



# Head of School

## Shalom School

Sacramento, CA

Salary: \$150,000 - \$175,000

## INTRODUCTION

Shalom School is Sacramento's only Jewish day school, serving children from 18 months through 6th grade. Rooted in Jewish values and traditions, it offers a warm, inclusive, and academically rigorous environment for families of all backgrounds. The school welcomes both Jewish and non-Jewish students, embracing a wide spectrum of Jewish practices and making Jewish life accessible and meaningful to all.

At Shalom School, strong academics are interwoven with Jewish values, fostering pride in Jewish heritage, joy in Jewish living, and a deep connection to Israel. As one parent shared, "Here, it feels like a great place to be Jewish."



The school is known for its vibrant, community-oriented culture. Families form deep, lasting connections, and the "open-door" atmosphere makes everyone feel at home. Parents are actively involved, and children genuinely love being at school—so much that they often don't want to leave! Families describe Shalom School as foundational to their Jewish identity and community life, offering lifelong friendships, dedicated educators, and a strong academic foundation.

Shalom School provides a safe and nurturing environment where the whole child is supported—academically, socially, and emotionally. The secure campus and programs like buddy pairings foster relationships across age groups and strengthen the sense of community.

Founded in 1978 as a community Jewish day school, Shalom School began with a small preschool and grew to a peak enrollment of around 300 students in the 1990s. In 2007, it moved to its current location in the Arden-Arcade area of Sacramento. Although the campus is situated on the property of Mosaic Law Congregation, a Conservative synagogue, Shalom School is a community school and is not affiliated with any specific congregation. Families from approximately 29 zip codes—some traveling up to an hour—choose Shalom School for its exceptional community and educational experience.

### Leadership Opportunity

The Head of School is responsible for advancing the mission and vision of Shalom School, as defined by the Board of Trustees. In partnership with a dedicated administrative team, the Head of School oversees the day-to-day operations and strategic direction of the school. The Board and Head of School share a strong, collaborative relationship, with lay leaders deeply committed to the school's continued success.

Shalom School is seeking a visionary Head of School to build on its strong foundation and lead the community into its next chapter of growth. The ideal candidate will be deeply committed to the school's values and embrace diverse expressions of Judaism. The community looks forward to welcoming a new leader in the summer of 2026 who will inspire, connect, and guide Shalom School with warmth, wisdom, and purpose.

## Mission

To provide each child with an outstanding education in a nurturing environment that is academically excellent, inclusive, innovative, and inspired by Jewish values and traditions.

## Facts and Figures

**Founded:** 1978

**Enrollment:** 179

- Preschool (18 months-Pre Kindergarten): 120
- Elementary (K-6): 59

**Full-time Staff:** 45

**Average Tenure of Faculty:** 5 years

**Operating Budget:** \$3.34 million

**Indebtedness:** \$0

**Tuition:** Full day Preschool ~\$19K, K-6~\$10K

**Average Class Size:**

- Preschool: 15
- Elementary (K-6): 15

**Head of School Direct Reports:** 6

**Accreditation:** WASC, NAEYC with membership to PRIZMAH and NAIS

**On the Web:** Shalom School (<https://shalomschool.org/>)

## Schoolwide Learner Outcomes

Shalom School nurtures children in their emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual growth.

Students are:

- Effective communicators who write and speak clearly, confidently, and respectfully.
- Critical thinkers who use a range of tools, strategies, technologies, and skills to organize, synthesize, and analyze information.
- Lifelong learners who collaborate with others, persevere through challenges, and advocate for themselves.
- Inspired problem solvers who think and express themselves creatively, make connections across disciplines, and use 21st century skills to engage with the world around them.
- Authentic and joyful community members steeped in Jewish values and traditions, curious about others, respectful of differences, and embracing of tikkun olam—the obligation to improve the world.





