Mission Statement

We believe that, in life, knowledge must be guided by values. Through a commitment to character formation and a rigorous and inspirational academic program, The Peck School strives to build in each student the capacity for disciplined learning and consideration of others. With dedicated faculty and families, we prepare our students to succeed in secondary school and to lead healthy, productive, and principled lives.

Overview

One of the nation’s finest independent, K-8 coeducational day schools, The Peck School provides the perfect learning environment for children to thrive. Peck melds a proven curriculum with modern methods—and students discover the pure delight of creative thinking and active learning by honoring timeless traditions and supporting timely transformation. Peck’s dedicated K-8 educational model allows for growth, for exploration, for risk-taking, and for failure throughout students’ critical elementary and middle school formative years. It allows for a nurturing environment where children feel challenged, and will challenge themselves, all within a belief that learning is best when it is a joyful process. Children at Peck will know and will be known as they develop into confident learners and leaders as they move through the Peck experience.

The school is seeking a Head of the Upper School to lead students and faculty in grades 5-8. Peck students are known for their academic strengths, athletic achievements, artistic expression, leadership skills, and community service, and the new Head will be responsible for ensuring students continue to thrive and succeed across all areas. The ideal candidate will have a strong knowledge and background in middle school education and will be a highly involved and visible leader for the Upper School.
School History

When The Peck School was founded in 1893, its mission was clear: to provide the best possible education to local children. Under the name Miss Sutphen’s School—named for the teacher, Christine Sutphen—six students came through its doors in the first year.

By 1916, 23 years after opening its doors, the school had grown to 100 students, nine teachers, and was recognized as one of the best private elementary schools in Morristown. Two years later, in 1918, it changed its name to The Peck School after its new leader, Mr. Lorraine T. Peck.

In 1944, Peck became a nonprofit corporation, comprised of parents and a Board of Trustees, with parents taking an active role in guiding the School’s policies and planning. In 1948 the School completed its move to Lindenwold Mansion and the nine acres of land on which it’s situated.

In the following decades, the school grew both in terms of enrollment and physical footprint, adding new facilities and expanding programming while building the foundation for many of the school’s current traditions. In 1993, Peck School completed the Deetjen Kindergarten Building. In 1995, the Caspersen-Tomlinson Academic Building was completed, followed by the F. M. Kirby Lower School in 1998. In 2006 the state-of-the-art Eckhart-Huff Academic Building was completed, which was followed by the 32,000-square-foot Peck Athletic Center in 2007.

Fast Facts

343 students (234 families), from more than 60 different communities in Northern NJ

6:1 student-teacher ratio

18 years average faculty teaching experience

60% advanced faculty degree

14-acre historic campus in Morristown

Peck’s motto, Disciplina ad Vivendum (“Learning for Life”)
**THE SCHOOL**

Today, The Peck School’s mission is as clear as it was when it was founded in 1893: to introduce bright young minds to even brighter futures. Its small-scaled K-8 program provides children with role models worth following and equips them over time with the strength to lead. Peck’s curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning continue to evolve and transform as it implements its [2015 Strategic Plan](#).

Character is at the heart of the Peck experience. Students learn to take ownership and responsibility for their actions by practicing honesty, integrity, patience, and perseverance. Since the 1960s, “consideration of others” has been included as an important category on each student’s report card. Throughout their time at Peck, students learn to respect all members of their communities, to appreciate diversity, to encourage and support others, and to exhibit cooperation and fairness.

Peck maintains a family-style dining tradition that gives students of all ages a seat at the table with teachers from all divisions—and makes them feel seen, heard, and loved by the adults who share their lives.

Peck is a community of people that represent different ethnicities, a vibrant range of cultural and racial backgrounds, and varying religious and socio-economic backgrounds. Families come from 39 different communities throughout the state, and students enjoy an abundance of programming and resources focused on embracing diversity. The school has an active and passionate Inclusion, Equity and Justice Committee as well as a Board of Trustees Diversity Committee.
The school’s nationally-recognized Individual Development and Community Responsibility (InDeCoRe) program guides its efforts to promote positive character development. Every trimester, Peck focuses on one of its six core values: Respect, Loyalty, Perseverance, Empathy, Responsibility, and Honesty. Students become people who value and practice the kinds of life skills critical to future satisfaction as successful adults and responsible citizens.

The school is accredited with the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS) and the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools.

**Academics**

The academic program at Peck is founded on three main pillars: a rigorous and inspirational academic curriculum, a commitment to character education, and an emphasis on the critical life skills and traits necessary to lead a principled, healthy, and successful life. The school aims to provide authentic learning experiences that allow for meaningful connections between students and across disciplines.

The heart of Peck’s coeducational, K-8 model is its approach to the Upper School for grades 5-8. The Upper School is a vibrant, energetic arena where children can take healthy risks, engage new experiences, and build ambitiously on solid academic and ethical foundations. Peck students move into Upper School ready to translate more intricate theories into even bolder actions and to test trickier hypothesis with their own hands. Upper Schoolers also learn to work through greater complexity and disagreement to find the best answers to increasingly difficult questions.
Beginning in fifth grade, students are given increasing responsibilities and privileges that gradually instill a sense of ownership for their education. Each student has an advisor who monitors their growth and ushers them toward opportunities for leadership and accountability. Recognizing that all students have unique learning styles and interests, teachers strive to encourage and champion each student’s development and respond to each child’s individual learning style, abilities, and interests.

