

# CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER SEARCH

**POLY PREP COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL**

Brooklyn, New York

polyprep.org

Start Date: July 1, 2025



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

# Mission Statement

Poly's mission is to prepare and inspire the next diverse generation of leaders and global citizens to act with intelligence, imagination, and—above all—character.

## At a Glance



Established  
**1854**



Enrollment  
**1,158**



Total faculty and staff  
**290**



Student-teacher ratio  
**6:1**



Students of color  
**53%**



Financial aid awarded  
**\$13.8M**



Faculty with advanced degrees  
**82%**



Campus size  
**26.5 acres**

Faculty of color: 45%

Students receiving aid: 22%

Endowment: \$36.8M

Annual operating budget: \$84M

Sports: 25

Annual arts performances: 26

Clubs and activities: 90+



## Overview

Poly Prep Country Day School (Poly), located in Brooklyn, is uniquely positioned as one of New York City's only independent schools with a significant, college-like 26 acre campus for its Middle and Upper School in Dyker Heights and the Lower School is located in historic Park Slope. Serving nearly 1,200 students in Grades N-12, the Poly community is intentionally diverse, with 53% of students and 45% of faculty members identifying as people of color. The Poly community is committed to learning, personal growth, and the joyful exploration of life and its possibilities. Poly is guided by three pillars that define its identity: diversity, excellence, and Brooklyn. For Poly, these guiding principles can be understood as follows:

- **Diversity-** We seek to be a community that reflects our country's great pluralism, encouraging everyone to thrive in an environment that values multiple perspectives and experiences.
- **Excellence-** We strive to achieve excellence across academics, athletics, and the arts.
- **Brooklyn-** We benefit from our 25 acre campuses, historic 173-year tradition, engaged alumni, and a community that reflects the borough's tenacious spirit and drive.

Founded in 1854 as the Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn Heights, the school grew over the next 35 years, when the preparatory school separated from the collegiate division and took up residence next door. In 1916, inspired by the rise of country-day schools around the United States, the school secured 25 acres at their current location in Dyker Heights and incorporated as Polytechnic Preparatory Country Day School. Founded as an all-boys school, the school began enrolling girls in the 1970s and graduated its first coeducational class in 1979. The school acquired and developed its Lower School Campus on Prospect Park West in Park Slope in 1995. In July 2025, highly regarded educator Noni Thomas Lopez will join the Poly community as Head of School and the community is very hopeful and excited about the school's continued evolution and advancement. Enrollment is strong, and the positive momentum is palpable.

With record enrollment and a talented, passionate faculty and staff, the school can focus strategically on its bright future as it considers exciting opportunities that will allow Poly to enhance its program and the Poly experience.

Poly Prep Country Day School seeks a dynamic and collaborative Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) to lead a comprehensive fundraising program that advances the school's mission and strategic goals. This is an exceptional opportunity for an experienced advancement professional with a proven record in nonprofit education or foundation relations, and a demonstrated ability to build and scale successful programs. Poly Prep recently enacted a strategic plan emphasizing growth and expansion, setting the stage for transformative leadership in advancement.



## Opportunities and Challenges

The Chief Advancement Officer will play a pivotal role in shaping the institution's future by leading a comprehensive and ambitious advancement strategy. This role presents exciting opportunities and complex challenges that require a strategic, innovative, and collaborative leader.

Poly has recently launched a new strategic plan that includes major capital projects and an aggressive endowment growth initiative. The Chief Advancement Officer will have the opportunity to drive transformative fundraising efforts to support these goals and other school wide priorities. A deeply loyal and enthusiastic alumni body and parent community presents the potential for increased engagement and philanthropic support. The Chief Advancement Officer will have the opportunity to strengthen alumni relations, implement new parent engagement strategies, and build a culture of giving that ensures long-term institutional success. This role will work closely with Communications, Enrollment Management and other senior leadership to align messaging and community outreach efforts. A collaborative and coordinated strategic approach has the potential to enhance institutional visibility, attract new donors, and increase engagement across key constituencies. With a strong institutional mission and many schoolwide compelling student success stories, the Chief Advancement Officer can leverage clear and persuasive communication to inspire support from parents, alumni, and community stakeholders.

