

# Alta Vista School



## Technology Systems Manager

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**Location**

San Francisco, CA  
Mission St. and Somerset St. campuses

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**Post Date**

May 2, 2024

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**Priority Deadline**

May 31, 2024

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**On-Site Final Round**

Early June

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**Decision Announced**

June 21, 2024

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**Start Date**

Summer 2024  
(Preferably on or before August 5)

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**Salary Range**

\$140,000 – \$160,000

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**Reports to**

Chief Financial Officer



# Summary

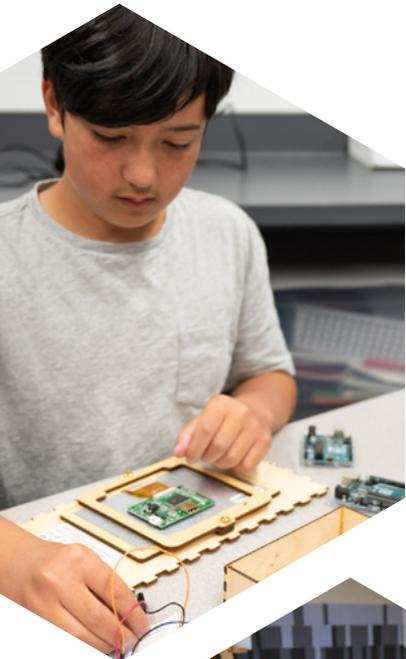
An independent Junior Kindergarten through 8th grade progressive school based in San Francisco, Alta Vista School prepares students to thrive as creative thinkers, innovators, and catalysts for positive change in the world. Between two campuses — the lower school in Portola District, and the middle school in the Mission District — the school's STEAM-powered curriculum and foundation of deep social-emotional learning inspire curiosity, creative problem-solving, and love of learning for all 300+ students.

AVS now seeks a technology systems manager who is ready to lead all areas of IT/IS, which will include gradual, long-term improvements to the school's network and systems architecture, while ensuring daily support needs continue to be met on both campuses. The technology systems manager will begin alongside a new head of school, and report to a new CFO — both of whom will begin later this summer. The manager will also supervise a database administrator, and work closely with external partners for technology support as needed. AVS is excited to welcome its next technology systems manager this summer, ideally before the start of the school year in August.



# Mission, Vision, & Values

We prepare students to thrive as creative thinkers, innovators, and catalysts for positive change in the world.



## Vision

Alta Vista School aims to help children grow dynamically, by providing them with a vigorous, interactive educational experience that engages their imagination and nourishes their curiosity, while teaching them how to think effectively and solve problems. With an emphasis on science, math, engineering, the arts, and social emotional learning, Alta Vista School encourages students to go beyond a strong academic foundation to pursue their passions as well as engage their community and environment.

## Passionate about science and technology

Our approach is rooted in the scientific method. We embrace technology, innovation, and design-thinking as powerful tools for good. Technology is thoughtfully integrated into the classroom with Google Chromebooks, document cameras, video cameras, digital camera, and more.

## The whole child

We focus on the whole child and recognize that school does so much more than provide an intellectual foundation. We guide our students in the discovery and pursuit of their unique talents and interests and sense of self. Beginning in lower school and culminating in middle school, our program promotes self advocacy, responsibility, accountability, and choice to help students build resilience and self-reliance in their academic pursuits and beyond. Our middle school curriculum builds confidence and independence, with an emphasis on analytical and problem-solving skills across a variety of contexts. This foundation will serve our students well as they continue their academic pursuits, and throughout life.





## Experiential, hands-on learning

Taking things apart can be far more illuminating than following an instruction manual. We believe that children learn best when they individually explore, touch, cause, observe, hear, consider, speak, analyze, measure, predict — experience learning. Our teachers are empowered to teach creatively and are supported through small class sizes.

## Serious play

Our teachers are passionate about their work and showcase a joy of teaching. We believe education should be filled with play and joy — and that children's minds will develop most dramatically and positively when it is.



