

# Francis Parker School

Head of Upper School  
Position Statement

San Diego, California  
July 1, 2021



FRANCIS  
**PARKER**  
SCHOOL



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## THE UPPER SCHOOL

How can you not be excited by a school whose mantras are “No Boring Days” and “No Limit To Better?” That’s Parker’s Upper School. A campus with remarkable modern facilities, a visible commitment to the arts, a palpable enjoyment of athletics, a robust and challenging curriculum, and an overt emphasis on excellent pedagogy combine to create an exciting environment for close to 550 students in Grades 9-12. Set in one of the most diverse neighborhoods in San Diego, almost directly across the street from the University of San Diego, Parker’s Middle and Upper School campus captures the open-air ambiance of Southern California – classrooms have floor-to-ceiling glass, many look out onto courtyards or canyons, decks abound, and a feeling of spaciousness and openness prevails.



At the heart of it all is a curriculum that both stretches and encourages Parker’s students. With AP’s in all content areas, there are electives that are made possible by the size of the enrollment: Global Studies and Statecraft, Race and Gender, Marine Science, Engineering, Mandarin and seemingly endless

opportunities in the performing and visual arts. (This is one of a handful of independent schools with a wood shop.) Signal success has been enjoyed by Parker’s robotics program as it has gained national prominence, made even more noteworthy by student leadership.

The engine driving this broad and varied program is a dedicated and creative faculty who are known for the individual attention given to students. Across the School there is a 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. Each year the School welcomes newer teachers (those with up to 5 years of experience) who bring their talents and enthusiasm to the Parker Community.



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On its webpage, Parker has a separate tab for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, an indication of its commitment to “embrace the celebration and understanding of different identities, backgrounds, and experiences.” The School has demonstrated its willingness “to lean into difficult conversations” by administering the AIM survey and then using it to set forth an ambitious agenda to improve its cultural competency, policies, and strategic goals. Of course, there are challenges as there are for all independent schools, but Parker benefits from the inclusive community found in San Diego and has put its broad shoulders to meet the ambitious goals it has set for itself.



Another initiative of special mention is the Global Studies program that begins in Junior Kindergarten and climaxes in the Upper School. As befits a school in a major city on the Pacific Rim, Parker’s global outreach is profound, with students studying and learning in China, Peru, Quebec, Costa Rica, Cuba, Croatia, India, South Africa, The Philippines, and Fiji. These are not “happy tourist” trips by any means. Students take part in exchange programs with overseas communities, learning from and engaging with local cultures.



The Upper School leadership team is led by the division head and includes four grade-level deans (each of whom teaches two classes), the associate division head, dean of students, and the dean of college counseling. There is additionally the student support team made up of the director of the Academic Resource Center, the School psychologist, the Upper School learning specialist, and the admission director. As at the Middle School, advisory classes provide the perfect space for students to step out of their comfort zone and forge new relationships.

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As one would expect in a part of the country that is famous its outdoor, athletic lifestyle, Parker offers a robust and diverse sports program, fielding twenty teams at the varsity level, as varied as sailing and surfing, volleyball and water polo, lacrosse and golf, to name a few. The School has won 162 league championships, 94 City of San Diego titles, and 9 State championships.

The Middle and Upper School campus has been in a state of near-constant improvement for more than a decade with the arrival first of new buildings for visual arts and music, and an art gallery, followed by the Student Life Center in 2019 with its outdoor amphitheater and cafeteria, additions to the Amelita Galli-Curci Performing Arts Center, and increased on-site parking. Next up will be the renovation of the Field House and the creation of a new aquatic center. If you would like to take a virtual tour of the Francis Parker School, click [here](#).

Such dynamism in forward-thinking and building for the future is not surprising in a school that typifies the “can-do” nature of the entire area. This is a school whose leadership team is constantly seeking ways to be stronger, better, more inclusive, more involved in the life of the Pacific basin. Complacency is its enemy; energy is its essence. It would be hard to imagine a better working environment for someone who wants to be involved with a school that is constantly evolving, part of a team that revels in its cohesion, working with students who are gifted and active, leading teachers who are creative and joyous, all in a part of the country that is, frankly, unbeatable. If this sounds like a place where you’d like to work, let



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## THE NEXT HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL

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

- Fostering positive and functional school cultures and learning environments
- Successful leadership of an independent school faculty
- Experience and success in multicultural communities
- A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Advocacy for the arts and athletics
- Effective work in a collaborative team

The School seeks a proven administrator who is:

- Optimistic and energetic
- 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 Upper 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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