

extraordinary environment for learning



HEAD OF SCHOOL July 1, 2017

Barrie School
Silver Spring, MD

HISTORY AND MISSION

Founded in 1932 as a preschool, Barrie School evolved over the last eighty-four years to become a PK-12 day school of approximately 300 students in the Washington D.C. suburb of Silver Spring, Maryland. The school is rooted in a progressive educational philosophy that draws heavily from the works of Montessori, Dewey and Adler. The lower and middle schools moved to their present Layhill Road site in 1976 and the upper school was re-opened in 1981. Today Barrie consists of the Montessori program (PK-5), Prep (grades 6-12), the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies, the Barrie Camp, and the Barrie Equestrian program. The school is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS), Maryland Office of Childcare, and the American Montessori Society (AMS). Barrie Camp is accredited by the American Camp Association.

Barrie's mission is *to empower individuals to expand their intellectual abilities, develop their creative talents, and discover their passions to make a positive impact in a rapidly changing world.* Additionally, the school values social, emotional and physical well-being, collaboration, teamwork, diversity, and respect for

oneself, others and the environment. At Barrie, students are truly known and understood by the faculty and staff, and the result is a student population unafraid to be authentic. Believing passionately in the innate curiosity of children, Barrie teachers use Montessori methods and progressive/project-based learning to follow and extend student's interests and fully engage students in the learning process. Barrie's *extraordinary environment for learning* offers a stimulating, active and multi-sensory education.





LOCATION AND CAMPUS

The campus is located on forty-five acres of beautifully wooded land- a rare luxury for an independent school so close to a major city. Teachers take advantage of the outdoor setting to promote respect and appreciation for the environment, and students cherish the freedom to use outdoor spaces for study, play, and socializing.

Barrie is located eight miles north of Washington D.C. in one of the wealthiest counties in the country. The school draws students from the District as well as numerous towns in Maryland (representing thirty zip codes). The school offers several bus routes, and is accessible by public bus transportation and the nearby Metrorail station.

There are eighteen buildings spread out across the campus. Among them are two beautiful new Prep buildings housing flexible classrooms, and a well-equipped and exceptional gym with a basketball court, locker rooms, training facility, and a black-box performing arts space. A recently built

turf field next to the gym rounds out an attractive athletic complex. The original house on the property serves as an administration building for Admissions and the Head of School. The Business and Development offices are located in an adjacent building. “Up the hill” is the Montessori program with classrooms, a small gym and outdoor spaces. At the top of the campus is the Equestrian Center with stables and riding rings. In addition to the main campus, the school has access to fifteen nearby houses owned by a generous trustee. The houses are rented to faculty and administrators at an extraordinarily low price. Included is the head’s residence adjacent to the campus, which is also used for entertaining and meetings for the Barrie community.

Despite the beauty of the campus, deferred maintenance for a number of the facilities is visible. In particular, the Montessori classroom buildings would benefit from some updating even though they currently offer sufficient space for the program.

