

UPPER SCHOOL HEAD (GRADES 4-6) SEARCH

JOHN THOMAS DYE SCHOOL

Los Angeles, California

jtdschool.org

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

We look to each day with a commitment to inspire purposeful learning, cultivate character, and celebrate childhood.

Core Values

Caring, Common Sense, Consideration, Cooperation, and Courtesy

At a Glance



Established
1929



Upper School enrollment
(grades 4-6)
144



Total faculty
54



Student-teacher ratio
7:1



Students of color
46%



Financial assistance budget
\$1.6M



Faculty with advanced degrees
69%



Campus size
11 acres

Enrollment: 336

Faculty of color: 31%

Students receiving financial assistance: 13%

Endowment: \$41.8M

Annual operating budget: \$17.5M

Sports: 7



Overview

Ranked among the nation's premier independent elementary schools, The John Thomas Dye School (JTD) is an independent, coeducational day school serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 6. Situated atop a chaparral canyon on a charming 11-acre campus in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, JTD has offered generations of young people an idyllic environment for learning.

JTD offers students a well-rounded academic experience, emphasizing personal responsibility while nurturing the natural curiosity of children. The hallmark of a John Thomas Dye School education is its community's commitment to upholding its core values, known as The 5C's: Caring, Common Sense, Consideration, Cooperation, and Courtesy. The School enjoys a well-established reputation in Los Angeles for excellence in the preparation of young children for success in secondary school and beyond.

Established in 1929 as the Brentwood Town and Country School in the home of founders John and Cathryn Dye, the School evolved in 1949 into the Bel Air Town and Country School, housed in what is today known as John Dye Hall. The vibrant, child-centered spirit of the Dye family continues to shape the School today. JTD offers a values-centered education where childhood is celebrated, and learning is joyful and purposeful. Opportunities for leadership and public speaking, competitive athletics and physical education, field trips and grade level retreats, and social emotional learning are integral to the program and complement the rigorous study of core subjects, visual arts, music, and technology.

The faculty at JTD is fully invested in the School's mission and has embraced a co-teaching model, which is professionally rewarding for faculty and highly enriching for JTD's students. Most faculty hold advanced degrees, and faculty take advantage of generous professional development resources, including tuition reimbursement for continuing education, curriculum and program development grants, travel grants, and graduate school loan relief. JTD offers excellent benefits, and employees are entitled to 50% tuition remission for children enrolled in the School.

The John Thomas Dye School is committed to building an inclusive community that understands and values diversity. It actively seeks to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of backgrounds and continuously strives for growth through professional development and ongoing curriculum review to create a nurturing environment in which everyone in the community feels a sense of belonging.



Reporting to the Head of School, the Upper School Head leads grades 4-6, critical years for the school's students to grow into greater levels of independence and personal responsibility. The division's faculty serve as advisors, teachers, and club sponsors, and the Upper School Head supports and leads their work in each of these domains. In collaboration with the Student Success Team, the Upper School Head monitors the progress of each student in the Upper School, identifying and assisting students with learning, social-emotional, or behavior needs.

The Upper School Head actively engages with parents, seeking opportunities for partnership and providing clear educational and logistical communications throughout the year. Finally, the Upper School Head is an integral member of JTD's senior leadership team and works in close collaboration with the Lower School Head and Director of Teaching and Learning on curricular and pedagogical alignment and professional growth programs.

Opportunities and Challenges

The priorities, opportunities, and challenges ahead include:

Attend to culture of Upper School

In recognition of the scope of responsibilities connected to a new strategic plan and a high touch approach to placement as JTD students matriculate to the most competitive secondary schools in the Los Angeles area, the current Upper School Head will assume a new position as Director of Secondary School Placement and Strategic Initiatives. This shift allows the new Upper School Head to devote more time to the core culture of the division, attending to the needs of students and teachers in grades 4-6. The JTD faculty devote their time, love, and energy to knowing, caring for, and appropriately stretching their students, and celebrating their achievements in a safe and nurturing environment. With more focused responsibilities, the next Upper School Head will be positioned to extend that same level of care and dedication to the faculty.



