



Position Statement  
Head of School Search

# Phillips Brooks School

Menlo Park, California  
Start Date: July 1, 2025



# Head of School

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### Overview

Imagine leading a school with a clear sense of purpose and a 45-year track record of distinguishing itself with a powerful combination of developing young children's academic strengths while equally emphasizing the development of their emotional intelligence. Phillips Brooks School (PBS) is just such a place—an independent, co-educational day school offering a truly child-centered learning program for Preschool through 5th grade. Located in Menlo Park, California, neighboring Stanford University, PBS strives to ensure that children flourish as individual learners and graduate as confident and empowered middle-schoolers.

This is an exceptional school and a leadership opportunity that is well-worth exploring. Current Head, Scott Erickson, will be leaving PBS after a highly successful tenure at the end of June 2024, and an interim Head of School will be in place for the 2024-25 academic year. The next permanent Head at PBS will continue the journey of a school where learning is engaging and purposeful. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate that they possess the expertise, empathy, and energy to ensure that PBS continues to be a leader in providing young students with a distinctive and transformative education for many years to come.



- **Courage:** valuing strength of character and the integrity to do what is right in spite of the risk of fear or discomfort.
- **Community:** valuing responsible membership in the school community and in doing so demonstrating understanding and compassion for others.
- **Kindness:** valuing empathy and respect for self and others through honest and effective deeds and communication.
- **Love of Learning:** valuing learning as a lifelong process, driven by intrinsic motivation and focused on process rather than product.

### MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Phillips Brooks School was established in 1978. The mission of PBS is to *“inspire students to love learning, to develop a spiritual nature, to communicate effectively, to be kind to others, and to respect the uniqueness of each person.”*

Daily life at PBS is guided by the following core values:

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### Location and Facilities

Phillips Brooks School is located on a welcoming 5.6-acre suburban campus on land that is on a long-term lease from the local public school district. PBS is in the heart of Silicon Valley, and it attracts families from Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and a range of surrounding communities.

The school has wonderful and appropriate facilities scattered throughout multiple small buildings connected by green spaces and “outdoor corridors.” There is an Early Learning Center for the School’s youngest students and separate buildings housing 2-sections each of Grades K-5. In addition, there is a large multipurpose space for meetings and performances, and there are dedicated teaching and learning spaces for “special subjects” –art, music, science, and library. Administrative offices, an outdoor amphitheater, and multiple outdoor play spaces complete a campus that is beautifully scaled to serve the developmental needs of children ages 3-11.



### Program

Academics are the heart of the PBS experience. However, the school teaches students much more than how to read and write or add and subtract – it teaches students to consider why an answer is correct, to see multiple pathways to the same answer, and to consider answers that haven’t yet been found. Students at PBS are artists and musicians, scientists and mathematicians, inventors, and discoverers. They love to learn, and the things they learn at PBS inspire them to start their own projects or seek out opportunities for deeper understanding.

The program at PBS has been intentionally developed to:

- Deliver a challenging and collaborative learning environment
- Balance outstanding academics and thoroughly integrated emotional intelligence
- Attract inspiring teachers whose expertise and growth mindsets ensure a high-quality experience for children

A special weekly feature of PBS’s program is GATHER, a community assembly attended by faculty, administrators, staff, and students in kindergarten through 5th grade. All parents and visitors are welcome to attend GATHER as well. During this time of inclusion and community-building, topics from current events are presented and explained, along with reports from students in each grade on projects they are working on or something special that happened in their class. Additionally, each 5th-grader will present at one GATHER in the year on a topic meaningful to them that they would like to share with the community. For more information on the program at PBS, go to <https://www.phillipsbrooks.org/academics>.

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## Community of the School

### Faculty and Staff

The PBS faculty is distinguished by its intellect, depth of knowledge, innovative teaching, and commitment to students. When asked about “the best thing about PBS, “students respond enthusiastically and unanimously: “Our teachers!” Faculty and staff have created a community that is loving and kind, where students feel safe about making mistakes as they travel through their learning journey.

PBS looks for and attracts educators who can model its core values, live by its mission, deliver its curriculum in collaboration with colleagues, challenge students academically, draw out the joy, creativity, and social development of each child, and uphold the school’s clearly articulated teaching standards.

### Students

At PBS, every student is valued individually; students at PBS are inspired to find and follow their passions, to challenge themselves, and to learn to be their best selves every day. Following are a few common threads in the tapestry of PBS’s student body:

- PBS students are kind. They respect themselves and the uniqueness of others. They are compassionate. They are learning to communicate honestly and effectively. They show strong sportsmanship and are team players.
- PBS students are courageous. They do what is right in spite of the risk or fear of discomfort. They accept their mistakes and view them as part of the learning process. They resolve conflicts and overcome obstacles. They self-advocate. They are up-standers.

- PBS students are community minded. They are learning to be responsible members of their local and global communities. They use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships. They are collaborative.
- PBS students love to learn. They are curious and eager to learn. They ask “juicy” questions. They take ownership of their learning. They explore their interests. They are learning how to manage, regulate, and express emotions.

### Administration

The Head of School works with a senior leadership team that includes an Associate Head of School, a Chief Financial Officer, an Assistant Head for Academics, a Director of Enrollment Management, an Advancement Team, a Senior Strategy Advisor, and an Executive Assistant/Office Manager. Additional school leaders, including the Director of Student Life and Belonging, meet regularly as members of the Academic Leadership Group.



