

DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY



THE THACHER SCHOOL

The philosophy of The Thacher School is rooted in the wisdom and work of its founder, Sherman Day Thacher, who embraced the extraordinary natural venue of the school and sought above all else to train students “in the art of living for their own greatest good and for the good of their fellow citizens.” In that same vein, The Thacher School seeks a talented, experienced, and enthusiastic Director of Library Services and Educational Technology, who can authentically connect this philosophy of aspiring to the greatest good to the disciplines of educational technology, library, innovation, and information services. This is a new position reporting to the Assistant Head of School and serving on the Leadership Team.

SUMMARY

<i>Position:</i>	Director of Library Services and Educational Technology
<i>Reports to:</i>	Assistant Head of School
<i>Organization:</i>	The Thacher School
<i>Post date:</i>	September 19, 2016
<i>Application deadline:</i>	November 7, 2016
<i>Decision announced:</i>	January 31, 2017
<i>Start date:</i>	July 1, 2017



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

MISSION

Thacher trains young men and women in the art of living for their own greatest good and for the greatest good of their fellow citizens in a diverse and changing world. To that end, the School augments its highly challenging academic program with profound lessons learned from the care of a horse, regular chores around the School, teamwork on playing fields, outstanding instruction in the arts, the give and take of everyday life with schoolmates and teachers, and adventures shared in the wilderness. The aim is to inspire and encourage hard work, integrity, self-reliance, a lifelong love of learning and truth, self-knowledge, and a deep concern for the world in which we live.



CORE PRINCIPLES AT THACHER

Honor

Fairness

Kindness

Truth

STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

Thacher's goal is to be the best high school in the world. To do that, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our work. We believe that by understanding ourselves and others, we can move with purpose towards the greater good. To be a community of excellence and authenticity, we work to raise awareness around differences of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomics, religion, family structure, sexual orientation, and geographic origin.



KEY STATISTICS

- **Founded:** 1889
- **Location:** 425-acre campus in Ojai, CA, about 1.5 hours north of Los Angeles
- **Students:** 244 students (228 of which are boarding) in grades 9–12. Students come from 24 different US states and 12 different countries. International students make up 12% of the student body, and 41% of all students are students of color.
- **Admissions:** 646 applications; admit rate of 13%; enrollment rate of 77%
- **Faculty:** 80% of teachers have advanced degrees, and the median teaching experience is 20 years. Faculty to student ratio is 6:1.
- **Accreditation:** Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the California Association of Independent Schools
- **Endowment:** \$138 million
- **Financial aid:** \$3 million, awarded to 28% of students
- **Web:** www.thacher.org

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Where Thacher began isn't so far from where it is today. Here, ambitious students take on challenging academics while learning a thing or two about resilience, grit, and living a balanced life under the wide open skies and rolling mountains of the Ojai Valley.

Trail to Ojai

Sherman Day Thacher didn't travel from Connecticut to Ojai with a school in mind. In search of a rejuvenating environment for his ailing brother, Mr. Thacher arrived with him in 1887 and developed a deep appreciation for the stunning landscapes and open, resourceful, and informal attitudes of Western life. When a New England friend asked Mr. Thacher to tutor his son for admission to Yale, he accepted—as long as the boy could come to Ojai for his lessons. The friend agreed, and in 1889 Mr. Thacher's School was begun.

But while his counterparts in the East were scratching their heads over what to do with the boys during blizzards and mud season, Mr. Thacher wondered only, "Which trail to take the lads on today?" He simply turned the mountains and meadows into a vast classroom without boundaries, one with limitless opportunities for lessons and growth. And the horses? In them he found some of his best teachers.

East Meets West

Sherman Thacher's education was decidedly Eastern, from his high school years at Hopkins Grammar School to his college days at Yale. Strict academic schedules, meat-and-potatoes classics taught by dedicated scholar-teachers, seated meals in coat and tie. Then and now, some of this stuck: students and faculty still sit down to formal, family style meals four times a week, and our curriculum, faculty, facilities, programs, and college placement are models for other schools around the country. But with the West as their backdrop, Mr. Thacher and his students forged a more expansive path, combining traditional academics with horses and mountain trails, inspiring resourcefulness, perseverance, and the conviction that some of life's most lasting lessons are learned outside the classroom.