Refine and define the unique qualities of grades 4-6 in the continuum of the JTD experience

The next Upper School Head will help the school articulate and support the special qualities as well as the desired learning outcomes and dispositions of each of the three grades in the Upper School. Specifically, Grade 4 bridges the Lower School (grades K-3) and the departmentalized program of grades 5-6. In both its physical location and program structure, it supports students as they transition from the homeroom structure of the lower grades to a modified departmentalized program and receive letter grades for the first time. Grade 4 teachers will appreciate greater clarity in their role as a bridge between divisions.

Partner on curricular design and oversight

In partnership with the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Lower School Head, the Upper School Head will ensure cohesion in scope and sequence across the grades. The school maintains a healthy equilibrium among tried-and-true curriculum and pedagogy, openness to new ideas, and a respect for research on best practices. The Upper School Head will represent the division in collaborative efforts to ensure an engaging and appropriately demanding curriculum for JTD students and a professional development plan for faculty to support this work. An important facet of this work will include ensuring that teachers within and across the division have adequate planning time in both grade level and curricular teams. The next Upper School Head will also lead and coordinate various co-curricular programs, including growth education, athletics, clubs, advisory, and outdoor education, ensuring that they align with the school's mission and support student development.

Support and implement new professional growth and evaluation system

JTD has engaged in a multi-year review of its professional growth and evaluation processes, and a new set of protocols will emphasize goal setting, peer coaching and feedback, and regular evaluation cycles. The next Upper School Head will support the execution of these new protocols, evaluating their effectiveness, and ensuring that the process supports the growth of the talented and dedicated JTD faculty. Familiarity with the Danielson framework is a plus.

Support co-teaching model

In JTD's co-teaching model, students benefit from the attention and expertise of teams in every classroom. Teachers complement one another's strengths and passions to ensure that each child is known and engaged. The Upper School Head plays an integral role in supporting teams, assessing team dynamics, and onboarding new hires into the co-teaching structure. Teachers appreciate a leader who expresses genuine curiosity about team dynamics and prioritizes regular non-evaluative classroom visits in order to understand the strengths and challenges of particular teams and help them work to their optimal capacities.



Engage with parents as partners

JTD's highly invested parents are strong partners in upholding the core values and high expectations of the school. The Upper School Head will form strong partnerships with parents by communicating proactively, helping parents anticipate and navigate the developmental milestones of early adolescence, and managing difficult conversations when necessary. Additionally, the Upper School Head will develop and lead parent education sessions on topics such as adolescent development, understanding student progress, and other areas tailored to the needs of the learning community.

Join a strong administrative team

The bond among the leadership team is strong and characterized by a willingness to explore ideas collaboratively, extend help when needed, laugh together, and respect each person's area of expertise. Mission aligned and dedicated, this team fosters a joyful celebration of childhood, a fierce work ethic, and a blend of humor and humility.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

- Approachable and accessible: present in the life of the division – from classrooms, to playing fields, to performance spaces.
- Forthright and authentic: able to give adults concrete feedback to support professional development and programmatic excellence.
- Fair, understanding, and empathic.
- Consensus builder and team player.
- Prior experience leading diverse communities, skill in building inclusive communities, and the ability to respectfully navigate diverse cultural and social situations.
- Able to find joy and humor in working with early adolescents in ways that foster excitement and engagement about lifelong learning.
- Possesses a strong understanding of curriculum and good pedagogy, including, ideally, in a co-teaching environment.
- Open to input and feedback while capable of making hard decisions.
- Able to understand and empathize with the concerns of parents while establishing appropriate boundaries.
- Teaching experience, preferably in grades 4-6.
- Strong communication skills, verbally and in writing.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about John Thomas Dye School.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[School History](#)

[About Los Angeles, California](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)



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)

Selected candidates may also be asked to provide the following:

- Writing samples specific to this search

Karen Whitaker

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The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$140,000-200,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include type and years of experience, education level, and expertise.