Procedure Change Concerning BYM Nominations to SSFS Board of Trustees (Background)

The Sandy Spring Friends School’s (SSFS) Committee on Trustees (COT) is responsible for nominating at-large members of the Board and for training and nurturing Board members.  In September 2023 the General Secretary of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, in an email exchange, asked Frank Massey (co-clerk of COT), “Why is BYM nominating SSFS Board members?”  The General Secretary noted that BYM is the only North America Yearly Meeting nominating school board members.  After that inquiry, and in consultation with the COT co-clerk, Frank had a Zoom conversation with the BYM Nominating Committee co-clerks.  The co-clerks acknowledged that the committee has had difficulty finding nominees for the Board.  The most likely source of nominees is the Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting, which itself is having a difficult time nominating SSFS Board members.  The BYM Nominating co-clerks express support of the SSFS Board taking the responsibility of nominating four Quakers to the Board.  After a review of the SSFS bylaws, it was determined that with a small revision of the bylaws, these nominees could come from yearly meetings beyond the BYM.

The COT co-clerks discussed this change, then spoke with the SSFS Board co-clerks, and after a time of discussion and discernment, it was agreed that the full COT would review and discern if the Committee would forward this to the Board.  All acknowledged that this would allow the Board to nominate Board members from beyond BYM, including alumni and Quaker educators from across the United States.  This would also free up a few spots on the Board for nominations to increase the Board’s diversity.  COT approved forwarding the proposal to the Board.

A written proposal for the change in the nomination process was emailed to the SSFS Board several days before the February Board meeting.  The Board considered this during the  executive session on 13 February 2024.  After considering the potential advantages and disadvantages of this change, the Board approved forwarding this request to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting.

Mary Nishioka Frank Massey

Co-Clerks Committee on Trustees

Sandy Spring Friends School Trustees