



Oakwood School  
Assistant Head of School for Community  
Engagement and Belonging  
North Hollywood, CA

## Background

Founded in 1951 by parents driven to provide their children an education rich in the arts, sciences, and humanities, Oakwood is a community that encourages independence of thought, intellectual integrity, sensitivity to the needs of others, and preparation for participation in a democratic society. Families and faculty coming to Oakwood know what to expect and are largely mission-aligned. Social justice principles are deeply ingrained, and the focus is on ensuring equitable and inclusive learning and prioritizing environmental sustainability. In helping to make sure Oakwood does its part to change the world for good, the program is set up to create future leaders who are committed and prepared to bring about such progress.

This relational school is made up of passionate and committed adults who care about and are connected to the students, their learning and development, and their long-term success and happiness. Greeting everyone by first name, Oakwood's students, faculty, and staff know each other and their relationships are at the core of this friendly and engaging school. Faculty work to ensure everyone feels cared for throughout the community. One of the unique aspects of Oakwood is its collective holding, understanding, and ownership of the Statement of Philosophy as a living document. In that spirit, every community member's voice (students, faculty, staff, board members, alumni, *and* families) is valued.



Excellence at Oakwood is at least in part measured by success in fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. Oakwood integrates DEIB into all that it does and has a longstanding history of a demonstrated commitment to equity. Oakwood has affinity and alliance groups available to all students starting in Grade 5. Any Oakwood family is welcome to take part in the family affinity gatherings. As one would expect at a school, Oakwood believes in continued learning for all community members. Voices Envisioned is a series of events for all parties to explore important issues related to DEI and social justice. Oakwood

community members can participate in DEIB Learning for parents and guardians, the IDEAS (identity, diversity, equity, and action) summit, NAIS Student Diversity Leadership Conference, and for faculty and staff exclusively, NAIS People of Color Conference.

Oakwood is committed to community engagement and opportunities for learning both inside and out of the classroom. Families are attracted to innovative offerings like the Immersion program, a two-week intensive course experience beyond traditional academics for all Secondary Campus students. In collaboration with faculty experts, students are able to take a deep exploration into courses like *California Land and Sea*, *Cooking through Cultures*, *Race Matters*, and *Young Investors* to name a few. Oakwood's outdoor education program, engineering-lab-facilitated STEAM electives, and extensive clubs and on-campus organizations provide more opportunities for students to develop leadership and hone passion projects and interests. Looking forward, with the introduction of this position, Oakwood hopes to connect students with more opportunities to engage with the greater Los Angeles community.

Oakwood's kindergarten through sixth grade is on the elementary campus (EC) and seventh through twelfth grades are on the secondary campus (SC) two miles away. Both campuses preserve the village feel and even provide for an appropriate moving up sense when students move from the Lower School on the EC into the Middle School on the SC. While still coordinating, the school has made incredible progress aligning programs across campuses and between divisions which is a dynamic process because Oakwood regularly works to evolve and adapt.





## Oakwood School at a Glance

### Facts and Figures

Founded: 1951

2023-24 School-wide  
Enrollment (K-12): 830

Students self-identifying as  
students of color: 45%

Employees: 200

Average tenure of Faculty: 12  
years

Location: North Hollywood, CA

Endowment: \$40+ million

Operating Budget: \$45.3 million

Tuition: \$41,350 - \$49,360

Financial Aid: \$6.2 million to  
20% of students

Total Funds Raised, 2022-23:  
\$3.7 million

Parent Participation in Annual Giving: 84%

Accreditation: Western Association of Schools and Colleges, California Association of  
Independent Schools; member, National Association of Independent Schools

On the Web: <https://www.oakwoodschool.org/>



## Main Tenets of Oakwood's Statement of Philosophy

- **To guide students toward mastery in their academic, artistic, and athletic pursuits.** We want students to grapple meaningfully with ideas, to discover relationships among disciplines, and to become independent and moral thinkers.
- **To spark passion.** We want young people to become wholeheartedly immersed in their work. We believe that intelligence and imagination enrich each other, and that to involve a student passionately in learning is to involve the whole person.
- **To cultivate depth of character.** We seek to nurture students' empathy, imagination, and moral courage; to foster a sense of responsibility and humility, along with a habit of service; and to instill a lifelong commitment to social justice. We intend for the development of their intellect and character to be intertwined, so that their choices are guided by internal controls and sensitivity to the needs of others.
- **To help students gain self-knowledge.** We want students to learn about their strengths and needs as learners. We seek to accommodate and appreciate the unique qualities of each young person and to provide multiple opportunities for students to succeed, to learn from mistakes, and to take risks for the sake of learning.
- **To foster a sense of community.** We seek to create a vibrant public life in the school, where students learn to express themselves fluently and responsibly, and to consider differing perspectives respectfully. We believe that an environment most conducive to learning and growth is diverse and inclusive, and balances seriousness of purpose with a sense of play.



