



**POLY
PREP**
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL



**Position Statement
Head of Middle School
Poly Prep Country Day School**

**July 1, 2023
Brooklyn, New York**



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POSITION STATEMENT | START DATE: JULY 1, 2023



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Early on Monday morning, all is tranquil around the campus pond at Poly Prep, but it will not remain quiet for long. Shortly, students will arrive, by bus, from across all five boroughs of New York City, and fill the campus grounds' buildings and Poly Prep will reverberate with the sound of a community engaged in the work of learning. Another week at Poly Prep in the ongoing pursuit of greatness.

Poly Prep Country Day School is a community of experts. Educators are masters of their craft and they work from full "toolboxes" and rich experience to inspire students to strive for greatness—that magical combination of intellectual and personal ambition balanced with

equal parts of humility—in all they explore and do in the classrooms, on the stages and the fields, and across New York. At Poly Prep, students are encouraged to learn all they can about the world no matter how challenging the pursuit, while also recognizing, throughout this journey, just how much they still have to discover.

Poly Prep is currently seeking an experienced, creative, and collaborative middle school expert to join the community in this important work, beginning July of 2023, as the next Head of Middle School. The next Head of Middle School will join a high-functioning administrative team led by a strategic, visionary Head of School.

Founded in 1854, Poly Prep is an independent, co-educational day school where over 1,100 students from nursery age through grade twelve partner with passionate educators across two campuses in Brooklyn, New York. Today, Poly Prep's community is as diverse and rich in experience and tradition as New York City itself, and yet it remains committed to the mission of the school's founders, providing an outstanding academic program and a strong, supportive community for the city's brightest and most promising emerging leaders and scholars.

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THE OPPORTUNITY

Despite the stagnation many schools faced during COVID, much development and innovation has taken place in the Middle School at Poly Prep in recent years: fifth and sixth grade has eliminated grades; students in seventh and eighth grades can select courses from a growing electives program; all students are well known and uniquely supported by a dedicated team of four Middle School deans, a talented director of student life and the division coordinator for DEIB. The next Head of Middle School will be charged with innovating and growing this recent momentum and leading this division's administrative team.

The next Middle School Head will have the ambition and vision to develop the exciting electives and curricular travel programs for seventh and eighth graders, which mirror the curricular choice and opportunities offered to Upper School students. Poly Prep knows there is great value in giving students access and opportunity to explore and develop their unique passions. Currently, the Middle School Head teaches an elective class. The next Middle School Head should continue this model in order to promote growth in the number of electives offered – particularly with an eye towards STEM offerings.

As members of one of the most diverse schools in the country, Poly Prep students have the opportunity to learn from one another and also



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explore the world through all that Brooklyn and NYC have to offer. The Head of Middle School will value the resource that is the community's diversity and will champion ways for students to build partnerships to learn from peers and the surrounding Brooklyn community.

The Head of Middle School at Poly Prep, to be successful, must be able to demonstrate—and thereby cultivate—a love of learning for all members of the community and promote a passion for the life of the mind. The Head of Middle School will understand that the middle school experience is not preparatory for “what is next.” The Head of Middle School will be a middle school specialist dedicated to students’ social, emotional, psychological, and physical well being. The division leader will be able to clearly articulate to parents, faculty and fellow administrators how we develop a love of learning, and a connection to content, in an intentional age-appropriate way for the middle grades learner.

The next Head of Middle School will be a natural collaborator who can work with the talented members of the leadership team to plan and develop the Middle School program and the transitions that students encounter from nursery to twelve grade.

THE SCHOOL

Poly Prep Country Day is a school that leans into being noisy.

From drop-off in the morning to the time the buses roll out of campuses at the end of the day, visitors to the hallways and classrooms will not only see “school” happening, but will be immersed in the cacophony of learning. Fifth graders and Seniors and all grades in between intermingle in the hallways of the academic building. Students share space in the library, distinguished dining hall and gorgeous chapel, where secular assemblies are held. This is how community is built.

In conversation with Middle School students, many point to this “community” as the strength of the school and the feeling of belonging as their favorite part of Poly Prep. Even new students who have only been at the school a matter of weeks remark that, while they may occasionally get lost during transitions between classes, they always know they are part of the larger whole. At its heart, Poly Prep is a school that has embraced the individual student and



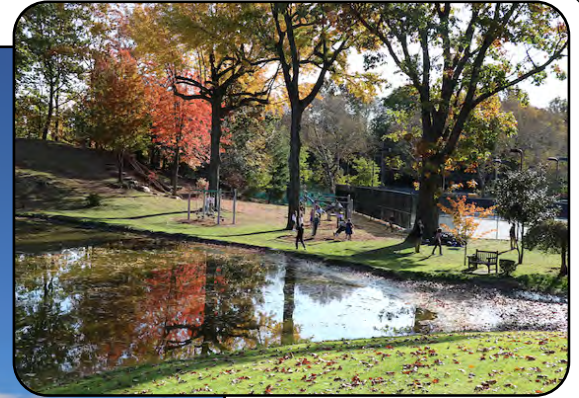
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celebrates the diversity of the whole, understanding that *this* is a shared ethos that builds and defines community.

Poly had various campuses before arriving on Dyker Heights, in south Brooklyn, where the Middle and Upper School make its home. Covering 25 acres, Dyker Heights is one of four campus schools in New York City and the grounds are unmatched. Learners engage in energetic discourse and dialogue with accomplished, experienced faculty members in seminar-style classrooms, modern science labs and performing arts center; athletes lob balls on the tennis courts, practice in the numerous gyms, and compete across the meticulous playing fields; and students race around the campus pond and then roam the playground built into a nearby hill. It is no wonder that Poly draws nearly 1000 students to school each day from across all five boroughs of New York City—and beyond.

