

THE OAKS SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT
Head of School Search
The Oaks School

Los Angeles, California
Start Date: July 1, 2026



Head of School

Position Statement

The Place

Behind the imposing façade of an early 20th century Methodist church in the heart of Hollywood is a magic-land of greenery and play space, a seemingly secret school of spacious classrooms, stained glass windows, eager students and attentive faculty. Dedicated to progressive education, The Oaks School is a place of learning, yes, but a place also of great joy.

Nowhere have these consultants encountered such commitment among parents as exists at The Oaks. Nowhere that we've even heard of mounts a school-wide camping trip each April with over 95% of students and their families taking part. And nowhere have we ever seen a circus in which every student is a featured performer. What this all means, we believe, is that nowhere are children better cared for, more imaginatively taught, or more intimately involved in their own education than at The Oaks.

What a joyful place to be a child! Book-filled classrooms flooded with light, playgrounds surrounded by oak trees, a secret garden, a "private" campus for the kindergarten, breezes wafting through the nearby Cahuenga Pass, this campus lives up to the school song, "A Home for Dreamers."



A Historical Commitment to Children and Community

Founded 40 years ago by a group of parents eager to build a progressive school for their children, The Oaks moved to its present home nestled behind the gothic church in 1987. From Day One the school has been committed to progressive education, social justice, and to being a welcoming and inclusive community. While many schools have changed their goals over the years, The Oaks remains true to its founding principles and mission.

With a program that values the individual and embraces the uniqueness of each student, The Oaks features a child-led approach to learning that is at the heart of progressive education. Students find great joy in hands-on learning and appreciate their opportunities to be independent thinkers, crucial elements in their academic journey. That journey is complemented by the school's commitment to both social-emotional learning and DEIB, strengthened by an anti-bias curriculum and a focus on social justice that run throughout the curriculum.

Amid all the wonders that make The Oaks what it is, perhaps none is more striking than the community-centered approach that builds strong, lasting relationships among students, teachers, and parents. Right in the center of Hollywood's bustle, The Oaks is an oasis of calm that feels like small-town America in the way people relate to each other and how obviously comfortable all branches of the school family feel on campus.

Among the students, there is a sense of freedom—freedom to explore, to ask questions, to joke with each other and with their teachers—that contributes to a strong sense of self. As one recent visitor put it, "These are children who have a high E.Q. and know how to be a friend." The parent body at The Oaks is involved as few parent bodies are. They support the school, come to events and meetings, go on camping trips, have their



own singing group, believe in DEIB, and cheerfully pitch in to help with whatever needs doing. As the school has recently contended with reduced enrollment and diminished revenue, parents have pitched in to raise nearly a million dollars to date to steady the balance sheet and shore up reserves.

This is a tight-knit community. The faculty are at one with the parents in their commitment to DEIB and social justice, and the social fabric of the school is strong because of the intimacy afforded by the school's size. The faculty celebrate their students' successes and reinforce the atmosphere created by a culture in which everybody knows everybody!

The Program

The Oaks' curriculum is rooted in progressive educational theories that emphasize hands-on, inquiry-based learning that promotes curiosity, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. Collaborative teaching allows for differentiation, ensuring that instruction is responsive to each student's learning style, needs, and pace. It is a program that honors and preserves childhood in part by having a relaxed approach to technology, by not assigning homework before Third Grade, and by its focus on social-emotional learning.

The Oaks boasts a decades-long commitment to DEIB and has a well-defined anti-bias curriculum. Touchstone books like *Fry Bread* and *Hair Love* introduce Kindergarteners to differences in physical characteristics and family culture and traditions. Concepts build each year through joyful, affirming, and thought-provoking picture books until the 6th grade when students learn about systemic oppression, intersectionality, and uprisings. Students learn to be allies, advocates, and activists, putting them on the path to being informed and active citizens of the world. Parents overwhelmingly support this work through attendance at monthly Courageous Conversations, gatherings designed to support parents with various DEIB topics. Anti-bias education is not a one-off topic at The Oaks; it is woven into every fiber of the curriculum and community.

It would be impossible to attend the school's annual circus without sensing the joy that abounds at The Oaks. A long-time feature of the P.E. faculty's work, the circus involves every student in the school, all showing off skills they have mastered through their P.E. classes. From jugglers to unicyclists, tumblers to hula hoopers, plate spinners to gymnasts, every student has a chance to shine. Not only is this event hugely attended by parents and visitors for its sheer spectacle, it also reinforces what the children have learned because it is entirely skill-based. One of the most telling and endearing aspects of the circus is that when students drop a plate or fall off a unicycle, they pick up the plate or get back on the bike without embarrassment or hesitation or tears; resilience is baked into their thinking.

Governance and Finance

With declining enrollment, the Board has become very involved in helping out in admissions and fundraising. The Board enjoys stellar leadership right now and possesses a collective will to overcome the exigencies of the moment. Parental outreach will almost surely boost admissions and the parent body has already put its collective shoulder to the wheel to undergird the school's finances. There is a strong sense that a hard-working Board and committed parent body, coupled with the steady hand of an experienced Interim Head, will soon lead to more robust enrollment and revenue.

Opportunities and Challenges

Marketing the only progressive school in Hollywood requires someone with strong communication skills. Surprisingly, in a school that so values its intimacy, people complain about communication; the faculty often feel left out of the information loop, while parents find some communications either contradictory, confusing, or poorly timed.

Beyond the immediate need for better communication among all branches of the family, there is a need for the next Head to develop a strategy that will yield long-term improvements in admissions, work with the Board on fundraising, develop a strategic plan, strengthen relations with the church, and be the visible face and audible voice of the school.

The Successful Candidate will:

- Be a presence on campus and in the community
- Bring a sense of joy to the position
- Demonstrate ongoing commitment to DEIB
- Have experience with K-6 curriculum and pedagogy
- Be able to lead from the heart and the head with minimal ego
- Preserve the commitment to let the children shine
- Balance the strong academic program with the school's history of joyful, child-centered learning
- Know school finance and bring new resources into the school
- Engage productively with faculty and parents
- Know everyone on campus
- Build trust among the faculty and staff





Interested Candidates

Interested candidates should apply through the RG175 website: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>. We require a current resume, a cover letter detailing the candidate's interest in the position, and a writing sample that could be anything from a letter to parents to a graduation speech or magazine article or even philosophy. The salary range for the position is \$225-250K with \$60K housing allowance. Deadline for applications is **August 15th**.

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