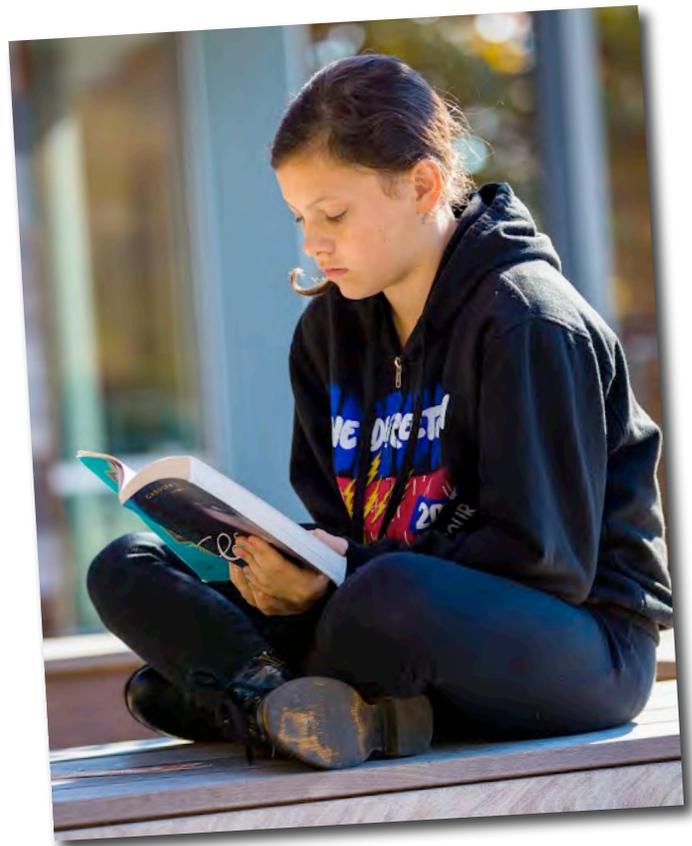
COMMUNITY OF THE SCHOOL

The respect for individuality and diversity defines the progressive Barrie culture. Students call adults by their first names and talk enthusiastically of the support they feel from their teachers. Student and faculty dress is informal. Students feel accepted for who they are, and there is a palpable sense of collaboration in a non-competitive school culture. This atmosphere, in turn, encourages students to take appropriate risks, to pursue new adventures, and to encourage their fellow classmates to do the same.

This culture of acceptance begins with the faculty. Students laud teachers for their caring and dedication. Teachers go out of their way to provide extra help, and students know that Barrie teachers are there to help them to be successful. Teachers, in turn, feel supported by the administration and are encouraged to innovate within their classrooms. Trustees, administrators, and parents all sing the praises of the caring, nurturing faculty who work tirelessly to bring out the very best in each child.

Student voice is valued at Barrie. Faculty talk with pride about listening carefully to student opinion and making sure that students feel comfortable expressing their ideas. Students know their opinions will be taken seriously, yet another expression of the deep respect teachers and students have for each other. A robust advisory program in Prep provides further opportunity for students to express their views and ideas in a responsive and respectful atmosphere.

Student diversity at Barrie is extraordinary by independent school standards. Seventy-one percent are students of color. Approximately twenty-seven percent are African American, another twelve percent Asian American, and four percent Hispanic American. The rest of the students of color are multi-racial. Fifty-one percent of the student body receives financial assistance, an exceptional commitment to socio-economic diversity. Each year the school enrolls approximately twenty international students,





mostly from China, in grades 9-12. These students live with host families, and an outside agency not only helps the school recruit these students but also coordinates the logistics of their stay in the United States. The enrollment of international students has been part of a recent effort to incorporate a global perspective into the curricular and extracurricular offerings of the school. Teachers endorse this new initiative, and the Head of School actively pursues partnerships with global organizations.

Barrie Prep offers an annual Extended Study Week (ESW), which involves a deep dive into a topic or theme proposed and developed by faculty teams. Recent ESW experiences included study of pilgrimage in Spain, education models in Cuba, civil rights in Alabama, and photography techniques in the DC/MD/VA region. Students work with faculty leaders to research and prepare for the ESW experience, and present what they've learned to family members in a post-ESW showcase. Care is given to ensure topics and activities at a range of price points.

Barrie embraces technology and students complete their work on iPads or Chromebooks and have online access to assignments, faculty support and resource materials. A 3-D printer is used for multiple learning activities. Laptops are available for faculty use. Barrie TV, a student-directed project, produces biweekly shows featuring student perspectives on timely topics.

One hundred percent of the graduates attend four-year colleges throughout the country. The students are accepted at many of the top 100 colleges or universities based on the *US News and World Report* ranking. More than one million dollars in scholarships were offered to both the 2015 and 2016 graduates, including the Gates Millennium Scholarship. College preparation activities begin in the freshman year, and juniors and seniors have access to a full-time college counselor who guides them and their parents through the college preparation and application process.