While community enthusiasm and significant capacity exists, the Advancement team must develop the necessary programmatic structures and best philanthropic practices to support Poly's long-term fundraising and engagement goals. The Chief Advancement Officer must effectively coordinate efforts across departments, ensuring clear, consistent, and compelling messaging that aligns with institutional priorities while fostering strong internal collaboration. Poly has immediate fundraising priorities while also needing to focus on the strategic plan and create sustainable, long-term capital and endowment growth. The development of a comprehensive donor engagement strategy will require expertise, creativity, passion, and the ability to clearly articulate Poly's unique value proposition in a sophisticated and competitive fundraising environment.

The Chief Advancement Officer role at Poly offers an exceptional opportunity for a dynamic advancement professional to make a lasting and transformative impact on the institution's fundraising and engagement efforts.



## Responsibilities

The Chief Advancement Officer is responsible for designing and implementing a comprehensive programmatic fundraising model that includes individual major gifts, annual giving, foundation relations, and donor communications. A member of the school's strategic planning group, the CAO will collaborate across departments to identify and leverage new and existing sources of philanthropic support. The CAO will utilize moves management strategies to cultivate, solicit, and steward donors while operationalizing the school's fundraising strategy through the leadership of a nine-person development team.

Central to the CAO's role is fostering a culture of philanthropy among staff and the Board of Trustees. Partnering with the Head of School, the CAO will coach and guide stakeholders to enhance their confidence and effectiveness in philanthropic conversations with donors and prospects.

Advancement Program Management includes:

### **Strategic Fundraising Leadership**

- Develop and implement a multi-year fundraising strategy that incorporates diverse revenue streams, including foundations, corporations, and individual donors.
- Establish measurable goals for revenue sustainability and growth.
- Collaborate with the Executive Team to align fundraising priorities with strategic objectives.
- Partner with the Operations team to forecast annual revenue goals, perform monthly revenue reconciliation, and manage accurate donor reporting.
- Evaluate and improve internal systems to enhance transparency and integration of donor data, including assessing and optimizing current CRM tools.

### **Endowment Growth Strategy**

- Work closely with the Board of Trustees and Head of School to develop and execute a long-range plan to significantly increase the school's endowment.
- Identify and cultivate prospective donors and foundations to strengthen endowment contributions, including individual major gifts and planned giving.
- Prepare detailed reports and presentations for leadership, board committees, and stakeholders.
- Oversee stewardship programs to engage and retain high-net-worth donors.



### **Annual Giving Enhancement**

- Design and implement strategies to continue to increase annual giving.
- Oversee the planning, execution, and analysis of annual giving campaigns.
- Identify opportunities to increase donor retention and upgrade giving levels through personalized outreach and stewardship.
- Analyze donor data and giving trends to optimize solicitation strategies and segmentation.
- Collaborate with marketing and communications teams to craft compelling donor appeals and engagement materials.
- Enhance stewardship initiatives, including donor recognition, impact reporting, and personalized outreach.
- Develop relationships with volunteers, alumni, and donors to foster a culture of philanthropy.

### **Alumni Engagement and Outreach**

- Strengthen alumni relations through targeted communications, events, and networking opportunities.
- Foster a culture of giving among alumni and encourage active participation in advancement efforts.
- Identify and cultivate potential donors for fundraising initiatives.
- Analyze engagement metrics and report on outreach effectiveness.
- Represent the institution at alumni functions and external networking events.

## **Qualifications and Personal Attributes**

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.
- Minimum of 10 years of progressive experience in nonprofit advancement, preferably in education or foundation relations.
- Demonstrated success in designing and implementing comprehensive fundraising strategies, including major gifts, annual giving, and endowment growth.
- Ability to convey ideas clearly and concisely through verbal and written communication, ensuring understanding across diverse audiences.
- Experience managing and inspiring teams, with collaborative and inclusive leadership
- Ability to engage and motivate diverse stakeholders, including staff, trustees, and alumni.
- Exceptional interpersonal, and relationship-building skills.
- Strategic thinker with strong analytical and project management abilities.
- Proficiency in CRM platforms and fundraising tools.

# Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Poly Prep Country Day School.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

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

[College Matriculation](#)

[Explore Poly Prep's Campuses](#)

[About Brooklyn, New York](#)



## To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this 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:

**Jonathan Ball**  
Managing Associate  
jball@carneysandoe.com

**Julia Sinton**  
Consultant  
julia.sinton@carneysandoe.com

*The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$275-325k. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.*