



# Peninsula School



## HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

Position starts July 2024

MENLO PARK, CA

[www.peninsulaschool.org](http://www.peninsulaschool.org)



**EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE**  
EXPERTS IN SEARCH, TRANSITION & STRATEGY

## Our Mission

Peninsula School creates a space where children thrive and develop their full promise as confident contributors in the world. Here they learn about themselves and others, discovering their passions and growing intellectually in an inclusive community rich with choices, exploration, and play.

## Our Vision

Through the progressive principles of constant reflection and renewal, Peninsula School will continue to adapt to the ever-changing world while holding true to the core values that have been the school's foundation for nearly a century.

We will articulate how our unique pedagogy fosters a learning community that nurtures intellectual curiosity and where students develop the skills and confidence necessary to become creative and compassionate contributors in the world.

In the school's ongoing quest for social justice, we will continue to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion by building a community rich with a range of experiences and perspectives. We will strive to provide our students, staff, and families with resources to thrive in our community.



At Peninsula students are given the skills to navigate their lives.

~ Parent

## Core Values

Peninsula School's core values are long-standing, deeply held, grounded in the Progressive Education tradition, and put into practice daily throughout our community.

### AUTHENTIC INTERACTIONS

Children learn to communicate honestly and directly and to make decisions conscientiously.

### COMMUNITY

Children learn the value of personal connections and membership in a diverse community committed to local and global justice.

## EQUITY

Children thrive in a school environment where everyone has access and opportunity to fully participate; inequitable practices, policies, and structures are eliminated.

## FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Children learn best by experiencing daily opportunities for making important choices and reflecting on the results.

## MEANINGFUL ACADEMICS

Children explore their world and develop strong critical thinking skills through a progressive teaching and learning program, with opportunities to discover, problem solve, and meet challenges.

## PLAY

Children need ample time and space for safe, open-ended exploration in our richly varied environment.



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Peninsula School was founded on the progressive principle that schools are labs for democratic life where we engage in the work of social transformation for local and global justice. We embrace the ongoing work of building a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable school. We seek to examine systems of power, oppression, and privilege in both our classroom curriculum and our organization. We strive to be advocates, allies, and change agents for a more socially just world. We know this is a long-term commitment and we are a work in progress. We seek to listen and acknowledge where we need to grow and work to change policies, practices, and systems to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at Peninsula School. Learn more about DEIB at Peninsula [here](#).



I like that it is like family and we are all close, and that I know I can talk to my teachers personally, even when it is uncomfortable, because of that respect.

~ 6th grader (age 12)



## We Get Outside!

- Over 35 field trips each school year
- 10 unique camping trips and approximately 45 overnights across all grades each year
- 6.6 acres of wooded land in Menlo Park

## At a Glance

- Founded in 1925
- 250 students
- 6:1 student to teacher ratio
- Class sizes average 18-21 children
- Nursery through eighth grades
- 16% of tuition allocated to assistance
- 24% of families enrolled at reduced tuition



It is not a common school.

