

POSITION STATEMENT

THE DALTON SCHOOL

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTOR SEARCH

START DATE: JULY 1, 2026

THE DALTON SCHOOL





OVERVIEW

Rooted in an illustrious history yet looking boldly to the future, The Dalton School is one of the great K-12 schools in the United States. “The joy of learning at Dalton is palpable and abundant,” says Head of School José de Jesus. Founded in 1919, the school is widely recognized today as an international model of progressive education based upon a rigorous and challenging academic curriculum. Located in excellent facilities on 89th Street in Manhattan’s Upper East Side, Dalton serves 1330 extraordinarily diverse and talented students in grades K-12.

Dalton is seeking a first-rate educator and exceptional administrator to lead its High School beginning July 2026. This is a compelling career opportunity to take on a key leadership role in one of the nation’s most highly acclaimed independent schools.

VITAL STATISTICS

Total enrollment is 1,330 students with 460 in the High School. Students live in more than 100 different zip codes across the NYC area. Dalton School is accredited by the New York Association of Independent Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools.

The school's annual budget is \$89 million, with \$15 million dedicated to financial aid and about 20% of the student body receiving aid. The endowment is \$165 million. In 2024-25 the school raised \$5.3 million in the annual fund, and the Centennial Campaign, which concluded in 2020, raised \$108 million. Tuition for the 2025-2026 school year is \$67,480.

MISSION STATEMENT AND MAJOR PRINCIPLES

The Dalton School is committed to providing an education of excellence that meets each student’s interests, abilities and needs within a common curricular framework and reflects and promotes an understanding of, and appreciation for, diversity in our community as an integral part of school life. Dalton challenges each student to develop intellectual independence, creativity and curiosity and in the community at large. Guided by the Dalton Plan, the School prepares students to “Go Forth Unafraid.”

As a progressive school guided by the Dalton Plan, we are an intentionally diverse community committed to a tradition of life-long learning and educational innovation. These principles inform the learning environment at Dalton:

- Valuing all dimensions of each child – intellectual, social, emotional, aesthetic, physical and spiritual.

- Cultivating values of respect, integrity, compassion and justice to encourage community responsibility, combat prejudice and engage students as participants in a democratic society and global community.
- Developing intellectual independence and risk-taking through inquiry, direct experience and collaboration.
- Valuing all disciplines – the arts, sciences, humanities and physical development in an interdisciplinary curriculum, mindful of our historical emphasis on music, dance, theater and visual arts.

Learn more about Dalton’s values, programs and community at www.dalton.org.

THE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Dalton’s rigorous and distinctive approach balances structure and flexibility. Students complete core requirements in academics, arts, and physical education while exploring a wide range of electives. Designed to foster cross-disciplinary connections, the program cultivates inquiry, experimentation, and analysis—preparing students to think critically and contribute meaningfully in an increasingly complex, interconnected world.



THE DALTON PLAN IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

In the early 20th century, Helen Parkhurst created an educational model that captured the progressive spirit of the age. Her objectives: to tailor each student’s program to their needs, interests, and abilities; to promote both independence and dependability; and to develop students’ social skills and sense of responsibility to others. Over a century later, the Dalton Plan—with its core components of Assignment, House, and Lab—remains the foundation of a Dalton education.

- **House** is a close-knit group of 16–25 students from all four high school grades guided by two Advisors. Houses meet daily and serve as a critical support system. The relationship between the House Advisor and advisee typically spans four years, fostering a deep understanding of each student’s academic, emotional, and social well-being. Advisors serve as the primary source of connection between students, the school, and families.
- **Assignment** shapes the classroom experience by guiding students through a structured learning journey. Assignment introduces students to new topics within the curriculum. It outlines learning paths, tasks, and responsibilities, allowing students to personalize their approach while also teaching them essential skills like time management and organization. Through this process, students gain a broader understanding of both the subject matter and the cognitive skills needed to master it.

- **Labs** are one-on-one or small group sessions with teachers that enable students to tailor and extend their learning experiences. When students “make a Lab”, they receive personalized attention to review projects, seek clarification, plan independent study projects, or dive deeper into their studies. Though teachers may require a Lab, students more often choose when and why to attend, allowing them to take ownership of their learning. This gives students ample opportunities to enrich and accelerate their studies according to their needs and interests.