The strong sense of community that defines Barrie can also be seen within the faculty. Several teachers spoke glowingly of the collaboration among teachers. New faculty spoke about the willingness of veteran teachers to help orient them. Teachers collaborate on projects, and confer with each other about students. As one teacher remarked, "We help





each other be our personal best.” Teachers appreciate the intellectual freedom they have to pursue areas of student interest. They design their own courses in Prep and don’t feel constricted by a pre-determined curriculum.

The Montessori program receives rave reviews and steadfastly follows the tenets of the AMS Montessori philosophy. The program follows the interests of the child and intentionally creates opportunities for those interests to blossom into passions. In this regard, the beautiful outdoor setting offers extensive opportunities for students to investigate the natural world. Barrie Montessori has benefitted enormously from its relationship to the Barrie Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies, a leading center for the professional development of Montessori teachers. The Institute, which draws Montessori teachers from around the region and beyond, has enhanced Barrie Montessori’s reputation as a leader in Montessori education.



Building on the hands-on approach of Barrie Montessori, Barrie Prep recently emphasized Project Based Learning as a teaching style compatible with the Montessori methods, making the transition from lower to middle school smoother. In order to advance the inclusion of Project

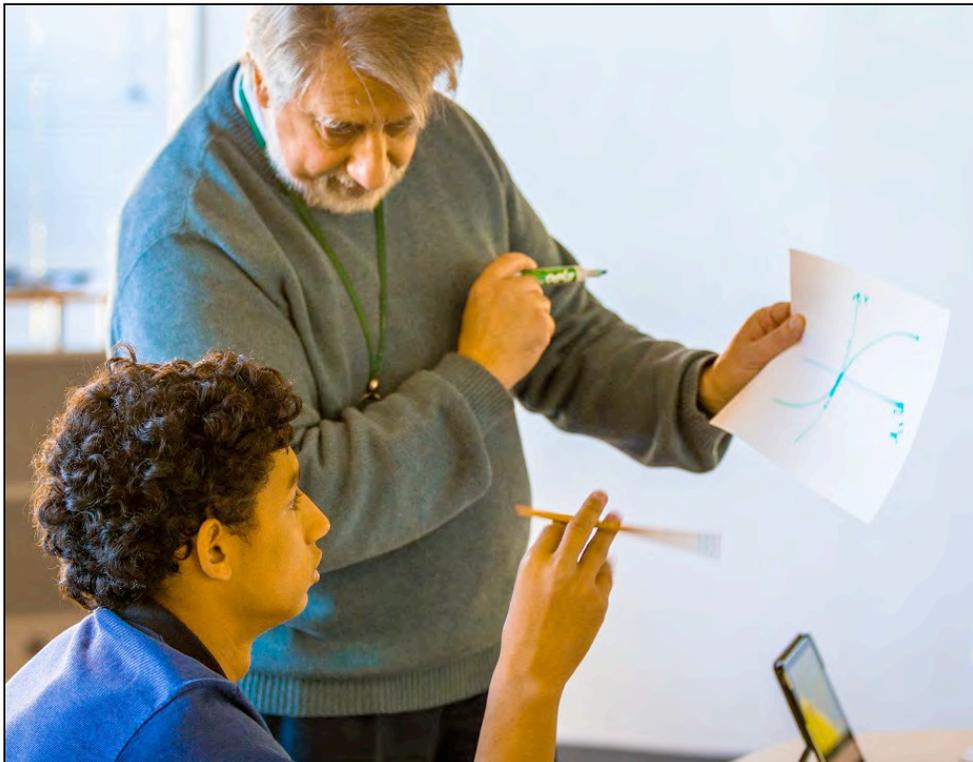
Based Learning in Barrie Prep, the administration allocated professional development funds for training in this approach to teaching and learning. Older students in the Prep program can also take Advanced Placement courses, and the school now offers thirteen on-line courses for credit. Of particular note is the opportunity for students to express their creativity in a multitude of visual and performing arts classes.



