



Brooklyn
Waldorf
School

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: July 2027

Brooklyn Waldorf School

Brooklyn, New York | brooklynwaldorf.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

OVERVIEW

Nestled in the heart of a vibrant Brooklyn neighborhood, the Brooklyn Waldorf School is an independent school which engages more than 190 3-year-old through 8th grade students in learning with their whole selves – “hands, hearts, and heads.” It cultivates resilient, creative and self-determined individuals as dynamic as its surrounding city. Housed in Claver Castle, a beautifully appointed facility in the Bed-Stuy neighborhood — notably the site of one of the earliest Black Catholic churches and schools in the country — the school is an oasis of calm and warmth amid the energy of New York City. Art, plant life, and natural light fill every space, reflecting the school's conviction that environment is itself educative. The school draws from the rich character of its neighborhood and its city, putting the "Brooklyn" in Waldorf.

Founded twenty years ago in Fort Greene and now rooted in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn Waldorf has pursued a vision of Waldorf education that is both faithful to the pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner and responsive to the culture and context of its community. The school stands out among Waldorf schools for its programs in music — by third grade, all students are playing in the orchestra — and for its introduction of Spanish and Mandarin instruction beginning in Early Childhood. An established learning support program serves students who learn differently or need additional support. Over the past two years, the school has seen double-digit percentage increases in enrollment and is on a path toward reaching its 210-student capacity. Accordingly, meaningful financial progress has been made, with the school moving from a significant deficit toward a break-even model, and the board and administration are working together to continue strengthening the institution's financial and organizational foundation.

The incoming Head will arrive at a moment of genuine momentum: enrollment is rising, a committed and mission-aligned faculty is in place; the school's community of parents and families is among its greatest assets. The new Head will be asked to provide overall leadership to BWS academic program, culture, faculty, finances and community. They will articulate and hold a clear, inclusive vision of Waldorf education at BWS— one that integrates equity and belonging as core to the pedagogy — while building the organizational coherence, financial sustainability, and adult learning culture the school needs to realize its full potential.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As Brooklyn Waldorf School enters its third decade, the incoming Head of School will find a school with deep strengths and meaningful work ahead. Among the opportunities and challenges that will define this leadership moment:

Define and Enact a Coherent, Inclusive Waldorf Identity. There is deep love across the Brooklyn Waldorf community for the essence of Waldorf education — protecting childhood, nurturing creativity, and centering the full development of the human being — yet there is also uneven understanding of and tension between Waldorf tradition, adaptation, and equity. At times, equity and Waldorf are experienced as separate from, or even in conflict with, one another, with real implications for belonging and retention. The next Head must articulate and live a clear vision of what Waldorf education means at BWS — one that treats diversity, equity, and inclusion not as adjacent to the pedagogy but as core to it — and must bring the full community into that understanding through consistent conversation, professional development, and visible leadership.

Strengthen Financial Sustainability, Governance, and Strategic Growth. The school has made meaningful financial progress, yet the model remains fragile, with continued pressure on enrollment, their commitment to tuition assistance, advancement, and long-term viability. The Board of Trustees is small but growing, and opportunities for strategic outreach, community connection, and market positioning are plentiful. The next Head will need to continue building a sustainable financial and enrollment strategy, strengthen governance clarity and board capacity, and lead with an outward-facing approach that expands access, deepens community ties, and secures the school's future.



Strengthen Faculty Culture Through Coherence, Development, and Continuity. Waldorf education centers the innate capacity of children to grow and learn, but they do not do it alone. Teachers are central to a child’s development, and the BWS faculty is deeply committed to their students. Recent shifts in the faculty have created some amount of unevenness and some loss of institutional knowledge, leading to fatigue and at times, inconsistency. There is a strong desire across the faculty for meaningful opportunities to collaborate, establish clear expectations, and to build a more robust professional development culture. The opportunity at BWS is to build a sustainable adult learning culture that deepens pedagogical craft, establishes shared expectations, reduces the sense of reinvention, and support teachers in doing the best work of their careers — in a school they are proud to call home.

Build Community, Belonging, and Outreach. Brooklyn Waldorf aspires to be a school that is genuinely of its neighborhood — not a fortress in Bed-Stuy but a partner and neighbor to the surrounding community. The school has work to do in building relationships with families and communities who do not yet see themselves in the school, and in ensuring that structures, communications, and culture signals welcome to the full diversity of Brooklyn. The next Head will need to lead both the internal work of belonging and the external work of visibility, outreach, and access.



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Brooklyn Waldorf School seeks a leader whose experience, values, and character are equal to this particular moment in the life of the school and educator whose backgrounds reflect the following:



Professional Experience

- Meaningful experience in school leadership, with a track record of building organizational coherence, strengthening culture, and leading through complexity
- While Waldorf experience is not required, a deep enthusiasm for and willingness to learn about Waldorf education — and about what Waldorf means in this particular school and community — is essential
- Strong Financial literacy to partner with the Board and Finance Director to develop and implement effective and sustainable budgets
- Sophisticated understanding of and demonstrable experience navigating and leading diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in schools
- Experience working in or with urban communities and some familiarity with the New York City educational landscape



Personal Attributes

- A visionary leader who can articulate a clear, compelling, and inclusive mission for Brooklyn Waldorf and hold that vision with steadiness and resilience across the full complexity of the school community
- A deep listener who comes to understand the school on its own terms before seeking to change it — someone who leads from curiosity over judgment or dogma
- A committed bridge builder, able to unite and collaborate with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences around shared purpose
- A visible and present leader who is known throughout the community — someone who gives energy to children and adults alike
- A calming, grounded presence who can hold difficult and contradictory conversations with steadiness, honesty, and care
- An organized systems-thinker who can establish clear structures, job descriptions, and accountability while preserving the warmth and relational culture of the school
- An excellent communicator, internally and externally, whose voice is consistent, timely, and clear
- Someone who models the ability to navigate fulfilling the often unpredictable responsibilities of one's job, with finding meaningful ways to tend to the wholeness of a healthy adult life



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:

ALLISON GAINES PELL

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HEATHER FLEWELLING

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The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$275,000-\$315,000. 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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