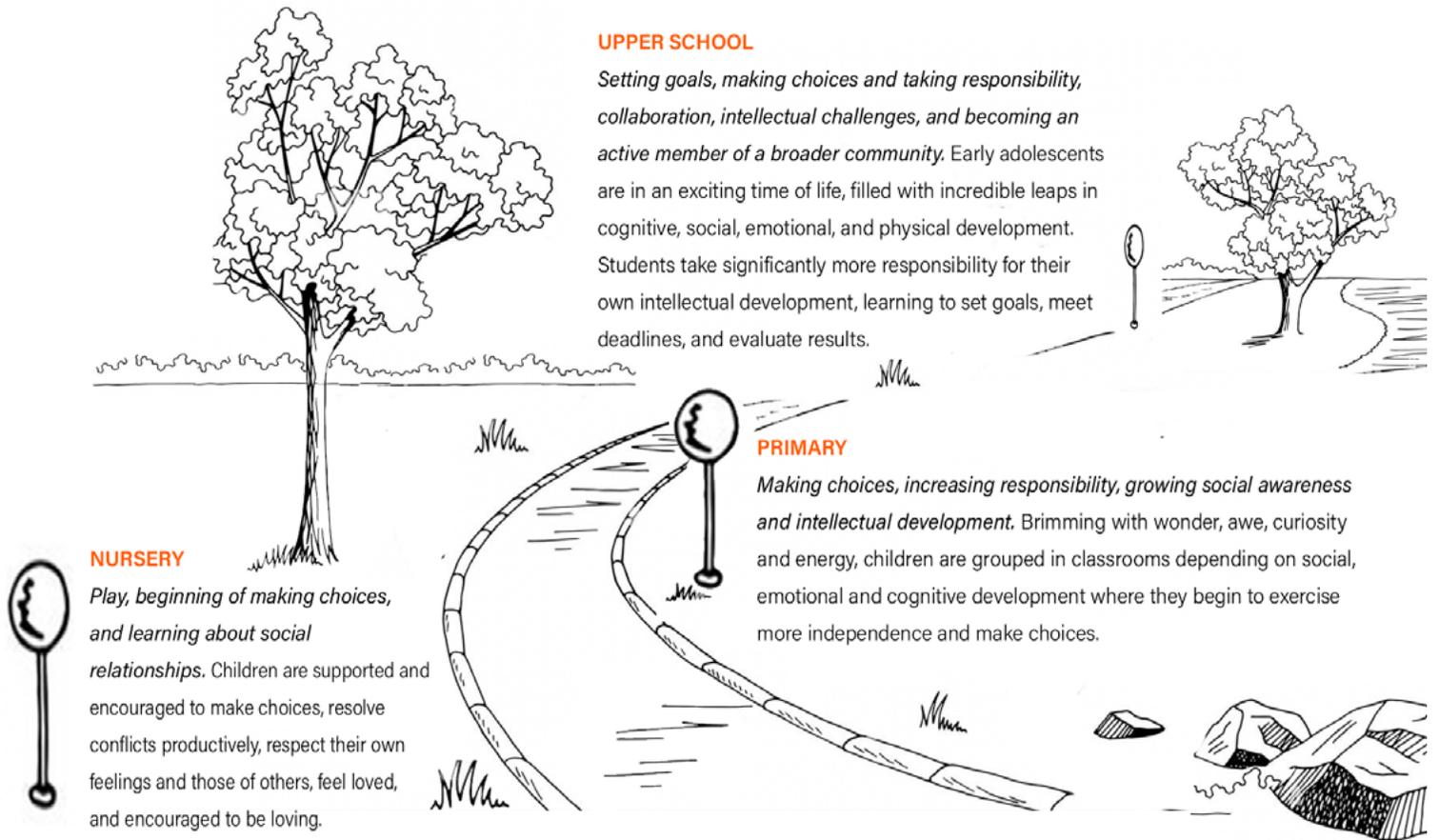
~ 7th grader (age 12)

## An Inspiring History and Enduring Ideals

In 1925, the ideals of fearless thinkers such as Francis Parker, John Dewey and Maria Montessori inspired Josephine Duveneck and a small group of parents to search for a school where learning was joyful and exciting, where children could learn by doing, and where both independence and group cooperation were valued. Unable to find one that suited them, they started the "Peninsula School for Creative Education," one of the first progressive schools in California. Those ideals, deceptively simple and intuitive to many today, have endured as guiding principles for Peninsula for nearly 100 years. These ideals continue to influence not only the progressive education movement in America, but public and private institutions of education worldwide. Josephine's generous and tenacious spirit established a new and innovative school that would provide children with a place of joyful learning where each was recognized as an integral member of the community, a place that celebrated intellectual curiosity, and a place that was committed to participating in and improving society. These ideals continue to inspire Peninsula today.



