DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES

THE ALEXANDER DAWSON SCHOOL

Since 2000, a beacon of pre-school through 8 independent school education in Southern Nevada has focused on the intellectual, social-emotional, and physical growth of the next generation of leaders and learners. The Alexander Dawson School at Rainbow Mountain employs faculty and staff leaders to spark student curiosity, celebrate discovery, and inspire deep learning. To do all this, the school embraces best practices and emerging trends in innovation, technology, instructional design, and information services.

Alexander Dawson seeks a talented, experienced, and visionary Director of Innovation and Information Services to lead its academic technology and information services departments. This position reports to the Director of Education.

The school is located on a beautiful 33-acre facility in the planned community of Summerlin, just outside the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. Less than 30 minutes from the Las Vegas resort strip, the community of Summerlin is ideal for those who love the outdoors with abundant opportunities for hiking, biking and golf.

SUMMARY

Position:	Director of Innovation and Information Services
Reports to:	Director of Education
Organization:	The Alexander Dawson School at Rainbow Mountain
Post date:	February 1, 2017
Application deadline:	February 24, 2017
Decision announced:	March 31, 2017
Start date:	July 1, 2017 (or earlier if mutually agreeable)

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

MISSION

The Alexander Dawson School at Rainbow Mountain is a nurturing learning community for boys and girls in preschool through grade eight that challenges students to achieve excellence in mind, body and character.

CORE BELIEFS

Entrepreneur G.B. (Jerry) Henderson's vision and philanthropy are the cornerstones of The Alexander Dawson Schools. A lifelong learner, Mr. Henderson was fascinated by technology, education, and innovation. He was dedicated to providing students with the highest-quality education. Dawson's Core Beliefs are a reflection of Mr. Henderson's legacy.

TEACHING & LEARNING

- Dawson graduates are complex problem solvers and collaborators; empathetic, flexible, and innovative; and critical thinkers who develop into resilient lifelong learners and leaders.
- Through choice and reflection, Dawson students are active agents and advocates for their learning experience.
- A Dawson education facilitates deeper learning because students approach tasks from multiple perspectives, and draw connections across disciplines and the outside world.
- Within collaboration and healthy competition, students find value in both successes and failures. Teachers best engage and motivate students through encouragement, nurturing, inspiration and inquiry.
- We recognize students learn at different paces and in different ways, and we differentiate instruction accordingly.
- We continually reevaluate the curriculum for relevance, current methodologies, quality of intellectual content and intrinsic interest.
- We are a true learning community. Dawson's faculty and administrators model lifelong learning by investing in educational best practices, advances in technology and relevant world development.

Dawson's Vision

Our graduates will be ready to achieve their individual potential, savor life and meet the challenges of the world.

CORE BELIEFS (CONTINUED)

THE DAWSON COMMUNITY

- We choose to be part of the Dawson community because we share in the vision and values of the Dawson educational experience.
- We find strength in our diversity and commit to learning from each other.
- Although families are the primary educators of their children, student achievement throughout life is increased when the School and families work together as partners.
- Each of us is a model for the rest of us; each of us interacts with integrity and cares for the rest of us.

THE WORLD

- With an appreciation of the sacrifices others have made for freedom and social justice, our students learn what it means to be engaged and contributing global citizens. Our students commit themselves to the responsibility of being agents of positive change.
- Global citizens investigate root causes, analyze solutions, connect with people in need and become empowered activists in the problem-solving process.
- As members of the desert environment, we strive to foster an awareness of and responsibility for preservation and sustainability of our natural resources.