ABOUT THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROGRAM

The Thacher community believes that learning happens best in the context of relationships. The faculty and students live and learn together in a vibrant community that motivates students to achieve their maximum potential. Learning spaces are intimate, each classroom is unique, and collaboration and conversation are celebrated as central elements of teaching and learning.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Positive risk taking

Achievement + happiness

Supportive peer culture

Deep relationships

Power of place



Technology has been thoughtfully and carefully introduced so as to support, not inhibit, those student-teacher relationships. Students have laptops and access to computer technology day or night. Classrooms have projection systems, with some of those supporting interactive and collaborative features. The school has invested heavily in core IT infrastructure and boasts a solid wireless and Internet backbone. The faculty is supported whenever they request funds to explore new ideas or technologies.

The library is a beautiful facility located at the center of campus. Always open, the library invites and welcomes faculty and students to study on their own, relax, or work in groups. A full-time assistant librarian oversees the daily operations of the library.

Thacher is not and never will be a “laptop school” or a “technology school.” The core values of Thacher go far beyond the notion that a piece of hardware or software can or even should be the central component of a teaching and learning program. That being said, the Thacher faculty over the last several years has become increasingly motivated to learn about educational technology techniques and digital media systems. Thacher teachers, who are already some of the best in the world, want their classes and the student experiences in those classes to become even better. “I don’t know what I don’t know” is a statement often echoed by teachers who work at this boarding school islanded away from the chaos that is the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The right Director is someone who will take time to build partnerships with the faculty, be a catalyst for incremental change, and help foster a culture of educational innovation that is sometimes—but not always—enabled by technology itself.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The new Director of Library Services and Educational Technology will have a unique opportunity to reshape and connect multiple disciplines of learning and design as the school enters a new chapter for its academic program. The two primary disciplines are:

Educational technology: A relatively new area for Thacher. A few years ago, the school engaged with a contractor who provided occasional Ed tech integration support, though this work was primarily centered around user training for the new learning management system. The school has never employed a full-time educational technology integrator.

Library services: A well-established program and physical space for Thacher. Housed in a beautiful facility in the center of the campus, the James G. Boswell Library collection comprises over 20,000 books and 70 periodicals. The library also contains special collections, archives, historical treasures, a computer lab, meeting and classrooms, and even a small makerspace.

In essence, this new position is at the nexus of where “old meets new.” But as any veteran librarian or educational technology director knows, library and educational technology are not unrelated, but rather two sides of the same coin that is instructional design, curricular innovation, information services, digital literacy, and pedagogical creativity. The right candidate is someone who would be thrilled at the opportunity to lead and reshape both these disciplines—by partnering with existing programs, classes, and departments to further the academic mission of the school. The Director is like a head coach who oversees both the offensive and defensive units: though serving different functions, they really are part of the same team.



One of the first tasks for the new Director will be to hire an Academic Technology Integrator. This search has been put on hold until the new Director is hired, so that the Director can have an opportunity to contribute to the hiring process. Ideally, the new Academic Technology Integrator will be hired in time for the 2017-2018 school year.

Once staffing is settled, the primary focus of the Director will be to ensure the successful design and implementation of both educational technology and library services, which include:

Library

- Managing the physical space, circulation, archives, and collections
- Supervising the Assistant Librarian
- Supporting students and teachers who utilize the physical library and its services
- Partnering with departments on major research initiatives
- Coming into classes to instruct on best practices of research
- Developing a library curriculum and strategic plan that aligns with the needs of the school



Educational technology

- Designing, overseeing, and delivering educational technology support to faculty, via trainings, workshops, and institutes
- Coordinating with the IT department on common areas of technology, including: classroom spaces, hardware and software deployment, and enterprise systems
- Developing an educational technology curriculum and strategic plan that aligns with the needs of the school



In August of 2016, in partnership with Ed Tech Recruiting, the school hosted a two-day, faculty professional development experience that covered a range of educational technology and curricular design topics. This event included speakers from other schools, all of whom shared ideas and facilitated workshops with Thacher faculty. The right Director is someone who, in partnership with the Assistant Head of School and Dean of Faculty, will be excited to develop an ongoing, robust professional development program that helps the faculty grow and learn.