Students complete an interdisciplinary curriculum that includes coursework in English, history, mathematics, science, world languages (French, Latin, and Spanish), and the arts. Core academics are supplemented by special programming around Health and Wellness, Public Speaking, and the Capstone Lab for eight graders where students develop and pursue a project of their own choosing.

When students reach the eighth grade, they are truly the upperclassmen on campus with all the privileges and responsibilities that come with the role. They can edit the newspaper, the Yearbook, captain the sports teams, conduct school-wide community service drives, and organize dances.

The following is a selection of secondary schools attended by Peck graduates from 2014-2018:

- Choate Rosemary Hall
- Delbarton School
- Kent Place School
- Morristown-Beard School
- Newark Academy
- Oak Knoll School
- Pingry School
- Taft School

The following is a selection of colleges and universities attended by Peck graduates from 2014-2018:

- Boston College
- Brown University
- Duke University
- Georgetown University
- Harvard University
- Lafayette College
- University of Pennsylvania
- New York University
- Princeton University
- Villanova University
- Washington & Lee University
- Yale University
Each eighth grader delivers an eighth-grade speech at an Upper School assembly, a culmination of a student’s experience at the school, and designs their own Capstone project to pursue an area of interest to them. Eighth graders are heroes to the younger children and wear the mantle of leadership almost without knowing they have donned it.

At the end of their eighth-grade year, Peck students are exceptionally well-prepared for high school and beyond and empowered to make positive contributions to the world. A secondary school counseling program works diligently to match each student with their right-fit school; 90% of graduates matriculate to their first-choice school. Secondary schools are eager to receive these young leaders and strong scholars who enter their high schools with an exuberant stride to become their National Merit Finalists, school presidents, champion debaters, house prefects, All State Athletes, and more.

**Arts and Athletics**

Building a strong foundation at Peck goes beyond academics. The school strives to foster intellectual curiosity, creative thinking, appreciation of the arts, and a commitment to a healthy and active lifestyle. Graduates leave Peck with the skills necessary to succeed at the next level of education.

The arts are an important part of an education at Peck. In the visual arts, students are challenged to create works of art that enhance skill development, thinking processes, and creativity. Students work in a variety of mediums and technology is integrated appropriately. In music, students study composers, learn how to read music, and study music in different cultures. They become composers themselves, learning different techniques and mastering performance skills. Drama is introduced in seventh grade, and students learn the basic tools of the dramatic arts while building confidence and
public speaking skills. Woodworking emphasizes the safe use of hand tools and power equipment. As students progress, they use their skills to complete large projects of their choosing. Eighth graders select two arts electives from options that include Digital Storytelling, The Play, and School of Rock.

At Peck, learning carries over from the classroom to the playing field, court, or rink in recognition that part of a healthy childhood is the opportunity to grow through structured play and intentional physical activity. Peck’s Athletic Department offers students a distinctive program that is based in character education, and respectful of developmental needs at every stage, emphasizing developing skills as well as sportsmanship. At all grade levels, master teachers and coaches provide ample positive experiences that result in a lifelong appreciation for sports and physical exercise, and a deep understanding and respect for teamwork.

Students in grades 5-6 continue intramural programs that began in Lower School in the winter sports of basketball, floor hockey, and volleyball. In the fall and spring, they test their skills through interscholastic competition in soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, softball, and baseball. The grade 7-8 program offers students a complete interscholastic experience in the sports of basketball, cross country, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, lacrosse, softball, baseball, and volleyball. There are more than 200 competitions among more than 48 different public, independent, and parochial schools as well as tournament play in many of these sports.
SERVICE LEARNING

Instilling and reinforcing a sense of social awareness in students is a fundamental aspect of Peck’s educational experience. Beginning in Kindergarten and extending throughout their years at Peck, students devote time and energy to serving the local and global communities through meaningful—and fun—hands-on activities. Some of these include a Food Drive & Hunger Walk helping the Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown, helping out with environmental conservation initiatives, working with developmentally disabled children across the country, and collecting and organizing Christmas gifts for those in need.

Each grade is paired with a specific organization for a year-long service learning project, aligning with each grade’s specific service learning theme. Themes range from Compassion and Caring, to Kids Helping Kids, to Environmental Stewardship, and more. In eighth grade, students choose their own theme and partner organization.

CAMPUS

Exceptional learning facilities and resources are at every turn at Peck. The 35,000 square-foot Eckert Huff Building—dedicated in 2006—features the state-of-the-art Higgins library; a technology lab, the Tomlinson Multimedia Center; smart classrooms; space devoted to music, fine arts, and woodshop; and common areas for students.