THE POSITION: HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The High School Director leads both the educational vision and agenda and the daily operations of the division. The role reports to the Head of School and sits on the school's exceptional [senior leadership team](#). The three division directors—High School, Middle School and First Program—form a close-knit, collaborative “team within a team.” The relationship with the Middle School Director is particularly important, as the two leaders ensure smooth transitions for students, align curriculum, share a significant number of cross-divisional faculty and more.

The Director leads the High School administrative team, faculty and staff. This person plays a key role in admissions for the division, representing the division in public events and sitting on the admissions committee. (Most high school students continue from Dalton's 8th grade, and around 20 new students enter 9th each year from other schools.)

A central charge is to sustain and deepen the High School's engagement with the ideals and relevance of the Dalton Plan in a rapidly evolving world. A commitment to the school's legacy and to progressive education more broadly, and understanding around excellence and innovation in pedagogy and curriculum, are foundational to the Director's role.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Lead continued educational excellence.**

The Director is the educational and academic leader of one of the world's finest schools. As such, they ensure that Dalton's curriculum and program remain distinctive, reflective of the best thinking in each discipline and translated to students through the framework of Assignments. The Director supports Dalton's remarkable faculty to remain engaged with meaningful professional learning that enriches their teaching and students' experiences.

- **Ensure a healthy student experience.**

The Dalton Plan inspires and exists in some tension with the school's reputation and college admissions pressure. Dalton has a culture of relentless striving for excellence that can inspire—and at times exhaust. The Director should balance this with perspective and levity—and the important conversation around when “more” becomes “too much.” They must champion a student-centered ethos: listening deeply, sharing a vision about the Dalton Plan's relevance, and facilitating reflection around the Plan and program in service of students' thriving.

- **Nurture a culture of belonging.** The work of developing a student's sense of self, passions, and identity within a diverse community is central to the Dalton Plan.

Dalton has long brought together learners of widely different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints. The Director must be skilled at fostering a strongly felt sense of community and nurturing each individual's sense of belonging in the school.

- **Build an engaged and high-functioning high school admin team.**

Bring the team together, ensure vivid clarity around roles and priorities, and foster an ethos of high responsiveness and strong collaboration with faculty, other teams and students. Integrate one or two key new hires focused on faculty support and curricular alignment.

- **Foster productive collaboration throughout the division and in the School.**

The High School Director must establish close partnerships with the other division directors, Assistant Heads, Head of School and other senior leaders. This person ensures the right people are working on the right things, supporting Department Chairs, Assistant Directors, faculty and staff. Ultimately, the Director helps realize the collective potential and talents of the division.

- **Inspire trust and confidence with high school families.**

Communicating with families often and well, building strong relationships in support of students, and upholding appropriate boundaries with grace, clarity and empathy are essential to the Director's role. The Director works very closely with Parents Association leaders to maintain confidence and partnership across the community.





KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The successful candidate for Director of the High School at Dalton will bring most or all of the following qualities:

- A sophisticated educational leader with a command of what excellence in teaching and learning looks like in a progressive, academically rigorous environment, honed through classroom experience and their own professional growth.
- Proven ability to partner with and guide fellow educators in meaningful professional growth and curricular development and alignment.
- A highly skillful manager and team builder, who builds strong relationships and develops motivated, talented people into highly effective teams.
- An unflappable leader who balances humility and confidence, collaboration and decisiveness. Equally adept at listening and consulting deeply as with making hard calls.
- A clear and compelling communicator—in settings ranging from 1-on-1 meetings to an auditorium of hundreds.
- An energetic and present leader who delights in the everyday work of schools together with passionately engaged faculty, students and families.
- A strong focus on healthy relationships and fostering students' wellbeing and belonging in an inclusive community.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is \$250,000-\$300,000 per year.



TO APPLY

This search is supported by Resource Group 175. The application deadline is **January 5, 2026**, and applications should be made through the RG175 website.

<https://rg175.com/candidate/register>

Candidates whose experiences and leadership align with this role are encouraged to contact Diego Merino (Diego.merino@rg175.com) and Bob Henderson (rhenderson@rg175.com) for an exploratory conversation well in advance of the deadline.

The Dalton School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, ethnic origin, age, physical disability, sexual orientation, or any other category protected by applicable law in the administration of our educational policies, hiring policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs, athletics, and other school-administered programs.