

## **The Committee for Nurturing Friends Education at Moses Brown**

The Committee for Nurturing Friends Education at Moses Brown (CNFEMB) has continued to do substantive and meaningful work throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Below is a brief report of several detailed dimensions of that work to convey specific ways we have worked to live our faith and mission as a Friends school during an exceptionally challenging year.

Over three joint meetings, the CNFEMB partnered with the Moses Brown All School Diversity Committee (ASDC) to discuss the school's continued observance of Columbus Day. The sense of the meeting that emerged was that Columbus Day should be replaced by Indigenous Peoples' Day on the Moses Brown calendar. The Minute was approved by the Board of Trustees in September, 2020 and was reflected in the updated school calendar in October.

In addition to adopting Indigenous Peoples' Day for the second Monday in October, Director of Friends Education Jen McFadden and the CNFEMB advocated for the school to recognize the 19<sup>th</sup> of June as Juneteenth. That change is now also reflected on the school calendar.

Also last fall, Dawn Tripp, the Clerk of CNFEMB was asked to clerk the search team for the next Clerk of the Moses Brown Board. This is the first time in the school's history that a Friend has stewarded this process. The search committee was comprised of three members of the administration and four current trustees. The sense of the meeting that emerged was to implement - also for the first time in Moses Brown's history - a Co-Clerk model which was approved by the Board. Reza Taleghani and Jane Ritson-Parsons will serve as the next Co-Clerks of the MB Board.

At our March 2021 Board Meeting, the MB Board met to discuss the possibility of a change to the bylaws to allow for remote participation at MB Board Meetings beyond COVID. This issue had drawn forth concerns in smaller committee conversations – both at the Executive Committee, at the Governance Committee, and at CNFEMB. While it is clear that remote participation can allow for an increased level of inclusivity and attendance, some Friends, as well as others, were concerned about a shift away from in-person meetings and how that might change the spiritual experience of decision making and discernment. Members of the CNFEMB suggested using a query to frame the conversation at the Board. Clerk Dawn Tripp crafted a query about remote participation to present to the Board, along with brief remarks about how queries function in Friends discernment. Out of that discussion in March, a sense of the meeting emerged that would allow for a degree of remote participation for Board meetings, and a by-laws change was approved by the Moses Brown Board and is being offered for consideration and discernment by NEYM Permanent Board.

Moses Brown School's commitment to Friends voices and leadership in governance has intensified over recent years. The CNFEMB is now meeting seven times per year (as opposed to simply five). While the CNFEMB will continue to do the work we have always done – including supporting the work of our Director of Friends Education and nominating Friends to the MB Board – in the coming years, we are also committed to continuing our partnership with other committees, including the All School Diversity Committee and the Moses Brown Governance Committee; to explore and implement collaborative changes in school and Board culture; to support new initiatives around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the recently hired Director of DEI; and to help create more community-wide fluency in Quaker decision-making, Friends practices, and clerking skills.

To that last point, currently and throughout the summer, a small working group from CNFEMB will be planning the September Board Retreat. The retreat will be a several hour training in Friends Decision Making for all Moses Brown trustees and members of the MB administrative council.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Tripp  
Clerk, Committee for Nurturing Friends Education at Moses Brown