

ABILITIES MODEL®
FLEXIBILITY SELF-ADVOCACY
INCLUSIVE INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY
GROWTH WELCOMING INNOVATION
RESPECT CREATIVITY WELLNESS
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

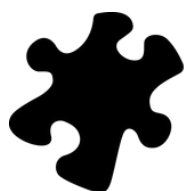


DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Start Date: July 2026

McLean School

Potomac, Maryland | mcleanschool.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

McLean School's mission is to make education accessible, stimulating, and meaningful to a broad range of bright K-12 learners. McLean understands each student's unique strengths and challenges, and supports both in a way that fosters intellectual growth as well as confidence, self-advocacy, empathy, and connection. At McLean, students succeed because they learn how to learn in an inclusive, conscientious community of caring teachers and peers.

At a Glance



1954
established



481
total enrollment



39%
students of color



76
total faculty



65%
admissions yield rate



12
advanced placement
courses



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OVERVIEW

Transforming the lives of students and families, McLean School is Washington, DC's premier independent school preparing bright students in grades Kindergarten through 12, including those with dyslexia, ADHD, and executive functioning challenges, for college success. For more than 70 years, the school has helped students realize their full potential with a comprehensive and academically rigorous full-scope educational program and curriculum that is traditional without being rigid, challenging without being intimidating, and designed with the real world in mind.

Many schools talk about the warmth of their community, the collegiality, and the deep sense of caring and trust among and between students, faculty, staff, administrators, and parents. At McLean, born from the mission of serving learners that span the range of racial, socio-economic, cultural, and learning strengths and challenges, that deep sense of caring for one another provides a bedrock foundation. Reaching all corners of the McLean experience, the school's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is an extension of its mission to make education accessible, stimulating, and meaningful to a broad range of learners. McLean embraces diversity and values the integrity of all individuals. This recognition enriches the community and encourages students to be better leaders and more responsible citizens

McLean has been built to celebrate and serve all students, recognizing that all children are natural learners, but that they learn in different ways. The school's unique Abilities Model® provides a holistic way to understand and engage students, recognizing each child for their unique strengths, allowing them to excel, while also providing support in areas of need.





McLean School may look like a typical, maybe even traditional college-prep school. But what happens within the walls of the school is anything but traditional. The school attracts deeply caring and trained educators whose passion is discovering and teaching to the unique abilities of each student.

With close to 500 students in grades K-12 on two campuses just minutes apart, McLean School is delivering on the promise of giving students skills, confidence, tools, and knowledge to succeed in college and beyond. Many schools whose population includes traditional learners and those with dyslexia, ADHD, and executive functioning challenges talk about their aspiration for graduates to attend college. At McLean School, that is not only an aspiration but a reality for nearly 100% of graduates.

Following the retirement of a long-serving and highly successful leader of the school's marketing and communications team, McLean seeks a new Director of Communications, a reimagined and retitled role that leads the development and delivery of the school's outreach to current and alum parents and students, strategically, creatively, and tactically, and collaborates widely with the leadership team, key offices, Parents' Association, and other constituency groups. Working hand-in-hand with the similarly retitled role of Director of Marketing, who is primarily responsible for outreach to prospective families, and supervising a Graphic Design and Social Media Manager, the Director of Communications sits on the school's leadership team, reports to an Associate Head of School, and regularly collaborates with and supports the Head of School in service of the school's mission, strategic direction, and culture.

About the McLean Leadership Team

In his second year as Head of School, Barry L. Davis is empowering a talented team of educators to create an environment where students can be transformed, and families can exhale in the knowledge that their child will be seen and understood. His distributed leadership model places trust and freedom in the hands of his administrators. The next Director of Communications will join an accomplished and ambitious group of colleagues committed to collaboration and shared growth.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Brand Strategy and Stewardship

- Partner with senior leadership to develop and align brand strategy for all school audiences with institutional priorities and long-term goals.
- Serve as steward of McLean School's brand, ensuring consistency in visual identity, tone, style guide, and messaging across all school communications and materials (such as uniforms - daily and athletic, school swag, posters, presentations, print, installations, and other imagery).
- Develop, maintain, and enforce brand guidelines, messaging frameworks, and style standards used by faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Ensure the McLean brand authentically reflects the School's mission, values, and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the evolving needs and wants of current students and their families.
- Train and support faculty and staff in effective communication and brand usage.