## Grounded in community

Equally crucial to development is learning to be inclusive, responsible, and respectful of ourselves, and the greater community that surrounds us. We ask our students to be kind, respectful, and proud of all their actions, and to take responsibility in their communities around them. This includes individual responsibility, cooperation with peers, and tools for effective and peaceful conflict resolution. An important part of our curriculum is learning to be a contributing community member at Alta Vista and beyond.

## Building on our founders' legacy

We acknowledge and aspire to fulfill the vision of Founding Head of School Ed Walters and the seven Founding Families. We are thankful to them for beginning their wonderful journey together to start our school in June 2010: the Chowdhurys; the Conomos; the Garcia-Mannings; the Lawsons; the Phelps; the Witherspoon-Dadzies; and the Yangs.



# AVS Past, Present, & Future

2010

**AVS is incorporated**

by Twitter's former Chief Scientist, Abdur Chowdhury.

AVS welcomes 18 students and 7 faculty members at the first location in Valencia Street in the Mission.

2012

AVS moves to Somerset, where we turn an old building into a lively space and a basketball court into a garden.

2013

**AVS enrollment reaches 100 students.**

2017

AVS Middle School welcomes its first students to the Mission Street campus.

AVS enrollment reaches 300 students.

2014

AVS Lower School becomes a JK-5th grade school.

2018

**AVS's first graduating class takes flight.**

2024

In July, AVS will welcome Rob Cousins as its new head of school.

2050

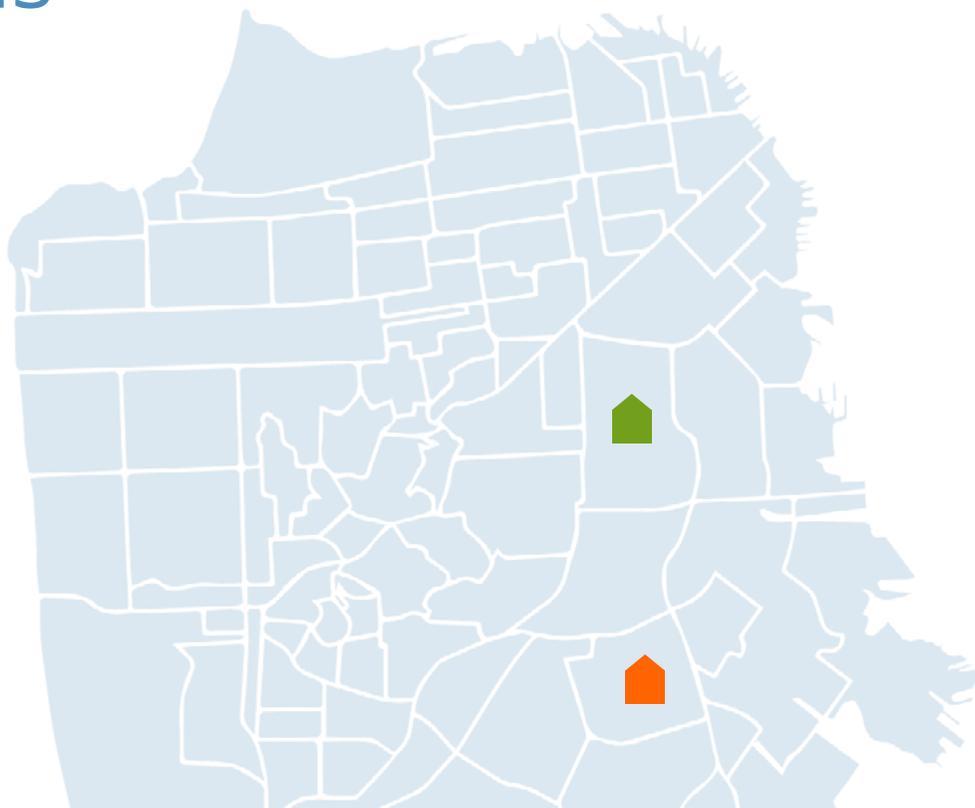
AVS opens its first interstellar campus on Mars Colony.



