

FRANCIS PARKER SCHOOL

DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Start Date: July 2027

Francis Parker School

San Diego, California | francisparker.org

Carney Sandoe & ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

The Francis Parker School mission is to create and inspire a diverse community of independent thinkers whose academic excellence, global perspective, and strength of character prepare them to make a meaningful difference in the world.

At a Glance

1912
established

1,330
total enrollment

52%
students of color

184
total faculty

86%
faculty with advanced degrees



OVERVIEW

Francis Parker School in San Diego, one of the leading JK-12 schools in Southern California, seeks a Director of the Paul Esch Office for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. With a mission to create and inspire a diverse community of independent thinkers whose academic excellence, global perspective, and strength of character prepare them to make a meaningful difference in the world, Francis Parker School has cultivated active learners since 1912. Located on two campuses (Lower School and Middle & Upper School), the School gets its name from one of the country's first progressive educators, Colonel Francis Parker, whose approach to education appealed to the School's founders, Clara Sturges Johnson and William Templeton Johnson.

A college-preparatory school offering a rich palette of electives designed to meet individual student needs, Parker is guided by its core values: Students First, Academic Excellence, Global Perspective, Strength of Character, Inclusive Community, and No Limit to Better. Character education remains a hallmark of a Parker education, guided by the acronym STRIVE, and school life tends to follow Parker's axioms, No Boring Days and No Limit to Better. Parker's deep commitment to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community creates a culture of respect for all. On campus, one immediately senses the School's vibrant integration of academics, the arts, and athletics, led by an experienced faculty with an unwavering attention to student learning and superior pedagogical practice. The work culture is positive, rigorous, growth-oriented, collegial, and collaborative.





The Paul Esch Office for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (ETL) stewards and holds accountability for the learning environment Parker creates through four interconnected areas: Curriculum and Instruction, Instructional Coaching, Professional Development, and Research and Development. A young office with eight employees, the ETL is the home of Parker's curricular program and plays an important role in connecting curriculum across the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools. Reporting to the Assistant Head of School for Academics, the Director is a director of directors, supervising two Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, the Director of Instructional Coaching for Belonging, the Director of Professional Growth, and the Instructional Coaches; Department Chairs and Lower School Coordinators report to the Directors of Curriculum and Instruction. Working closely with the Assistant Head of School for Academics and the Division Heads, the Director ensures coherence, high-quality instruction, and continuous professional growth across all divisions, along with alignment between Parker's written curriculum, instructional practice, assessment systems, and the School's core educational beliefs and values. The role is grounded in the belief that "Belonging Begets Academic Excellence" and recognizes the unique opportunity of a 14-year partnership with students and families as they move through the School. Parker seeks a leader with a teacher's heart and a systems mind—an organized, forward-thinking, and diligent leader and executor who will earn the trust of an expert team, keep its work focused and coherent, and help the ETL become an essential resource for every Parker teacher.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Director joins the office at an important moment—with an experienced team in place, a clear mandate to steward teaching and learning at Parker, and the opportunity to help shape what the Office for Excellence in Teaching and Learning becomes.

The work of the next Director includes:

Furthering a Shared Vision for Teaching and Learning: In partnership with the Assistant Head of School for Academics, the Director will establish and communicate a clear, research-based vision for excellent teaching and learning across JK-12. Parker uses Research for Better Teaching (RBT) as its teaching framework and Understanding by Design (UbD) for curriculum, and the Director will ensure these frameworks are understood and actively used by faculty in curriculum design, instruction, and assessment. A shared instructional vision—one that supports the Portrait of a Parker Graduate and the Portrait of a Parker Faculty Member—will give coaching, professional development, and curriculum work a common target across three divisions and two campuses.

Leading a Team of Leaders: As a director of directors, the Director will coordinate the work of the office and hold the team together. The ETL team brings deep expertise, and its members describe an office culture of candor and respect. Their leader will be a skilled project and personnel manager who clarifies roles, provides vision, connection, and coherence across initiatives, and earns the trust of an accomplished group of professionals.



Defining and Strengthening Instructional Coaching: Parker's instructional coaching program is in its second year. Coaching is non-evaluative and draws on the work of Elena Aguilar, Jim Knight, and Diane Sweeney. Every new teacher works with a coach and other faculty are assigned or opt in. The Director will bring definition, consistency, and coordination to the program—clarifying how coaching works, helping faculty know when and how to seek coaching, and, over time, positioning coaches to lead data reviews with teaching teams.

Coherent Curriculum and Assessment, JK-12: Curriculum now lives in the ETL, which connects and aligns the work of the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools. The Director will support the Directors of Curriculum and Instruction in developing and refining a coherent JK-12 written curriculum, with scope and sequence documents, learning targets, and pacing guides reviewed regularly. The Director will also oversee Parker's assessment systems, including FastBridge and ERB assessments, and help faculty use assessment and student feedback data to inform instruction.

