

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

ELMWOOD FRANKLIN SCHOOL

Buffalo, New York

elmwoodfranklin.org

Start Date: July 2026



elmwood franklin school

Thinking beyond.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission

Elmwood Franklin School prepares children to lead thriving lives.

Core Values

Academic Rigor, Character, Community, Creative Inquiry, and Individual Excellence

At a Glance



Established
1895
(incorporated)



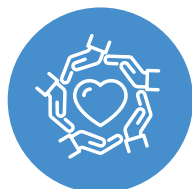
Total enrollment
339



Total faculty
45



Student-teacher ratio
1:7.5



Students of color
25%



Financial aid awarded
\$813,245



Faculty with advanced degrees
89%



Endowment
\$8.2M

Preschool enrollment: 97
Lower School enrollment: 134
Middle School enrollment: 108
Faculty of color: 9%
Students receiving aid: 31.5%

Annual operating budget: \$7,000,000
Highest tuition: \$23,221
Total debt: \$0
Annual fund goal: \$335,350
Accreditations: NYSAIS



Overview

Elmwood Franklin School is dedicated to nurturing confident, resilient, and independent thinkers through a comprehensive academic program that emphasizes learning how to learn, developing strong work habits, and fostering creativity. Students experience rich classroom learning, have opportunities to participate in athletics and the arts, and are part of a school culture grounded in respect, caring, and inclusion. Faculty members serve as both exceptional educators and caring mentors, working in partnership with families to support each child's academic and personal growth. With well-equipped facilities and a strong emphasis on citizenship and character, Elmwood Franklin provides a vibrant, child-centered environment where curiosity is rewarded, risk-taking is encouraged, and assumptions are thoughtfully challenged.

Elmwood Franklin School seeks a dynamic and visionary leader to champion a warm, inclusive community where students are known, challenged, and supported. They will work closely with the Board of Trustees to lead the school with clarity of vision, purpose, and a commitment to programmatic excellence. The Head of School should have a genuine passion for the Pre-K-8 model, finding joy in guiding children through their formative years of growth and discovery. Additionally, the next Head of School should be supportive, inspirational, and possess a strong sense of teamwork and professionalism to support Elmwood Franklin's faculty and staff in providing innovative learning opportunities.

Opportunities and Challenges

Develop and Champion a Clear, Compelling School Brand

Establish and actively promote a distinctive brand identity that communicates EFS's values, culture, and strengths, attracting and retaining families and uniting faculty and staff around a shared purpose. The Head of School will be a knowledgeable and authentic champion of the brand—deeply understanding the school's programs, culture, and achievements to confidently and intelligently advocate for EFS both internally and externally.

Key Success Indicators:

- Work with key stakeholders to crystallize a brand identity statement that reflects current strengths and articulate EFS's uniqueness in a competitive school market
- Work with the Advancement team to develop targeted marketing campaigns showcasing EFS's unique strengths, resulting in an annual increase in inquiries and tours
- Consistently represent and promote the school's brand in community events, parent meetings, and public forums, demonstrating deep knowledge and passion for EFS



Foster Transparent and Inclusive Communication Across All Constituencies

Establish clear, consistent, and empathetic communication channels with parents, faculty, staff, and the Board to build trust, manage expectations, and unify the community.

Key Success Indicators:

- Provide regular updates and open forums with parents and faculty to discuss key decisions and share school developments
- Deliver consistent messaging around complex topics (e.g., curriculum, diversity initiatives, programming) that maintains relationships and fosters community cohesion
- Receive positive feedback in annual surveys regarding clarity and transparency of communication

Recruit, Support, and Retain Outstanding Faculty

Invest in and support faculty to attract and retain highly qualified educators by increasing compensation competitiveness, expanding professional development opportunities, and cultivating a culture in which faculty and staff feel deeply valued, respected, and supported for the tremendous work they do every day.

Key Success Indicators:

- Achieve a reduction in teacher turnover and improved faculty satisfaction scores
- Create a competitive faculty compensation structure aligned with regional benchmarks
- Foster a culture where faculty feel seen, celebrated, and supported through both acknowledgment and action

Drive Enrollment Growth Through Strategic Retention and Engagement

Ensure strong, mission-aligned enrollment across all divisions by focusing on student and family retention—especially at key transition points—while expanding capacity, thoughtfully increasing diversity, and enhancing marketing and student engagement strategies.

Key Success Indicators:

- Work with the Admissions Director, Head of Lower School, and Head of Upper School to develop a plan to expand enrollment.
- Work with the Advancement team to launch a targeted middle school marketing campaign with measurable growth in inquiries, tours, and applications
- Establish a baseline and measurable goals for increasing student diversity
- Implement regular student feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, focus groups) and act on findings to enhance student experience



Strengthen Facilities to Enhance Learning and Program Growth

Ensure that Elmwood Franklin School's campus environment is strategically aligned with current and future programmatic needs by implementing a prioritized facilities plan that enhances student learning, supports faculty excellence, and reflects institutional identity.

Key Success Indicators:

- Continue implementing improvements to campus safety and security, including annual updates to emergency preparedness protocols and physical infrastructure enhancements
- Develop and adopt a five-year capital improvement and reserve replacement plan based on a comprehensive evaluation of current facilities and future needs
- Align facilities with the academic, athletic, and extracurricular needs of the school, ensuring that space constraints do not hinder programmatic goals or future enrollment growth
- Identify and pursue new external funding opportunities to support capital improvement initiatives

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The ideal candidate will be:

A Visionary and Strategic Leader

- Articulates a compelling, forward-thinking vision aligned with EFS's mission and values
- Balances bold innovation with thoughtful consultation and strategic execution
- Makes decisive, informed choices and takes ownership of outcomes
- Understands independent school finance and leads confidently from that foundation

Communicative and Community-Oriented

- Communicates with clarity, transparency, and authenticity across all constituencies
- Builds trust through consistent, collaborative messaging and active listening
- Represents and elevates the EFS brand in every interaction—internally and externally
- Actively seeks feedback and input from parents, students, faculty, and staff



An Empowering and Inspirational Educator

- Leads faculty with inspiration, purpose, and a commitment to professional growth
- Acknowledges effort with sincerity and specificity; sees and nurtures potential in others
- Encourages innovation in the classroom while upholding high standards of teaching and learning
- Brings energy, presence, and optimism to faculty meetings and schoolwide initiatives

Visible, Engaged, and Present

- Is a constant and accessible presence on campus and at school events
- Cultivates relationships with students, parents, teachers, trustees, and donors
- Embraces and contributes to Buffalo's unique, interconnected culture
- Builds connections across institutions to explore creative collaboration

A Resilient and Courageous Decision-Maker

- Confidently navigates complex dynamics, including different constituencies and external pressures
- Maintains professional boundaries while building meaningful relationships
- Stands firmly for the school's best interests—even when it may cause friction
- Accepts the challenges of leadership with resolve, humility, and self-awareness

Ethical, Grounded, and Principled

- Models integrity and transparency in all actions and decisions
- Fosters a culture of accountability—with compassion and clarity
- Balances kindness with firmness
- Delegates with purpose, provides direction, and expects excellence

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Elmwood Franklin School.

[School Website](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

[School History](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Core Values](#)

[About Buffalo, New York](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultant 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;
- 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:

Jamie Estes

Consultant

jamie.estes@carneysandoe.com

The full-time salary range for this position is \$175,000 - \$205,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.