As the Director settles in, other areas related to educational technology, library services, innovation, and information systems will warrant further examination, including:

- IT services
- Registrar services
- Robotics
- Maker movement
- Design thinking
- Learning spaces and commons: library, classrooms, and labs

Each of these areas is in a different state. IT services is a well-established department with two full time employees. Registrar services, and more specifically the student information system, is a distributed task split among multiple employees. Robotics, maker movement, and design thinking are emerging areas that will undoubtedly require more resources as student interest is piqued. Though some learning spaces have been renovated, a long-term campus master plan is just being developed. In the long run, it may make sense to consolidate one or more of these areas under the Director of Library Services and Educational Technology, but that decision will be reserved for a later date. However, the right Director is someone who is willing and able to manage or contribute to one or more of these additional areas, in addition to education technology and library services.



THE POSITION: DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

SPECIFIC DUTIES

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- Ensure that all members of the community receive sufficient internal and external educational technology training and integration support
- Coordinate with the IT Department and other staff on major areas of overlap with respect to technology services, including classroom AV, hardware and software deployment, and enterprise systems such as the school website, LMS, and SIS
- Supervise the Academic Technology Integrator

LIBRARY

- Manage the physical space, circulation, archives, databases, and collections
- Support students and teachers who utilize the physical library and its services
- Partner with departments on major research and library-specific initiatives
- Design and deliver lessons for students on research and information literacy
- Supervise the Assistant Librarian

GENERAL

- Develop and maintain strategic and operational plans for educational technology and library services that are aligned with the mission and values of the school and that support the goals of the various divisions and departments
- Develop, deliver, and evaluate faculty and student trainings throughout the year, including personalized trainings, workshops, in-service days, and summer institutes
- Design and implement programs and initiatives that further the integration and blending of both educational technology and library systems
- Manage and plan the library and educational technology budgets
- Serve on and/or oversee technology-related and library-related committees at the leadership, faculty and staff, and student levels
- Attend professional development workshops and conferences
- Oversee the research and evaluation of emerging technologies, information literacy, library services, and innovative curricular techniques
- Maintain an active presence in the local, regional, and national educational technology and library communities
- Ensure the successful establishment and maintenance of local, regional, and national partnerships to support the strategic goals of the educational technology and library services departments
- Help develop a culture of creative innovation to meet the dynamic and evolving needs of an excellent 21st century school, by being an inspirational yet patient leader of best practices in innovation, experimentation, and technology integration
- Other duties as assigned



PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

The Thacher School is looking for candidates who can demonstrate:

- A strong set of technology and library skills, and relevant professional training. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is a minimum requirement, though a graduate degree in management, instructional technology, information systems, library science, or other relevant field is highly desirable
- Significant experience as a technology and/or information services leader, including areas such as: project and personnel management, enterprise systems management, library management, end-user training and support, financial planning
- Experience working in a technology and/or library department of an educational institution. Prior classroom teaching experience is highly desirable
- A successful history of implementing and growing large-scale professional development experiences for employees—particularly faculty
- Strong communication skills: written, verbal, presentation, and training
- Passion for working in a boarding school environment that values both deep connections with students, as well as rigorous outdoor educational experiences
- A thoughtful but determined approach to change management and department unification—while still remaining true to organizational goals and community culture.
- A collaborative, cooperative, and patient mindset
- Visionary leadership that is in tune with the needs of a dynamic and diverse faculty
- Capability to lift up to 25 pounds and access hardware in hard-to-reach spaces

QUOTE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

"Thacher gives all its students the most precious of gifts: the opportunity to discover not only who they are, but, more importantly, what they can become as they move from challenge to achievement to personal fulfillment. They are surrounded by a motivated peer group and adults who know them and care deeply for them; they are held to high standards out of this concern for their growth."

—Michael K. Mulligan
Head of School



TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of The Thacher School to recruit exceptional professionals to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

Gabriel Lucas
Principal, Ed Tech Recruiting
gabe@edtechrecruiting.com

Applications will be considered through November 7, 2016. Candidates should send the following five separate PDF attachments to jobs@edtechrecruiting.com:

- Cover letter addressed to the Thacher search committee
- CV or résumé
- A list of four or more references (including phone numbers and emails—we will obtain your permission first before contacting references)
- A short list of major accomplishments, projects, or initiatives related to educational technology integration, library services, instructional design, or curricular innovation
- Statement of educational philosophy that addresses the following prompt:

What are the short-term hazards and long-term benefits of unifying an educational technology program and a traditional library department? What are some best practices and innovative ideas for successfully integrating these two traditionally separate entities?

All applicants for employment will be provided equal opportunity regardless of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or veteran status.