Peck students enjoy access to excellent indoor and outdoor facilities that extend more than 14 acres and include the 32,000 square-foot Diebold Center for Sportsmanship and Athletics.
The school is also in the midst of an exciting time as the campus undergoes a metamorphosis to fit the deep and dexterous teaching and learning demanded by today’s world. A year into making the vision of its Master Plan into a reality, five new or reimagined spaces are up and running: the fully renovated Kindergarten, the Robotics Lab, the 7th and 8th Grade Commons, the Idea & Design Lab, and the reimagined Higgins Library. A variety of other campus improvements are slated for completion in late 2019, including The Peck Commons, a multipurpose gathering and event space that will feature a new dining hall and kitchen, reconfigured campus entrance, new arts spaces, campus store, and expanded outdoor play area.

MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

Known as “a community that cares,” Morristown has been Peck’s home since 1893. A charming community with deep Colonial roots of less than 20,000 residents, Morristown features a variety of historic attractions, many Victorian-era homes, and has been named by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of its “Dozen Distinctive Destinations.”

Although it is surrounded by the quintessentially suburban Morris Township and affluent commuter towns, Morristown has long been a place with lots of restaurants, shops, and activities, while remaining relatively affordable. People who come to live in Morristown enjoy its pedestrian-friendly walkable community with access to New Jersey Transit and several highways. About 30 miles west of Manhattan, Morristown allows for easy access to the attractions of New York City.

The Morristown Green at the center of town is the site of the Festival on the Green in September, a weekly Farmers Market, an annual Jazz Festival, and the Christmas Festival, among other activities,
and is surrounded by shops, restaurants, condominiums, and offices. South Street has many restaurants and the Mayo Performing Arts Center, which is the site of a variety of performing arts acts. The town has an extensive recreation program, including a seasonal swimming pool, horseback riding at nearby stables, public ice skating, and more.

OPPORTUNITIES

Lead the Upper School faculty
In collaboration with Head of School, Andy Delinsky, the Head of the Upper School shapes the strategic vision for the academic and character development of Peck students in grades 5-8. Adept at developing teacher leaders and comfortable with delegating responsibility, the Head of the Upper School balances the day-to-day demands of running the division with attention to long-term strategic goals.

Support best practices in teaching and learning
Peck has earned its reputation for academic excellence and seeks opportunities for continued pedagogical and curricular transformation to continue offering the best program for students. The Head of the Upper School will work closely with the Director of Curriculum and Faculty Development to deepen the good work that’s already in progress by prioritizing collaboration, supporting dialogue among the faculty, sharing protocols for examining student learning—including data on student achievement—and framing generative questions to inspire continuous improvement in curriculum and pedagogy.
Steward communication with parents
Peck believes in a strong parent-school partnership, which the Head of the Upper School continues to foster. Emotionally intelligent and politically astute, the Head of the Upper School understands, manages, and addresses parental concerns with a nuanced combination of empathy and confidence as parents navigate the ups and downs of raising middle school children. Keeping the best interest of the student at the heart of the conversation, the Head of the Upper School communicates proactively, leans into difficult conversations, and draws appropriate boundaries as necessary.

Champion Peck’s core values
From direct eye contact to a firm handshake to conversation at the mixed-grade family style lunch table, the Head of the Upper School models the values of the InDeCoRe program—individual development and community responsibility—that’s at the heart of the Peck experience: perseverance and responsibility, loyalty and honesty, respect and empathy. The Head of the Upper School embodies Peck’s core values and integrates these values in every aspect of the job.

Ensure the readiness of Peck’s graduates
Peck students matriculate to prestigious local schools and nationally recognized boarding schools. The Upper School Head, in collaboration with the Director of Secondary Counseling, understands and manages the unique stressors 8th graders and their parents experience during the high school application process, tracks the performance of Peck graduates, and manages change to ensure the preparedness of Peck’s future graduates.

**DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

**Genuine love and appreciation for students in grades 5 through 8**
Ideal candidates will find humor and delight in the unique characteristics of children on the cusp of adolescence, make authentic connections with students, support the growth of each child to his or her full potential, and show empathy and kindness in trying circumstances that would test the patience of Job. A sense of humor is a plus.

**Excellent communicator**
Engaging with a wide range of constituents—students, teachers, prospective and current parents, administrators, as well as leaders in the broader educational community—the Head of the Upper School must possess strong writing and public speaking skills, valuing clarity and effectiveness. An ability to listen with an open mind, ask questions, and explain decisions with appropriate transparency are vital in this work. Openness to communication via video and blogs is a plus.

**Personal warmth**
Peck is a close, caring environment, a family of families where the innocence of childhood is treasured and preserved as long as possible. Strong candidates will possess strong emotional intelligence and understand the importance of authentically welcoming all families, encouraging students, supporting faculty and staff, and inspiring joyful engagement in the daily work of Peck.

**Proven leader**
Qualified candidates will have experience managing and leading people. Just as Peck teachers recognize and build upon the strengths of each child, the Head of the Upper School will leverage the strengths and talents of the faculty, and will implement processes that support the evolution of programs and protocols in a high-functioning school.
TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

• A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
• A current résumé;
• A one-page statement of educational philosophy and practice;
• A list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate’s permission) to:

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