

## POSITION STATEMENT

# WATERFORD SCHOOL

SANDY, UTAH



HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL SEARCH

START DATE: JULY 1, 2026

**W**  
WATERFORD  
SCHOOL





## OVERVIEW

Located at the foot of the Wasatch Mountains, Waterford School is Utah's premier liberal arts college preparatory private school for students in Preschool through High School. Student learning is Waterford School's reason for being. Since its founding, the School has instilled habits of independent thought, critical thinking, responsibility, passionate learning, and service to others. Waterford School's liberal arts program provides a strong foundation, and the campus culture prepares students to pursue lives of meaning and purpose. Waterford delivers a world-class education distinguished by a rich curriculum, an outstanding faculty, a deep commitment to student growth, and a learning environment that is caring, nurturing, and inspiring.

Founded in 1981 as a research school focused on a classic liberal arts education, Waterford is known for its outstanding liberal arts academic program, featuring inquiry-based teaching and learning. As noted by one parent, "Waterford teaches students how to think, not what to think." Inspired daily by an exceptional faculty, outstanding arts and athletics programs, and a cohesive community that values collaboration, respect, and the joy of discovery, Waterford takes pride in both challenging and supporting every student to be their best. Student outcomes speak to the success of Waterford's

approach, with the highest Advanced Placement scores in the state and excellent college placement results.

Waterford's 41-acre campus is designed with both aesthetics and sustainability in mind, a model for integrating classroom learning and extraordinary outdoor surroundings. Featuring natural elements like sand, water, logs, climbing terrain, and even a nature lab and arboretum, Waterford's setting enables hands-on, exploratory learning and the importance of environmental stewardship for all community members. An impactful recent addition is The Murray Science Center, a two-story, LEED-registered building, incorporating visible geothermal and solar features and a real-world lens to STEM in action.

Arts facilities promote creative inquiry and expression across all visual and performing arts offerings. These include a 600-seat concert hall, a black box theater with advanced sound and lighting, dance studios, ensemble and practice rooms, a ceramics studio, photography lab and studio, as well as gallery space. Top-tier faculty foster ties to the full artistic resources of Salt Lake City, facilitating extraordinary student learning and achievement.

Starting with its youngest students, Waterford places a premium on physical activity and engagement with the outdoors. From daily recess and physical education classes to elite varsity programs, students gain valuable lessons in character development through competition and cultivate a lifelong commitment to health and well-being.

Waterford's entire liberal arts educational experience reflects the longstanding tradition of excellence and a values-driven curriculum infused with a forward-thinking, intentional approach to developing the skills, judgment and character that leads to purposeful and impactful citizens upon graduation.

## MISSION, HISTORY & STRATEGIC VISION

Waterford School's Mission to provide “a world-class liberal arts education that stimulates intellect, ignites passion, and shapes character,” is as evident today as it was when the school was founded in 1981. Inspired by this clarity of purpose, the Waterford community holds itself to the highest expectation to live by their Core Values: Integrity, Excellence, Curiosity, Responsibility, and Caring. This close alignment between what the school says and what it practices sets Waterford apart as a leader in academic excellence, character development, and a distinctively unified and aspirational community.

Founded in 1981 by Nancy and Dustin Heuston, Waterford began as a research school that paired a classical liberal-arts model with cutting edge technology, then moved to its current campus in 1986. Serving as founding head until her retirement in 2015, Nancy was succeeded by Andrew Menke, and his leadership has been marked by sustaining the rich cultural legacy of the School's founding mission, and elevating it to a vibrant educational philosophy and vision that aligns with the forward-focused priorities of today's Waterford. Specifically, [Waterford Rising: A Path to Distinction, Strategic Plan 2024-2034](#) sets ambitious, measurable goals across three pillars:

- Establish the preeminent liberal arts independent school experience in the nation.
- Establish a center for teaching excellence in the liberal arts.
- Strengthen the long-term financial health and grow operating revenue to support world-class liberal arts learning.



The Waterford community has embraced these strategic priorities and the high expectations that accompany them. The shared focus and clear institutional identity generate unusually high morale, and the spirit of joy and curiosity that are signature characteristics of the Waterford experience.

## WATERFORD AT-A-GLANCE

- 1,100 students, grades PK-12; Lower School: 500, Middle School: 260, Upper School: 340
- 41-acre campus located 20 minutes from downtown Salt Lake City, at the base of the Wasatch Mountains
- Founded in 1981 to provide a classical and rigorous liberal arts education
- 61% of faculty have advanced degrees
- 38% of faculty have 10+ years tenure at Waterford
- 39% Students of Color
- 17% of students receive financial assistance
- 25 National Merit Semi-Finalists in 2025
- Arts program generates over 50 annual performances in dance, theater, instrumental and vocal music
- Athletic program boasts 10 varsity teams that have won 58 state championships

## SPOTLIGHT: LOWER SCHOOL

Waterford's Lower School provides a foundational experience, where young learners in grades PK-5 are nurtured by passionate teachers to cultivate and sustain a sense of wonder that facilitates a lifelong love of learning. The Lower School spans pre-school to fifth grade, and includes the mission-aligned, liberal arts focus on core academic subjects, as well as rich offerings in the visual and performing arts, including ballet, vocal and instrumental instruction, dance and drama, and drawing and design.