# A Child's Journey at Peninsula

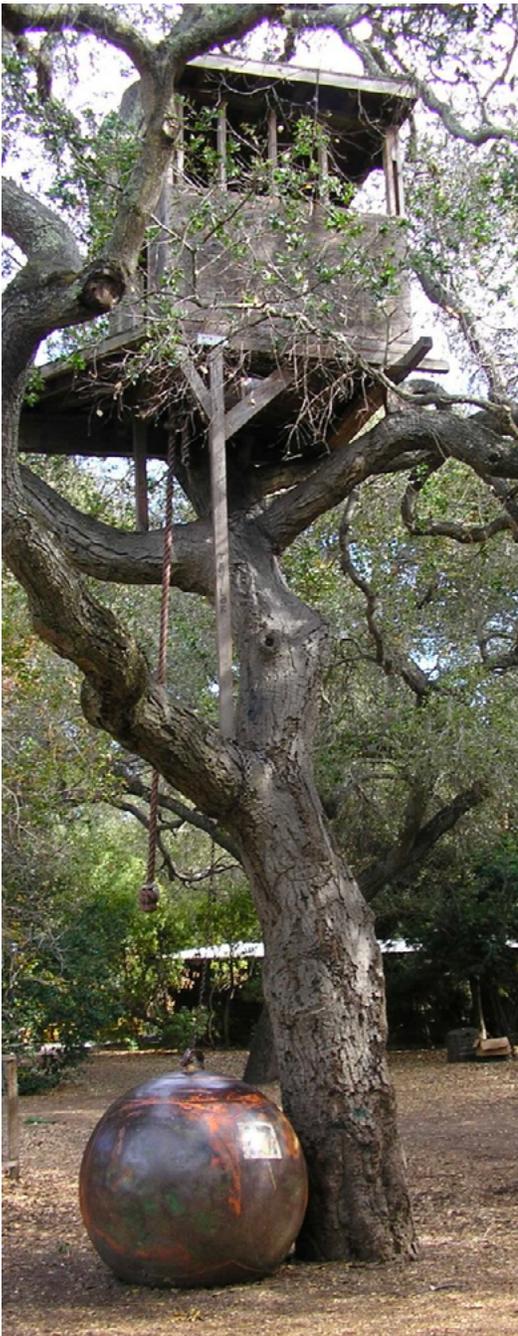


## What's POP?

The People of Peninsula, also known as POP, is an organization of parents/caregivers whose mission is to build a sense of connection and community for families at Peninsula School and to help raise additional resources for the school through events and fundraising. Peninsula School's version of a parent/caregiver and teacher association, POP strives to contribute to each event by mirroring students' classroom daily "work jobs" through community volunteering, thus modeling the values of Peninsula School. We aim to know, support, involve, and value all Peninsula School families. This group values authentic connections, community-building, and teamwork, and aims to know, support, involve and value all Peninsula School families.

## Learn More About Peninsula School

- [Strategic Plan 2019-2025](#)
- [Board of Directors](#)
- [Program Overview](#)
- [After Peninsula](#)



## Future Leadership of the School

The Board of Directors of Peninsula School seeks an experienced educational leader who will fully embrace the school's inspiring mission and bring the skills and passion needed to lead a community of professionals dedicated to progressive education and the social and emotional growth of children. This leader will have the capacity and initiative to work collaboratively to develop a strong sense of shared leadership, enabling the Peninsula community to realize its compelling vision and future for the school.

Tracy Bennett and Joan Beauregard of Educators Collaborative are guiding this national search to identify and recruit the next Head of School. They solicited input from stakeholders when visiting the school and through an online survey. Based on this feedback, their understanding of the school, as well as input from the Search Committee, the following represents a summary of Peninsula School's strengths, challenges and opportunities, and the desired qualities and skills of the next Head of School.

### Strengths of the School

- A warm, welcoming community that values close relationships among its members.
- Parents and educators who have a true appreciation for a school that cultivates and celebrates intellectual curiosity, creativity, and a love of joyful learning.
- Dedicated and inspired teachers who are deeply committed to their work and their students.
- An unwavering commitment to a progressive program that gives children voice and choice in their learning.
- A community dedicated to continued striving in the work of DEIB and social justice and that acknowledges the compelling need to ensure a culture of equity and inclusion can thrive at Peninsula School.
- A bucolic campus, considered an essential part of the Peninsula experience, which provides a real "home" for students to learn and grow.