## ACADEMICS & PROGRAMMING

Shalom School offers a professional, data-informed academic program aligned with educational standards, while nurturing a lifelong love of learning. Elementary teachers are fully credentialed, and all faculty are experienced Jewish educators—some Jewish, some not—who integrate values-based learning into daily instruction.

The elementary program follows a multi-age classroom philosophy, designed to support both social development and differentiated instruction. The school currently has four sections: Kindergarten, 1/2 Classroom, 3/4 Classroom, and 5/6 Classroom. These are not traditional “combo” classes where students are taught separately by grade. Instead, each multi-age cohort—typically 17–20 students—is treated as a unified learning section. Teachers assess students both individually and as a group, tailoring instruction to meet each child’s unique strengths, needs, and academic growth.



Students are supported and challenged through personalized learning opportunities, including the ability to “level up” in subjects like math. The curriculum is carefully selected and research-based, with programs such as Eureka Math Squared and Mystery Science used in general studies, alongside a strong Hebrew and Judaic studies curriculum. All general studies curricula are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), ensuring academic rigor and consistency. The school is committed to academic excellence and is also deeply dedicated to fostering Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to support the holistic development of every student. All K–6 students participate in a robust enrichment program that includes Physical Education, Art, Music, STEAM, and Media/Library. Students receive ongoing assessments and personalized report cards to track progress and growth.

The preschool program is thriving, including a newly reopened 18-month-old classroom that already has a waiting list. Accredited by NAEYC, the preschool exceeds state requirements with lower student-to-teacher ratios (as low as 1:6 compared to the typical 1:12) and a high standard of care. It is one of the few programs in the region with this level of accreditation—and the only one at an independent school.

Across all grade levels, Shalom School fosters curiosity, confidence, and a love of learning. Small class sizes and a nurturing environment allow faculty and staff to know each student by name and tailor instruction to their academic needs and interests. Students are empowered to engage meaningfully with the world around them, supported by a community that values both excellence and belonging.

A defining feature of the Shalom School experience—for both students and families—is its vibrant, joyful, and inclusive Jewish community. Grounded in Jewish values, traditions, and celebrations, the school fosters a deep love for Jewish life in ways that are engaging, uplifting, and accessible to all.

Each morning begins with a spirited gathering at the school entrance, where students, parents, faculty, and school leaders join in singing and dancing to various versions of Modeh Ani. The joy is palpable and sets a tone of connection and celebration for the day ahead.

Weekly rituals such as Monday morning T'filah and Friday Kabbalat Shabbat are cherished moments of spiritual connection. As one parent shared, "Kabbalat Shabbat is the best part of my week. To see joy is amazing—loving each other and their identity, dancing and singing, pure joy. The administration and educators are playful and part of it, dancing with the kids. That is the vibe." T'filah is also a meaningful learning experience, supported by a custom school siddur designed to make prayer approachable and relevant for all students.

Jewish holidays and festivals are celebrated through engaging, school-wide events that deepen students' connection to tradition and community. For example, the annual Hanukkah celebration brings together families, students, and staff in a joyful expression of light, music, and shared heritage.

The Hebrew and Judaic Studies curriculum is rigorous and deeply integrated into the school's academic program. Students explore Jewish history, values, traditions, prayer, spirituality, and Torah, with the goal of developing personal meaning and relevance in their Jewish identity. A spiral curriculum ensures that concepts are introduced early and revisited with increasing depth across grade levels. Jewish themes are woven throughout all subjects and reinforced through weekly themes and monthly values—such as compassion, respect, cooperation, and tikkun olam (repairing the world)—which resonate with families from all backgrounds.

Through the study of Jewish texts, thoughtful discussions, and hands-on projects, students gain insight into social issues and learn how individuals can make a difference in the world.

A professionalized Hebrew language program, Ulpan Or, excites students and supports meaningful language acquisition. Hebrew instruction is differentiated by ability level, allowing students from diverse backgrounds—including those new to Judaism and those from Hebrew-speaking homes—to thrive. Families value the cognitive and cultural benefits of early exposure to a second language.