## The Position: Assistant Head of School

The Assistant Head of School for Community Engagement and Belonging will serve as a key member of the senior leadership team, reporting to the Head of School, and will be responsible for leading Oakwood in fostering a culture and climate of student-led community impact. The Assistant Head will help to nurture a



positive, engaging, and caring atmosphere and a healthy school community, where everyone feels a deep sense of belonging. The Assistant Head will also help the Oakwood community deepen their engagement with Los Angeles and beyond, making meaningful impact beyond its walls.

## Key Responsibilities

In close collaboration with the entire Leadership team, especially the Principals, Elementary Campus and Secondary Campus Deans of DEIB, and the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School for Community Engagement and Belonging is responsible for:

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Leading a broad array of constituents towards greater grace and understanding of each other in the service of an ever-improved sense of belonging for students.
- Delivering, in partnership with Senior Administration, strategic diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives across the institution.
- Leading a team of two high-functioning leaders (Elementary and Secondary Deans of DEIB) and supporting the Parent Guardian Organization DEIB Committee.
- Conceptualizing and implementing relevant curriculum, programs, and opportunities for reflection and awareness in areas related to gender, race, religion, economic differences, and sexual identification on both an individual and institutional level.



- Facilitating training, professional development, and support to the staff on DEIB issues.
- Using exceptional communication and facilitation skills to work with a wide variety of constituent groups to build consensus and increase programs.
- Analyzing complex data and information, in terms of student admissions, matriculated students, and the overall community, and presenting it to the board and other constituents.
- Leading with a mindset of inclusion in the pursuit of mutual understanding throughout all levels of the organization, while modeling key behaviors and characteristics such as collaboration, integrity, empathy, teamwork, critical thinking, judgment, priority setting, and constructive behavior.

### Community Life

- Providing strategic direction, implementation, and communication about all facets of student life using research and best practices to inform this work.
- Continuing to develop the student life programming, especially the advisory curriculum, centered around the core values of the school which incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and socioemotional learning.
- Supervising proactive student life programming in partnership with the administrative team and faculty, including divisional community events (community meetings, assemblies, and outside speakers and performers), advisory programming, clubs, and extracurriculars.
- Communicating frequently with both faculty and parents about students' experiences.
- Collaborating with the Principals in leading new student onboarding and planning new student events and programming throughout the school year.



## Community Engagement

- In partnership with the principals, developing and leading family programming, including new student/family orientations and DEIB-based retention events.
- Developing and leading the ongoing creation and implementation of student engagement programs and services to support the involvement and impact of the Oakwood community on the broader Los Angeles community.
- Developing, managing, and leveraging external partnerships to inform and develop a student engagement plan.
- Partnering with key stakeholders in the ongoing development, refinement, and implementation of Oakwood's advising programs across all grades as well as the school's leadership development, service, and other co-curricular student engagement initiatives.
- Networking with colleagues across peer schools to develop and sustain close working relationships, information exchange, and other partnership opportunities.

## Desired Qualifications and Qualities

### Experience and Skills

- Minimum of 5 years of prior diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency work, and proven ability to apply these lenses to decisions in policy, communications, and outcomes in an educational institution preferably in an independent school.
- A bachelor's degree is required, an advanced degree in a relevant area of study is preferred; specific coursework in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is a plus.
- Experience in DEI strategy development across all school levels.
- An ability to partner with all community members.
- Outstanding professionalism and interpersonal and communication (written and oral) skills.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of child development.
- Proven success working collaboratively and effectively and leading teams in schools.
- Demonstrated experience in and commitment to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive school community; successful track record examining practices to ensure equitable access to opportunities for all community members.
- Ability to view challenges and problems as opportunities for growth and transformation.



