

## POSITION STATEMENT

# The Blake School

DIRECTOR OF EARLY LEARNING CENTER SEARCH

START DATE: JULY 1, 2026



# BLAKE



## OVERVIEW

The Blake School, an independent PK–12 co-ed day school serving 1,300 students across two campuses in Minneapolis, seeks a Director of the Early Learning Center (DELC) to begin July 1, 2026.

Opened in 2023, the Early Learning Center (ELC) is a purpose-built, fossil-fuel-free facility designed for Blake's youngest learners: pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade. Rooted in the Reggio Emilia philosophy, the ELC reflects Blake's values of curiosity, kindness, inclusivity, and resilience. With light-filled classrooms, seamless indoor–outdoor connections, and thoughtfully designed learning spaces, the ELC provides an environment where inquiry, exploration, and joy flourish.

The DELC will join a school nationally recognized for its academic excellence, commitment to pluralism, and innovation across all divisions. Blake's families are deeply engaged, its faculty are highly skilled and collaborative, and its financial, physical, and human resources are strong. Within this context, the DELC will have a rare opportunity to shape the earliest years of a Blake education, building a joyful foundation that will carry students forward through the Upper Elementary, Middle School, and Upper Schools.

Reporting to the Head of School, the DELC oversees all aspects of the PK–1 program, co-leads the Lower School alongside the Upper Elementary Director, and serves as a member of Blake's senior Administrative Council. This role is ideal for a visionary early childhood leader who is eager to work in partnership with dedicated colleagues, engaged families, and curious young learners to sustain and enhance one of the region's and nation's premier independent school programs.



## MISSION, COMMITMENT TO PLURALISM, VALUES

### Mission

Blake engages students with a dynamic, academically challenging education in a diverse and supportive community committed to pluralism and a common set of values. Students pursue an integrated program of academics, arts, and athletics, preparing for college, lifelong learning, and purposeful lives as community and global citizens.

### Commitment to Pluralism

Blake believes that a vibrant learning environment springs from diversity. The school values students, families, and employees from a wide range of backgrounds, identities, and life experiences, and strives for understanding across differences in an inclusive environment where everyone can belong, contribute, and thrive.

### Values

- Curiosity
- Kindness
- Inclusivity
- Resilience



## A TWO-CAMPUS SCHOOL AND TWIN CITIES COMMUNITY

Blake serves families from more than 55 neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. Following a recent campus unification, all early learners in pre-kindergarten through first grade now thrive in the new ELC on the Hopkins campus, which also houses the Upper Elementary (2–5) and Middle School (6–8). The Upper School (9–12) remains at the historic downtown Northrop campus near the Walker Art Center and Minneapolis Sculpture Garden.

The Twin Cities offers a rich cultural and natural backdrop: world-class museums, theaters, and music alongside four-season outdoor opportunities. Home to major universities and corporate headquarters, the region provides a dynamic setting in which Blake and its families flourish.

### Blake At-A-Glance

- Year Founded: 1900
- Grades Served: PK–12
- Total Enrollment: 1,300
- ELC Enrollment: 165
- Lower School Enrollment: 450 (includes ELC and Upper Elementary)
- Student–Faculty Ratio: 9:1
- Diversity: 38% of students self-identify as people of color
- Financial Assistance: 26% of students receive support
- Annual Budget: \$50 million | Endowment: \$100 million

## THE PROGRAM

The ELC establishes the foundation for Blake’s strong Lower School program and embodies five guiding principles:

- **Child-Centered:** Children are seen as inquisitive, capable, and whole.
- **Belonging to All:** Families and educators of all backgrounds experience connection and inclusion.
- **Rooted in Nature:** The curriculum emphasizes environmental awareness and indoor–outdoor learning.
- **Pluralistic Future:** Collaboration and diverse perspectives are embraced.
- **Sparking Curiosity:** Every space fosters inquiry, exploration, and wonder.

Students develop academic and social-emotional skills in a nurturing environment. Small classes, strong relationships, and a joyful spirit define daily life. The ELC also serves as the bedrock for a Blake education, preparing children for Upper Elementary, Middle School, and beyond.





## STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

The Early Learning Center is a joyful, purpose-built environment that reflects Blake's values of curiosity, kindness, inclusivity, and resilience. The ELC faculty are talented and collaborative, families are engaged, and the state-of-the-art building itself provides an extraordinary canvas for innovation in early childhood education. The next DELC will inherit these considerable strengths while also stepping into a moment of exciting possibility, one that calls for vision, clarity, and relational leadership.

The next DELC will welcome the following opportunities and challenges:

### THE ROLE

The DELC reports to the Head of School, serves on the Administrative Council, and co-leads the Lower School with the Upper Elementary Director. The DELC is responsible for:

- Overseeing all aspects of PK–1 curriculum, teaching, and learning.
- Hiring, supporting, and supervising faculty and staff.
- Partnering with Admissions to articulate the vision of the ELC to prospective families.
- Communicating effectively with current parents/guardians.
- Fostering a positive, collaborative adult culture.
- Ensuring Blake's mission and values are lived daily in the ELC.
- **Define and Model Reggio-Inspired at Blake:** Collaborate with academic leaders to further articulate with clarity what "Reggio-inspired" means at the ELC, demonstrate how the philosophy informs teaching and learning, and, in partnership with the Upper Elementary Director, establish systems that ensure a smooth and intentional transition into Upper Elementary.
- **Equip Teachers as Stewards and Guides:** Help faculty and staff articulate Blake's Reggio-inspired approach so that messaging is consistent, authentic, and compelling.
- **Build Adult Culture:** Continue to support, retain, and develop a healthy, collaborative environment that encourages dialogue and listening in which teachers, assistants, and staff prioritize learning from one another and working together with joy and mutual respect.

- **Inspire Innovation:** Empower faculty to embrace curricular evolution, innovation, and cross-pollination of ideas, ensuring the ELC remains a place of curiosity and growth.
- **Connect to the Whole School:** Share how the ELC serves as the foundation for a Blake education, and consistently collaborate with other division directors and PK-12 chairs to strengthen the PK-12 vision.
- **Welcome Families into the ELC and Blake Educational Community:** Encourage faculty, staff and parents/guardians to view families as integral to the ELC learning community. Create more meaningful and interactive experiences with ELC parents/guardians and collaborate with other divisional leaders in designing a mission-driven parent education series.
- **Communicate the Heart of the ELC:** Articulate clearly to prospective families what the ELC is, why Blake's ELC matters, and why it is the premier place for their children to begin their educational journey.
- **Differentiate in the Marketplace:** Partner with the broader Blake community to effectively communicate, both outwardly and inwardly, how Blake's ELC program distinguishes itself within the Twin Cities educational landscape.



## LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following:

### Education & Experience

- Advanced degree in Early Childhood Education or related field.
- Minimum of five years teaching experience in early childhood.
- Administrative leadership experience involving teacher supervision and evaluation.
- Familiarity with independent schools preferred.

### Skills

- Exceptional communication skills across audiences.
- Strong organizational and problem-solving abilities.
- Capacity to strategically manage complexity and change with composure.
- Record of recruiting, developing, and retaining excellent teachers.

### Personal Qualities

- A visible leader who finds joy in their relations with students.
- Warm, approachable, and authentic.
- Confident, humble, and resilient.
- Optimistic, steady, and socially aware.
- Listens deeply and empowers others.

## SALARY AND BENEFITS

The anticipated salary range for this role is \$160K-170K depending on experience. Additionally, Blake offers a generous and comprehensive benefits package including a retirement plan with an employer contribution, comprehensive insurance benefits, and more.





## APPLICATION PROCESS

The Blake School has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support this search. After a thorough reading of the Position Statement, interested candidates are encouraged to apply via the RG175 website: [www.rg175.com/candidate/signup](http://www.rg175.com/candidate/signup).

Applications are due by **November 1, 2025**, and those that are received before that will get priority review.

Application materials should include:

- Cover letter addressing interest in Blake and this role.
- Resume or CV.
- Personal statement or educational philosophy focused on early childhood teaching and learning.
- List of three to five references (references not contacted without prior notice).

If prospective candidates need more clarification, please contact Steve Morris at [steve.morris@rg175.com](mailto:steve.morris@rg175.com)

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