

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

St. Louis, Missouri

communityschool.com

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Philosophy

Community School fosters the intellectual, emotional, and creative growth of young children and encourages their development as the leaders of the next generation.

Mission

Nurturing the Gifts of Mind, Body, and Spirit

Guiding Principles

Community School was established in 1914 in St. Louis by a group of intelligent, idealistic women who are known in the school's history as "the Founding Mothers." The Founding Mothers sought a more educationally progressive school, and felt that the "rigid, formal approach" to education could and should be changed into an exciting adventure where curiosity and wonder form the foundation for learning. In establishing the school, they wrote ten Guiding Principles, which continue to be relevant and serve as guideposts for the school 110 years later.

At a Glance



Established
1914



Total enrollment
350



Total full-time faculty
52



Student-teacher ratio
7:1



Students of color
38%



Financial aid awarded
\$1M



Faculty with advanced degrees
70%



Campus size
18 acres

Zip codes represented: 40

Faculty of color: 12%

Average class size: 20

Students receiving aid: 22%

Endowment: \$17M

Annual operating budget: \$11M

Mascot: Goldy the Golden Eagle



Overview

Located in the beautiful, picturesque, and highly desirable St. Louis suburb of Ladue, MO, Community School has been a beacon of educational excellence since its establishment in 1914. With its Tudor-style buildings and 18-acre wooded campus, the setting is a spectacular place for children to learn and be, “where young minds can make sense of the world as they move between the known and unknown, accompanied by trusted adults who cherish and support them.” With the brand-new state-of-the-art Broughton STEAM Center, two lead teachers in each classroom, full enrollment and a substantial endowment, Community School is thriving. A nationally renowned school, it is also distinguished for its long-term commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Rooted in a rich history of fostering academic achievement, nurturing individual talents, and “encouraging students to search for the hidden, uncover what gives meaning, and discover what differentiates and unites,” Community School, serving 350 children grades N (age 3)-6th, prides itself upon providing a holistic, challenging, and joyful experience that has empowered generations of students to become thoughtful leaders and compassionate global citizens. The school’s Guiding Principles, created by a committed group of founders who wanted curiosity and wonder to be the foundation for learning, has helped Community School stay true to its mission for over a century.

The incoming Head of School will build on the highly successful 10-year tenure of current Head, Bob Cooke, and will benefit from the school’s strong financial position, outstanding reputation and competitive position in the market, supportive Board of Trustees, and excellent faculty, staff, and administration. The prospective Head of School should demonstrate a warm relational style, a team-focused approach to leadership, effective communication with constituent groups, a proven track record as a strategic and nurturing academic leader who understands the importance of joyfully educating the whole child, and a commitment to continue to build diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in the school community. Prospective candidates will be excited by the beautiful, spacious Head of School home situated in Ladue in a private, wooded setting abutting campus. Ladue is one of the St. Louis region’s most desirable residential communities, with numerous beautiful neighborhoods and premier schools.

Opportunities and Challenges

The next leader will work closely with the Board of Trustees to articulate current strategic priorities, continue to build upon Community School’s reputation as one of the finest schools in the country, and maintain the remarkable momentum the school has experienced over the past decade. Those priorities, which focus on people and program, include:



Caring for a joyful, strong, and committed community

From the strength of student/teacher relationships to the dedication of the Board of Trustees to the sense of being known and cared for expressed by students, parents, faculty, and staff, Community School possesses a culture of joy, trust, and care. The next Head of School will carry the mantle of a healthy and enduring school culture where academic challenge, warmth of community, a talented and committed faculty and staff, and extraordinary support of its students are a hallmark.

Continuing to inspire academic excellence

Community School strives to produce graduates who use their talents to make a positive and enduring difference. The next Head of School will continue to build upon the school's Guiding Principles and seek ways to inspire students' curiosity for learning. The next Head will work closely with the Board of Trustees to carry out a highly intentional and child-centered strategic plan to make a great school even greater.

Improving teaching and learning through careful exploration

Through a thoughtful approach to change and healthy skepticism about the educational trend of the moment, Community School has continually improved its program while maintaining a careful balance between the tried and true and the best of new pedagogical approaches. The next Head of School will continue to support exploration of promising new teaching methods and curricula to meet the evolving needs of students while also supporting professional development opportunities that allow Community School faculty to bring the best new ideas to the school.

Continue to build diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging

Like many independent schools, Community School seeks to reflect the diversity of the surrounding community by welcoming a student body from many walks of life and hiring faculty and leaders who reflect that diversity. By building relationships and fostering a culture of belonging, the next Head of School will continue to embrace and support the richness of a diverse community.



Communicating the value proposition

Community School enjoys an excellent reputation and strong market position, and the next Head of School will continue to strengthen the school to ensure it is the destination for curious and committed students and families. Staying current about the robust and competitive St. Louis independent school market, fostering strong relationships with students, families, faculty, and staff, and exploring ways to ensure affordability and access will all be essential responsibilities for the next Head.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

Community School is seeking in its next Head of School an innovative and inspiring educational leader who is eager to make a long-term commitment to the community and the work. The next Head of School will offer the following qualifications and qualities:

- Warm, approachable, joyful, accessible, collaborative leader who empowers others to learn and grow;
- Honest, trustworthy, empathetic, relational, and transparent;
- Committed to academic excellence;
- Attentive to current educational research and able to combine that understanding with an appreciation for Community School's values and vision;
- A collaborative leadership style that delegates effectively and genuinely invites and respects the perspectives and views of others, yet is decisive and firm when necessary;
- Personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and belonging work and the requisite skills to support conversations in the design of ever more inclusive school culture;
- A palpable enjoyment at being an active and visible presence in the life of the school as a foundation for strong, supportive relationships with all community members;
- Excellent communicator with faculty and staff, parents, students, community members, and the Board of Trustees, keeping these groups focused on the school's vision and appropriately informed of potential issues and/or needs;



- Expertise in strategic external affairs, including admissions, fundraising, marketing, and broader community involvement;
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration, clarity, and decisiveness, both in writing and in person;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy; and
- A love for children and appreciation of their developmental differences and delights, which are apparent daily in an Age 3-Grade 6 school.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Community School.

[School Website](#)

[School History](#)

[Diversity and Inclusion](#)

[Guiding Principles](#)

[Explore Community School Campus](#)

[Beyond Community School](#)

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:

- Cover letter expressing interest in this leadership position;
- Current resume;
- Statement of educational leadership, and/or a writing sample of your choice (e.g., article, speech, convocation) related to the topic(s) of leadership or education; and
- 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:

Burke Zalosh

Consultant

burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com

Charles “Charlie” Britton

Senior Consultant

charles.britton@carneysandoe.com