- A highly engaged and supportive Board of Directors that is focused on the strategic development and success of Peninsula School.
- A thoughtful and aspirational strategic plan that provides a clear roadmap for the school in the coming years.

### Challenges and Opportunities Ahead

- The community will benefit from clear, timely, and consistent communication from its leadership. The Head of School should effectively model and facilitate deep listening, respectful dialogue, and openness to varied perspectives and opinions.
- Following a period of significant change, there is a yearning to repair relationships among administrators, faculty, staff, and parents, building a foundation of trust and respect centered on the shared focus on joyful learning for children. The school can celebrate and promote the deep sense of community that has defined Peninsula for nearly a century, and nurture a culture of kindness, inclusivity, equity, and caring.
- While the school’s financial position is enviably strong, continued review of the long-range financial plan in alignment with the mission and strategic goals will be important. This includes a careful analysis of projected enrollment, tuition revenue, and financial aid levels as well as compensation benchmarks and fundraising goals.
- The new leader should foster a professional culture rooted in a shared commitment to progressive education, continued professional growth, collaboration, and respect that supports a healthy and inspiring work environment.



“  
We are like a family. Much of the education is about connecting with students on their level, but in a personal way, and there are so many caring adults that students are going to find someone to connect with. It’s about the relationships that form between us all.

~ Teacher





- The academic program of the school straddles the delicate balance between a respect for faculty autonomy and a recognition that an articulation of a cohesive program reflecting vertical alignment of the curriculum is needed. Continued reflection on the foundational principles of progressive education and how they shape curriculum and student learning in today's world will offer an exciting opportunity for faculty conversation and collaboration.

- The school acknowledges it is vital to continue its DEIB work at all levels, including hiring, curriculum, affordability, and to support BIPOC students, families, faculty, and staff. Cultivating an authentic experience of belonging for all community members is imperative.



- The 2019-25 Strategic Plan is bold and exciting. Successful implementation will require thoughtful communication, ongoing assessment of priorities and resource allocation, and a strong partnership between the Head and the Board. Engaging the community in this shared investment for the vision and future of the school is key.

- Peninsula School is uniquely situated in an educational landscape offering an array of options, including public, parochial, and independent schools. While the current community can readily describe what makes the school so special, the next Head has the opportunity to elevate the essence and value of the progressive educational experience at Peninsula. The new leader's passion and enthusiasm for the school's mission will inspire student and faculty recruitment and retention.

## Qualifications and Attributes of the Next Head of School

- A keen, respectful, and astute listener and observer who will take the time to understand Peninsula School.
- A pedagogical leader of progressive education with significant teaching experience who will continue to foster a culture deeply committed to educating the whole child.
- A sincere love for children and a commitment to providing what students from nursery through eighth grade need to grow and thrive in school.
- An outgoing and warm personality with a genuine desire to engage in the school community at every level.



- An unwavering personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice coupled with the capacity to support others in this work.
- An inspiring communicator who will speak passionately about the mission of Peninsula School and be an ambassador for progressive education in the greater Bay area.
- A skilled administrator and team builder with experience and demonstrated success in financial management, fundraising, and enrollment growth.
- The ability to invite input from stakeholders while providing a well-defined decision-making process with clarity in direction, responsibility, accountability, and expectations for those involved.
- A commitment to servant leadership that includes delegating responsibility, empowering and inspiring others, working in partnership, and holding people accountable to support continued professional and personal growth.
- Capacity to facilitate inclusive dialogue, make difficult decisions, have courageous conversations, navigate conflict, and build trust.

## To Apply

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials by August 15:

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet and Disclosure Form (contact Tracy Bennett and Joan Beauregard for the documents)
- Letter of Interest addressed to the Search Committee
- Current Resume
- Statement of Educational Leadership Philosophy
- A list of five or more references with contact information (name, relationship to candidate, phone and email address)

### Application materials are to be sent electronically via email to:

Tracy Bennett, Partner, Educators Collaborative  
Email: [tbennett@educatorscollaborative.com](mailto:tbennett@educatorscollaborative.com)  
Phone: (425) 466-4748

Joan Beauregard, Partner, Educators Collaborative  
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