

# JOB DESCRIPTION



## Physical Education Teacher

**Status:** Exempt, Full-Time (30 hrs/week)

**Reports To:** Specialty Program Division Head

**Supervises:** None

**Dated:** June 2026

### Overview

Middle Way School is pioneering a new model of education based on the best in education research and enhanced by the wisdom and compassion of Buddhist traditions. We are seeking a creative, energetic, and contemplative educator to help build our physical education and aftercare programs from the ground up. Specialty teachers are responsible for co-creating, evaluating, implementing and documenting curricula in cooperation with the Division Head, curriculum coordinators, and other teachers in the school.

The MWS PE Teacher is a 30-hour-per-week position (11 AM – 5 PM, Monday - Friday), split between leading physical education classes during the school day and facilitating aftercare programming in the late afternoon. The PE Teacher is the primary architect of both programs, designing activities, sourcing low-cost equipment, and continuously refining curriculum in collaboration with classroom teachers and school leadership.

This is an ideal role for someone early in their career who brings enthusiasm, ingenuity, and a background in coaching, camp leadership, or youth recreation. Our PE program is grounded in cooperative play, lifelong leisure activities, and the joy of movement – not competition. We believe physical education is most powerful when children discover what they love to do with their bodies and build habits they will carry for a lifetime. They teach fundamental motor skills, sports, and games, while also incorporating fitness strategies and health education. Additionally, they may supervise extracurricular activities and collaborate with other teachers to support school-wide health initiatives.

Our facilities are wonderfully unconventional: most classes take place outdoors or in a partially finished space that calls for adaptability, creativity, and a genuine love of working with what you have. We are looking for a candidate who would thrive in this environment.

Specialty teachers are responsible for supporting students' development in all areas including social-emotional, physical, and academic. They also work with the Dharma Education Liaison to integrate Buddhist wisdom and practice into the classroom. Specialty teachers assess students' progress and report to parents through progress reports..

MWS school culture relies on daily meditation and ample professional support. We expect our teachers to 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

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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

#### Physical Education

- Design and deliver engaging, scaffolded PE lessons for all age groups (preschool through seventh grade) and introduce students to a wide range of movement disciplines such as cooperative games, mindful movement, nature-based activities, archery, martial arts, and other non-traditional physical pursuits
- Create a positive, nurturing physical education setting and maintain an organized and inviting environment
- Build a program that centers student enjoyment and intrinsic motivation over competition or performance metrics
- Collaborate with the Dharma Education Liaison to weave contemplative and thematic unit principles into PE programming
- Assess and observe student progress in physical skills, documenting growth in a narrative format
- Prioritize student safety through appropriate instruction, equipment checks, and environmental awareness
- Maintain open communication with classroom teachers about student observations and curriculum integration
- Demonstrate and explain basic skills, knowledge, and strategies for various physical activities, including sports, games, and rhythms.
- Communicate effectively and promptly via email and other channels with staff, faculty, and families.
- Maintain a clean, welcoming school environment through daily tidying and preparation, and encourage children to take pride in caring for their space.
- Attend all staff meetings
- Plan and participate in seasonal celebrations and events
- Other duties and responsibilities may be assigned from time to time as business needs require

#### Aftercare Program

- Plan and facilitate engaging games, crafts, outdoor adventures and movement-based activities that are fun, low-key, and developmentally appropriate for mixed-age groups in our aftercare program (3:30–5:00 PM)
- Foster a calm, welcoming aftercare environment that serves as a gentle transition from the school day
- Collaborate with teaching staff to ensure continuity and complement the school's culture and values
- Other duties and responsibilities may be assigned from time to time as business needs require

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### 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 love and understanding of children and early childhood development
- An interest in personal and professional growth
- Open to the teachings of the Buddhadharmā
- Flexible, open-minded, adaptable, patient with change
- Able to work independently and in teams
- Practical and resourceful
- Able to see the merits of perspectives other than his/her own; openness to different and new ways of doing things
- Reliable and respectful of deadlines
- Humor!

### Required Education/Experience

- Associate's degree required, Bachelor's or Master's degree preferred.
- Preferably 3-5 years of experience in grade level

### 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.
- May require moving items weighing up to 30 lbs. Some supports are available to assist with this.

### Terms

- On-site at Middle Way School in Saugerties, NY
- Full-time, exempt position



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- Schedule is for the entirety of the 2026-2027 academic year
- Eligible employees receive group health insurance, a 401(k) retirement plan, paid parental leave, paid time off, life insurance, and additional ancillary benefits.
- All employees must pass a New York State background check
- Salary range \$33,000-\$36,000

### 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 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.*