

# JOB DESCRIPTION



## Music Teacher

**Status:** Exempt, Part-Time

**Reports To:** Specialty Program Division Head

**Supervises:** None

**Dated:** June 2026

### Overview

Middle Way School (MWS) is pioneering a new model of education based on the best in education research and enhanced by the wisdom and compassion of Buddhist traditions. Teachers with a deep understanding of childhood development are the pillars of this education. Specialty teachers are responsible for developing curricula in cooperation with the Head of School, curriculum coordinators, and other teachers in the school. Specialty teachers also support students' development in all areas including social-emotional, physical, academic, and work with the dharma curriculum coordinator to integrate Buddhist wisdom and practice into the classroom.

This is an exciting moment for the MWS music program. We're expanding music classes from 30 minutes to a full hour per session, deepening students' musical experience across all grade levels. The music teacher will lead 7 one-hour classes per week, serving preschool through 7th grade. The curriculum progresses from rhythm, song, and movement in the early years to foundational music skills, beginning instruments (mini piano in 3rd grade, recorder in 4th), and culminating in a 5th–7th grade Rock Ensemble elective that meets twice weekly. Across all levels, the program emphasizes joyful, hands-on musicianship and ensemble skills.

This is a part-time role totaling 12 hours per week: 7 hours of teaching (afternoons) plus 5 hours for prep and meetings. The Music Teacher would also have the option of adding an hour of morning teaching for our youngest students one day per week.

MWS school culture relies on daily meditation and ample professional support. We expect our teachers to meet conventional outcomes in unconventional ways and use skillful means to differentiate in ways that help meet students academically and socially. Teachers are expected to explore the Middle Way model of development and actively engage in its creation. Being a practicing Buddhist is not necessary, however, an understanding of Buddhist principles and terminology is expected. In addition, we ask that all staff develop a personal contemplative practice of some kind.

### Responsibilities

- Plan and implement 7 one-hour music classes per week across preschool through 7th grade, with developmentally appropriate curricula emphasizing practical skill-building. There is an option to add 1 hour of morning teaching one day per week for our youngest students.

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- Report on curriculum and student growth 2x/year in narrative reports and be available for ongoing parent communication as needed.
- Transport instruments and materials between classrooms (e.g., using a wagon), adapting to a campus-based, multi-room teaching model.
- Maintain open lines of communication with classroom teachers regarding curriculum integration and student observations.
- Maintain a clean, welcoming school environment, including preparation and tidying of music spaces, and encourage children to take pride in caring for their space.
- Support students' social interactions and learning throughout the day to create a culture of harmony, reverence, and respect.
- Engage in an annual performance review process beginning in September. Middle Way School will offer reasonable time to engage in this process.
- Other duties and responsibilities may be assigned from time to time as business needs require

## Core Competencies

- Knowledge of current best practices in elementary education, including play-based learning, outdoor education, early childhood development, mindfulness and social emotional learning
- Background in progressive education and constructivist theory and ability to put it into practice
- Knowledge, understanding, and use of active learning strategies to support a range of learners
- Ability to creatively integrate and adapt curriculum to engage learners
- A creative and rigorous approach to information gathering and analysis, ability to understand broad ideas and synthesize
- Clear communication – excellent command of written and spoken English
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team – especially when it is necessary to facilitate change, overcome an impasse, face an issue, or ensure that decisions are made.

## Qualities

- A passion for education and carrying out the vision and mission of Middle Way.
- A personal connection to contemplative music – an understanding of how sound, silence, and presence intersect in musical practice.
- Creativity and adaptability: able to design engaging lessons across a wide developmental range, from preschoolers to young adolescents.
- Comfort with the physical and logistical demands of a mobile music program, including willingness to cart instruments in a wagon across campus with practicality and good humor.
- An understanding of or keen interest in integrated curriculum development, brain-based learning, project-based learning, early childhood development, mindfulness, class culture, and authentic learning.
- Flexibility, open-mindedness, adaptability, and patience with change.
- Openness to the teachings of the Buddhadharmā.
- Ability to work independently and in teams.



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- Ability to work harmoniously within a group when it is necessary to facilitate change, overcome an impasse, face issues, or ensure that decisions are made.
- Ability to see the merits of perspectives other than one's own; openness to different and new ways of doing things.
- Reliability and respectfulness with an equitable, positive view of students, co-workers, and parents.
- Humor!

### Required Education/Experience

- Master's degree or a minimum of three years relevant work experience.
- Early childhood and/or elementary teaching experience, ideally spanning preschool through middle school.
- Experience teaching piano or keyboards, recorder, and/or band/ensemble at the elementary level.
- An interest in the Middle Way view and how to manifest it through presence and pedagogy.

### Working Conditions

- Ability to position oneself to work with young children and remain in a stationary position for periods of time.
- Ability to observe details at close range and communicate information and ideas so others will understand. Must be able to exchange accurate information to ensure children's health and safety.
- Ability to work in outdoor weather conditions.
- Teaching currently takes place across multiple classrooms on campus, requiring regular movement between spaces throughout the day and the ability to transport instruments and materials (e.g., loading and pulling a wagon) between rooms.

### Terms

- On-site at Middle Way School in Saugerties, NY
- Part-time, exempt position
- Schedule is for the entirety of the 2026-2027 academic year
- Eligible employees receive a 401(k) retirement plan and paid time off
- All employees must pass a New York State background check
- Salary range \$20,000-\$28,000

### How to Apply

Please send a cover letter explaining why you are interested in a position at Middle Way along with a resume to [careers@middlewayschool.org](mailto:careers@middlewayschool.org).

*We hire and enroll without discriminating against any identifying factor which may include race, age, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic background. We will make accessibility accommodations for individuals with disabilities to the fullest extent possible. As an*

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*institution and as individuals we recognize that we have the responsibility to actively change the power differences that perpetuate biases against historically underrepresented groups. Our inclusion efforts are a dynamic process. We welcome your experience and invite your input on how our school community can continue to evolve.*