



College Counselor
Pasadena, CA
January 2022

The School

Founded in 1907, Polytechnic School embraces an “open-air” design created by residential-scale classrooms complemented by courtyards and playgrounds that still form the heart of the Lower and Middle School campus. The school’s mission and philosophy remain true to the original concept of hands-on, inquiry-based learning. The school expanded after World War II, adding grades 9-12 in the late 1950s. Poly has benefited greatly from the capable leadership of several notable, long-term heads: Willis Stork (1955-1976), Alexander “Mike” Babcock ‘48 (1980-1998), and Debbie Reed (2002-2015). The current head of school, John Bracker, is in his seventh year at Poly.

Poly has developed into a superb and well-resourced institution and is highly regarded for its academics, athletics, arts, and sense of community. The school’s sterling reputation rests on the foundation of a rigorous academic program that takes into account the developmental needs of its students in all major areas. Sharing the sentiment that Poly has a small school feel and is “elite but it doesn’t feel elite,” Poly graduates attend a wide range of first-class colleges and universities. The school is in excellent shape in every way. Although Poly would have every right to trumpet its success, the school’s culture is decidedly purposeful and understated. Poly is very forward looking, yet also values many traditions, one of which is to allow students to explore by trying as many new things as they need to find their passions and to explore themselves as learners and as young people.

Program

Polytechnic’s program is fully developed, rich, and far too extensive to describe adequately herein. However, this snapshot offers a flavor of the school’s commitment to the breadth and depth of the offerings. The academic program is highly appropriate for each of the three divisions. The Lower School (grades K-5) has adopted a balanced literacy approach with a strong emphasis on writing



(supported by Lucy Calkins’ workshops at Columbia) and a revised math program using the Singapore Math approach. Embracing the whole child, the Lower School is working on adopting a new social-emotional curriculum for its students. The Middle School (grades 6-8) remains committed to hands-on, experiential learning, both in and out of the classroom. All students complete Algebra by the end of the eighth grade, and almost all of the students take either Calculus

AB and/or Calculus BC by the time they graduate. The Upper School has a full array of Advanced Placement (AP) courses and a number of electives. Graduation requirements are broad and rigorous.



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The arts and athletics programs form an integral part of a Poly student's experience. The size of the school and breadth of the program make it possible for students to participate in arts and athletics without having to choose between the two. There are many three-sport athletes in every senior class; most of these students have also had significant engagement in performing or visual arts. Even with a no-cut policy in athletics, Poly teams regularly win Prep League and CIF championships. Alumni commonly cite the Outdoor Education program as a highlight of their Poly years. A K-12 Community Outreach program fosters service learning at all grade levels, and the opportunities to engage in the community are numerous. Poly's multi-faceted Global Initiatives Program introduces even its youngest students to global engagement, including visits from students in Japan. This year, the program is hosting five international trips, including Cambodia, Nicaragua, and Iceland. Poly hosts an international exchange student each year, and Upper School students have participated in the School Year Abroad (SYA) program annually.

The school has a full summer program of academic, arts, athletics, and enrichment courses that is available not only to the Poly students, but to the surrounding community as well. A sizable number of Poly's Upper School students are hired as summer teaching assistants, providing many students with their first job experience, as well as further encouraging the atmosphere of collegiality and camaraderie among students, faculty, and staff. New students enter at several grade levels, most frequently at kindergarten, sixth, seventh, and ninth grade. While Poly students are very strong, indeed, there is a diversity of learners at the school, and any student who requires support receives it. Poly students are valued for the learners that they are and individual needs are met within the program.

Students

At first glance, the Poly student body may seem to be indistinguishable from most independent school students. What does distinguish Poly students, however, is their closeness to each other, their relationships with their teachers, their pride in their school, and their absolute, certain knowledge that all the adults in the community care for them. There is an ineffable air of affection and camaraderie at Poly that is palpable. Perhaps this stems from the high percentage of students who are "lifers" and attend from kindergarten through graduation. Maybe it's a function of the size of the school, where it's easy for every teacher in each division to know each student.



