

POSITION STATEMENT

The Advent School

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

START DATE: JULY 1, 2027





OVERVIEW

Discover a place where curiosity leads the way: The Advent School, a Reggio-inspired, secular independent elementary school in the heart of Boston's Beacon Hill, is seeking a new Head of School to begin July 1, 2027.

Founded in 1961, Advent is recognized as a leading progressive independent school, currently serving 130 Pre-K to Grade 6 students from over 40 neighborhoods and towns in the greater Boston area. With its long history of commitment to social justice, Advent is proud to have both a student population and faculty that are representative of the city that surrounds them, with over 40% of students and over 25% of faculty identifying as people of color. The School's small classes and supportive community provide students with an environment that nurtures both academic growth and social-emotional development. At Advent, every day is an invitation to wonder, question, and grow.

Throughout the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years, Advent is being led by an interim Head of School. The next permanent Head will be expected to further the mission and continue the development of this wonderful school.

Candidates will need to demonstrate that they possess the expertise, empathy, and energy to ensure that The Advent School remains a special place for many years to come.

MISSION, HISTORY, AND CORE VALUES

Since 1961, The Advent School has stayed true to its founding mission: *to be an urban school whose community reflects the diversity of Boston; with a forward-thinking curriculum that inspires and engages a child's passion for learning; with a commitment to social justice; and with a culture of collaboration where every child has the confidence to take action in a connected world.*

At a time when some families were leaving major cities to avoid sending their children to court-ordered integrated schools, Advent was founded as a school where all of Boston's children could learn and thrive

together, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, neighborhood, or socioeconomic status. In hindsight, Advent opened as a fully inclusive school 13 years before the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts ordered Boston's public schools to integrate.

While the School initially received the support of Beacon Hill's Church of the Advent, since the mid-1990s Advent has not been religiously affiliated and has welcomed families from all backgrounds.

Today, Advent's core values remain rooted in the democratic principles of participation, dialogue, and deep listening. Confidence may be the defining characteristic of Advent students.

Children here learn to take initiative and intellectual risks, to work collaboratively with others, and to engage with ideas and the world around them.

LOCATION AND FACILITIES

The Advent School was founded on Brimmer Street in Boston's Beacon Hill. For 65 years, the School has made its home alongside the residents, businesses, and cultural institutions that also call Beacon Hill home. The Advent community takes pride in its place as a Beacon Hill neighbor and contributor to the neighborhood's important history.

Advent's students see the city of Boston as an extension of their classroom. They shop at DeLuca's Market to practice their math skills, regularly visit the Public Garden, and utilize both the Esplanade and the YMCA of Greater Boston for PE. In addition, students embark on field trips to the Museum of Science, the New England Aquarium, the Freedom Trail, the Black

History Trail, branches of the Boston Public Library, the Massachusetts State House, and more, documenting their visits on a community display in Advent's Family Center.

Advent owns three late 1800's era brownstone buildings in Beacon Hill, two adjacent to one another and the third a 10-minute walk away. The Brimmer Street buildings feel much like a residence, lending themselves to creating the warm, caring, and nurturing nature of an elementary school. Brimmer Street is Advent's primary facility, housing Pre-K to Grade 6 classrooms, the school library, administrative offices, and a remarkable urban playground. West Cedar Street is a smaller and more modern building, which houses learning spaces for art, music, science, and movement for students in Grades 2-6, as well as serving as home for Advent's summer Design and Engineering Camp.

Together, these facilities, 21,000 square feet at Brimmer Street and 5,500 square feet at West Cedar, provide a comfortable and joyful learning environment for students, families, and faculty.



PROGRAM

An Advent education emphasizes curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking through hands-on, experiential learning. It values collaboration, community, and real-world problem solving over rote memorization. Advent uses both standardized and individualized assessments to understand each child's growth and defines academic rigor as deep, meaningful learning—not just more work.

At its heart, the Reggio Emilia approach that inspires the School's curriculum values relationships—between children, teachers, families, and the community—as central to learning. It views children as capable, curious, and full of potential, with a natural desire to explore and make meaning of their world. In this philosophy, teachers act as co-learners and guides rather than traditional instructors. Advent's co-teaching model allows two highly skilled educators to collaborate in the classroom, bringing multiple perspectives to instruction and student learning. Teachers at Advent observe children closely, listen to their questions, and design projects that both align with student interests and build developmentally appropriate skills.

