



October 24, 2008

Dear Friends:

Despite the current turmoil in the financial markets and the likely coming recession, I want everyone in the Walker family to know that we are well positioned to maintain a high level of special education and therapeutic care for troubled children, adolescents, and their families. In my 25 years as executive director, Walker has been through many ups and downs. We have continued to prosper and grow, and I know we will emerge from this recent economic downturn fiscally sound, programmatically refocused, and poised for further growth.

The Walker School was created in 1960, at the beginning of one of the most tumultuous decades in American history. Beacon High School was created at the end that decade, when many people believed that our country was coming apart at the seams. And Walker Partnerships was created in 1994, as we emerged from the last nationwide recession. This rich history gives us confidence that, even in these times of frightening uncertainty, Walker will continue to see and embrace opportunities for innovative new ways to serve our most vulnerable citizens.

I am also confident because Walker is blessed with hundreds of dedicated and talented staff members, with the trust and support of a strong board of directors, and with many, many loyal and generous friends. This great community of supporters allows us to focus without reservation on the core components of our mission: teaching struggling students, caring for troubled children, building hope for families facing serious challenges.

While our programs are well managed and our revenue streams are diverse, everyone at Walker is looking at new ways to stretch budgets and conserve resources. We are maximizing our strengths and examining areas where we might be able to cut costs. We are also retooling our fundraising strategies to ensure that our efforts are wide-reaching and highly efficient, and we are taking special care to thank our community of donors for their continued financial support.

With the same bold ambition that created Walker 50 years ago, we are moving forward with our strategic planning for the next five and ten years. We will certainly have to make tough choices, alter timelines, and adjust our priorities according to the circumstances we face, but our commitment to a vision for the future of Walker will remain clear and focused.

Rebuilding lives is difficult work, even in the best of times. I am especially grateful for the support of so many wonderful friends in the Walker community at a time when many severely troubled children, adolescents, and their families need it most. With you by our side, we will not falter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Richard W. Small'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard W. Small  
Executive Director