



## Lauralton Hall At-A-Glance

Founded: 1905

Affiliation: Catholic

Grades: 9th–12th Grade

Enrollment 2022-23: 270

Students: All Girls

Number of AP Courses  
Offered: 14

Tuition: \$22,975

Percent of Students  
Receiving Financial  
Aid: 27%

Professional Affiliations:  
New England Association  
of Schools and Colleges,  
the Connecticut  
Department of Education,  
Connecticut Association of  
Schools, Connecticut  
Association of Independent  
Schools, and Mercy  
Secondary Education  
Association

# Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Lauralton Hall Head of School / President Search

200 High Street | Milford, Connecticut 06460

Independent, Catholic Day School: All girls

Applications Due: January 22, 2023

For July 1, 2023 (possibly July 2024)

## OVERVIEW

Educators Collaborative partners Sally Mixsell and Joan Beauregard are pleased to assist Lauralton Hall, an independent Catholic girls' day school serving 270 students in Grades 9-12, with its search for a Head of School / President to begin in July 2023 (possibly 2024). [Lauralton's campus](#) sits on 25 acres where the beautiful [original mansion](#) to the property serves as the main focal point, with other impressive buildings and playing fields serving the academic programs and co-curricular activities. The school is in [Milford, CT](#), a shoreline town 20 minutes from downtown New Haven.

Lauralton Hall has long been known for providing excellent academic preparation for college, attributable to the dedicated faculty who both challenge and nurture their students in ways that build confidence, capability, and maturity. Lauralton teachers approach teaching and learning in holistic ways designed to help girls learn best. In addition to its regular offerings, [Lauralton offers](#) six courses through UConn's Early College Credit program, taught on campus by trained Lauralton faculty members. Other signature offerings include a [Financial Intelligence](#) course required of all sophomores, and annual participation in the [Sikorsky STEM Challenge](#), a competition won four times by Lauralton, the only all-girls team among ten schools. The school offers 14 AP courses and broad opportunities for competition and performance. In 2011 Lauralton moved to a [block schedule](#) that is still being used today. It functions on an eight-day rotation with four academic classes scheduled per day. Click [here](#) to learn more about Lauralton's academics.

Inspired by the Mercy tradition (see below), Lauralton Hall also offers its students an experience imbued with strong values and tradition. All students work in service to others throughout their time at Lauralton, volunteering a minimum of 75 hours over their four years at the school. With a holistic approach to education, Lauralton welcomes girls who want to grow in wisdom, spirituality, and character and is committed to empowering young women as they grow and learn about themselves. There is a supportive, caring alumnae community, with a significant number working at and/or sending their children to the school. In fact, there is great love for Lauralton in every constituent group of the school, especially the students. Everyone cares deeply about this school.

Click here for [Quick Facts](#) about Lauralton.

## MISSION

*Inspired by the Mercy Tradition, Lauralton Hall empowers young women to pursue their highest potential through lifelong learning, compassionate service, and responsible leadership in a global society.*

## CORE VALUES OF A MERCY EDUCATION

- Compelled by Mercy
- Educational Courage
- Inspired by Faith
- Principled Leadership
- A Voice for Dignity and Respect



## DEI MISSION STATEMENT

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees, 2021*

*Inspired by the Mercy Core Values, Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Loralton Hall endeavors to create, nurture, and sustain an inclusive culture that inspires all members of our community to share life experiences from their own diverse perspectives and to gain a deeper understanding of people from different races, cultures, religions, and backgrounds.*

*Faculty and staff embrace practices that inspire young women to open their minds and hearts to others during their time at Loralton Hall and as they embark on their journey to find their place in the world beyond our campus, we strive to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion for all and empower young women to pursue their highest potential in our global community through lifelong learning, compassionate service, and responsible leadership.*



## LAURALTON HALL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SISTERS OF MERCY / MERCY EDUCATION

In 2017 the Sisters of Mercy created Mercy Education, a body designed to support the Catholic identity, and specifically Mercy identification, of each of its 55 schools in six countries and one territory. The organization is committed to creating dynamic vision for Mercy schools, in that its Core Values (listed above), [Portrait of a Graduate](#) and Critical Concerns (listed below) are reviewed regularly in order to

remain relevant. Mercy Education also offers annual conferences for the Head of School / President, Board members, and staff in order to provide opportunities for sharing ideas and issues relevant to their Catholic identity. The Head of School / President, Board Chair, and administrators are also invited to join monthly cohort calls to discuss issues pertinent to their work at the school. At the very core, Mercy values call for every person to be treated with dignity and respect, allowing for independent thinking and an enlightened response to issues facing young people today. Click [here](#) to read more about the Sisters of Mercy and the history of Loralton Hall.