Perhaps it originates in the community, which is strong, stable, and supportive. Maybe it comes from the historic buildings students see around them and the sense of tradition that they inculcate. This camaraderie is further fostered by the Outdoor Education trips, Community Outreach opportunities, and global travel in which both students and faculty participate during their time at Poly. Whatever the reasons, it is there, this sense of closeness and of pride.



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And they're bright, too. Typically, about 20 percent of the senior class is named a National Merit semifinalist, and AP scores run very high. Put together a bright student body with a faculty that is ready for the challenge and, predictably, the result is a very lively place intellectually. Many students come from homes where both parents hold advanced degrees, and with Caltech right across the street, it's not surprising that intellectual engagement and a broad awareness of the world beyond the school are the order of the day at Polytechnic. The school's stated commitment to shaping good citizens helps to inform this environment as well. Internal debates, outside speakers, and experts invited to campus all help foster a culture of curiosity, awareness, and involvement that typifies the Poly student, who is competitive yet respectful and restrained in their general comportment. Faculty describe the students as "amazing ... and age-appropriate."

Such a student evolves over time, molded in the hands of a wise and caring faculty. Time and again, when asked what makes Poly the school that it is, students answer, "Our teachers." And when asked what makes Poly the school that it is, the faculty respond, "Our students." The eagerness of the students to engage the faculty and, in turn, of the faculty to be engaged, is inescapable. Regardless of the grade level, there is concurrence that the teachers are there to meet the needs of the students. Indeed, it might be said that the school's twin goals of educating its students and living humbly coincide in the academic arena.

Bright, successful students working independently or in small study or research groups garner academic accolades, but they do so with a genuine humility. It would be difficult to imagine a school environment where students support each other so ardently and, in turn, feel so supported themselves by the adult community around them. Seeing is definitely believing.

Campus

The Polytechnic campus is extraordinary and well suited to the mission of the school. Located in the heart of Pasadena and adjacent to Caltech in a residential neighborhood, the school has the feel of a small California village graced with historic buildings, open courtyards and walkways, and mature trees. The original open-air architecture, created by renowned architect Myron Hunt, has been carefully preserved. The classrooms are large and sunlit with wide eaves that overhang walkways, creating a Craftsman-style feel that is often associated with Pasadena. These surround courtyards that are open, bright, and conducive to play, gathering, and relaxing in ways that invite students and adults into the outdoors.

Spanning 15 acres, Poly occupies a large city block and most of a second. A quiet residential street separates the North Campus (Lower School and Middle School) from the South Campus (Upper School). The school's gymnasium (due for upgrades in the next few years) and playing field are on the North Campus, as are the major administrative offices. The South Campus houses the school's extraordinary performing arts theatre and visual arts spaces and a new library and academic building. The private residence of the head of school is adjacent to the North Campus. The overall campus features a marvelous layout that allows



both openness and intimacy, graced with truly exceptional facilities both historic and contemporary.

Location

The city of Pasadena has cultural riches that are world-renowned: The Huntington Library, Norton Simon Museum, Caltech, The Jet Propulsion Laboratory, The Art Center College of Design, Pacific Asia Museum, Descanso Gardens, Pasadena Playhouse, and more. These would be noteworthy for any city, but for one of only 140,000 people, they are truly remarkable. The Rose Parade and Rose Bowl are world famous, as are the city's numerous buildings by Green and Green, Myron Hunt, and others of the California Craftsman style. Pasadena is a gem of a community, highly livable and reminiscent of many small towns in the East and Midwest. All of these assets, plus the closeness to Los Angeles and all it offers, make this a desirable community in which to live, typically under a blue sky and the dramatic backdrop of the San Gabriel Mountains.



The Position

The mission of the college office states, "The college counseling process requires authenticity as students are encouraged to build skills that will serve them during their college years and throughout their lives. A successful college process requires a willingness to build self-knowledge, an openness to discover new options, and an ability to work thoughtfully toward an uncertain outcome."

