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Dear Tavan Elementary School Parents and Guardians,

I know you have been anxious to learn who your students' next principal will be, following the reassignment of Ms. Margaret Serna to an important District position.

I am happy to inform you that Tavan's assistant principal, Julie Ballard, has been appointed as Tavan's next principal. You know Ms. Ballard well: she has become a key member in almost every aspect of Tavan's daily life during her 18 years with the school, from the Intervention Planning, Multi-Disciplinary and Literacy teams to the Teaching and Learning/Leadership Committee. She started at Tavan in 2001 as a special education teacher and has served as your assistant principal since 2014.

Ms. Ballard is a highly trained, professional educator, holding a Bachelor's degree in Education and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership, both from Northern Arizona University, and has certificates in both K-8 General Education and K-12 Special Education. She has planned and provided professional, research-based development for Tavan teachers on the instruction of at-risk and special education students, created an intervention system for students who need extra help, and is focused on advancing the achievement levels of all students. In fact, we have relied on Ms. Ballard to train other Scottsdale Unified School District teachers and assistant principals in these areas of her expertise.

Along the way, she has had an excellent mentor in Ms. Serna. As a result, Tavan parents, teachers, staff and community members with whom we consulted believe Ms. Ballard is uniquely suited to take over the role of principal. I agree.

Tavan traditions will continue, but as principal in her own right, we will encourage Ms. Ballard to put her own stamp on your school's ongoing, outstanding record of preparing children for the future. She will develop and nurture your students, and, with your trust and support, I am confident her leadership of Tavan Elementary School will be exceptional.

Respectfully,

John Kriekard, Ed.D.  
Superintendent