

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

THE LAMPLIGHTER SCHOOL

Dallas, Texas

thelamplighterschool.org

Start Date: July 2026



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& ASSOCIATES

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*A student is not a vessel to be filled
but a lamp to be lighted.*

Mission Statement

Dedicated to igniting the potential of each child, Lamplighter engages children in the joy of learning through intellectual discovery in a creative, inclusive, and collaborative environment.

At a Glance



Established
1953



Total enrollment
459



Total faculty
63



Students of color
33%



Endowment
\$17M



Annual operating budget
\$13.7M



Campus size
12 acres

Average faculty tenure: 14 years
Zip codes represented: 45

Admission Acceptance Rate: 26%
Number of chickens in the barn: approx. 36



Overview

Two visionary teachers and 23 dedicated students launched the inaugural year of The Lamplighter School in 1953 in a North Dallas farmhouse. Today, one will find a robust academic program serving 459 students from Early Childhood through 4th grade, immersed in 72 years of traditions including square dancing, monthly hootenannies (spirited school-wide gatherings), and a student-run philanthropic corporation, Lamplighter Layers, through which students raise chickens and sell eggs.

Nestled on a 12-acre campus, Lamplighter features classroom spaces designed to support its research-based, rigorous curriculum that is simultaneously wrapped in joy and discovery. The campus also includes expanded fine arts facilities, a state-of-the-art media center, multiple gymnasiums, a greenhouse, a purpose-built STEM building, and a barn. Nature trails, a creek, and gardens accent the serene setting. As a nationally acclaimed independent school dedicated exclusively to early childhood and primary education, Lamplighter's expertise in this area is particularly evident in the construction of its bespoke playgrounds, which inspire and engage young minds! Learning is further enhanced through deep partnerships with Southern Methodist University, the Dallas Arboretum, the Perot Museum, and Dallas public schools through United to Learn.

Lamplighter's physical spaces reflect the School's constructivist pedagogical approach. In the Early Childhood and Lower School programs, discovery, exploration, collaboration, and critical thinking serve as catalysts for lifelong learning. The small student-to-teacher ratio provides ample opportunity to forge deep relationships between students and their teachers, leading to long-lasting connections to the School through a highly engaged alumni association.

The Lamplighter School seeks as its next Head of School an experienced, innovative servant leader who will uphold the school motto: "A student is not a vessel to be filled, but a lamp to be lighted."



The incoming Head will build on the highly successful 15-year tenure of Dr. Joan Hill, who has led the school through the completion of the campus master plan and stewarded robust admission and enrollment, a deeply connected community, and thoughtfully designed learning experiences. The Head will join curious students, involved parents, passionate faculty, and committed senior administrators in building on Lamplighter's excellent program and inclusive community. The strongest candidates will be passionate about early childhood education and believe that learning should be built on academic excellence while also being engaging and joyful.

Opportunities and Challenges

The challenges and opportunities for the next Head of School are likely to include:

Leveraging the momentum of the current strategic plan, financial and enrollment health, and new facilities, to propel Lamplighter forward and further enhance its reputation for excellence

- Nurture a culture that both embraces innovation and delights in its distinctive traditions, where joy and wonder are hallmarks of the student and adult communities
- Carry forward the current [Strategic Plan](#) (2024-2027)
- Deepen existing partnerships with Southern Methodist University, the Dallas Arboretum, the Perot Museum, and United to Learn, and establish new partnerships throughout the city that will enhance faculty growth and student academic experience
- On the heels of a very successful capital campaign and completed campus master plan, continue to nurture the existing culture of philanthropy with a focus on endowment growth
- Communicate with inspiration and clarity to a wide variety of stakeholders, serving as the school's chief storyteller and greatest advocate

Continuing to build Lamplighter's identity as the region's preeminent educator of young children

- Maintain a culture of continuous evaluation and improvement in the academic program, embracing current best practices and emerging research in curriculum and pedagogy, in concert with a program steeped in hands-on and project-based learning
- Recognizing the increasingly competitive independent school market in Dallas, fully support students and parents in an outplacement process that is proactive and highly communicative and that honors each child's individual journey



Building an exceptional community of teachers, leaders, and families

- Recruit and retain an exceptional and diverse faculty, staff, and senior administrative team and support and mentor them, fostering the full use of their talents
- Implement excellent parent education programs that are responsive to evolving parent needs
- Ensure that all members of the Lamplighter community feel a sense of inclusion and belonging

Qualities and Personal Attributes

The most compelling candidates will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:

Professional Qualifications

- A deep understanding of and appreciation for the joys and compelling qualities of an Early Childhood through Grade 4 school;
- Personal and professional alignment with a progressively influenced school that emphasizes a constructivist pedagogy and a commitment to nurturing joy, wonder, and love of learning;
- Experience recruiting, hiring, supporting, and retaining talented, broadly diverse, and mission-aligned faculty, staff, and administrators;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy;
- Depth of experience in early childhood and elementary curriculum and instruction, school operations, strategic planning, and board relations; and
- Experience working in partnership with a highly engaged parent community that has appropriately high expectations of the school.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- A community-building style that is collaborative whenever possible and decisive when necessary, demonstrating approachability, trustworthiness, and transparency;
- A commitment to honoring multiple perspectives with the aim of sustaining an authentic, inclusive community;
- A joyful countenance and desire to actively engage with students, parents, faculty, and alumni and the willingness to prioritize presence and visibility.

Learn More

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

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[School History](#)

[Equity and Inclusion](#)

[Middle School Matriculation](#)

[About Dallas, Texas](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates are encouraged to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents as soon as possible:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
- A current résumé

Selected candidates may be asked to provide:

- Writing samples specific to this search
- 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)

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