



Wildwood School

**Position Statement
Director of Upper School Search
Wildwood School**

**Los Angeles, California
Start Date: July 1, 2024**



Director of Upper School

Position Statement



Wildwood School

OVERVIEW

Wildwood School is an urban, all gender, college-preparatory K-12 school in West Los Angeles recognized for its innovative practices, progressive pedagogy, and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). The school enrolls 727 students in three divisions on two campuses, both on the westside of Los Angeles.

The Elementary School, which was the original campus, is close to LAX, and the Middle and Upper School is about three miles north at the Santa Monica border. A decidedly urban school, students attend from all over the greater Los Angeles area and are drawn by the school's excellent reputation as one of the city's leading and most exciting independent schools.

While many schools may describe themselves as "progressive," the term often refers largely to forward-thinking and liberally minded attitudes toward social issues. At Wildwood, the progressive qualities extend well beyond the social constructs and are centered in the curriculum and pedagogy. This is a truly student-centered school, one whose academic and co-/extra- curricular programs are



based on what is best for students. The teaching, the content, the focus on mastering skills, and the overall organization of the school are informed by research and a spirit of innovation rarely seen in other strong college-preparatory schools. Wildwood is an inspiring and exciting community in which to work and learn.

MISSION AND HISTORY

Wildwood School cultivates reflective scholars, bold innovators, and compassionate leaders equipped with the skills, ethics, and inspiration to transform their world.



"We're looking for a leader who'll partner with others of us to focus on the next 5-10 years. The landscape of American college education is changing dramatically. Wildwood has embraced innovation for decades. So how can we be of use? What opportunities are there for our school to contribute to this recalibration and rethinking of what college prep means in the coming decades? Our next director of upper school will be central to that conversation.."

—Landis Green, Head of School

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DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING (DEIB) MISSION

Wildwood School is a dynamic community of culturally and racially diverse families and educators. Wildwood honors individual differences and creates conditions where all can feel safe, accepted, and empowered. Our healthy exchange of perspectives and experiences cultivates compassionate, effective change makers.

For over 50 years, Wildwood School has been committed to a progressive approach defined by research-driven educational practices. This is a truly mission-driven school. Wildwood teachers, administrators, and trustees are not afraid to lean on best practices and research to develop new learning models and refine curriculum, shifting course for the benefit of students. Based on best practices, the school has acted with courage and foresight to create programs that are engaging and relevant to the lives of students who will be entering a very different workforce from previous generations. Social, emotional, and intellectual skills are integrated both vertically and horizontally. The school's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is real and central to the work of all at the school. Collaboration among students and faculty is the norm, and project-based learning has existed at the school since its founding.

"This is a school with many choices and where students are treated as individuals. School is a place that builds on our interests, and the learning and opportunities we are provided—in general—are just right."

—Upper School student interview



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DIRECTOR OF UPPER SCHOOL: THE POSITION

The school's next Director of Upper School will join a dynamic, high-functioning team of teachers and administrators, actively mentoring and sponsoring others in their professional growth and contributions to both Wildwood and the broader educational community. The 9th through 12th grade upper school division serves 215 students; there are 34 teachers in the division.

The Director of Upper School:

- Supervises the practice, evaluation, and continuous improvement of the faculty.
- Supervises and collaborates with the Assistant Director of Upper School for Academic Services, Teaching and Learning, as well as the Upper School Counselor and Upper School Dean of Students.
- Works closely with the Director of Middle School in supervision and collaboration with the Faculty Services Coordinator (6-12) and the Executive Assistant to the Directors of Middle and Upper Schools.
- Attends to the quality of all upper school curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs.
- Utilizes relevant primary and secondary educational research to inform change.

- Works collaboratively with all members of HLT (Head's Leadership Team), which includes the Head of School, Associate Head of School, two other division directors, Director of Institutional Advancement, CFO/COO, Director of Equity and Inclusion, and the Director of Admission and Enrollment Management.
- Consistently reminds others of shared goals and holds them accountable for their part in moving the school forward.
- Communicates effectively and proactively both within the school community (to students, faculty, and parents) and to external constituents (to applicants and their families, fellow educators, community organizations, and other school partners).
- Serves as a responsive guide and expert for parents/guardians of upper school students.
- Facilitates effective support for students who need academic, social, or emotional assistance at school.
- Assures that the spirit and tone of the upper school are focused on mutual respect, professionalism, kindness, and health of students and teachers in the division.
- Participates actively in relevant functions related to the operation of the K-12 program, such as interviewing and serving on admissions and other committees, DEIB programming, and Board and parent education programming.

"I am challenged every day when I come to work, but not in a meaningless way. This is a school where one can live with purpose on a daily basis, and that makes hard work...fun work."

—Upper School faculty member

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THE PROGRAM

The upper school offers a challenging, intellectually stimulating curriculum and program where students synthesize the lessons accumulated throughout their time at Wildwood and prepare for a successful launch into higher education and the world beyond. Distinctive elements of the upper school program include the [Institutes at Wildwood](#), varsity sports, nationally recognized performing and visual arts departments, and a unique [internship program](#) that's built into the curriculum for 11th and 12th-grade students. Students are asked to dig deep, think critically, and commit themselves to fully pursuing their intellectual passions both inside and outside the classroom. For a detailed overview of the upper school program, see [here](#).



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

This is a school where the opportunities and challenges feel one and the same. Students, teachers, and administrators want to be clear that the upper school program is in great shape. This is not a program that is “broken” or needs “a ton of new initiatives.” In many ways, the wants/needs of the students and adults are alike. The students hope for an upper school leader who will create a strong bond with them and will see them as individuals. The faculty, similarly, is looking for “a shepherd” who will get to know them as who they are and help to grow them in their respective roles. They want to maximize much of the work they have already begun or are in the process of starting. Finally, the administrators are looking for a highly functional, lifelong learner who is collaborative, can share and receive constructive truths, and wants to be a part of a team that really enjoys one another.

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QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

There is deliberateness and honesty in the school's culture; people at Wildwood are not afraid to be direct and clear, which has created an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. There is humor and warmth among students, faculty, and administration. Wildwood is a school where adults trust one another; in this kind of community, innovation is possible, and improvement—as well as acceptance of imperfection—has become the norm. The new Director of Upper School will join an exceptional team of educators. Additionally, the person will need to:

- Lead with energy and stamina, a stellar work ethic, and top-notch organizational, executive functioning, and management skills.
- Bring both upper school teaching and leadership experience.
- Exhibit wisdom, judgment, and a keen intellect.
- Share a genuine affection for students and a natural, optimistic, problem-solving nature.
- Lead with curiosity and openness.
- Show both patience and decisiveness, understanding when it is important to pause and reflect, and when a strong backbone is necessary.
- Enjoy a ready sense of humor, relish and sustain community with warmth and humility.
- Demonstrate effective DEIB leadership, wisdom, skills, and enthusiasm.
- Serve as a “warm demander” who has both courage and clarity.



SALARY RANGE

\$165,000-\$190,000 based on a combination of factors that include but are not limited to experience, education level, and expertise.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Candidates interested in applying to be the next Director of Upper School at Wildwood may apply online at <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>. The application must include:

- Letter of interest
- Resume
- List of 5 references (will not be contacted without advance permission)
- Personal Statement (can be an educational philosophy or a sample of your writing for your school community.)

The deadline for receipt of completed applications will be announced on the RG175 website but will be on or about December 20th. If you have any questions, please contact the RG175 consultants:

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