# Two-Campus Community

 **Middle School**  
2558 Mission Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110

 **Lower School**  
450 Somerset Street  
San Francisco, CA 94134



## Alta Vista Lower School

### Foundations

STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics)

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Social and emotional learning

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion

### Pillars

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Community Meetings

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Current Events presentations

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Science Fair

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Research project and presentation

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Performances and concerts

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Engineering challenge and Rube Goldberg project



## Alta Vista Middle School

### Foundations

STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics)

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Social and emotional learning

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion

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Responsibility, independence, and choice

### Pillars

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Community Meetings and advisories

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Student leadership

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Problem Based Interdisciplinary STEAM Projects

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Landmark experiences

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Performances and concerts

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Arts Bonanza



# Key Statistics



**317**  
Students  
enrolled from  
JK to 8th grade



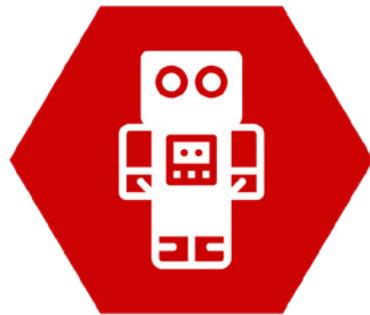
**14**  
Average  
homeroom size  
across all grades



**30**  
ZIP codes  
represented  
among the  
student body



**51%**  
Students  
of color



**100%**  
STEAM-based curriculum  
(science, technology,  
engineering, arts, and  
mathematics)



**35%**  
Faculty and  
staff of color



**1:1**  
Device-to-  
student ratio,  
starting at  
2nd grade



**1.3M**  
dollars budgeted  
for Tuition  
Assistance grants  
in 2022-23



**2.3M**  
dollars received in  
charitable giving  
in 2021-22

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



# Technology in the Classroom

21st century education requires competency in using technological tools to support the learning process. However, technological tools are thoughtfully used to assist the learning process, not to become the process.

Students and teachers at AVS at every level employ a wide variety of software and hardware tools to deepen their learning. Students use Google Drive for writing and editing their own writing as well as collaborating with their peers in multiple subject areas. They learn to use voice-to-text typing and audio recording software to record radio advertisements or interviews for research projects. Some

students use Chrome extensions to produce stop-motion animation clips. Computer programming is integrated into various courses, creating cross-curricular projects.

Internet safety is a prime component of whole-group lessons. Through the Common Sense Media program and other resources, students learn how to control their own digital footprint and why it's important. These conversations are ongoing, and practicing good digital citizenship is a necessary element for continued access to these learning tools.



## Lower School

In addition to interactive classroom projectors with document cameras and other group teaching tools that are present in every classroom, AVS students dive into a number of projects that help them hone their technological prowess. 1st-graders learn about direction and measurement by programming robots through mazes. 2nd-graders program their own interactive name poems and begin to practice typing and work processing with tools like Google Docs. 3rd-graders use Scratch — developed and run by MIT — to demonstrate their knowledge of the rock cycle. 4th-graders create an interactive math game that uses random number generators. Dreambox is used to assign differentiated math homework for 2nd-, 3rd-, and 4th-graders. In 2nd and 3rd grades, students become proficient in typing and using their Chromebooks so that, beginning in 4th grade, technology is more seamlessly integrated into the students' learning experiences. 5th-graders have used 3D-modeling software to deepen their understanding of the human eye in their science classes.

## Middle School

All middle school students receive a school issued Chromebook, which is theirs to use at school for all of their coursework. Teachers use Otus Learning Management System where students and parents can log in at any time to view their assignments and grades. While technology is integrated into the overall Middle School curriculum, students also have the option to take specific elective courses in the area of computer science, podcasting, and broadcasting to further develop technology skills.



# STEAM

At Alta Vista School we take an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to STEAM education. Engineering challenges are the hallmark of hands-on and experiential learning at the AVS Lower School. Through these challenges students learn not to fear mistakes, to fail forward, take feedback, celebrate risk-taking, innovate, and find joy in discovering how various things work and connect to one another.