In addition to direct instruction, learning at Advent takes place through long-term investigations, where children research, experiment, and create to deepen understanding. Documentation—through photos, notes, and displays of children's work—is used to make learning visible, reflect on progress, and plan the next steps in each investigation.

For families, the Reggio Emilia approach emphasizes partnership and respect. Parents and caregivers are seen as essential collaborators in their child's education, contributing knowledge, experiences, and perspectives that enrich the learning community.





Assessment-driven learning

Advent uses a range of assessments to stay closely connected to how each child learns and grows. While standardized tools provide useful benchmarks, it is more individualized and nuanced assessments that truly set The Advent School apart. Families appreciate that Advent teachers know each child deeply—not only their personality and interests, but also their academic strengths, areas for growth, and what motivates them as a learner. Teachers gather this understanding in many ways, enhanced by the introduction of “looping,” during which teaching teams stay with their students for a full two-year, two-grade cycle.

Re-thinking rigor

For nearly 65 years, Advent has been reimagining rigor. The School’s play-based, integrated, and experiential approach ensures that students are not only joyful in their learning but also challenged to think critically and explore the world in sophisticated ways. This is the heart of an Advent education: joyful, meaningful, and rigorously engaging.

Equity, Diversity, and Belonging

The Advent School has been committed to diversity, equity, and belonging since its founding in 1961. In that vein, the School commits to inspiring students, faculty, staff, and families to explore, appreciate, and embrace the multicultural world in which we live, while fostering an environment that prepares and empowers students to be informed and active citizens.

It is important to note that the emphasis on social justice at Advent is integrated into the School’s curriculum and is seen as complementary to other components of its academic program.

For more detailed information about the program at Advent, go to:

<https://www.adventschool.org/curriculum>

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Faculty and Staff

Advent’s faculty and staff is comprised of dedicated professionals who model a strong work ethic and collaboration while delivering a challenging curriculum to students. Teachers at Advent value the School’s small classes, its co-teaching model, and its strong support for their continuing professional development.

Administration

Going forward, the Head of School will work with a senior leadership team that includes a Director of Finance and Operations, a Director of Enrollment Management, a Director of Development, a Director of Marketing and Communications, and both Lower School and Upper School Division Heads. A Chief of Staff coordinates the school calendar, supports the Head of School, and responds to the daily needs of students, faculty, staff, and parents.

Families

At Advent, there is a shared belief that authentic home-and-school partnerships are the surest path to maximizing each child's potential. Furthermore, parents actively support the faculty and staff through coordinating volunteer opportunities, planning events for the school community, and participating in the Annual Fund.

Board of Trustees

The Board's responsibility is to ensure the long-term success of Advent as an institution. Its primary activities include monitoring the school's financial management, fundraising, strategic planning, setting high-level policies, ensuring that the school has adequate physical resources, and the hiring, support, and evaluation of the Head of School. The Board understands that it must entrust all operational matters to the Head of School.

STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Advent is a school with many strengths. Since its founding, the School has thrived as a dynamic and nurturing community, staying true to its mission and core values. Today, Advent is a school that benefits from:

- A strong and dedicated faculty and staff
- Two appealing urban facilities that fully support its Pre-K to Grade 6 program
- A carefully developed, Reggio-inspired curriculum
- Strong relationships with area secondary schools and impressive support for matriculating students
- An exceptionally diverse, caring, and supportive school community

While Advent is operating on a solid foundation, the School has some significant strategic work to do. Among the key challenges that the next Head will work with the Board of Trustees to address are the following:

Securing the financial strength and long-term stability of Advent School

In recent years, like many elementary independent schools, Advent has experienced both a significant downturn in new enrollment and an increase in attrition, as some families have sought early entry into area secondary schools and others have moved to the suburbs. Additional strain on the School's annual operating budget has stemmed from ongoing debt payments on the School's three buildings. The interim Head of School currently is working to more effectively communicate the story of Advent's strong academic program, to increase fundraising, and to "right-size" the School's expenses to fit the needs of what is today a smaller school than it was pre-pandemic. The next permanent Head of School will need to continue this work, while also developing a multi-year plan that prioritizes increasing faculty compensation and addressing the ongoing maintenance needs of Advent's aging facilities.





