



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Japhet School Announces New Head and Plans to Operate Debt-free by mid-June

Clawson, Michigan - Japhet School, an award-winning private school in Clawson that integrates character education with strong academics, will have a new Head of School in July, and -- with hard work and support from the community -- will operate free of a mortgage. Raising enough funds to earn a \$50,000 matching grant, announced just a few days ago, is key to this plan.

Cathy Mohan, a 30-year Japhet teacher and administrator and Royal Oak resident, has been the Head of School since 2005. She announced her retirement over a year ago, giving the school's Board of Trustees ample time to hire the right person for this vital position for the school. Joe Mohan, the school's IT/Facility Director and Cathy's husband, is retiring also. He, along with the Board, announced a quest to retire Japhet School's mortgage as the Mohans' 'parting gift' to the school. Since purchasing the school in 2013, the school has raised \$750,000 toward the mortgage, but it still needs to raise about \$200,000 by June 18 to pay it off completely.

The Joseph and Mary Cacioppo Foundation recently promised a grant of \$50,000 to inspire enough giving to help the school meet this important goal. Retiring the mortgage will allow the school to, among other things, keep tuition affordable and provide scholarships so that any child who wishes to attend Japhet School is able to do so.

"We're in the very final stretch," Joe Mohan said. "With less than \$200,000 left to raise, this match could get us there. We're so close to reaching this milestone for Japhet and for generations of future students." The Mohans are committed to Japhet School's philosophy of seeing children as unlimited learners who best learn in an environment where character and academics are equals.

This philosophy will continue under the leadership of Kerri G. Vizena, recently named as Japhet's Head of School beginning July 1. Vizena was once Japhet's Early Childhood Director and a trustee. She also served Lapeer Public Schools as a Gifted and Talented Coordinator and as a Building Manager (assistant principal). Vizena, of Rochester Hills, has owned her own business for several years, and she is a member of the Assistance League of Southeastern Michigan.

The decision to hire Vizena was unanimous among board members. “We believe Kerri is an outstanding fit for Japhet,” says Frank Edwards, President of the Board of Trustees. “She has a strong history of excellence in the field of education, and her recent tenure on the board of trustees gives her an understanding of the challenges and opportunities we face.”

Vizena looks forward to leading Japhet’s outstanding staff. “Each individual brings unique talents and strengths, and is valuable to the team’s success,” she says. “I’m proud to be a member of Japhet’s team and to lead in a manner that will honor Cathy’s legacy, all former Heads of School, and Japhet’s mission. I’m excited for the future of Japhet and for the relevant ways that our students will have an impact on the world.”

To donate to Japhet School, visit japhetschool.org/legacymatch/ or call 248-585-9150.



Caption: Kerri Vizena (left), will replace Cathy Mohan as Japhet’s Head of School on July 1, 2018.

High-res pic sent as individual file.

About Japhet School:

Founded in 1973, Japhet School is an independent school, serving children the metropolitan Detroit area in preschool through eighth grade. Its mission is to nurture and prepare each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program. The school provides small classes of fewer than 20 students in each, which enables teachers to challenge students with academic material that is appropriate for their intellectual readiness, regardless of age or grade. Integrated with strong academics is Japhet School’s national award-winning character education curriculum, which builds a peaceful community within the school. The school’s public speaking curriculum gives graduates confidence in leadership roles. Japhet is a National School of Character: it was the first school in Michigan -- and the first independent school in the country -- to receive this award. To learn more about Japhet, visit japhetschool.org.

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