## CURRENT CRITICAL CONCERNS OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

- *Earth*
- *Immigration*
- *Nonviolence*
- *Racism*
- *Women*

The school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), as well as the Connecticut Department of Education. It is a member of the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools (CAIS), and Mercy Secondary Education Association. Luralton Hall was last re-accredited by NEASC in 2019 and submitted its two-year update last spring.



## FACULTY

This year Luralton employs 36 faculty members and seven staff members, none of whom is a Sister of Mercy, though the Director of Campus Ministry, as a lay person, is a Mercy Associate. Most teachers carry a class load of five courses, or the equivalent. Each academic department has its own

office and regularly scheduled meetings. The Dean of Academics evaluates the department chairs, who in turn evaluate their respective department members. There is an Academic Council made up of department chairs and the Director of Counseling; it is chaired by the Dean of Academics.

Students feel that their teachers trust them implicitly. For instance, students are expected to get their work done “on their honor” if a teacher is not in class and to work independently on posted assignments at home during snow days. When we asked two groups of students how many adults they felt truly connected to, they named an average of five teachers or staff members - each whom they felt they could trust to share a serious issue.

The school's wireless network was last updated in 2019, and faculty receive new laptops every three years. A new LMS was introduced last summer, set up and overseen by the Technology Director. The Academic Technology Coordinator chairs the Tech Committee, which is charged to draft a technology plan every three years. She also supports all instructional technology.

## **GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT**

The [Guidance Department](#) provides all academic advising, social-emotional support, and college counseling. This department oversees [an advising program](#) tailored to each year's needs. All ninth graders are enrolled in the First Year Experience (FYE) to provide the skills needed for high school in general and Loralton Hall in particular. Sophomore Seminar covers topics such as goal setting, mental health strategies, the digital world (and one's place in it), and PSAT preparation. Junior Seminar and Senior Seminar focus largely on the college process.

Since 2008 the department has sponsored [Career Day](#) every other year, bringing in as many as 60 women professionals from the Loralton community (e.g., alums, parents, sisters) to inspire students to imagine what's possible in their own lives. The Guidance Department also makes all referrals for emotional support and psych-ed testing that go beyond the school's capabilities.

## **ATHLETICS**

Participation in athletics is not required at Loralton Hall, but over half the student body chooses to play at least one sport per year. Loralton fields 28 teams in 15 sports and is a "Class Act" school in the state of Connecticut, meaning that the Director of Athletics and coaches train their athletes to practice good sportsmanship and model positive behaviors through athletics. Loralton boasts a beautiful turf field and a dedicated athletics building that houses the basketball court, workout room, lockers, offices, and more. For more about Loralton Athletics, click [here](#).





## ADMISSIONS / ENROLLMENT

Seventh and eighth grade girls are invited to Luralton to shadow students and tour the school. The school also hosts an annual Spring Fair for girls in grades 5-8. The Admissions office invites current parents to serve as Ambassadors reaching out to prospective families to provide them with an “insider’s” perspective on the school.

The 2022-2023 tuition is \$22,975; \$1.25 million has been allocated for

scholarships and need-based financial aid. Luralton has experienced a decrease in enrollment over the past few years. The school enrolled some international students pre-COVID and most of those students have not been able to return; the COVID years have taken their toll. One challenge for the new Head of School / President will be to lead the work of re-establishing Luralton’s identity in the marketplace and clearly promoting the many advantages of a Luralton education. Click [here](#) for a virtual tour of campus.

## DEVELOPMENT / ADVANCEMENT

Luralton Hall has enjoyed longtime support of the school community. Some of the annual traditions are fundraisers, most specifically [Christmas in the Mansion](#) and [Irish Night](#), paying homage to Luralton Hall’s roots and celebrating its long affinity for Irish culture and hospitality. Both events are open to the public and are supported by the [McAuley Parents Association](#) (MPA).

100% of both the faculty and the trustees participate in the Annual Fund, as do many other constituents of the school. The Advancement Office currently consists of the Director of Advancement, the Director of Alumnae Relations, and an individual who does data entry. There is a strong tradition for Luralton alumnae to marry in the school’s beautiful chapel, to the point where scheduling alumnae weddings is a part of one person’s job description.



## ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

The Head of School / President leads two teams, each of which meets every other week:

1. The Academic Team, which includes the Dean of Academics, Dean of Students and Athletic Director, and Director of Counseling; and
2. The Leadership Team, which includes the Directors of Advancement, Finance, and Enrollment.

On occasion these two teams meet together to coordinate strategic, all-school initiatives.

## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The current Board consists of fifteen voting trustees who are Luralton alumnae and/or past parents, one grandparent and one Sister of Mercy. The Head of School / President serves ex-officio and there is one Trustee Emerita who is both a graduate and a Sister of Mercy. Full Board meetings occur six times a year, with committee meetings scheduled most months. Standing board committees include Executive, Finance, Advancement, Governance, Mission Integration, and Buildings and Grounds.

## CURRENT INITIATIVES

The Board looks forward to developing a new strategic plan once the new Head of School / President is in place and COVID has continued to recede. Under the leadership of Elizabeth Miller some significant B&G upgrades have been made by covering pipes, replacing some roof areas and HVAC systems, replacing 250 windows, updating an old elevator, re-paving campus roadways, and more. The facilities are

well-maintained by two dedicated staff members who take great pride in keeping the campus in tip-top shape for the community. Housekeeping and Grounds work are contracted out. Most of the Board's recent focus has been on managing and emerging from COVID.



## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

[Elizabeth Miller](#), Lauralton Hall's Head of School / President since 2017, has announced her decision to step down at the end of the 2022-23 school year. Sally Mixsell and Joan Beauregard of Educators Collaborative have been engaged to assist the Board of Trustees in identifying Mrs. Miller's successor. Given the relatively late start for this search, there is strong desire to find the right candidate to start July 2023, with the possibility that an Interim Head will be placed and the

search will result in a new Head of School / President for July 2024. Candidates interested in **either** start date are encouraged to reach out.

Joan and Sally have interviewed Lauralton constituents in person, over Zoom, and via an online survey in order to understand the school, its people, and their hopes and dreams for the school. What follows is a list of themes that emerged when asked about Lauralton's strengths and challenges / opportunities, as well as the attributes and qualifications they hope to see in their next leader.

### Strengths of the School:

- The all-girls community that supports deep and long-lasting friendships, self-confidence, and healthy competition within a culture of acceptance. The safe physical and emotional environment encourages girls to be themselves without judgment, social distraction, or undue pressure.
- Excellent preparation for college and a multi-year college counseling and preparation program. The work of the Guidance Department is appreciated by the school community, and the school boasts a 100% college acceptance rate.
- The committed faculty, many of whom are long-tenured and hope the new Head of School / President will understand how unique the faculty-student bonds are at Lauralton. Their strengths in academics, creativity, and empathy are noteworthy. In the words of one faculty member, *"The teachers love Lauralton! I can confidently say that there is absolutely no other school where I would rather be teaching (and I have many teaching years left in my career). I think this is a general sentiment of the LH faculty."*





- The many close relationships within the extended Luralton community. Everyone loves, loves, loves this school, largely for its ability to support and challenge girls very intentionally as they go through their high school years. Faculty feel they are particularly good at “recognizing the person who needs to be lifted up” and providing meaningful academic challenge. Students agree that their academics are demanding, which they feel encourages good time management skills and affords enough freedom of choice to teach self-responsibility. Alumnae, too, appreciate their Luralton experience and care deeply about their school and their common experience there. As noted above, many alumnae have sent or do send their daughters to the school, and many have been married in the school’s chapel.
- The Catholic identity and core values of the Sisters of Mercy that are imbued in the culture of the school. Empathy, integrity, compassion, service, and social consciousness are most often referenced as student “take-aways” from Luralton’s association with Mercy Education. Further, the model provided by [Sister Catherine McAuley](#), founder of the Sisters of Mercy, provides inspiration to all.
- The beauty of the campus and facilities. These are appreciated by many – especially the students who are allowed to use campus spaces freely. Spacious outdoor areas create wonderful spots during the warmer months, and the rooms in the historic

Pond-Taylor mansion and the stunning chapel afford quiet and reflective areas for students to work alone or congregate with a few friends. The attention paid to maintaining and enhancing both the campus and facilities has been a point of pride.

