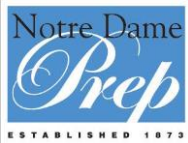




Notre Dame Preparatory School

Head of School

Towson, MD



Introduction

Located in Towson, Maryland and founded in 1873, Notre Dame Preparatory School has been educating and empowering girls to become women who transform the world for over 150 years. NDP is a Catholic, independent, college preparatory school for girls in grades 6 through 12 and a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

The Head of School Position

NDP is now seeking its next Head of School. In partnership with a dedicated leadership team, the next Head of School will lead one of the nation's most treasured Catholic girls' schools. With an exceptional faculty and staff deeply committed to the mission of NDP, a proud and joyful student body, outstanding facilities, loyal alumnae, and a reputation for academic excellence and service, NDP offers an extraordinary career opportunity for an accomplished, mission-aligned, Catholic school leader.



Mission and History

Mission

Where Girls Become Women Who Transform the World

Notre Dame Preparatory School educates and empowers girls to become women who transform the world. As a Catholic, independent, college preparatory school for girls in grades 6 through 12, Notre Dame Prep inspires students to pursue academic excellence, spiritual growth, and the practice of justice. Infused with the spirit of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church, the NDP community strives to answer God's call ". . . to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God." (Micah 6:8)

History

Since its founding in 1873, Notre Dame Preparatory School has provided a stellar college preparatory education to young girls in the tradition of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND). The essence of the school's mission—academic excellence, spiritual growth, and the practice of justice—has remained the same since the school's establishment and provides the foundation allowing NDP to offer a solid liberal arts-based curriculum while responding to the educational needs of the times.



The original school building of Notre Dame of Maryland, the school's founding name, was constructed on Charles Street. The school flourished from the start and gained national prominence when President Ulysses S. Grant conferred diplomas at the school's 1876 commencement. Throughout its first 50 years, the preparatory school attracted students from all over the world. Cardinal James Gibbons often brought visiting dignitaries to Notre Dame, where he kept an

office. As a result, Notre Dame's reputation as a premier Catholic girls' school spread. The preparatory school continued to thrive, but space constraints became a reality.

In 1960, Notre Dame relocated to a spacious, modern campus on Hampton Lane. At the same time, the school reaffirmed its individual identity as Notre Dame Preparatory School, or NDP. The Mother Philemon Doyle Library and new labs were added in 1992 to enhance the academic program and introduce new technology. In 1999, the Irene B. Kirby Educational Center and the Knott Performing Arts Center were built, and athletic facilities were expanded. In 2002, a new Gateway, reminiscent of the gateway that was once located on Charles Street, was constructed. In March 2005, the school opened a state-of-the-art Sports and Fitness Center. In fall 2006, an outdoor courtyard, featuring an original statue of SSND Foundress Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, was dedicated.

In 2012, the school installed the Yeardley Reynolds Love '06 Turf Field and landscaped and refurbished the center courtyard to create a beautiful outdoor space. In 2014, in partnership with the School Sisters of Notre Dame, NDP renovated the Convent building to provide contemporary living space for the sisters and expanded office space. In addition, a separate STEAM Center was created, providing students the necessary space for STEAM instruction, robotics, and design and build projects. In summer 2016, a dedicated Innovation Lab was added to the Middle Level. January 2020 found our students working and studying in the newly opened Innovation Wing, which is dedicated to our STEAM and Humanities programs, and features a new, beautiful outdoor learning space. Today, state-of-the-art technology provides countless learning opportunities for students in both the Middle and Upper Levels.

In 1985, Notre Dame Preparatory School earned national recognition as an Exemplary Private School, in keeping with the standards of excellence established by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Affirming the school's stellar academic reputation, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools re-accredited the school in 2012 with high praise. In 2012–2013, NDP was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a University of Maryland Top Engineering Source School. NDP has also been named a *Baltimore Sun* "Top Workplace." In 2021 NDP reaffirmed its ongoing dedication to justice and equality with the formal adoption of diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments. These commitments, which are an integral part of NDP's mission, vision, and values, will guide our way forward as a

school community dedicated to the Gospel message and the SSND charism of unity.

The 2023–2024 school year marked Notre Dame Preparatory School's 150th Anniversary of educating young women to transform the world, a mission the entire community accepts with enthusiasm, conviction, and faith.



Notre Dame Prep at a Glance

Enrollment (24–25): 843 girls in grades 6 through 12. Middle Level (6–8): 190; Upper Level (9–12): 653. 20% of students are persons of color. Students come from 80+ different ZIP codes, ranging from Annapolis to Southern Pennsylvania.