Belonging Begets Academic Excellence: At Parker, instructional practice is where belonging is seen in the schoolhouse. Working closely with the Director of Instructional Coaching for Belonging and colleagues across the ETL, the Director will ensure that curriculum is culturally responsive, inclusive, and reflective of diverse perspectives and voices. The next Director will treat equity not as a sidebar but as central to the work of teaching and learning, helping every teacher see how inclusive practice and academic excellence reinforce one another.

Professional Learning with Purpose: The ETL coordinates Parker's professional development, including all-school faculty days, Wednesday professional development, and specialized coaching, and faculty expect high quality from that time. The Director will oversee professional development grounded in identified faculty needs, school priorities, and the Continuous Cycle of Student Learning, moving beyond one-off sessions toward sustained growth. There is also room to expand offerings, perhaps to include book clubs, lunch and learns, study groups, and custom on-campus programs developed with local universities.



$9M
financial aid awarded

24%
students receiving aid

$68.3M
endowment

$67.2M
annual operating budget

27 acres
campus size



Research, Fellowships, and Thought Leadership: The Director will oversee the Paul Esch Fellowship, now in its first year: a three-year, stipend opportunity for master teachers, one from each division, who identify a problem of practice, carry out action research, and then serve as part-time instructional coaches. Three fellows are participating this year, with three more joining in each successive year. The Director will also support the Tchang Fellowship, in partnership with the University of San Diego, for individuals who want to become teachers; oversee the Technology in Education Committee; and help codify Parker's practice and contribute to the profession by presenting at gatherings such as INDEX and NAIS.

Connective Tissue and Buy-In: The ETL is increasingly visible, and faculty understand Parker's commitment to teaching and learning, yet the roles and functions of the team are still coming into focus. The Director will serve as the connective tissue between the ETL and other departments, keep Division Heads informed, lead the Academic Divisional Team meetings, and develop a communications plan for the ETL. Leading change thoughtfully with an experienced, hardworking faculty—after considerable change in recent years—will be essential to building lasting buy-in.

QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Francis Parker School seeks an accomplished educator and proven team leader who can bring structure, coherence, and care to the ETL and the faculty it serves.



Professional Qualifications

The strongest candidates will have a successful record of classroom teaching; demonstrated excellence in pedagogy and student outcomes; and a graduate degree in educational leadership, curriculum and instruction, or a related field. In addition, compelling candidates will bring:

- Experience as a Director of Teaching and Learning or in a similar role leading a teaching and learning office or a multi-faceted portfolio spanning curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development
- Management experience and demonstrated credibility leading a team of professionals
- Experience across multiple grade levels, divisions, or subject areas, with a deep understanding of how learning develops across the K-12 continuum
- Familiarity with frameworks such as Research for Better Teaching (RBT) and Understanding by Design (UbD), and a strong understanding of instructional coaching, including program definition and coach training
- Experience with assessment systems, data analysis, and using data to drive instructional decision-making at scale, as well as designing and delivering school-wide professional development for adult learners
- Involvement in educational research and Research and Development initiatives, such as teacher fellowship programs, and experience with change management in an educational setting



Personal Attributes

Parker seeks a leader who brings:

- A teacher's heart and a genuine belief in the potential of every student and teacher
- A logical, systems-oriented, and forward-thinking mind, paired with the organization, thoroughness, and follow-through of a diligent executor
- Excellent listening skills and verbal, written, and interpersonal communication strength to build trust across constituencies
- Humility, curiosity, and a habit of asking good questions
- High cultural competency and a deep commitment to equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive teaching
- Comfort with candid conversation and productive disagreement
- The ability to think system-wide while remaining attentive to individual student and teacher needs
- The organizational fluency to manage multiple priorities in a collaborative, fast-paced environment
- A commitment to continuous learning, reflection, and improvement—no limit to better
- Proficiency with technology and a willingness to learn and champion new tools and approaches

LEARN MORE

- School Website
- School History
- ETL Blog
- Strategic Plan
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Virtual Campus Tour
- About San Diego, California





TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultant in confidence and to apply by submitting the following materials as separate PDF documents:

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

As the process moves forward, selected candidates may be asked to submit:

- 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)

MARSHA LITTLE
Senior Consultant
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The full-time salary range for this position is $170,000 to $190,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, educational background, and expertise.

Francis Parker School values diversity and seeks talented faculty and staff from different backgrounds. All employment decisions are made without regard to unlawful considerations of race, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and related medical conditions), gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, mental or physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, military or veteran status, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

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