



**Position Statement for
Middle School Director
Detroit Country Day School
Beverly Hills, MI
July 1, 2024**



Middle School Director Position Statement



OVERVIEW

Detroit Country Day School (DCDS), one of the largest and most renowned day schools in the country, seeks to bring to its community a new Middle School Director, to start in July of 2024, who will serve as the leader of a very large middle school (515 students) in grades 4-8. The Middle Director will work in close collaboration with Middle School administrators, faculty, and staff while reporting to Head of School Rich Dempsey and serving on his senior administrative team.

Established in 1914, Detroit Country Day School currently enrolls 1,514 students and sits on two campuses in beautiful Beverly Hills and Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, north and west of a revitalized downtown Detroit. The 13 Mile Road campus, (approximately 43 acres in Beverly Hills), houses both the recently configured Middle School and the Upper School and includes as impressive an array of academic, athletic, and arts facilities as any independent school anywhere.

Under the dynamic leadership of Rich Dempsey, Detroit Country Day School is well positioned to build upon its reputation as a nationally ranked school of excellence in all areas of endeavor including academics, athletics, and the arts. Detroit Country Day is a close-knit community in which a talented faculty and staff provide a comprehensive high quality educational program while placing a strong emphasis on building authentic relationships with their students.



The new Middle School Director will be expected to maintain Detroit Country Day's storied history of success and sterling reputation while supporting Rich Dempsey's strategic vision and aspiration for the School. The Middle School Director will play a key role in this undertaking, engaged in further articulation of the aforementioned vision and the effective implementation of its initiatives and priorities.

The Detroit Country Day School experience is based on immersion in challenging, innovative learning environments, a comprehensive approach that combines academics, athletics, and arts to maximize the opportunity for self-discovery and growth, and a deep dedication to hard work no matter what the pursuit. This is combined with a culture of deep connection, engagement, mutual respect and support, and a collective desire for impact and results not only at the individual level, but as a strong, vibrant, diverse community with the resolve, spirit, talent, creativity, and intellect to shape the future in countless, exciting, positive ways. The shared love of challenge, and the camaraderie formed by accepting and meeting it together teaches students that character and connection to others are what make achievement genuinely meaningful.



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As the leader of a division that spans grades 4 to 8, the Middle School Director should have an understanding of and experience with students from a wide span of developmental stages. The Middle School structure consists of a distinct program for grades 4-5 and more conventional program for grades 6-8. The new leader should have a proven track record of success as an administrator in middle school and/or late elementary school settings. Working with Middle School administration and faculty, the next director will grow and deepen the School's commitment to a pedagogy informed by Mind, Brain, and Education (MBE) and improve transitions to/from the other divisions, providing for a more intentional and streamlined academic and student life experience. The new Middle School Director will also help to articulate and clarify the administrative structure for the Middle School.

The new Middle School Director will play the lead role in helping the DCDS faculty and staff reconcile their ongoing conversation about the appropriate "balance" between tradition and innovation and between a rigorous and supportive environment. The new Middle School Director will also help articulate and clarify the administrative structure for the Middle School.

The Middle School Director position is ideal for that experienced school leader who wants to be part of a well resourced independent school "on the move" and play a critical role in that "move". With a healthy admissions profile, enviable facilities, and highly qualified faculty and staff, the Middle School Director will encounter few limiting factors in their efforts to "move" an already great school forward.



If this opportunity sparks your interest, please visit the Detroit Country Day School website at <https://www.dcds.edu>

MISSION

Detroit Country Day School develops citizens and leaders of the world in a culturally diverse environment of academic rigor, competitive athletics, and artistic expression, built on a foundation of service and character.

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Detroit Country Day School is embodied in its motto: *Mens Sana in Corpore Sano* (A Sound Mind in a Sound Body), a motto that guides its overall pedagogy. DCDS strives to educate the whole child by offering an educational program that responds to their academic, athletic, and artistic pursuits and by developing their talents and strengths in a supportive and nurturing environment. To do so, the School maintains a challenging academic program, a competitive interscholastic athletic program, myriad curricular and extra-curricular opportunities in the visual and performing arts; in addition, the School makes a significant investment of time and energy to foster service and build character in its students.