KEY STATISTICS

- **Founded**: 2000
- **Location**: 33-acre campus in Las Vegas, NV
- **Students**: 520 students in grades PS-8. 80% of students come from Nevada. Major relocation states include California, Texas, and New Jersey.
- **Admissions**: Acceptance rate is 78%; yield is 73% of new students annually
- **Faculty**: Student to faculty ratio is 8:1.
- **Accreditation**: Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS), and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- **Financial aid**: Over $1.4M awarded to approximately 20% of Dawson students
- **Website**: www.adsrm.org

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

G.B. "Jerry" Henderson was a philanthropist and entrepreneur, fascinated by technology, education, and innovation. In 1957 Jerry established the Alexander Dawson Foundation, naming it for his father and dedicating it to children's education. His goal was to inspire children to not just learn, but to be responsible citizens who would lead purposeful lives, to counter the lack of inspiration he experienced through his own educational journey.

Although Jerry was not an educator, as in so many other things, Jerry was ahead of his time. Concepts that have come into the mainstream today were central to the Alexander Dawson Foundation's mission and philosophy since its inception. Educating the whole child was key to inspiring life-long learners who took personal responsibility for their future and the future of their community. Long before it was popular, Jerry understood that the best way to learn something is to engage in an activity that requires the skill or knowledge that one wants to learn. Today this idea goes by different names, active learning or experiential education.

In 1996, the Alexander Dawson Foundation decided to open a school in the Las Vegas Valley, the Foundation's home for more than 30 years. Located on a 33-acre campus in the beautiful community of Summerlin, the Alexander Dawson Foundation spent $58 million for the land, facilities, the interest expenses on the construction bonds, and budget support during the School's early years. Construction broke ground in 1999, and The Alexander Dawson School at Rainbow Mountain opened on September 6, 2000, with over 150 students from kindergarten through fifth grade. From 2001-2003, the School expanded by adding sixth, seventh and eighth grades to the curriculum. A three-year-old preschool curriculum was added in 2009.

ABOUT THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Early childhood

Our goal in early childhood is to nurture, challenge, and assist children in developing socially, emotionally, and intellectually. We do this through teaching independence and problem solving skills, attending and listening skills, speech and language skills, fine and gross motor skills, and reading, writing and math readiness skills. We encourage creative play, which is an outlet for the richness of student creativity, and an absolutely critical part of childhood.

Lower School

The elementary school years lay the foundation for student success. During these years, educational experiences cement lifelong passions and a love of learning. The Alexander Dawson Lower School provides hands-on and minds-on activities that shape each child's intrinsic motivation to learn and excel. From simulating country travels across grade levels to first-hand exploration of the economic principles of mini-societies, our talented teachers inspire curiosity by providing opportunities that require critical thinking and collaboration. We listen to student questions and understand that, out of these questions, comes some of the most creative ideas and discoveries.

Middle School

Learning and growing takes place in every corner of the Middle School, and connections are cemented through relationships. We satisfy student need for novelty with unique options such as Robotics, Global Marketplace, Video Game Programming, Computer Engineering, and Speech and Debate. Deeply engrained in our culture is the importance of community, lifelong learning, and striving for personal excellence. Our small class sizes allow our talented teaching staff to differentiate instruction to match each child's needs and optimal learning styles. Students move from direct instruction and facilitation to small groups to pairs and to peer-coaching opportunities within each period. Each student is provided a laptop, the guidance to make productive use of it, as well as tools like accelerometers and conductivity sensors to expand their ability to interact with the world.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The technology program at Alexander Dawson is poised for long-term success. From an innovative faculty professional development model to the launching of new faculty support roles, the school has many critical pieces already in place:

Teacher Academy: At most schools, teachers lack sufficient time to gather as an entire faculty when classes are not in session. By contrast, Alexander Dawson recognizes that to effectively implement new ideas and methodologies, the school must give teachers extended time to learn and explore innovative topics in depth. Thus, at Alexander Dawson the faculty gathers for two weeks of teacher academy each year: one week in February, and one week in August. These are invaluable professional development days, during which ideas are turned into action.

