

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

THE PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

tps.school.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

The Philadelphia School educates children for a future that is impossible to know but not impossible to shape. Learn here. Go anywhere.

At a Glance



Established
1972



Enrollment
410



Total faculty and staff
154



Student-teacher ratio
6.8:1



Students of color
36%



Financial aid awarded
\$2.4M



Faculty with advanced degrees
48%



Campus size
1.57 acres

Faculty of color: 35%

Students receiving aid: 32%

Endowment: \$1.38M

Annual Operating Budget: \$14M

Mascot: Tiger



Overview

“YOUNGER LONGER, LEADERS SOONER.”

Founded in 1972, The Philadelphia School (TPS) has long been a leader in child-centered education focused on the holistic development of children, embracing active, mixed-grade, student-led instruction and experiential learning since its founding. Learning and growing on two closely proximate and vibrant campuses in the Fitler Square neighborhood of Philadelphia, TPS students work with highly committed and skilled educators who utilize their classrooms, the campus, neighborhood, and Philadelphia’s outdoor and community spaces to activate learning and engagement. Warm and highly engaged families, faculty, staff, and administration hold a deep love for the school — its history, what it is, and what it can be. TPS is a school that embraces progressive educational practices where “children progress through predictable stages, but not at the same time and where teachers catch the clues to ask the right questions and pose the right challenges to meet the needs of the individual students.”

TPS has a long-standing and deep commitment to cultivating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. This is demonstrated in its curriculum, practices and programs, and work to build understanding, empathy and skills among constituencies. In recent years, they have focused on action, including establishing and supporting student affinity groups, creating and delivering family educational programs, and developing increased culturally responsible instruction practices among teachers.

The next Head of School will be responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the school, ensuring its continued growth and excellence, and nurturing an environment where academic, emotional, and social development thrives for students, faculty, and staff. The Head of School will work closely with a committed Board of Trustees, expert faculty and staff, and the broader TPS community to uphold and strengthen the school’s commitment to foster intellectual curiosity, creativity, civic engagement, and a lifelong love of learning. The Head of School will have the ability to inspire and collaborate with a diverse set of stakeholders and bring a deep understanding of Preschool-8 education, as well as the ability to lead with empathy, vision, and joy.

Key responsibilities of the Head of School include:

- Leading and inspiring faculty and staff while promoting a culture of professional growth and collaboration.
- Overseeing the academic and co-curricular programs to ensure they align with the school’s mission and values.
- Engaging with students, families, and alumni to further foster relationships and a sense of community and joy.
- Advancing the school’s diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Ensuring the school’s financial health and long-term sustainability through effective management and fundraising efforts.



Opportunities and Challenges

The next leader will benefit from an ongoing relationship with TPS families and other leaders of the Philadelphia community built over the last 50 years. Parents, students, and alumni care deeply for their school, and they are proud of the impact TPS has had on their lives. The next head of school will enthusiastically embrace this passion; embrace student, faculty, and parent voice; and work with all constituencies to continue to move the school forward. TPS places a high value on community and seeks an educator who can lead strategically while furthering a Preschool-8 progressive education program. The next head of school will have an opportunity to:

- Join with the faculty and Board to continue to provide a progressive education, while defining excellence in a Preschool-8 school in today's world.
- By partnering with the academic leaders, provide a program that fosters a culture of intellectual curiosity and allows each student to reach their full potential while adhering to the progressive educational mission of the school.
- Understand the importance of faculty voice and collaborate with the faculty to move TPS forward while ensuring that every teacher at TPS continues to grow in their knowledge and appreciation of progressive education and best practices.
- Capitalize on and strengthen TPS's growing fundraising efforts.
- Reinforce and grow further TPS' city and country learning opportunities.
- Become even more connected and consequential in the Philadelphia independent school market.
- Affirm TPS's commitment to its core value of diversity and belonging and further define/clarify what DEIB means for today's TPS.
- Identify facility enhancements to be addressed, both short and long term, including delivering on a long-range campus master plan.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The Philadelphia School is seeking in its next Head of School a joyful and inspiring educational leader who is eager to make a long-term commitment to Philadelphia and the TPS community and the work to make brave decisions for the school's future. The next Head of School will offer the following qualifications and qualities:

- **Visionary Leadership:** A strategic thinker with a clear vision for the future of TPS, capable of articulating and implementing plans that honor the school's traditions while embracing opportunities for innovation.
- **Exceptional Communication Skills:** The ability to inspire and connect with various constituencies, including students, parents, faculty, alumni, and donors, through both written and verbal communication.
- **High Emotional Intelligence (EQ):** A leader who is empathetic, approachable, and skilled at building strong relationships, understanding the importance of listening and engaging with others authentically.
- **Personable and Engaging:** Someone who naturally builds rapport with people of all ages and backgrounds, serving as a visible and approachable presence within the school and greater community.
- **Fundraising Expertise:** A confident and effective fundraiser who will champion TPS' mission and stories with enthusiasm, fostering relationships with donors and community partners to secure the resources needed for continued growth and success.
- **Cheerleader for the Community:** A passionate advocate for TPS, celebrating the school's achievements and promoting its mission both within Philadelphia and beyond.
- **Systems Oriented:** The skills required to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy.
- **Culture Enhancer:** Someone who will thoughtfully guide and strengthen the school's culture, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that inspires all members of the community.
- **Joyful Educator:** A love for children and appreciation of their developmental differences and delights, which are apparent daily in a Preschool-8 school.
- **Skilled Listener:** Good listener and synthesizer of ideas and an ability to act with purpose.
- **Clear Decision Maker:** Knows how to engage, listen and ensure all constituencies feel heard while making difficult decisions in the best interest of the school.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about The Philadelphia School.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[School History](#)

[High School Matriculation](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)

[About Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

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

Burke Zalosh

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