In Lower School, topics within the core subjects of science, mathematics, literacy, and social studies are considered through multiple lenses and across disciplines to reflect real-world experiences and challenges. The core program is enriched with specialist classes like Spanish, Garden and Sustainability, Physical Education, Drama and Visual Arts. This robust STEAM-based educational approach promotes thinking critically, taking multiple perspectives, and solving problems creatively.

In the Middle School, STEAM-focused projects take the form of interdisciplinary challenges which broaden students' horizons and solidify cross-curricular connections. These projects span the course of the academic school year and range from theoretically establishing life-supporting colonies on Mars to gathering their own leaf specimens from the streets of San Francisco in order to create field guides to the plant life in San Francisco. Students are encouraged to ask questions, collaborate, and engage in the world around them.



# Background & Narrative



Alta Vista School (AVS) brings joy and creativity to its entire academic program. As a relatively young school, which is about to celebrate its fifteenth anniversary, AVS has retained its nimble, innovative, and imaginative spirit, even as it grows and matures as a progressive STEAM school in the culturally diverse neighborhoods within the southern half of San Francisco proper.

AVS has two campuses, each of which is unique in its own right. The lower school uses all three floors of a spacious former Catholic school facility in the Portola District. Large classrooms have lots of natural light. Rooms on the lower level have been converted into theatrical and art spaces. Outside the school added modular classrooms within a very large, open, outdoor play area, which is adjacent to a small educational garden space. The entire facility sits on a quiet residential street, but inside the perimeter the bustling sounds of elementary school echo through large, colorful hallways.

Less than ten years ago, AVS expanded to a second campus in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District. The school owns a compact, ground-floor, mixed-use facility, which has the feel of part fabrication space, part small tech start-up. Almost every inch of space has been leveraged to receive maximum benefit for the middle school students that come each day to design, build, tinker, and explore.

The technology program in many ways reflects the arc of a small start-up school that has grown fast. Students use iPads and Chromebooks, and faculty are issued MacBooks. The IT infrastructure comprises a patchwork of homegrown systems, some improvised network infrastructure, and creative solutions to accommodate both an old physical campus built well before the days of the Internet, and a compact, more modern campus that came online relatively quickly.

AVS seeks a technology systems manager who is ready to help redesign and rebuild much of the network and systems architecture. AVS is not in any technology crisis, but by the same token school leadership recognizes that the IT/IS program needs an overhaul in many areas to ensure technology services are reliable, scalable, robust, secure, and manageable. AVS understands that this endeavor will take months to years, not days to weeks. But by the same token the next technology systems manager should be ready to roll up their sleeves as early as this summer to take oversight of all areas of IT/IS, and begin addressing opportunities to improve core services.



The exciting news is that the next technology systems manager will enter the school right at the inflection point of a new era. A new head of school is arriving this July, having served most recently as an academic leader at a progressive school in Manhattan, NY. The technology systems manager post will continue reporting to the chief financial officer, as it has for many years prior. The CFO position is also open at the moment, which means the technology systems manager will have the chance to start around the same time as their new boss. All this put together means that the technology systems manager will have a chance to play an important role in shaping the next chapter of the school's dynamic history.

Supporting the technology systems manager is a second-in-command, full-time technology position, which is currently titled database administrator. Because the school has two campuses, it's important for the technology systems manager to establish presence at both campuses, as well as ensure that each campus has regular access to a technology administrator. This does not mean that the two technology professionals can never be in the same place at the same time. But at the same time, the technology systems manager does need to be cognizant of the needs of both campuses, and be highly organized, communicative, and proactive when thinking about service, schedules, and systems.

For several years, the school has leveraged a third-party contractor to provide faculty training during Covid, and more recently, data administration support. This partnership was most helpful during the school's recent transition to Veracross, a student information system used by many independent schools. Once the next technology systems manager is installed, this partnership will fall under the purview of the technology systems manager. Going forward, the technology systems manager will have a chance to work with the next CFO and incoming head of school to ensure that resources are properly allocated to meet the needs of all faculty and staff.