Class size: 16–20 Student–teacher ratio: 9 to 1.

Employees: 180, including 82 faculty (76% with advanced degrees) and 71 admin/staff. 27% are alumnae.

Tuition: \$23,600 for all grades, with additional fees for selected activities.

Need-Based Financial Aid (2024–25): \$2.2M (11% percent of gross tuition revenue).

Budget (2024–25): \$19.7M. Total gifts (2023–24): \$4.0M.

College placement: 100% of students continue education after high school; the Class of 2024 earned nearly \$35 million in merit aid.

Student activities: Social Service, Student Council, Athletic Association, Christian Community Awareness Program, Diversity Council, retreats, clubs (60+ in Upper Level; 12+ in Middle Level), intramural sports, Gym Meet.

Athletic program: Approximately half of all NDP students participate in interscholastic sports; in the high school, NDP is a member of the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM) and fields teams in all 15 league sports, including Badminton, Basketball, Crew, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Indoor Track, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Squash, Swimming, Tennis, Track and Field, and Volleyball. Nine sports are offered at the middle

level. 24 seniors committed to college athletic teams this year on fall signing day, including all 16 seniors on the lacrosse team. The athletic program is supported by the Sports Boosters Club.

The Arts: A rich program of music, visual arts, dance, and theater is present throughout the school. Listening to enthusiastic cast members of the musical *Hadestown* as they explained how the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice inspired the play was a wonderful example of academic and artistic richness and connectedness. The arts program is supported by Friends of the Arts (FOTA).



Facilities overview: 65-acre wooded campus; three classroom wings, including a new performing arts center with rehearsal and performance space; 23,500 square-foot Innovation Wing dedicated to STEAM learning; state-of-the-art Sports and Fitness Center which houses an NCAA-regulation size basketball court, training room, and fitness room; library with 30,000 volumes; three regulation-size athletic fields (one turf); six tennis courts; swimming pool; field house; softball diamond.

Accolades: Notre Dame Prep has received numerous accolades and awards, including the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence (2012 and 2020), Niche.com Best Catholic High School and A+ School, *Baltimore's Child Readers' Choice Award* for Best Independent School Girls and Best Sports Program, AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award, *Baltimore Style Readers' Choice*, *The Daily Record's* Reader Rankings, and Top Workplace.

Accreditation and Memberships: Notre Dame Preparatory School is accredited by the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools; current accreditation runs from May 1, 2019, through January 1, 2027.

Member:

- National Association of Independent Schools
- National Catholic Education Association
- Association of Independent Maryland Schools
- National Business Officers Association
- Independent School Management
- International Coalition of Girls Schools
- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- Council for the Advancement of Support of Education (CASE)

- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).
- NDP also participates in several national organizations specific to academic content areas

Curriculum: College preparatory, including more than 190 courses (26 Advanced Placement) offered in grades 9–12, including STEAM, Bilingual Certification, dual-enrollment college courses, and fine and performing arts. Other highlights include a unique phasing system, the Bette Ellis O’Conor Humanities Program, and an impressive array of extracurricular activities and clubs.

NDP’s mission is evident in all aspects of the school, particularly through the rich service and justice programs at the school. Distinguishing between the direct impact of service and the long-range potential of advocacy, NDP’s service and justice work is rooted in the Gospel and a direct outgrowth of NDP’s philosophy and the School Sisters of Notre Dame’s charism. It is a central feature of helping girls learn how to transform the world.



Central to Notre Dame Preparatory School’s mission is academic excellence. Yet not all learning occurs in school. The Women In... or WIN Experience places students in career settings so they may explore interests and apply classroom learning to real work and real-world experiences. Founded in 2006 with a focus on science and medicine, WIN has expanded into a multitude of fields. To date, more than 1,800 students have had a WIN experience, with more expected each year as new career tracks are added.

To get a full sense of the richness of the school’s program, please explore further on the [NDP website](#).

Governance and Administration

Sister Patricia McCarron, SSND, Ph.D., retiring Head of School (since 2005); Mrs. Tracey Kuhn, Assistant Head of School for Finance and Administration (since 2023); Sister Sharon Slear, SSND, Ph.D., Executive Director of Academics (since 2023). A 25-member board of trustees governs NDP, led by Chairperson Sister Jane Forni, SSND, Ed.D. NDP is sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Community Strengths and Opportunities for the next Head of School

Strengths

484 respondents participated in the Head of School Discovery Survey, with many others attending meetings to discuss the school. Almost all participants made it clear that they



cherished NDP's sense of community, sisterhood, traditions and history, and Catholic identity. They were equally enthusiastic about faculty and curricular excellence, the breadth of opportunity for students, and the beauty of the campus and its facilities. And they frequently cited the NDP girls themselves, with their "upbeat and competitive spirit" as they form the foundation of their sisterhood for life.

