



Middle Way School

Director of Teaching and Learning

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Middle Way School (MWS), an independent day school founded in 2018, is pioneering a new model of education based on the best in education research and enhanced by the wisdom of the dharma. MWS seeks a part-time Director of Teaching and Learning to help develop the education program in alignment with the school's Buddhist and pedagogical principles. The Director of Teaching and Learning will collaborate with administrators and teachers on campus 15-20 hours per week.

MWS currently has 28 students and expects to enroll 15-20 more in 2020-2021, for a total of roughly 45-50 students in 5 mixed-grade classes. Each year we will expand by one grade. We currently employ 3 lead teachers, several part-time educators and are hiring for other key positions. We are dedicated to building a culturally diverse team. The Director of Teaching and Learning will join a cohesive, committed, and talented emerging community.

Our curriculum is developing with a strong progressive approach and gentle philosophical underpinnings and is infused with a wealth of ideas, practices, and content from the Buddhist traditions (logic, reasoning, respect, awareness, and so on). Our approach is one that recognizes the whole child and focuses on social and emotional learning and relationships as the necessary foundation for education. We aim for academic success while planting the seeds of the dharma.

MWS is an educational home for teachers drawn to relationships and practices that are rooted in wisdom and compassion and a belief that all children have inherent good qualities. We also lean on current neurological and educational research, and rely on our teachers' collaborative creativity and experience to weave these together with the principles of the school.

We are funded by a Buddhist philanthropic organization that is hoping our model will help others around the world start their own Buddhist schools, therefore it is imperative that we build and document a cohesive collection of materials that can be shared with others. Collaborating on this will be a key part of the Director of Teaching and Learning's responsibilities.

The Director of Teaching and Learning is a critical part of our leadership team and focuses on supporting teachers to create a joyful yet rigorous academic experience for our students. They will oversee a wide range of educational aspects of our school and have primary responsibility for leading the implementation and evaluation of the curriculum. The Director of Teaching and

Learning will analyze the curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness, identify weaknesses, and recommend/generate problem-solving solutions.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Pedagogical Approach

Provide leadership, training, and ongoing support for the school's pedagogical approach.

Beliefs about Children and Learning

Recognize students as inherently wise and good, independent learners, intrinsically motivated to generate, discover, build, and enlarge their own frameworks of knowledge. Guide students' processes of discovery and understanding rather than simply transmitting knowledge to them. Encourage the development of meta-cognitive skills such as reflective thinking and problem-solving techniques.

Curriculum

Lead the ongoing review and development of the school's curriculum, ensuring a comprehensive and cohesive continuation of learning through the grades that is informed by current research. Work closely with the Creative Director on weaving Buddhist themes through a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence. Define core curriculum objectives and provide pedagogical support for implementation of the curriculum and progress towards the objectives.

Faculty Development

Support a faculty that lives the values of the school and that provides excellence and continuity in the educational experience. In consultation with administration, plan and deliver effective professional development that trains and supports teachers to practice effective teaching strategies and develop effective curricula aligned with Buddhist principles. Facilitate the professional growth and development of each teacher. Meet regularly with teachers and observe each classroom. Support teacher-researchers in sharing their work with one another. Conduct goal setting, provide feedback and document the process. Conduct observations and carry out feedback meetings that support teachers. Develop strong relationships with teachers-while also holding them accountable.

Recruitment

Work with the Head of School and Creative Director to conduct searches for new teaching faculty.

Student Assessment

Work collaboratively to define tools for assessing student understanding and ensure an ongoing and cumulative process. Review grade-level progress against agreed-upon benchmarks. Plan to use the results of assessments to augment and solidify student learning.

Student Support

Lead the articulation of the MWS's approach to differentiated learning and to student support and discipline. Collaborate with faculty to respond to and manage concerns and issues, support communication between teachers and families; help to mediate any disagreements or misunderstandings. Always maintain confidentiality.

Administrative Team

Communicate regularly with the Head of School. Collaborate with the administrative team to ensure the smooth functioning of the school and program.

Research

Be proactive in asking questions and discussing the school's programs, students' progress and outcomes. Engage in action research by generating hypotheses and questions, documenting student work, and reflecting individually and collaboratively.

Planning

Collaborate with teachers to ensure that at the start of school, students and parents are provided with a clear set of expectations regarding behavior, class work, and – in some cases – homework.

Communication with Parents

Collaborate with teachers and with other administrators to ensure that parents are engaged, participating, and respected members of our learning community. Periodically lead program-wide communication with families.

Communication and Connection with Children

Build a connection to the children, supporting their learning and maturity through the school.

Engagement

Engage with the Middle Way School faculty through faculty development and community-wide events to forward the work of the school.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity

Support the school's efforts to build a culturally diverse and pluralistic team committed to working in a multicultural environment.

Supervision/Safety

Help to ensure the physical and emotional health and safety of students both inside and outside the classroom by providing active and appropriate guidance to teachers.



CORE EDUCATIONAL/PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

- Experience in the development and implementation of inquiry-based interdisciplinary curriculum across disciplines
- Firm understanding of a variety of student assessment tools, including special education
- Familiarity with STEAM education; outdoor learning/education and 21st Century Skills
- Advanced understanding of developmental continuum and best practices that meet students academically, physically, socially, and emotionally
- Experience differentiating instruction in a mixed age/ability classrooms
- Foundational understanding or openness to learn the fundamentals of Buddhism
- Able to work independently and in teams with multiple individuals at varying levels
- Practical, creative, and resourceful
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to manage personal and professional relationships with tact, sensitivity, respect, compassion, and openness.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Ability to work both indoors and outdoors
- Upon employment, ability to pass criminal background checks

QUALIFICATIONS

The Director of Teaching and Learning will generally have at least the following qualifications:

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university
- 10+ years experience in the field of education

Term and Compensation

Location: Saugerties, NY

Salary: Commensurate with experience (\$45k cap)

Type: Full Time - Administration

Timing: We are hiring for the 2020-21 school year starting ASAP; Part-time 20 hours per week

The Middle Way School welcomes, and in fact strongly encourages, students and prospective employees of any race, age, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic background to apply. The Middle Way School will make reasonable accommodations for individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. As an institution and as individuals we have the responsibility to actively change the power differences that perpetuate biases against historically underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.