The Portrait of a Detroit Country Day student enumerates the six habits of mind the School seeks to inculcate in its students during their years on campus. This Portrait documents the School's expressed desire to produce graduates who are "Inquisitive" and "Innovative" as a result of the School's challenging academic and artistic programs; who are "Honorable" and "Inclusive" as a result of the School's commitment to character education and diversity, equity, and inclusion; who are "Resilient" as a result of the School's required participation in the athletic program; and who are "Balanced" as a result of the School's concern for their social and emotional health.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

The Middle School Director will serve as a strategic thought partner for the Head of School and the other members of the Senior Administrative Team, as well as lead and collaborate closely with the administrators, faculty, and staff of the division. The Middle School Director will be responsible for oversight of the Middle School educational program; but should first acquire a sophisticated understanding of Detroit Country Day School's mission, culture, community, and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The Middle School Director must have an inspiring vision for middle school education in the 21st century as well as honed administrative skills to execute on that vision. The Middle School Director will be responsible for establishing and upholding clear standards, high expectations, and effective systems for execution by the administration of the division while forming positive caring relationships with students, colleagues, and parents.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to other roles that might be assigned as needed by the Head of School, the primary duties and responsibilities of the Middle School Director will include but are not limited to the following:

- Serve as the educational leader of the Middle School and a trusted advisor and thought partner to the Head of School as a member of his senior administrative team.
- Oversee all elements of the Middle School's rigorous, comprehensive, and innovative educational program, including academics, athletics, the arts, and service learning.
- Collaborate with the Middle School's academic leaders to create an environment that encourages the use of best practices in instructional strategies.



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- Tend to the behavioral, social, and emotional health and growth of middle school students by partnering with the student support team.
- Work with the Assistant Head, the Middle School Deans, and the community at large to advance the entire School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Develop constructive, positive relationships with students, colleagues and parents, and nurture a culture that deepens the sense of belonging for each member of the community.
- Support the professional growth of Middle School faculty through on-going mentoring, periodic reviews and evaluation, and relevant opportunities for professional development.
- Exert primary responsibility, in concert with the Head of School, Assistant Head, CFO, Director of HR, and Department Chairs, in hiring outstanding faculty for the Middle School division.
- Establish and administer the annual Middle School budget.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The next Middle School Director should be prepared to both lead and collaborate with a dedicated and visionary head of school, an experienced senior administrative team, and a talented and devoted faculty and staff. After taking the requisite time to know the School's people, programs, and traditions, the Middle School Director will be expected to seize new opportunities and address the challenges that will move the School forward with conviction. The DCDS Middle School is comprised of 515 students, 70 full-time faculty in grades 4-8.

These opportunities and challenges include but are not limited to the following:

- Define a clear identity and direction for the Middle School, building first upon the existing strengths while being mindful of upper, middle, and lower school coherence.
- Clarify the administration's structure within the grades 4-8 division.

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- Build trusting relationships with Middle School colleagues and personal relationships with students while also motivating, inspiring, and establishing clear expectations for them.
- Clarify the grade 4-8 span connecting to both grade 3 and grade 9 to ensure curricular alignment.
- Honor school values and traditions while developing an increasingly innovative curriculum.
- Lead the Middle School to provide alignment with the best practices of middle school education.
- Create a comprehensive process for faculty feedback and evaluation.
- Advance, in conjunction with other leaders, the School's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Encourage enthusiastic parent participation in the school community while establishing appropriate and consistent boundaries between them and administrative decisions.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The successful candidate to be appointed Middle School Director will likely embody or demonstrate the following skills, qualities, characteristics, and experiences:

- An engaging, enthusiastic, and inspirational school leader, fully participating in middle school life and genuinely interested in faculty, students and parents, and who is also accessible to them.
- Active and strong listening skills and an inclusive transparent decision-making process, yet with the courage to make decisions in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Superb communication skills, in writing, in front of groups, in relationships with others, and as team leader.
- Capacity to develop impactful personal relationships with individuals and constituencies, while building a culture based on trust and respect.
- An artful supervisor of faculty and students, providing honest feedback based on observation while holding all accountable to high standards.
- A strategic thinker, effective manager, and master implementer, with a systems approach to improvement and change. A leader who is able to listen to the past and embrace the future.
- High levels of emotional intelligence and the ability to navigate the complexities of leading others in a deeply invested community.
- Highly collaborative with interest and experience in creating signature programs.

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- Character, a strong ethical compass, a midwestern sensibility consistent with the mission and culture of DCDS, as well as warmth, humility, and a sense of humor.
- A strong work ethic, with the passion and capacity to invest full days; yet also establish, uphold and model appropriate boundaries and standards for others in the community.
- Confidence to function as an autonomous leader, with excellent judgment in regard to when to include others, at all levels in the organization.
- Most qualified candidates will have late elementary and middle school experiences as a teacher and school leader.



TO APPLY

Candidates interested in applying for the position of Middle School Director at Detroit Country Day School should do so online at: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

Application includes:

- Letter of interest
- Resume or CV
- Personal Statement
- Names of four current references

For any questions, please contact the consultant on the search:

John Farber
jfarber@rg175.com

The **deadline** for receipt of all application materials is **December 1, 2023**.