Other signature aspects featured in Waterford's Lower School are:

- Clear and aspirational pedagogy: rooted in a genuine commitment to the liberal arts. Starting with Waterford's youngest students, teachers model and foster the curiosity, critical thinking and intrinsic motivation that leads to a deep and lifelong love of learning.
- Facilities that optimize learning: Lower School students have access to extraordinary campus resources designed for grades PK-12, both for core academic disciplines and for the broad range of Specialists' classes. Beyond its teaching venues for the arts, the Lower School provides a rich learning environment that includes a library with a full-time librarian, an outdoor classroom for nature-based PreK learning, a full-size athletic field, dedicated chess instruction, and innovative STEM spaces in the maker labs, arboretum, and Bromley Nature Lab.
- Faculty expertise and leadership: Some of the most innovative programmatic changes in the Lower School have been led by teachers. Recent professional development initiatives have included Project Zero and other programs from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Responsive Classroom, Building Thinking Classrooms, and youcubed from Stanford's School of Education.

Through training and collaboration, Waterford's Lower School teachers continue to develop strategies to build upon strengths and inquiry-based thinking in order to maximize student engagement and empower them as learners.

Above all, the Lower School is characterized as an ideal, intentional incubator for authentic learning, growth, and achievement. During these critical early years students begin to realize the joys and rewards of embracing learning for the sake of learning. They form sound work study habits and explore new talents and interests. And they establish an educational rhythm that will grow and resonate throughout their Waterford experience and beyond.

Parents cite the deeply held values that permeate the hallways and classrooms and underscore the Lower School's expertise in not only meeting each child where they are, but understanding how to unlock their individual potential. Indeed, multiple parents, including those who work at the school, cite Waterford and the outstanding Lower School experience they have had as the reason they came to Salt Lake City and the reason they stay.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Given the significant growth in Waterford's Lower School and the corresponding academic range of students, there is an opportunity to clarify the School's academic profile to internal and external constituencies, as well as to build upon Lower School teachers' expertise, supporting them through professional development in meeting the needs of an ever-evolving student population.
- Waterford teachers rely on an administrative team that proactively defines and communicates the parameters for parental partnership. There is a clear desire to continue these practices to educate parents, to support teachers, and to promote the strongest possible parent/school partnership.
- Waterford's faculty identity is rooted in a passion for teaching and learning, leading to significant curricular freedom. There is an appetite for generating greater vertical alignment, including a more cohesive academic through line and consistent professional practices and expectations for faculty not only between the grades in the Lower School but equally important, in the transition from Lower to Middle School.
- Following a successful, hugely impactful division leader, the next Head of Lower School must bring equal measures of confidence, patience, emotional intelligence and all-in commitment to build the relational capital required in this high functioning, cohesive Lower School and broader Waterford community.

## KEY LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES

- Ability to lead, listen, and build community in alignment with the mission, core values, and strategic vision for the future of the school.
- Demonstrated success as an inspirational, approachable, transparent, genuine, wise, and collaborative leader and educator.
- Ability to serve as a visible, energetic, invested, and engaged presence in the Waterford community with a deep enthusiasm and ability to forge natural and meaningful connections with students, faculty, staff, and parents.
- Personal integrity, moral fortitude, high emotional intelligence and inspirational spirit, along with warmth, joy, and a sense of humor.
- Courage to serve as an ethical, brave, decisive, and transparent role model and communicator for administrators, faculty, staff, and students, and capacity to call on others to be their best selves.
- Experience with building, connecting with, and supporting an inclusive and broadly diverse community.
- Talent in identifying, selecting, retaining, and leading outstanding teachers, as well as for supervising, motivating, and developing them.
- Deep understanding of best practices and leading trends in pedagogy and curriculum, with a preference for lower school teaching and administrative experience.
- Capacity to forge authentic relationships and interconnections with a wide range of people both within the constituencies of the school and externally, including students, parents, colleagues, and wider community members.
- Superb written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills.



## TO APPLY

The Waterford School has retained Resource Group 175 to support its search for a new Head of Lower School. If you wish to submit your application, you may do so at:

**<https://rg175.com/candidates/signup>**

An application includes:

- Letter of interest (cover letter)
- Resume or CV
- An educational or leadership philosophy statement
- A writing sample of choice (optional)
- Names of five current references and contact information for each (the references will not be contacted until the finalist stage of the process.)

***This opportunity begins in July 2026. Qualified applicants will hold at least a bachelor's degree, preferably an advanced degree, and bring a minimum of five years of teaching and educational leadership experience.***

**The deadline for receipt of application materials is Monday, January 5, 2026.** Semi-finalist candidates will be interviewed in January and Finalists will be invited to campus for interviews in February 2026.

For any questions or further information about the position, please contact Molly King at **[molly.king@rg175.com](mailto:molly.king@rg175.com)** or 774-286-0114 (cell).

The Waterford School does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information. This policy applies to admissions and all areas of student life, as well as all areas of faculty and staff hiring, discipline, promotion, and termination. The Waterford School is an Equal Opportunity Employer.