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### Families

At PBS, there is a shared belief that authentic home-and-school partnerships are the surest path to maximizing each child's potential. Some of the key traits of this successful partnership at PBS are commitment to the school's mission and core values; open, two-way communication; mutual respect and trust; and participation in school events, volunteer opportunities, and philanthropic efforts.

The Phillips Brooks School Association, run by an elected board of parents, coordinates volunteer opportunities, plans events for the community, and supports the faculty and staff.

### Board of Trustees

The PBS Board is highly supportive of the mission of the school and conducts itself with

professionalism and collegiality. The Board is responsible for establishing broad policy goals that align the operation of the school with its mission, providing fiduciary oversight of the school's operations, and supporting long-range strategic planning to ensure PBS's future. The Board currently is comprised of 17 trustees who reflect the diversity of the PBS community. Its members include current parents, past parents, alumni, and individuals from the broader community who bring particular expertise and perspective.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

PBS puts a high priority on giving all children the opportunity to grow within a diverse and inclusive community. In 2018, the Board of Trustees initiated an intensive, multi-year study to identify strategies that the school could employ to ensure that it was continually evolving and pushing itself to learn and to grow, both for students' sake and for the sake of the greater community.

The PBS Board has adopted the following Mission Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice:

*PBS is committed to creating and sustaining a diverse, inclusive, equitable, and just community that is safe and welcoming for all. We also strive to build and support an environment in which each child can become a confident, respectful, and compassionate individual by accepting and valuing the uniqueness of self and others.*

*A diverse student population enhances the educational experience for all of our children. When learning with a diverse group of peers, our students become deeper thinkers, better learners, compassionate citizens, who are able to thrive in a multicultural, global community.*

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### Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

PBS is a school with many enduring strengths—among them are a clear and compelling mission, an outstanding faculty, staff, and administration, passionate students who love learning, an appealing suburban campus, supportive families, and a stable financial base from which to build towards the future. There is an extraordinary dedication to the school among parents, faculty, and students.

At the same time, PBS faces many of the challenges common to high-performing independent elementary schools today—from leaning into its commitment to being an equitable and diverse community to maintaining a balance between academics and social emotional learning to keeping the school as accessible and affordable as possible for a broad range of families. In working with the Board, Administration, Faculty, and Staff, the next permanent Head of School should be prepared to face the following challenges:



- Strengthen communication among the Board, faculty, administrators, and parents, as they work together to implement their shared commitment to the mission and core values of the school.
- Preserve and enhance PBS’s strong academic standards, while reinforcing the importance of maintaining a balance between academics and social emotional learning for students.
- Strengthen strategies to recruit, develop and retain excellent faculty and staff within an increasingly competitive environment.
- Continue to ensure PBS’s unwavering commitment to being a diverse and inclusive community, while working to create a shared understanding among the Board, faculty, administrators, and parents about developmentally appropriate initiatives.
- Preserve PBS’s strong and welcoming culture, while working with the Board to articulate a clear vision for the next phase of strategic development at PBS.

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## The Position

The Head of School at Phillips Brooks School oversees the ongoing operations of the school, hires and supports its employees, and manages its annual budget. Initial annual base salary for the next Head of School will be commensurate with the compensation offered by similar Bay Area independent elementary schools and will be between \$350,000 and \$450,000. In addition, consideration for a housing allowance will be negotiable.

First and foremost, successful candidates will need to embrace PBS's mission and values, including demonstrated commitment to balancing the development of academic strength with an emphasis on emotional intelligence. In addition, candidates should demonstrate a record of skill in leadership and change management, including many of the following professional and personal attributes:

- Embraces and can articulate the importance of PS-5 education. Understanding of early childhood education and development.
- Proven record of demonstrated skill in the leadership of a complex organization, including raising and sustaining top-tier academics.
- Educational thought leader and innovator, up to the task of leading an intellectually thoughtful faculty and community.
- Demonstrated success recruiting, developing, evaluating, and retaining outstanding talent.
- Conviction and skill that matches PBS's strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.

- A collaborative leadership style characterized by seeking input from others, willingness to delegate, but able to make and communicate hard decisions. A good listener and an honest, open, and inspiring communicator – both orally and in writing.
- Embracing the joys of being an engaged presence on campus—warm, empathetic, approachable, and available to students, faculty, staff, and parents.
- Prior teaching experience and genuine appreciation and respect for teachers.
- Ability to manage difficult conversations with sensitivity, conviction and moral clarity.
- Process-oriented, reflective, and open to hearing and providing honest feedback.
- Capacity to be a leader in fundraising and a strong partner in enrollment management.
- A connector who authentically demonstrates humility, resilience, and humor.



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## Application Process

Phillips Brooks School has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support the search for its next Head of School. To apply, interested candidates should prepare a cover letter, a current resume, and a personal statement. Candidates are requested to submit these materials online at: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

For an initial inquiry or to nominate a potential candidate for this exciting leadership position, please contact RG175 consultants Bodie Brizendine [bodie.brizendine@rg175.com](mailto:bodie.brizendine@rg175.com) and Jerry Katz [jkatz@rg175.com](mailto:jkatz@rg175.com).

Application Deadline: **May 20, 2024**

Start Date: **July 1, 2025**

Phillips Brooks School provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type with regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.