Instructional Designers: Starting in the 2017–2018 academic year, the school will have multiple members of the faculty serving as instructional designers. These teachers will be given course relief to help their colleagues reimagine their pedagogical approaches to innovation, integration, and experimentation. Although much of this faculty support will likely revolve around technology integration, the Alexander Dawson leadership has intentionally called these positions instructional designers, to emphasize that the goals are curricular innovation and pedagogical improvement, not merely technology for technology's sake.

1:1 program from grades 2 – 8: The school's academic technology program leverages iOS and OSX devices across multiple divisions. In grades 2 through 5, students have access to a school-owned Mac laptop that remains on campus. In grades 6 through 8, students take their school-managed Mac lap home with them.   iPads are in use throughout the campus, particularly in the lower grades via shared carts.

Innovative Classes: The school offers a number of forwarding-thinking classes, including: Engineering and Design, Woodshop, Darkroom Photography, Digital Photography, Broadcasting, Video Game Programming, Global Marketplace, Media Literacy, Future City, Computer Engineering, Multimedia Design, and Music Technology.

Library: The library plays an integral role in the technology program. The Head Librarian has been with the school since its founding and is dedicated to teaching both technology and information literacy skills. The library itself has multiple instruction spaces, including a technology lab with state-of-the-art equipment.

IT Department: The school has two full-time IT professionals plus two part-time staff who manage and support the infrastructure side. The network is mostly powered by HP hardware, including an ESX cluster running VMWare for the virtual server environment. Firewall services are managed through a Baracuda appliance, data backup is performed with Unitrends, and load balancing is delivered through Peplink.

Enterprise Systems: The school is a fully integrated Blackbaud shop, and runs the G-Suite (formerly known as Google Apps for Education) for both its email system and document collaboration system. OSX clients are managed through Jamf, and iOS clients are managed through AirWatch.

AV Services: The school has a dedicated AV support technician to provide sound and lighting assistance for events, shows, and meetings.

Director of Education: The director of education will be an excellent managerial partner for this position. In the absence of instructional technology leadership, she has supported faculty growth in the areas of technology integration by sending teachers to nationally recognized conferences, such as ISTE. She has helped to recruit forward-thinking educators in a variety of disciplines — from performing arts to science — who understand the value of thoughtful integration of innovative technologies. And her recent creation of the aforementioned instructional designer positions will further help to spread creative teaching methodologies throughout the campus.

Leadership Team: The entire leadership team is committed to and excited about this new position. The head of school is in her first year and truly values a teaching and learning program that is centered around best practices in education, student wellness and engagement, faculty professional growth, and a strategically aligned curriculum from pre-school through grade 8.

The two goals for this position are very simple.

First, the director of innovation and information services must serve as a **visionary leader** for curricular innovation, educational technology, and instructional design. To that end, the director of innovation and information services needs to work with the director of education to set an overall vision, connect and grow many of the aforementioned curricular initiatives, design thoughtful professional development experiences for faculty, and lead strategic committees and initiatives to help the school become a nationally recognized leader in STEAM and 21st century education. Initiatives such as developing more robust maker and computer science programs will be supported by a progressive-minded leadership team.

Second, the direction of innovation and information services needs to serve as an **effective IT manager**. Currently, the department is working under interim leadership, and in recent years the department lacked a manager with sufficient experience in information technology. As a result, a recent audit identified several areas for improvement around data security, network administration, and resource allocation. The director of innovation and information services will be expected to guide and lead the current staff, evaluate roles and responsibilities, and make recommendations on future staffing needs. In particular, the school lacks a role whose focus is overall system / data administration to partner with various operational areas of the school, such as advancement, web communications, and admission.