The college counselor's primary responsibility will be managing a cohort of students, starting in junior year, in their undergraduate applications. This will include:

- Meeting regularly with students and families,
- Guiding students through all aspects of the college process
- Writing master recommendations
- Coordinating with faculty recommenders
- Collaborating with the college counseling team to plan and execute departmental initiatives and events
- Teaching sections of the college counseling class in the junior and senior years.



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A strong candidate will have an unwavering commitment to keeping students at the center of the process. A successful candidate will have exceptional communication abilities, including strong writing and public speaking skills, a capacity for engaging students in the classroom, and a team-oriented approach to the college process and its various constituencies. This candidate will have a commitment to guiding students with a wide variety of academic and extracurricular interests and abilities. And at some moments, this candidate's most important assets will be flexibility and a sense of humor.



Polytechnic School's college counselors are active participants in NACAC, College Board, and ACCIS. In addition, they attend local networking events and travel to college tours and information sessions for secondary school professionals. These activities help the office build and sustain a strong base of knowledge about receiving institutions and to connect/building relationships with their counterparts in college admissions offices.

The college counselor will also serve as a dean, participating in the dean team, working with class officers, tracking student progress, planning interventions for struggling students, and participating in the life of the school.

Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree
- Student-centered commitment to working with young people
- Experience with and/or willingness to engage thoughtfully in work focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Desire to become involved in aspects of school life outside of college counseling and the dean's office, including athletics, the arts, outdoor education, or other areas

Desired Qualifications:

- A graduate degree
- Teaching and/or coaching experience
- Fluency in Spanish or Mandarin Chinese is also desirable.
- Experience in an independent school and/or selective admission work.
- Experience with Word, Excel, Naviance or the like, Zoom, and student information systems such as PCR, Veracross, or FAWeb.

To Apply

Interested candidates are invited to contact the consultants for a preliminary and confidential exploration of the position – and will ultimately be expected to submit electronically the following documents (preferably PDFs):

- Cover letter expressing interest in this particular position and Poly as a school;
- Current résumé;
- Statement reflecting your interest in and preparation for college counseling work;
- List of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (*references will be contacted only with the applicant's permission*) to:

Ben Bolté

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**COLLEGE
MATRICULATION
LIST 2017-2020**

Amherst College
Babson College
Bard College
Barnard College
Bates College
Baylor University
Berklee College of Music
Berkshire School
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Butler University
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
California Institute of Technology
California State-Monterey Bay
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
Claremont McKenna College
Colgate University
Colorado College
Columbia University
Connecticut College
Cornell University
Culinary Institute of America
Dartmouth College
Davidson College
Duke University
Eckerd College
Emerson College
Emory University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology-
Main Campus
Gonzaga University
Hampden-Sydney College
Hampton University
Harvard College
Harvey Mudd College
Haverford College
Indiana University-Bloomington
Johns Hopkins University

Kenyon College
King's College London (University
of London)
Lafayette College
Lehigh University
List College - JTS
London School of Economics
LA Trade Technical College
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University Chicago
Marist College
McGill University
New York University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Ohio State-Main Campus
Ohio Wesleyan University
Pasadena City College
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Princeton University
Purdue University-Main Campus
Reed College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island School of Design
Rhodes College
Rice University
Ripon College
Rose-Hulman
San Francisco State University
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
School of Art Institute of Chicago
Scripps College
Smith College
Southern Methodist University
Stanford University
Swarthmore College
Syracuse University
Tamkang University
The College of Wooster
The New School
The University of Arizona
The University of Texas at Austin
Tufts University
Tulane University of Louisiana
United States Air Force Academy
University of British Columbia
University of California-Berkeley
UCLA
UC-Santa Barbara
UC-Santa Cruz
University of Chicago
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Denver
University of Evansville
University of Iowa
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Univ. Minnesota-Twin Cities
Univ. New Mexico-Main Campus
University of Notre Dame
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Puget Sound
University of Richmond
University of San Diego
University of Southern California
University of St Andrews
University of Vermont
University of Washington, Seattle
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Virginia Military Institute
Wake Forest University
Washington and Lee University
Washington University in St Louis
Wellesley College
Wesleyan University
Westmont College
Whitman College
Williams College
Xavier University of Louisiana
Yale University



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