

Francis Parker School

Head of Lower School
Position Statement

San Diego, California
July 1, 2021



FRANCIS
PARKER
SCHOOL



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THE LOWER SCHOOL

Green, calm, safe – that’s how Parker’s Lower School looks and feels. Masterminded by the School’s co-founder, William Templeton Johnson, himself a noted architect, the campus has a distinctly California-open-air feel to it. All the classrooms open directly to the outdoors and the site is absolutely perfect for taking advantage of San Diego’s ideal climate. Outdoor play spaces abound and a central courtyard unites the low-rise buildings. Inside those buildings, it’s an elementary school paradise – a STEM studio, a maker space, two wonderfully equipped science rooms, a modern library that is light-filled and spacious. Without feeling small, the campus is nonetheless intimate, where every child is known and parents find their children at day’s end feeling challenged, engaged, and well cared for.



Lower School students have a homeroom as their base and then they go out for specialty classes in music, drama, science, Mandarin and Spanish (yes, students take them both!). There’s a common cafeteria where a hot lunch is served daily and is included in tuition. Everywhere one looks,

there’s student art – even in the cafeteria!

On this collaborative and team-oriented faculty there is healthy balance between veteran teachers (those with 16-31 years of teaching experience) and those long-standing, experienced teachers who've been in the field for 6-15 years. Additionally, each year the School welcomes newer teachers (those with up to 5 years of experience) to the Parker Community. They all bring with them the enthusiasm that one expects in a lower school teacher and they’ve worked hard in recent years to align the elementary curriculum with those of the Middle and Upper divisions.

The result is an academic program that features a detailed course of study with explicit learning outcomes in the core areas of math (Singapore), language arts,



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and social studies. Every aspect of the program has detailed and specific goals, and that is true as well in the much-heralded science curriculum that incorporates Design Thinking in its focus on Next Generation science standards; at all levels, students encounter physical, life, and earth science. The Design Lab introduces Lower School students to the theories of Design Thinking. “Dream, Do, Try” are the by-words to help students understand the cyclical process of design thinking as they are challenged to engineer creative projects in the remarkable Lab.



Not surprisingly, articulated learning programs exist for art, design, drama, and music that are vital components of the Lower School program. Students can choose from among band, strings, and vocal performance; each grade has a class play that the students cast, write, costume, and direct. Hands-on education is evident throughout the campus as learning-by-doing is fundamental to Parker’s approach, as is regular reinforcement of the School’s emphasis on character education which is guided by the acronym STRIVE: **S**eek always to do your best; **T**reat people and property with respect; **R**evere the truth; **I**nvest in your future; **V**alue school rules, your heritage, and personal responsibility; **E**nrich the world for all.



A description of life in Parker’s Lower School, however brief, would be incomplete without mention of the division-wide commitment to character education. A multi-disciplinary team used the “Ways of Being” model for social-emotional learning together with the “Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework” to create content that can be woven into the core curriculum, and all teachers have identified areas in their

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courses where there are natural connections that enable them to emphasize character development.

To be the Head of the Lower School at Parker comes close to being a Head of School. The Head is in charge of a unique campus, oversees the faculty and curriculum, is responsible for the daily academic and social well-being of 438 students, manages a discrete budget, is deeply involved in admissions and hiring, and is part of the Head of School's senior leadership team that meets weekly. It's a great job: all the fun of running a school without having to raise the money and with the benefit of reporting to one person, an experienced, decisive and supportive Head of School.

THE NEXT HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL

The next Head of Lower School will likely demonstrate experience in:

- Fostering positive and functional school cultures and learning environments
- Leading successfully a faculty in an independent school
- Working in multicultural communities
- A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Advocating for the arts and athletics and
- Working effectively in a collaborative team



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The School seeks a proven administrator who is:

- Optimistic and energetic
- Deeply knowledgeable of child development
- A careful listener who can be flexible
- An effective and clear communicator
- Warm and empathetic
- Student-centered

APPLICATION PROCESS

Those interested in becoming the next Head of the Lower School may apply online at:

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

The application includes a:

- Cover letter explaining your interest in the position
- Current resume
- Writing sample

If you have any questions, please contact the consultants on the search:

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