

# HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

## THE ODYSSEY SCHOOL

Lutherville, Maryland  
theodysseyschool.org

Start Date: July 2025



Carney  
Sandoe  
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

# Mission Statement

The Odyssey School is dedicated to providing an exceptional education to children five years old through middle school who have been diagnosed with dyslexia and other language learning differences. Through evidence-based methods, small group instruction, and daily tutoring, we cultivate independent and confident learners who excel academically, socially, and emotionally. Anchored by our Four Pillars of Kindness, Honesty, Respect, and Hard Work, The Odyssey School challenges students intellectually and fosters self-advocacy skills. Our supportive environment empowers our students to reach their full potential in high school and beyond.

## At a Glance



Established  
**1994**



Enrollment  
**164**



Total faculty  
**53**



Student-faculty ratio  
**3:1**



Students of color  
**21%**



Maximum tutoring class size  
**2**



Faculty with advanced degrees  
**49%**



Campus size  
**42 acres**

Faculty of color: 6%  
Students receiving aid: 32%

Annual operating budget \$7,098,676



## Overview

The Odyssey School is a unique, co-educational community that provides specialized instruction for children with dyslexia and other language learning differences from kindergarten through eighth grade. Located on 42 acres in the bucolic Greenspring Valley of Baltimore County, the school's program and teaching approaches are based on the most current evidence-based methodologies related to how students learn and thrive. As a result, the school provides its graduates with the necessary strategies for success at mainstream schools. Odyssey embarks on the next chapter of its journey following Marty Sweeney's retirement in June 2025 after eighteen years of exceptional leadership. Odyssey seeks a dynamic, visionary leader to serve as the next Head of School to propel the school's mission and build upon its four key pillars: Kindness, Honesty, Respect, and Hard Work.

## Opportunities and Challenges

The Odyssey School's new Head of School will have the opportunity to embrace and lead the following work:

**Continue to cultivate and model a relationship-centered and joyful culture that honors the school's pillars of Kindness, Honesty, Respect, and Hard Work.** While the new Head of School will have ample room to live out the role in ways that reflect their leadership style, they will serve as a model, advocate for, and nurturer of an existing culture that empowers community members to be the most powerful version of themselves whether they are students, educators, or parents and caregivers. Odyssey's community has greatly benefited from the steady leadership, calming presence, and ongoing dedication of its current Head of School who guides students, parents, and educators as they transition into and progress through their time at the school. Even as Odyssey's next Head of School continues this tradition of focusing on the individual, they will also serve as a guiding force, leading a positive school culture and work environment.



**Support and develop a dedicated and skilled professional community and retain Odyssey’s extraordinary commitment to professional development.** Odyssey’s professional community is passionate about evidence-based instruction and dedicated to the school’s model of shared instructional practices delivered through small class sizes and individualized tutoring. While many professional community members have been with the school for a decade or more, there are also more recent additions. Because of these shifts and the ever-evolving science of reading and language instruction, the school’s commitment to professional development is robust, even singular, and powered by several dedicated days each year during which the school invites leaders in research and practice to work with its community of educators and administrators. Additionally, Odyssey’s faculty and administrators present at and attend key conferences and engage in other forms of professional learning and growth. The Head of School will play a lead role in continuing to chart the course for the school’s continued investment in the development of Odyssey’s professional community.

**Serve as a primary public voice, networker, and advocate for Odyssey School, its students, and its evidence-based approach to the education of students with language-based learning differences.** Despite the school’s strength and prominence in dyslexia education, work will be ongoing to build greater awareness of and demand for the school. The Head of School also plays a critical role in helping area independent and public schools understand the school’s strengths and champion its students as they prepare to launch into mainstream schools for 9th grade, if not before. Finally, Odyssey’s Head of School will serve as a public advocate for greater awareness of dyslexia and the importance of early testing and intervention.

**Support a highly successful development campaign, and advance Odyssey’s commitment to financial sustainability and accessibility for the full range of mission-aligned students.** Thanks to the consistent and extraordinary stewardship of its parents, trustees, alumni, and friends, The Odyssey School is in an enviable financial position for a school of its relative youth, size, and low student-to-faculty ratio. Although still in its silent phase, a capital campaign aimed at funding a building project, increasing the endowment, and increasing financial aid resources to enhance accessibility for mission-aligned students is already proving highly successful. The new Head of School, along with a strong team of trustees and staff, will see the campaign and building project through to completion.



## Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The Odyssey School is seeking in its next Head of School an experienced and inspiring educational leader who fully embraces the school's mission, vision, and values. The strongest candidates will offer most or all of the following experiences, skill sets, and mindsets:

### Professional Qualifications

- A deep understanding of and appreciation for the joys and compelling qualities of a Kindergarten - Grade 8 school that is focused on teaching and empowering students with dyslexia and language-based learning differences;
- Expertise working within dyslexia/language-based learning differences education as a classroom teacher, researcher, and/or clinician;
- Significant administrative experience, including work with curriculum and instruction, school operations, strategic planning, and board relations;
- Successful experience recruiting, hiring, supporting, and retaining talented, broadly diverse, and mission-aligned faculty;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to calmly communicate with confidence, clarity, and consistency both orally and in writing;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to manage complex systems and processes;
- A forward-facing, external orientation and a passion for advocating for their school's mission, students, and educators locally, regionally, and nationally; and,
- Experience working in partnership with an engaged parent community that frequently first come to the school in a moment of crisis and have appropriately high expectations for their child's growth and development while at the school.

### Leadership Style

- An orientation toward skilled servant leadership;
- The ability to empower and support faculty, build a cohesive team, and provide opportunities for growth and advancement;
- A commitment to honoring multiple perspectives in order to maintain an authentic, inclusive community;
- An understanding of and respect for the school's history and the ability to serve as an agent of mission-aligned progress rather than change for the sake of change;
- The confidence and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback, engaging in challenging conversations with grace and a keen sense of emotional intelligence; and
- A commitment to advocating for and fostering a safe and supportive environment for all learners.

## Personal Qualities

- Alignment with Odyssey’s mission and vision, including a fundamental belief in the joy of working with young children;
- Demonstrates empathy and authenticity in interactions, building genuine connections with students, staff, and the broader community;
- Evidence of a commitment to fostering a culture that works to grow, embrace and celebrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, supported by purposeful and intentional ongoing practices to maintain and honor the success of the full breadth of community members;
- Eagerness to engage actively with students, parents, faculty, and staff, and willingness to prioritize visibility and approachability amidst the demands of a busy professional schedule;
- The highest level of character and integrity, and embodies the four pillars of Honesty, Kindness, Respect and Hard Work; and
- A commitment to wellness and a focus on supporting their team to seek balance despite the demands of their roles.

## Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about The Odyssey School.

[School Website](#)

[High School Matriculation](#)

[Inclusivity Statement](#)

[About Baltimore, Maryland](#)

[Character Education](#)

[Discover Baltimore County](#)

[Virtual Tour](#)

## 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, typically at the finalist stage of the search) to:

### Chris Boyle

Consultant

chris.boyle@carneysandoe.com

### Kim Peeples

Consultant

kim.peeples@carneysandoe.com

*The Odyssey School recruits, hires, and promotes without regard to race, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status, political affiliation, or sexual orientation.*

*The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$200,000 – 300,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise. The position provides customary benefits, including paid time off and the opportunity to participate in group health insurance and a retirement contribution plan.*