



HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL

Start Date: July 2026

Palm Beach Day Academy

West Palm Beach, Florida | pbday.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION AND VISION

The foundation of Palm Beach Day Academy's program is the education of our students in an academically challenging and compassion-rich environment that guides each child toward personal excellence of mind, body and character.

At a Glance

 **1921**
established

 **581**
total enrollment

 **350**
lower school enrollment

 **87**
total faculty

 **57%**
faculty with
advanced degrees

 **6:1**
student-teacher ratio



OVERVIEW

Located in the heart of Palm Beach County, Palm Beach Day Academy (PBDA) is the school of choice for families who value an education that guides each child toward personal excellence of mind, body, and character. PBDA is widely admired for its student-centered, whole-child approach that prioritizes joyful learning and meaningful relationships within an academically challenging and compassion-rich environment.

Palm Beach Day Academy graduates are empowered to fulfill their individual potential and well prepared for engagement and success in their next educational journey. They graduate from PBDA with an enduring confidence that comes from meeting genuine challenges within a supportive academic community.

PBDA seeks a Head of Lower School who will carry forward the school's whole-child approach with authenticity, compassion, and kindness. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a leader who cherishes early education and wants to join a warm, student-centered community deeply rooted in its mission. The next Head of Lower School will join an energetic and collaborative leadership team, serve a deeply engaged community, and mentor a talented and committed faculty.

The Head of Lower School is responsible for the direct operational and strategic oversight of the Lower School, which serves approximately 350 Pre-Primary through Grade 3 students on the West Palm Beach campus overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway. The next Head of Lower School will ensure that the Lower School program is developmentally appropriate for young learners, aligned with educational best practices, and supports the mission of the school. This role requires a leader who understands early childhood education and can balance academic rigor with creativity and joy.



KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Mentor, Support, and Empower Faculty

The next Head of Lower School will lead a talented group of educators who work collaboratively to support the PBDA program. The Lower School provides a rich learning environment where educators work closely on curriculum, pedagogy, and meeting each student's needs, with two lead teachers per class in grades Pre-Primary to 2nd, transitioning to a single teacher classroom model in 3rd grade. The Head will inspire faculty by being present in classrooms and the community; articulating and upholding clear standards; supporting new and veteran teachers with empathy and guidance; and offering pathways to professional growth. This leader will foster a positive culture, navigate difficult conversations skillfully, and celebrate the hard work and commitment of the Lower School team.

Lead with Strategic Vision

Over the last seven years, the Lower School has doubled in size. While average class sizes have remained consistent, student needs continue to broaden, requiring a leader with a strong background in curriculum and best practices. As a member of the leadership team, the Head of Lower School will think strategically about program development and sustainability while maintaining PBDA's commitment to excellence and joy in learning.





Champion Collaboration and One-School Identity

The Head of Lower School will bring a spirit of partnership to the leadership team and work closely with the Head of Upper School to ensure program continuity across PBDA's two campuses. Though the short distance between the two campuses can create challenges, this leader will support traditions and celebrations that link both locations, facilitate shared planning for special events, and create opportunities for cross-divisional teacher collaboration. The Lower School Head will ensure exceptionally clear coordination and messaging as students navigate the transition from Lower to Upper School.

Communicate with Excellence

As PBDA continues to build and refine its program, exceptional communication skills are essential. The Head of Lower School will navigate difficult conversations skillfully with both parents and faculty, providing empathy and understanding from multiple perspectives. This role calls for authenticity, candor, and empathy alongside the ability to lead with clarity and inspire confidence while strengthening the vibrant community that defines the community.



\$2.3M

financial aid
awarded



15%

students receiving
aid



\$35M

endowment



\$21.9M

annual operating
budget



6.2 acres

across two campuses



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QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The next Head of Lower School will be an experienced, empathetic, and forward-thinking educator who brings both heart and vision to their work. Ideal candidates will demonstrate the following qualities and professional competencies:

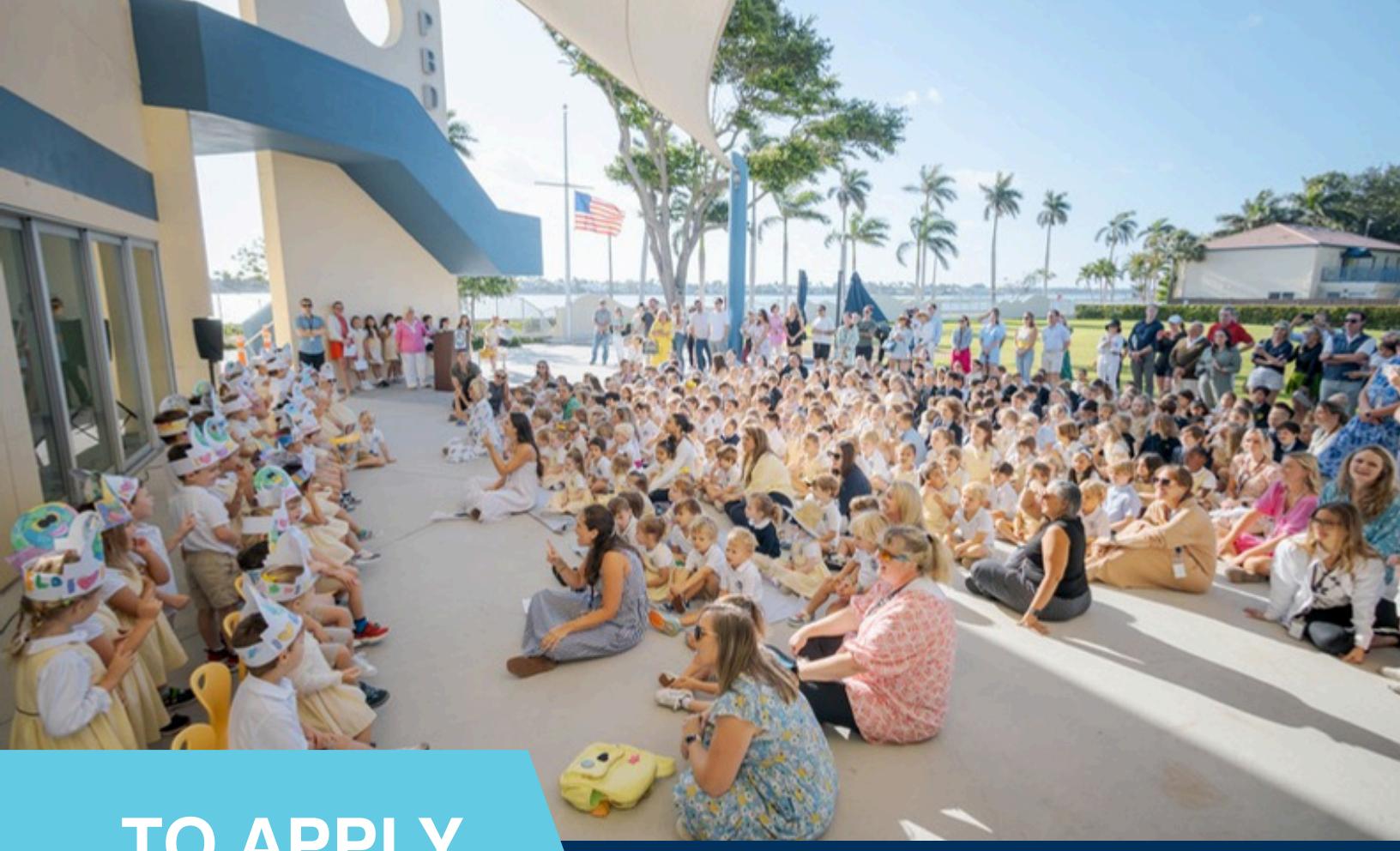


- An experienced educator and visionary leader with teaching and leadership experience in a Lower School setting, a wide-ranging understanding of child development, and a deep appreciation for the opportunities of a multi-division independent school;
- Joyful, approachable, and highly visible throughout the school day—a warm, authentic presence who delights in the rhythms of school life, engages with students and teachers alike, and models optimism in ways that create a happy and thriving learning community;
- Demonstrates the ability to lead change thoughtfully and intentionally, balancing innovation with respect for tradition;
- Excellent listener and communicator who approaches complex situations with empathy, transparency, and optimism;
- Experience developing and aligning curriculum to ensure coherence, progression, and innovation from early childhood through middle school;
- Lead differentiated instruction across diverse learning profiles, creating systems and structures that enable all students—from those needing additional support to those ready for advanced work—to thrive academically;
- Committed to supporting and mentoring exceptional teachers through robust professional growth and evaluation systems;
- Strong organizational and administrative skills, with the ability to manage faculty, budgets, and operations effectively;
- A compelling ambassador for the school, adept at community engagement and building lasting partnerships with families, alumni, and the broader Palm Beach community;
- A love of children and an infectious enthusiasm for teaching and learning.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [School History](#)
- [Lower School Academics](#)
- [Strategic Plan](#)
- [Secondary School Matriculation](#)
- [About Palm Beach, Florida](#)





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;
- 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:

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