Positioned as Poly Prep is as an “it” school in one of the world’s most diverse cities—and supported by a robust financial aid budget—the community is rich in experience and robust in perspective. The collective chatter about how the school can continue to be open to the world—and to be innovative about what is possible in this world—is palpable.

MISSION

Poly Prep’s mission is defined by its three pillars:

DIVERSITY ~ EXCELLENCE ~ BROOKLYN

From nursery to twelve grade, Poly Prep is a place where curiosity and collaboration shift perspectives and open minds. For those who choose it, the Poly experience—a love of learning, the pursuit of excellence, and authentic friendships—lasts a lifetime.

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DEFINING BROOKLYN

For most, “New York City” carries indelible images: Wall Street and Times Square; the glitz and glamour of Broadway; pinstripes, pizza slices and The Big Apple.

“Brooklyn” is less defined, more abstract, and more individualized. Brooklyn marches to the beat of its own drummer. Brooklyn doesn’t follow a script or conventional conventions.

Like Brooklyn, Poly Prep is ambitious—hungry to know and explore what is still to be realized. This ongoing effort will eventually produce mastery. Ten thousand hours, one day at a time. Poly Prep Country Day School is unafraid of its ambition; the community will do whatever it takes, in their own way, for the students and one another, and each student will be fully supported on their own unique journey.



MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY (From the Current Curriculum Guide)

At Poly, we have—since our origin—redefined the meaning of “school.” School is not a way station to life; it is life itself. And the life of our Middle School is multifaceted, vibrant, and always interesting. Middle School students draw on their natural curiosity and our expansive, beautiful campus and its resources to extend their learning beyond the classroom—in clubs, athletic activities, rehearsals, art studios, and in building relationships among each other and with their teachers.

Our Middle School curriculum places a premium on intellectual development centered on creativity, critical thought, and personal growth through the embrace of risk and challenge. Courses are deliberately designed to encourage questions rather than provide answers, and students are encouraged to connect their classroom learning to events in the world beyond

our campus. In every discipline, we set standards of academic excellence aimed at fostering habits of mind that will serve our students throughout their lives. Our expectation is that students learn to read, write, analyze, and quantify with purpose, focus, and clarity. The Poly Prep Middle School curriculum sequence is expressly designed to enable our students to be agents of positive change in whatever fields and contexts they choose, and to do so with dedication to mind, body, and character.

Middle School deans meet with students and families to craft a course of study that is uniquely suited to each student’s academic goals and interests. Students are prompted to challenge themselves by opting for courses that will introduce them to new modes of thinking and extend their knowledge and skills alike.

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DATA POINTS

School Name:	Poly Prep Country Day School
Year Founded:	1854
Grades Served:	Nursery - Grade 12
Total Enrollment:	1,153
Lower School Enrollment:	251
Middle School Enrollment:	344
Upper School Enrollment:	558
Boys %:	52
Girls %:	48
Diversity %:	47
Students Receiving Aid %:	21
Total Aid Given:	\$11.7M
Highest Tuition:	\$57,000



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LEADERSHIP TEAM

Since 2019, the Middle School at Poly Prep has been ably led by André Del Valle Jr. Much to the dismay of the Middle School team and the Poly Prep community, André will move on at the end of the 2022-23 school year to serve as Head of School at Mary McDowell Friends School, and for his appointment and future success there is much joy and goodwill at the school.

The next Head of Middle School will continue to work collaboratively with the Heads of Lower and Upper School.

Much good work has been done between André and Francis Yasharian, Head of Lower School, to coordinate the pedagogy and practice between the divisions and to scaffold the transition for Poly Prep families who come to the Dyker Heights Campus from Poly Prep's Park Slope Lower School building.

The next Head of Middle School will also work in concert with Sarah Bates, Head of Upper School, to coordinate the sharing of spaces and faculty within the school building and align with the academic program of the upper grades.

This team of division-leading experts report to, and plan strategy with, Michal Hershkovitz, Assistant Head of School, Academics—an inspiring educator who, like the other division leaders, continues to teach alongside her administrative responsibilities.

Since 2016, Poly Prep Country Day has been guided by Audrius Barzdukas, the school's 10th Head of School since 1854.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

To be successful, the next Middle School Head at Poly Prep Country Day School will contribute to the community in ways previously described while also carrying out the following primary responsibilities:

- Serve as the educational leader of the division consistent with the School's mission priorities and values
- Articulate the Middle School's programs, innovations, expectations, behavioral guidelines, and other information effectively to all of the School's constituencies
- Collaborate with Lower School and Upper School division heads to ensure a smooth transition for students and families across divisions and promote a "one school" ethos by participating in creating and executing all-division programs and initiatives
- Collaborate with the Assistant Head of School, Academics to promote continued innovation in Middle School programming, ensure ongoing faculty professional development, follow best practices in hiring and evaluation, and organize communal events that highlight the Middle School's strengths
- Assist the Admission Office in communicating the School's mission, evaluating prospective applicants, and overseeing robust orientation programs
- Oversee the work of the School's student support staff in order to ensure students' physical, social, psychological, and educational well being
- Establish and monitor Middle School budget in collaboration with the School's Chief Financial Officer

TO APPLY

Applications for this exciting position are currently being accepted and reviewed. Consultant interviews will be ongoing this fall.

Applicants should submit a **cover letter** explaining why they are a fit for Poly Prep Country Day School and why they feel their skills and experience match this job, a **resume**, and a **personal statement** of no more than a page and a half. In addition, candidates should include **five references** and their contact information. References will not be contacted without prior notice. All applications should be made on the RG175 website: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

For more information, please contact: Adam Peichert (adam.peichert@rg175.com)