AVS is excited to welcome its next technology systems manager this summer. Ideally, the technology systems manager would be able to hit the ground running before the start of the school year, which begins mid-August. Upon joining the AVS community, the next technology systems manager will find a warm, diverse, and close-knit community that continues to learn, grow, and evolve as it prepares students to thrive as creative thinkers, innovators, and catalysts for positive change in the world.



**Rob Cousins**  
Incoming  
Head of School



**Liz Davis**  
Head of  
Middle School

Rob Cousins will join Alta Vista as the head of school in July 2024. Rob currently serves as Principal at Ethical Culture School in New York City, a position he has held since 2012. Rob is excited about Alta Vista's educational model, which he describes as "progressive principles with STEAM subjects at the heart of the curriculum." Liz Davis is the head of middle school at AVS, where she has worked since 2019. Liz has a background in academic and instructional technology and is excited to partner with the new technology systems manager.

We invite you to watch our [interview with Rob](#) and our [interview with Liz](#). Rob and Liz talk about the dynamic and diverse community at AVS, as well as the major impact that the technology department has across all areas of school operations.



# Duties

## Systems Management

Oversee and evaluate the deployment of all hardware and software in terms of migration, rollout, customer satisfaction, performance, and asset management.

Identify, suggest, and implement improvement to the application system environment, including processes, functions, and database structures.

Ensure that the school's network, servers, data storage, phone system, A/V installations, printing systems, and overall IT infrastructure are delivering a reliable service and meeting the needs of faculty, staff, and students.

Interface with other departments to provide essential data services and report management.



## Technology Leadership

Manage the database administrator, and ensure that requests for technology assistance are addressed in a timely and professional manner.

Under the direction of the CFO, to which this position reports, and in partnership with other school leaders, engage collaboratively with long-term technology planning and strategy.

Evaluate emerging technologies in support of current, as well as future, academic and operational needs, and establish external technology partnerships as needed.

Manage the technology budget and general operations of the technology program, and perform other duties as assigned.

## Faculty, Staff, and Student Partnership

Serve as the school's technology project manager for upgrades and transitional initiatives, both school-wide and within specific departments.

Partner with other academic leadership to ensure educational technology needs are supported.

Design and deliver essential technology training for faculty, staff, students, and parents.

Be a visible presence and hands-on support partner to ensure that requests for technology assistance are addressed in a timely and professional manner.



# Qualifications & Qualities



## Professional Qualifications & Experience

Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university

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Experience coordinating or managing technology projects and initiatives, preferably in an educational institution

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Experience administering data systems or enterprise applications

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Prior experience supporting IT operations, including: security, networking, backup, disaster and recovery planning, risk management, or hardware deployment

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## Leadership & Personal Qualities

An eagerness to step away from the office and seek out colleagues across campus, in the spirit of cultivating meaningful and supportive relationships

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Curious passion for technology, and a highly skilled problem solver

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Excellent budgeting skills with the ability to plan strategically and cost-effectively, as well as prioritize resources

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Leadership and project management skills to successfully lead large-scale change initiatives

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Exceptional communication skills: written, verbal, presentation, and training

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An understanding of the diverse technology needs of a two-campus independent school

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A commitment to the mission and core beliefs of Alta Vista School

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Capability to lift up to 25 pounds and access hardware in hard-to-reach spaces

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# How to Apply

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of Alta Vista School to identify exceptional leaders in technology.

Direct inquiries to:

[jobs@EdTechRecruiting.com](mailto:jobs@EdTechRecruiting.com)



Applications submitted by May 31, 2024 will receive priority review.

All applications must be submitted online:

[www.EdTechRecruiting.com/jobs/AVS/technology](http://www.EdTechRecruiting.com/jobs/AVS/technology)

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

1. Cover letter introducing yourself to Alta Vista School search committee
2. CV or resume
3. A list of four references (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you — though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)
4. A response to the following prompt:

*In 300 words or less, share an example of when you led an enterprise-level, technology change initiative in an organization. Briefly describe your approach and considerations.*

*Alta Vista School is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity for applicants and employees and makes its hiring and employment decisions without regard to race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, genetic characteristics, or medical condition as defined under applicable laws. Employee decisions shall comply with all applicable laws prohibiting discrimination in employment.*