STUDENTS

Students at Barrie embrace the friendly and relaxed atmosphere as well as the diversity and respect that define the school's culture. Students work together on a variety of projects, and Prep students enjoy the freedom to play a role in shaping their own learning. Moreover, the close faculty-student relationship is in sharp contrast to the nameless, faceless character of many of the local public schools from which Barrie students are coming. Diversity, community, and acceptance are the key ingredients in the Barrie success formula. The result is an engaged student body, ready to learn and grow.

In addition to a racially and ethnically diverse student body, Barrie also attracts a variety of learning styles and differences. Small classes allow teachers to give students individual attention, and the dedicated teachers work with students outside of class to help them achieve academically.



ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY and BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Barrie senior administration consists of the Head of School, the Head of Montessori, the Head of Prep, the Chief Financial Officer, the Manager of Development and Alumni Affairs, the Director of Communication, the Director of the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies, the Director of the Barrie Camp, and the Director of the Equestrian program. Administrators work closely together to lead and manage the school program and operations. The Head of School is completing his seventh year.

Teachers at Barrie are devoted to the school and its mission. They relish the freedom to create their own courses, to use their imaginations to engage students, and to express their opinions freely to each other and to the administration. In keeping with Barrie's progressive and open style, teachers value the intellectual freedom and the classroom autonomy that the school promotes. The

disdain for a rigid, inflexible curriculum is palpable among the faculty. Teachers want to use their creativity to engage students and help them become life-long learners. At the same time the small classes make it easy for teachers to encourage students to take risks and develop their talents. Barrie is not cookie-cutter, and the teachers like it that way.

The Board of Trustees consists of fifteen dedicated and highly accomplished past and present parents, and meets regularly to manage the

governance of the school. The Board has standing committees: Executive, Finance, and Governance. Ad hoc committees and Task forces include Building Design, Retention, Advancement and Capital Campaign. In 2015 the Board approved the Strategic Framework and a detailed implementation plan to achieve a set of ambitious goals by 2020. In 2016, a Capital Campaign feasibility study was completed. Trustees care deeply about the school and contribute financial and in-kind support. They look forward to working closely with a new leader to address both the opportunities and the challenges at Barrie.



QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

In conversations with trustees, parents, faculty and students there was a consensus surrounding the skills and attributes of the next head of School. They include the following:

- An inspiring and visionary leader who will lead Barrie forward into the next decade and beyond.
- Leadership skills, especially in creating consensus about the identity of the school and working with interdisciplinary teams while strengthening unity throughout.
- A deep passion for the education of children in a progressive environment.
- Practical and demonstrable experience with marketing, school finance, and fundraising.
- An ability to work effectively with the board of trustees and support board development.
- A decisive and innovative leader with an ability to bring new ideas and then to follow through and execute decisions.
- A friendly and approachable “people person” who is responsive to constituent needs, a good listener who is able synthesize varying opinions.

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- An educator who appreciates Montessori principles and pedagogy and supports the professional development of the Montessori Institute.
 - A community builder who works effectively both internally in the school and in the larger outside community and who is enthusiastic about strategy and fundraising.
 - An effective manager who holds people accountable for decisions and actions and one who is willing to listen to all points of view.
 - A strong communicator, articulate speaker and writer who is able to engage the community and lead the marketing and communication efforts of the strategic vision.
 - An educator with relevant experience with some of the challenges Barrie is facing, particularly in marketing, admissions and financial management.
 - An innovative and entrepreneurial leader, with demonstrated achievements and successes in thinking strategically and embracing change.
 - A leader who has a proven track record of cultural sensitivity and who will embrace the diversity of the Barrie community.
 - An educator with a Master’s degree or higher and senior level administrative experience.
 - Fluency in financial management and ability to align budget and make difficult decisions as needed.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested candidates should send – **in one file – to both search consultants** – an electronic submission consisting of:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Statement of educational philosophy
- Contact information for one confidential reference

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