Jewish identity at Shalom School also includes a thoughtful and age-appropriate connection to Israel. Students learn about Israeli history, culture, and contemporary life in ways that are nuanced and respectful of diverse perspectives. Israel is celebrated as a vital part of Jewish identity, and students are encouraged to engage with its complexity through inquiry, dialogue, and appreciation.



## FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS

The faculty and staff at Shalom School embody the school's mission and values, cultivating a community that is both academically rigorous and joyfully rooted in lived Judaism. United by a shared commitment to making a meaningful impact, educators and administrators uphold high standards of care and learning while fostering a nurturing, student-centered environment.

As one parent beautifully put it, "We teach students, not subjects." Every child is known, valued, and supported as an individual. Teachers tailor instruction to meet students' unique needs, helping them grow both academically and personally.

Faculty members feel respected and empowered, supported by a leadership team that treats them as professionals and partners. There is a strong culture of trust, where staff are encouraged to bring their full selves to work and contribute authentically to the school community.

The administrative team operates with open communication, shared purpose, and deep dedication to the school's mission. Together, they ensure that Shalom School delivers not only an excellent academic experience but also a warm, inclusive environment where every student is cared for and every educator is appreciated.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

Shalom School offers a rare and exciting opportunity for its next Head of School to make a meaningful and lasting impact. With a strong foundation, a deeply committed community, and a clear vision for the future, the school is poised for its next chapter of growth and innovation.

The incoming Head of School will lead the development of a refreshed strategic plan focused on long-term financial sustainability, institutional growth, and mission alignment. This role calls for a collaborative and visionary leader who can build strong relationships across the school community—supporting students, families, faculty, and staff—while working in close partnership with the Board of Trustees.

Beyond the school's walls, the Head of School will be encouraged to cultivate meaningful connections throughout the broader Sacramento region and Jewish community. Fundraising will be a vital component of the role. While candidates with a proven track record in development are highly desirable, those with strong interpersonal skills and the capacity to grow in this area are also encouraged to apply.

A key priority for the next Head of School will be community outreach and enrollment growth, with a particular focus on expanding the elementary program, which currently serves just under 60 students. Increasing enrollment in the elementary grades is essential to ensure the program's long-term sustainability. With strong academics, a nurturing environment, and a joyful Jewish community, the school is well-positioned to attract new families and grow its impact across the Sacramento region.

This is a unique opportunity to lead a beloved institution into its next phase—shaping the future of Jewish education in Sacramento while fostering a joyful, inclusive, and academically excellent environment. The next Head of School will be empowered to inspire, innovate, and build upon the school's rich legacy with vision and heart.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to and partnering with the school's Board of Trustees, the Head of School will:

- Lead the implementation of a strategic plan with clear, measurable goals to guide long-term growth and sustainability.
- Serve as a visible and accessible leader, fostering strong relationships within Shalom School, the Sacramento Jewish community, and beyond.
- Drive fundraising efforts, including cultivating and soliciting support from individuals, foundations, and institutional partners, and identifying grant opportunities.
- Oversee financial operations, establishing sound fiscal practices and ensuring effective monitoring, management, and reporting of the school's financial health.
- Manage enrollment strategy, with a focus on attracting, engaging, and retaining mission-aligned families to support program sustainability and growth.
- Effectively manage and support staff through thoughtful leadership, professional development, and a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Ensure academic excellence within an inclusive, values-based Jewish educational environment.

## QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate for Head of School will bring a blend of visionary leadership, operational expertise, and deep relational capacity. We recognize that no single candidate will possess every qualification, but we expect that successful candidates will bring many of the following strengths and experiences:

- **Visionary Leadership:** Ability to articulate and implement a clear, inspiring vision that aligns with Shalom School's mission and values.
- **Organizational Experience:** Proven leadership in the nonprofit sector, ideally with experience guiding a small school or Jewish organization through a period of growth and transformation.
- **Financial Acumen:** Strong understanding of financial management, including strategic budgeting, resource allocation, and sustainable growth planning.
- **Fundraising Expertise:** Demonstrated success—and genuine enthusiasm—for advancing institutional priorities through fundraising, donor engagement, and stewardship. Candidates with strong relational skills and the capacity to grow in this area are also encouraged.
- **Community Engagement:** A dynamic connector and advocate for Shalom School, skilled at building relationships across diverse communities and serving as a trusted representative within the broader Jewish landscape.
- **Strategic Problem-Solving:** Creative and resourceful, with a track record of implementing effective solutions to complex challenges.
- **Educational Background:** Experience in education, familiarity with Jewish day school environments is a plus.

## QUALIFICATIONS (cont.)

- **Enrollment Management:** Experience in admissions and enrollment strategy, with the ability to systematically grow enrollment while preserving the school's character and academic standards.
- **Board Partnership:** Skilled in leveraging the Board of Trustees for strategic guidance, with strong relationship management and the discernment to offer constructive pushback when needed.
- **Compelling Communication:** A confident, principled communicator who builds trust and leads with clarity and authenticity.
- **Team Leadership:** Approachable and supportive, with a commitment to building positive team culture and investing in staff development.
- **Student-Centered Approach:** A leader who empowers others, holds high standards, and navigates challenges with compassion and clarity.
- **Jewish Cultural Competency:** Deep appreciation for the diversity within Jewish life and the ability to connect meaningfully across the spectrum of Jewish practice and identity.



### Personal Characteristics

- **Mission-Aligned:** Believes in diverse expressions of Judaism and is deeply committed to the school's values.
- **Resilient & Confident:** Positive, self-assured, and able to navigate difficult conversations with grace.
- **Visionary & Determined:** Big-picture thinker who embraces challenges with a solution-oriented mindset.
- **Relational & Present:** Approachable and eager to connect with children and the school community.
- **Collaborative Leader:** Builds trust, fosters teamwork, and cultivates a strong sense of shared purpose.
- **Authentic Communicator:** Honest, responsive, and listens actively to all stakeholders.
- **Politically Savvy:** Mature and discerning, with sensitivity to the needs of varied constituencies.
- **Adaptive & Creative:** Embraces ambiguity, takes thoughtful risks, and demonstrates a growth mindset.
- **Emotionally Intelligent:** Open-minded and inclusive, with strong interpersonal awareness.



## KEY COMPETENCIES

The ideal candidate for the Head of School position possesses the following competencies:

<b>Communicates Effectively</b> Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.	<b>Organizational Savvy</b> Maneuvering comfortably through complex policy, process, and people related organizational dynamics.	<b>Big Picture Thinking</b> Taking a broad view when approaching issues, using a global lens.
<b>Instills Trust</b> Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity with diverse groups of people.	<b>Decision Quality</b> Making good and timely decisions that keep the organization moving forward.	<b>Operational Insight</b> Applying knowledge of business and the operating environment to advance the organization's goals.

## BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is \$150,000 – \$175,000, competitive and commensurate with experience.

Shalom School offers a comprehensive benefits package, including medical, dental, and vision insurance, as well as tuition remission.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SEARCH PROCESS

DRG is conducting this search on behalf of Shalom 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 leadership 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 and only with candidate permission)

Application materials should be uploaded directly on the DRG website ([www.drgtalent.com](http://www.drgtalent.com)) by visiting the Shalom School listing.

## ANTICIPATED SEARCH CALENDAR

**Application Deadline:** December 1, 2025

**Semifinalist Interviews (on Zoom):** December 2025

**Finalist Visits:** January 2026

**Starting Date:** July 1, 2026

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

Shanna Jadwin  
Talent Consultant  
[sjadwin@drgtalent.com](mailto:sjadwin@drgtalent.com)

Merav Schwartz  
Associate Talent Consultant  
[mschwartz@drgtalent.com](mailto:mschwartz@drgtalent.com)

[Submit an application](#)