School Communications

- Lead the strategy, creation, and execution of internal marketing and communications for parents, trustees, faculty, staff, and alumni, in coordination with the Director of Marketing and the School's Administrative Team.
- Lead the ongoing audit of the School's internal communications to maximize efficiency
- Develop, manage, and coordinate communication channels, including newsletters, email communications, calendars, and announcements, including emergency and crisis communications.
- Create and deploy communications that are clear, consistent, inclusive, and aligned with McLean's educational philosophy
- Translate complex initiatives, strategic plans, and schoolwide priorities into engaging and accessible communications for parents, students, and faculty.
- Support leadership communications, including presentations, speeches, and messaging.



Content, Storytelling & Publications

- Oversee production of publications that convey in an engaging manner the unique story of the School and the accomplishments of its students to parents and faculty. This includes the School Calendar, musical and theatrical programs, large installations, swag, periodic Newsletters, and a new family welcome guide.
- Collaborate with designers, writers, photographers, videographers, and external vendors to produce high-quality, mission-aligned content that reflects campus life and community culture.
- Collaborate with the Director of Marketing on developing and implementing an integrated organic social media strategy and content (campaigns, blogs, videos) that meets the needs of both internal and external audiences.
- Support the Director of Marketing and the Director of Enrollment to create needed assets for the school's advertising and sponsorship work.

Community Engagement, Events and Campaigns

- Communicate and promote schoolwide events, milestones, and initiatives through coordinated messaging and creative execution.
- Develop assets in support of the school's advancement work and Parents' Association.
- Maintain an active presence on both campuses to identify stories and create compelling content in print and digital formats that reinforce a strong sense of community, school spirit, and shared purpose through storytelling and internal campaigns.

Collaboration and Leadership

- Co-manage the Graphic Design & Social Media Manager.
- In partnership with the Director of Marketing, steward a significant budget for marketing and communications that includes collateral production, radio advertising and SEM allocations.
- Serve as the Administrative Team's lead for school communications strategy.
- Act as a cross-departmental advisor on branding and communication best practices.
- Collaborate with academic, advancement, enrollment, and operations teams to ensure internal alignment and shared understanding of key initiatives.
- Establish indicators and review data to analyze School communication efforts.



\$8M

financial aid
awarded



47%

families receiving
aid



\$2.5M

endowment



\$24.5M

annual operating
budget



13

varsity sports teams



30+

clubs and activities



9

PVAC
championships won

QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The Director of Communications will bring significant experience and skill as a strategic communicator, a demonstrated ability to align mission and messaging, while also managing a significant portfolio of work, leading projects, and collaborating with colleagues. The most competitive candidates will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:



Professional Qualifications

- Minimum of 5 years of experience in communications, marketing, or branding, preferably including experience in K-12 education, higher education, or other non-profit organizations;
- Exceptional writing, interviewing, editing, and storytelling skills;
- Excellent executive functioning skills, including meeting deadlines and managing competing priorities;
- Strong understanding of message segmentation and scaffolding for the various constituent groups in an independent school;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy, the tactical skills to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy, and the organizational fluency to manage multiple streams of information and respond to situations as they emerge;
- Strong visual and creative sensibility with knowledge of design principles.
- Experience with digital marketing, website design, and social media in order to serve as a key collaborator for the Director of Marketing;
- An understanding of how cross-cultural competencies relate to communications strategies, including making school communications accessible to the full range of families, employees, and other constituencies;
- A flexible mindset paired with the ability to hold clear boundaries in support of a unified brand and consistent messaging;
- Experience leading other adults, providing feedback with an eye towards continuous improvement, and operating within the broader framework of a professional learning community committed to talent management;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills; and
- Proficiency with digital tools and platforms; ideally including experience with InDesign, Mailchimp, and Blackbaud.



Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- Evidence of strategic thinking, creative problem solving, and exploration of innovative ideas;
- The curiosity, confidence, and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, welcome feedback, and handle challenging conversations with grace;
- Eagerness to engage actively with students, faculty, and parents;
- A bias for action alongside a joyful spirit and sense of humor; and
- The ability to prioritize, execute, ideate, and lead as a model of McLean's values.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [Core Values](#)
- [The Abilities Model®](#)
- [Videos from McLean](#)
- [College Matriculation](#)
- [About Potomac, Maryland](#)





TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence as soon as possible. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents in addition to the electronic portfolio detailed below:

- 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);
- An electronic portfolio that includes up to 5 samples of the candidate's writing as well as materials that reflect collaborative work led by the candidate.

Send to:

CHRIS BOYLE

Consultant

chris.boyle@carneysandoe.com

CHARLOTTE BROWNLEE

Consultant

charlotte.brownlee@carneysandoe.com

The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$140,000-\$170,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.



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