When asked what qualities of NDP will attract strong candidates to the search, community member comments included:

- Emphasize that NDP is renowned for its rich history in educating young women and it fosters graduates who are deeply committed to excelling in their endeavors and making meaningful contributions to their communities.
- Rich legacy, women-focused, exceptional curriculum, opportunity to reshape for modern times while still rooted in the wisdom of Micah, opportunity to increase diversity in faculty, staff, and student body.
- Everyone is truly invested in the students and doing everything and anything for them. There are many traditions that may seem strange at first but, as the saying goes, you get what you put into them. If you are willing to open your heart to learning about and participating in the many traditions, you will feel so much love and goodness.
- We are a school that lives its mission and loves its students. We have numerous traditions that create a vibrant and caring community. We value academic excellence, integrity, and justice, and we cultivate strong and compassionate student leaders. We are an institution that strives to live its Catholic faith and values the morals it provides us.
- SSND's charism of transforming the world through education.
- Our wonderful potential. We have amazing students and programs but are in a period of transition from what we have always been to what we will be. We need to decide what of our past will help us as we move into the future and what is holding us back.
- There is a spirit about this place. When you are here, you will see it, hear it, and feel it.
- The strong community that surrounds the girls. The alumnae and current student community care deeply about NDP's traditions, values of service, and empowerment of women in education. The girls that attend have so much power as a collective and are motivated to make the world a better place. Also, the great school spirit – it is contagious and shows how incredibly talented the students are.

- The faculty and staff! NDP is the place that it is because of the loving and caring people that work there. They always had my best interests in mind when I was a student – it is something that I miss the most.
- Obviously, the academics.
- The warm, inviting environment, faith-based approach, nurturing facility, academic rigor, and the concentration on fun as much as learning!
- NDP allows educators to pursue innovative curriculum and pedagogical techniques while simultaneously cultivating young women who seek to create a more just, loving world.
- Dedicated faculty, and a desire to do right by the students.
- Our school does a great job in honoring traditions that showcase the students in a positive way through Gym Meet, Penny Queen, Concert Band, and so much more.
- Our students capture the essence of being the whole student who isn't just a student but also gives back to the community, engages in sports and the arts, and participates in school-wide events.



Prospective candidates can explore the traditions of NDP on the website and beyond, particularly the Gym Meet tradition. The Gym Meet is an incredible display of group creativity and bondedness. NDP's traditions build the sisterhood and create memories that last a lifetime. We heard about this from students and from alumnae in their eighties.

NDP's reputation is built on these strengths and ideas along with its important role as an all-girls, Catholic institution.

Opportunities

Community Culture

The strength of the school most mentioned in our community survey (Strong Sense of Community) also came up as a challenge. There are community members who speak of divisions in the community, morale concerns, and the need for the next head of school to build trust and foster unity. Many candidates in our search will have seen these same concerns in their current schools and can bring new eyes and new approaches to this work at



NDP. As the new leader meets the community, communication will be key, along with norm setting around what communications are possible in trying times. The backdrop of broader societal issues, arising from COVID, DEI disagreements, and political division, is real, but many community members speak of their loyalty to the school and willingness to be patient and grant grace to the new leader as the school moves forward.

Catholic Identity and Maintaining Traditions

Due to demographic patterns among the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the next head of school will most likely be a strong, practicing Catholic lay leader. Yet there is nothing more certain in NDP's search than the desire to maintain their strong Catholic identity, an identity dating back to the founding of the school by the Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. An equally strong desire to maintain the school's many traditions can be found in all constituencies. Upper-level students mention that they would like to bring new traditions and ideas to the school but then admit that they don't want to remove any of their current traditions. Given the packed school calendar, this creates a dilemma. Fortunately, and impressively, the school has demonstrated the ability to maintain tradition while also opening up new curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students.



One aspect of NDP's Catholic identity is the strong and highly present on-site leadership provided by School Sisters of Notre Dame throughout its history. Thoughtful adaptation will be needed if the new head of school lives off campus.