## Personal Characteristics

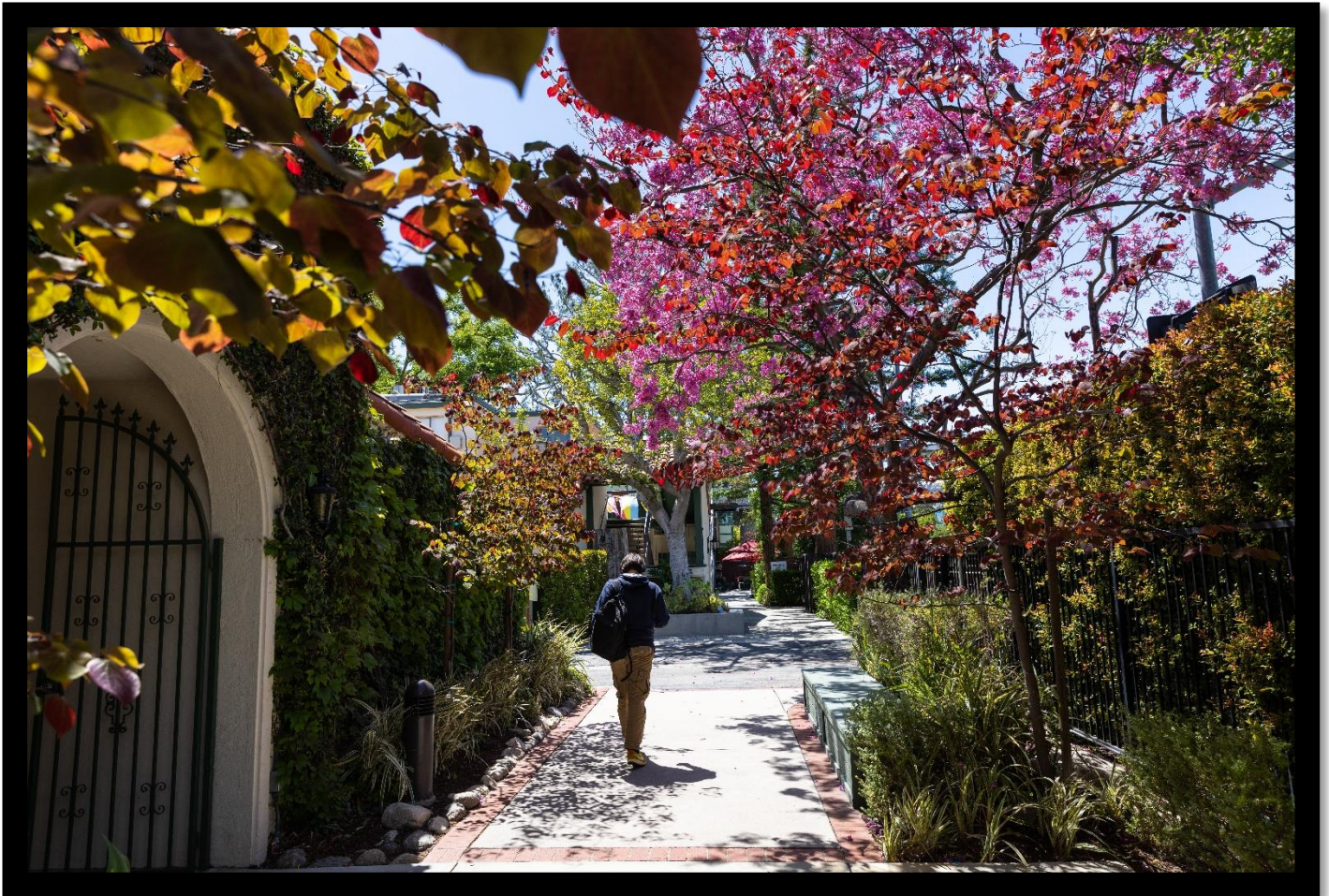
- High levels of emotional intelligence, excellent listening skills, and the ability to navigate the complexities and ambiguities of leading and inspiring others in a complex, deeply involved community.
- A well-developed sense of humor and a deep sense of purpose for the work of belonging for students.
- Warmth, character, a strong ethical compass, and values consistent with the philosophy statement and culture of Oakwood.
- Open to healthy debate, constructive feedback, diversity of perspectives, and celebration of mistakes as part of self-reflection and personal/professional growth process.
- Talent as a strategic thinker and implementer with a systems approach to improvement and change.
- Collegiality, approachability, flexibility, and positivity.





## Key Competencies

- **Manages Conflict** – Handling conflict situations effectively, with a minimum of noise.
- **Builds Network** – Effectively building formal and informal relationship networks inside and outside the organization.
- **Instills Trust** – Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.
- **Communicates Effectively** – Developing and delivering multi-modal communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.
- **Interpersonal Savvy** – Relating openly and comfortably with diverse groups of people.
- **Collaborates** – Building partnerships and working collaboratively with others to meet shared objectives.



## Benefits and Compensation

The salary for this position aims to be competitive and commensurate with experience and within the range of \$150,000 – \$180,000. Oakwood School offers a comprehensive benefits package including medical, dental, and vision insurance and a matching 403b retirement plan.

## Application Requirements and Search Process

DRG is conducting this search on behalf of Oakwood School. Interested candidates should submit, as soon as possible, materials including the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position.
- A current resume.
- A statement of DEI philosophy.
- A second writing sample of your choice (newsletter, article, talk, parent email, etc.).
- A list of references (references will not be contacted until the finalist stage of the search).

Application Status: Accepting Applications

Start date: July 1, 2024

This position description is based upon material provided by Oakwood School, an equal-opportunity employer.

To apply for this position, please click [HERE](#).

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