Order presides. Miss Hunt is celebrating her 20th Park School birthday. She came to us in September, 1936, to take over our girls' program of physical education. She has remained to become the trusted friend of every student in the Upper School and to be the one on our faculty to whom we turn now for a hundred important responsibilities. We have no titles but if we did she would be one of our Deans.

These platform guests assure the next administration of continuity in strength. Add to them our recent members - young teachers with sympathy for the ideals of the school and with the character, the training, and the ability to carry on and you have a nucleus of strength as warranty for future accomplishment.

Each year there are changes as members of the faculty go on to areas of work and service which fall at certain moments in the line of their ambition. Each time we are sorry to lose a colleague - someone with whom we have worked, someone we have come to understand, and someone who understands us. Of those who are leaving us this year some demand that we make a special mark and mention. Mrs. Elsie Trumbo has for ten years presided over the First Grade to the great and lasting advantage of every child who has been in her room. She leaves us this year - we all hope for a temporary leave of absence. Mrs. Trumbo wanted a year to catch up with herself and to chart her future. The reason we shall hope her decision for this future is Park School is because she is a great teacher and we know it.

Mrs. Dorothy C. A. Blanchard has been carrying on three careers in parallel. She has been an inspiring teacher at the Park School; she has been an author; and she has presided over the home of her distinguished husband. She found it necessary to give up one of these careers and I am sorry that it was her career here she elected to give up. She has meant much to a generation of Park School students and she will be missed.
George Beecher is leaving us, too. He came to us four years ago as Director of Studies and is a man of great responsibility and integrity. During this, his final year with us, he has to all intents and purposes been the principal of the Upper School. His contribution, however, has been great and will be memorable in a thousand other ways. He is the most modest, honest man I have ever known - a student, a philosopher, an observer, and a man of good will and kindliness. When honesty is fortified by these assets, its influence is incalculable. He is practical in detail and faithful in philosophy and purpose. I shall never cease to be grateful for the experience of working with him and the impress of his presence here in his work with us will go on in the lives of every colleague and student with whom he has been associated. In losing Mr. Beecher, we also lose his lady. Her special function on the faculty has been to work with the Kindergarten children but her gift to our family life has been the presence of grace and intelligence which has made the way in which we live a good deal happier and a good deal better. Our reluctance in losing this couple is compensated for in knowing that they are returning to Goddard College where a great opportunity has been created for them.

I began talking to you tonight by saying that our principal report to you was our senior class. To this theme I now return. The 26 young people whom we graduate tonight are as various in their gifts and in their makeup as any group of young people could be. I remember in the Fall their president, their advisor and I decided that we had better get the class together early in September in order that so various a group might accomplish all the things that are needed from the united response of a senior class. There is no individual whom we graduate tonight who has not gained in his own personal stature or gained in his own personal direction but their great accomplishment is in what they have been able to do together. They have discovered from experience that a various group of human beings can accomplish if they set their minds to accomplish. To them all honor for progress in community living. Each event over which they have had control, each function which they have individually performed has been well done. Delightfully enough it was possible for nearly every member of the class in one way or another to contribute to the publication of their yearbook. In this publication they had leadership of inspiration and skill. I am delighted that it was their pleasure to dedicate this book to me but, I am truly thrilled by the book itself. It is to me as fine and as memorable a volume as any senior class has published anywhere and my presence in its pages I esteem one of the happy incidents of my final year in the service of the school.

These young people then are our best and most eloquent report. Nothing in their year just happened. It was contrived, it was planned, it was executed and as a result we shall graduate tonight a group of individuals with a sense of community and with a knowledge that what goes on in the world happens only for the best if he and I and she and they join together to see that it is done.

Hans Froelicher, Jr.
A CHARGE TO THE CLASS OF 1956 PARK SCHOOL

The Grammar of Choice

You! You pronouns!
I've heard you groan when first you heard
of tasks to be done;
I've seen you jump at the chances there are
To do things.
Your eyes fall!
Your eyes dance!
You are choosing!

What is good?
For whom?
What's for me?
What's in it for me?
Am I a sucker? Who rides free?
Is it spinach or skittles?
Or honest stuff?

Yes or No?
Now or when?
Come on you guys
And gals -
Much is needing to be done,
You know that.
You are needed.
You know that.
You know that nothing (nothing very much)
Happens
Unless you make it happen
Unless you do do.

Who are you?
"They" are nothing; "we" are all.
"They" is out!
You might as well be "we".
Here then is grammar
-The grammar of choice-
Your way to parse the world.

Come on you pronouns!
You! You pronouns!

Hans Froelicher, Jr.
June 7, 1956
To: My fellow members in the Park School Class of 1956
and to our Advisor, Mr. Tom.

You can have no idea how much I have treasured and will treasure our final year at Park School. Your Brownie and your other thoughtfulnesses are my treasures for keeps. This I wanted you to know.

I feel deprived at not hearing all the news of each of you. I know that if I were at school I would have it. Now I am further deprived because Mrs. Froelicher and I are going to Denver for Christmas, and we will have to miss the College Assembly at school. Please think of us as glad to be with our two sons in Colorado but truly homesick for the luncheon and assembly and all of you.

I know that you all were saddened to hear of the death of Miss Coe. She meant much to every single Park School person during each of the forty years she served our school. There are very few people of whom you can say this. Just as she played a large part in the lives of many of you so did she in my life and the life of Mrs. Froelicher and our children. I am sure that at the Assembly you will pause and remember this friend of ours. Her gallantry in the last few years when she was stricken with arthritis is one of the most amazing expressions of human courage I have ever known. I know the school will somehow make her memory and her name a part of all its future.

Except for the sadness of our loss school is really going ahead. I saw Mr. Thomason a day or two ago and told him with pleasure how delighted I was that he was taking a fresh look at every part of the school and doing a prodigious work of bringing about some of the things which the school needs. Mr. Thomason and his associates on the faculty will need, will want and will profit by your continuing interest. I hope very much that you will return to the school as often as you can and help in every way that you can to see that the next chapter in its history is better than the one we knew.

With regards and much affection to each of you, I am

Sincerely yours,

Hans Froelicher, Jr.

P.S.- I want each of you to have a copy of the charge I gave to the class at your commencement, and I enclose a copy for you herewith.

P.S.- If you have a reunion in June please be sure to let me know.