- Small class sizes that allow each girl to be known and appreciated for the individual she is. This aspect of the school is felt to be key to the independence and responsibility encouraged in all students and to the close relationships that are developed.



### Challenges and Opportunities:

- Lauralton's positioning in the current marketplace and attention to enrollment efforts will be a major focus for the next Head of School / President. Demographic shifts, the loss of most international students through COVID, and the competition among strong public and area private schools have increased exponentially over the past ten years or so. It is time for Lauralton to recapture its reputation and market itself in new and dynamic ways. A part of this will be recognizing the willingness of faculty, staff, parents, and alumnae to join in this effort. In the words of one faculty member, *"The Head of School can rely on us!"*



- Continuing to nurture the relationships with Lauralton alumnae, parents, past parents and friends of the school will be key to the success of the next Head of School / President. Building support in the Advancement Office will help steward these relationships and solidify the foundation for fundraising.

- There will be room to assess work assignments coming out of the COVID era. Many, if not all, of the adults on campus are currently wearing multiple hats. Some of this is to be expected in a private school, but a larger enrollment would allow for more focused energy on one's primary responsibility.
- As at all schools right now, faculty and staff are tired. The next leader will be charged with helping rebuild energy and morale as the school enters a new era.
- Lauralton Hall has made efforts to diversify the community and develop deeper understandings around DEIBJ; the new Head of School / President will be expected to continue this work.

- The Guidance Department - covering academic counseling, college counseling, and social-emotional health support - remains key to the successful experience of each Luralton student. It is expected that Luralton's new leader will need to support continued efforts to build programming and to keep up with student needs as today's challenges become clear.
- While Luralton's sports team offerings and athletic successes have been a "bragging point" for many years, there is work to be done to rebuild the strength, visibility, and reputation of the program as the world emerges from the COVID years.

**Desired Attributes - Luralton Hall's next leader will ideally:**

- Be a community builder, committed to establishing trust and a sense of fun within and among all constituent groups as a new era begins at Luralton.
- Be a transparent, clear, and effective communicator, both in writing and in speech; invest in the value of communicating "the why."
- Be a collaborative leader who values relationships, community, kindness, and compassion.
- Have experience and/or strong familiarity with the business end of running a school. Investing time in clarifying marketing / messaging goals and acting on them will be a clear first step. The Head of

School / President will be expected to visit the school's constituents, both near and far, raising awareness of Luralton's current realities, seeking financial support for strategic initiatives, and bolstering enrollment efforts. An understanding and ability to provide oversight of the school's finances is expected as well.





- Engage actively in the life of the school; be visible and present at important events and engage with students, faculty, and staff comfortably in ways that signify shared experience and mission-driven purpose.
- Be experienced in and/or highly familiar with cutting-edge academic programs and pedagogy. Value the existing signature programs and seek to enhance student experience further by aligning offerings to mission and keeping Luralton aware of educational best practices.
- Serve as a strong role model for Luralton students and care deeply about their individual paths. Luralton's Head of School / President must be invested in the value of single gender education and take seriously the importance of modeling the best of what Luralton stands for.
- Demonstrate capacity to listen with an open mind and make decisions after seeking input from others, when appropriate, and engaging in thoughtful reflection, always.



- Be strong but humble in the face of challenge. Demonstrate the ability to manage change effectively and create buy-in toward a shared vision.
- Act as a true partner with the Board of Trustees in developing a strategic vision for the future of Luralton Hall and translating vision into reality together. Work in sync with the Board Chair on organizing the work of the Board.

#### Qualifications sought:

- An advanced degree in a relevant discipline.
- At least five years' experience as an education leader, with demonstrated success in leadership and management, delegating and holding others accountable with respect, fairness, and clarity.
- A Catholic who appreciates and will be guided by Luralton's mission and Mercy identity and has lived in accordance with Mercy concerns.

## SUMMARY OF THE SEARCH PROCESS

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials in a Single Merged Document in the order provided:

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet (contact Sally Mixsell or Joan Beauregard for the documents)
- Letter of Interest addressed to the Lauralton Hall Search Committee
- Current résumé
- Educational Leadership Philosophy Statement
- A list of five or more references with contact information (including phone numbers and email addresses)
- EC Disclosure Form (contact Sally Mixsell or Joan Beauregard for the documents)

Additional materials may be submitted separately and will be shared as supplemental.

### Please Address Inquiries to:

Sally Mixsell, Partner, Educators Collaborative, LLC  
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or

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