Societal Anxiety

Independent school parents bring increasingly high expectations to schools of late, citing tuition costs and expressing concern about how their children will fare in the future. This increases pressure on schools and faculties, and sometimes children. Pressure on students, particularly in the COVID aftermath, is a universal concern. NDP, with its mission-based approach and the supportive sisterhood, has a better chance than most schools while working on this. Understanding the anxieties of the day and the emotional needs of students will be important aspects of the new head of school's leadership.

Long Term Financial Strength



Compared to most independent schools, NDP is in a strong financial position. There is a desire, though, to strengthen the school by increasing the endowment to a level found at other area schools. Some community members note that historical/societal realities of the past led to a smaller endowment at NDP than at similar all-boys schools in Baltimore, but this message also came with a resolve to

call on the sisterhood to help change this in the years ahead. When observing the passion of this sisterhood, one gets the impression that this is possible.

The Baltimore Region

Baltimore, the Charm City, has major-city opportunities but is intensely local as well, with a rich weave of neighborhoods. The list of attractions includes the Inner Harbor, with its aquarium, world-class museums, colleges, and universities, notable restaurants (some featuring the famous blue crabs and scent of Old Bay). It also has a rich and complicated history. With the Eastern Shore and Atlantic Ocean to the east and farmland, forests, and outdoor pursuits to the west, it doesn't take long to leave the city for more natural settings. Sports in Baltimore stand out, including the Orioles and Ravens, but also the Preakness Stakes each May. Many would argue that the lacrosse played in Baltimore, at all levels, is the best in the nation. Transit from Baltimore to other major cities is convenient.

The Archdiocese of Baltimore is the oldest in the United States, and the first Catholic presence in the country began in Maryland. This history plays out today in the large number of Catholic-based institutions of the city, including its independent and parochial schools. Notre Dame Prep benefits from this rich educational and religious tradition.

When visiting NDP, one often hears someone say, “When they ask you where you went to school in Baltimore, they mean high school, not college.” It’s a fact. One hears similar stories of NDP alumnae sighting other women around town wearing the NDP ring and striking up a conversation borne of their multigenerational sisterhood. The new head of school will benefit from this bondedness.

Qualifications

Experience and Skills

- An experienced Catholic educational leader.
- Ability to delegate and empower.
- Experience in leading a diverse organization with care and empathy.
- Ability and enthusiasm to actively participate in the school’s advancement efforts.
- A commitment to NDP’s mission.
- Ability to build trust.
- A joyful communicator with all members of the community.
- Financial acumen.
- Previous success as a head of school or senior administrator.
- Superb communication skills.
- An effective writer and public speaker.



Personal Characteristics

- A passionate advocate for girls' education
- A selfless, empathic leader who empowers others.
- Warm, joyful, approachable, and accessible.
- Comfortable being the face of the school.
- Open and embracing of all community members.
- A relationship builder.
- A sense of humor.
- Inspirational, team oriented, and collaborative.
- An advocate for and commitment to service.
- A respect for tradition.
- Forward-looking, courageous, and strategic.

Competencies

Four important competencies rose to the top when community leaders completed DRG's proprietary Competency Generator.

Instills Trust – Gaining the trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.

Communicates Effectively – Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.

Builds Effective Teams – Building strong teams with a strong identity that apply their diverse skills sets and perspectives to achieve common goals.

Collaborates – Building partnerships and working collaboratively to meet shared objectives.

Close behind were Drives Vision and Purpose, Courage, Demonstrates Self Awareness, and Values Differences.

Candidates will be asked to provide specific examples of how they have demonstrated these competencies in their work.



Benefits and Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$275,000 – \$350,000. The school also offers a competitive benefits package.

Application Requirements and Search Process

DRG is conducting this search on behalf of Notre Dame Preparatory School. Interested candidates should submit, as soon as possible, materials including the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position
- A current resume
- A statement of leadership philosophy
- A second writing sample (newsletter, article, talk, parent email, etc.)
- A list of five references (at least three of these references will be contacted when candidates reach the finalist stage, and after receiving candidate permission)

Application materials should be uploaded directly on the DRG website (www.drgtalent.com) by visiting the Notre Dame Prep listing.

Application Status: Accepting Applications through February 14, 2025

Start date: July 1, 2025

This position description is based upon material provided by Notre Dame Preparatory School, an equal-opportunity employer.

To apply for this position, please click [HERE](#).

Andrew Watson, Senior Talent Consultant, awatson@drgtalent.com

Laura Hansen, Senior Talent Consultant, lhansen@drgtalent.com