Continuing to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff

In an increasingly competitive market, ensuring that Advent is a school of choice for outstanding educators must remain an ongoing priority. The next Head of School will need to not only lead efforts to increase faculty compensation but will also be expected to sustain a school culture that inspires collaboration, facilitates a shared sense of purpose, and offers multiple opportunities for ongoing professional development.

Stabilizing enrollment and establishing Advent as the leading elementary independent school in the City of Boston

In a city that is saturated with both independent and charter schools, and in spite of its long history of commitment to academic excellence and social justice, Advent is not as well-known as it should be to prospective families. There is even a perception among some community members that confusion may linger around the School's name and whether it connotes a religious affiliation. The School is beginning to explore more aggressive and

creative approaches to marketing, is working to develop a more engaging website, and is seeking to utilize faculty, staff, parents, trustees, and alumni as ambassadors in the broader community. The next permanent Head of School will need to continue to be an active participant in this important work.

Promoting understanding of Advent's dual commitments to academic excellence and social justice

Operating in a national environment that includes attacks on the importance of a focus on diversity, equity, and belonging, Advent clearly is committed to sustaining its historical belief in the importance of this work for the welfare and development of young children. Today, there is concern among some that Advent may be misperceived to be a school that cares more about its social justice mission than about the academic excellence of its students and program. Concurrently, there is concern among others that Advent may be taking a step back from its commitment to promoting social justice. The next Head will need to lead the community in articulating the ongoing importance of the School's commitments to both academic excellence and social justice and to building understanding that these commitments are complementary and not in competition with one another.

Supporting and ensuring good governance

With a Board that primarily includes current parents, ensuring stability, continuity, and institutional memory is an ongoing challenge. As with many elementary independent schools, there is a need for the ongoing cultivation and training of new trustees and for education within the Advent community about what the Board of Trustees does and does not do. Advent would benefit from a next Head of School who can assist the Board in working effectively in support of the School's mission, values, and emerging strategic priorities.

THE POSITION

The next permanent Head of The Advent School will have the opportunity to lead a very special school community to a next level of educational excellence. The Head of School at Advent oversees ongoing operations, hires and supports its employees, and manages its annual operating budget.

The next Head's initial annual base salary will be commensurate with the compensation offered by similar Boston area elementary independent schools and will be in the range of \$250,000 to \$280,000, depending on the successful candidate's prior leadership experience.

Of particular importance, as Advent looks to the future, there is an overriding desire to preserve and maintain a school culture based on openness, transparency, caring, trust, and support. The successful candidate will be a mission and values-driven leader who embraces Advent's commitments to co-teaching, to Reggio-inspired curriculum, and to both academic excellence and social justice.

In addition, the School seeks candidates who demonstrate many of the following qualities, characteristics, and skills:

- Embraces the joys of being an engaged presence on campus—visible, warm, empathetic, approachable, and available to students, faculty, staff, and parents.
- Demonstrates knowledge about and success in fundraising, enrollment management, and financial planning.
- Maintains a growth mindset, valuing feedback and ongoing improvement for both self and others.

- Is an excellent communicator, who listens to understand and builds strong connections both within and outside the school community.
- Demonstrates strong organization and time management skills.
- Demonstrates knowledge and conviction around the principles and practices of progressive elementary education and a profound respect for faculty and their work.
- Demonstrates a strong understanding of independent school governance and the ability to work effectively with the Board to implement the school's mission.
- Maintains calm under pressure, skillfully navigating difficult conversations and demonstrating the ability to inspire confidence in a crisis.
- Maintains a collaborative nature and flexible attitude, encouraging input in decision-making.
- Leads with humility, resilience, and humor

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Advent School has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support the search for its next Head of School. To apply, interested candidates should prepare a cover letter, a current resume, and a personal statement. Candidates are requested to submit these materials online at:

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

For an initial confidential inquiry or to nominate a potential candidate for this exciting leadership position, please contact RG175 consultant Jerry Katz, jkatz@rg175.com.

Application Deadline: **March 15, 2026**

Start Date: **July 1, 2027**