THE POSITION: DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES

SPECIFIC DUTIES

INNOVATION

- Working under the direction of the director of education, develop and implement a strategic vision for innovation, academic technology, instructional design, and cross-curricular STEAM initiatives throughout the school
- Provide leadership, guidance, and support for the instructional designers and others who support innovation and instructional technology initiatives
- Inspire the technology team and the broader faculty community to model and support best practices in innovation, technology integration, and instructional design
- Design, deliver, and manage major professional development and growth experiences for faculty in areas of technology integration and instructional design
- Support and guide senior academic leaders on strategic and operational decisions involving instructional technology hardware, software, and programs
- Serve on and/or oversee technology-related committees at the administrative, faculty and staff, and student levels
- Help develop a culture of creative innovation to meet the dynamic and evolving needs of an excellent 21st century school
- Maintain an active presence in the local, regional, and national educational technology communities
- Establish and maintain local, regional, and national partnerships to support the strategic goals of the educational technology program at Alexander Dawson

INFORMATION SERVICES

- Hire and supervise all technology staff
- Maintain ultimate responsibility for the performance and design of the entire IT infrastructure, including: network, servers, storage, end-user hardware, and security
- Oversee and evaluate the deployment of all IT hardware, software, and systems vis-à-vis: cost-effectiveness; customer satisfaction; compliance; asset management; migration, rollout, and transition; efficiency; and performance
- Manage information security risk by conducting system and technology security assessments to identity vulnerabilities and recommend controls to counter threats. Ensure that all members of the community receive sufficient training and support
- Support and guide senior leadership and various division directors on strategic and operational decisions involving technology infrastructure and enterprise data systems
- Manage and develop the operational and capital technology budgets, and anticipate future technology needs to meet the strategic goals of the school
- Establish and evaluate technology policies, procedures, and processes in areas such as: end-user support, data management, network security, compliance, content filtering, hardware deployment, capital investment, and AV services
- Maintain and evaluate all third-party vendor relationships
- Other duties as assigned

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Alexander Dawson is looking for candidates who can demonstrate:

- A combination of (a) experience managing instructional technology or curricular innovation, and (b) experience managing or administering major components of an organization's infrastructure technology. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is a minimum requirement, though a graduate degree in management, instructional technology, information systems, or related field is highly desirable.
- Significant experience as a leader of people, including areas such as: direct supervision, project management, personnel growth, staff training, and committee leadership.
- Other areas of technology leadership, including: enterprise systems management, end-user training and support, and financial planning.
- Experience working in a technology department of an educational institution. Prior classroom teaching experience is desirable.
- A penchant for strategic thinking, as well as a commitment to tactical management.
- A keen interest in emerging educational technology solutions and broader initiatives related to pedagogical research and innovation.
- An authentic understanding of how technology integration is but one part of instructional design, and an ability to lead an entire school around this principle.
- Excellent relational skills.
- A successful history of implementing and growing large-scale professional development experiences for employees, preferably faculty.
- Strong communication skills — written, verbal, presentation, and training — that support a broad set of school employees: teachers, staff, students, and administration.
- 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 and staff.
- A desire to settle in the Las Vegas area for years to come.
- Capability to lift up to 25 pounds and access hardware in hard-to-reach spaces.

STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

The distinct Dawson learning environment is reflective of the diverse community that surrounds us. The celebration of differences drives the Dawson mission and unifies the school-wide focus of self and social awareness. Students benefit from working with and learning from other students and teachers who are varied in learning styles, socioeconomic backgrounds, race, religions, ideology, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, culture and ethnicity. We are committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming learning community.

TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of The Alexander Dawson 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 February 24, 2017. Candidates should send the following five separate PDF attachments to jobs@edtechrecruiting.com:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to The Alexander Dawson School search committee
- CV or résumé
- A list of four references (include each person's name, organization, title, phone number and email, though we will obtain your permission first before contacting references)
- A short narrative about the <u>one</u> curricular or instructional technology initiative that you designed, delivered, or supported, for which you made the biggest mistake and learned a critical lesson
- Statement of educational philosophy that addresses the following prompt:

  What is the ideal relationship between technology integration and instructional design, and in particular what are some unique skills required for a successful instructional designer that are less critical for someone focused solely on technology integration support? If you were at a school that hired multiple members of the faculty to serve as instructional designers to their peers, how would you lead, guide, and mentor this group?