

Town School for Boys



Head of Upper School (Grades 5-8)

Location

San Francisco, CA

Remote Semifinal Round

Mid-January

Start Date

July 1, 2025

Post Date

November 14, 2024

On-Site Final Round

Late-January

Reports to

Head of School

Priority Deadline

December 23, 2024

Decision Announced

February 14, 2025

Salary

\$200,000 – \$220,000



Summary



Located in the Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, Town School for Boys is a K-8 independent day school. Since its founding in 1939, Town School has been committed to providing a dynamic and engaging environment that suits the developmental learning needs of boys.

Town School values academic excellence, respect for self and others, diversity and inclusivity, community service, and social-emotional development. There is also an expectation of continuous growth and improvement for all faculty and robust support for a wide range of professional development opportunities.

Town School is seeking a head of upper school (HUS) to begin in summer of 2025. In addition to supervising all grades 5-8 faculty, the HUS oversees two student-facing deans that also have some teaching responsibilities. An ideal candidate for the HUS will be a steady but warm leader—someone who can foster a positive and collaborative environment, but not shy away from holding both students and faculty accountable to high expectations. The HUS should have experience fostering educational improvements through effective systems that are robust yet adaptable, and above all else be comfortable with a leadership model of highly-engaged and interconnected deans, administrators, and head of school. The HUS school reports directly to the head of school, and will begin July 1, 2025.



Mission

At Town School, learning is prized, love of school is essential and boyhood is celebrated.

Values

Respect

We respect ourselves and others.

- We treat others the way they want to be treated.
- We practice good listening, compassion and empathy.

Curiosity

We are curious.

- We ask questions, think critically and solve problems.
- We seek opportunities to reach our highest potential.

Belonging

We all belong.

- We embrace and celebrate each of our unique stories and experiences.
- We seek to ensure that every member of our community feels an equal sense of inclusion.

Integrity

We act with Integrity.

- We have the courage to do the right thing even when nobody else is watching.
- We always try our best and when we fail, we try again.



Joy

We are joyful.

- We make space for play, fun and laughter.
- We know joy can be found in hard work, risk-taking and perseverance.



Town School Philosophy

As an all boys' school, Town provides a rich, challenging and rigorous educational experience that addresses the distinctive energy levels and developmental styles of boys. Town values being a **diverse and inclusive** community that nurtures integrity, sensitivity and respect in its boys, and prepares them to become productive and contributing members of an ever-changing world.



A Diverse & Inclusive Town

Diversity, equity and inclusion are essential core values of Town School. The best education for our students requires a diverse experience because a broad spectrum of ideas is essential for understanding different perspectives, challenging assumptions, and inspiring curiosity, to support critical and complex thinking.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where each boy is free to be himself, and where boys are confident and secure in their own identities. We equip each boy with the tools to explore differences in experiences, background, beliefs, and ideas. We seek to provide each student with the support

and resources he needs to succeed and thrive at Town School. A diverse and vibrant community is essential. To build and sustain such a community, we reach out to enroll students and families from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, races, religions, and sexual orientations, and we recruit and retain faculty, staff and administrators from the same broad range of backgrounds. We cultivate an environment where every member of the Town community senses he or she matters as a significant part of the life of the school. Only when each person feels valued and is engaged may the school and the individual achieve their full potential.

Student & Parent Community Affinity Groups & Initiatives

We incorporate opportunities for students and parents to see themselves in the fabric of our community, explore a diversity of perspectives, and enhance awareness of the many cultures represented within our school. The One Town committee of our Parents' Association organizes student assemblies, creates interactive school displays and develops parent learning material with the mission of creating experiences and celebrations that deepen connections, build understanding, and support a sense of belonging across Town School.

Students have natural opportunities to find spaces where they feel a strong sense of belonging. We offer affinity groups to students, faculty and parents. These groups meet throughout the year and enable our community members to feel valued, included and connected.



student

- Students of Color (grades 5-8)
- Jewish Cultural Affinity (grades 5-8)
- Gender Sexuality Alliance (grades 6-8)
- Neurodiversity Affinity (grades 7-8)

employee

- Employees of Color
- LGBTQ+

parent

- Asian American
- Black/African American
- LGBTQ+
- Latino/Latina
- Jewish Cultural
- Middle Eastern North African
- South Asian



Strategic Plan 2020–2025

Town School for Boys is anchored in 85 years of educational excellence, consistently evolving over time to design learning experiences to meet tomorrow's world while remaining grounded in our mission. Head of School, Lorri Hamilton Durbin, joined in 2017 and has led the school through its current strategic plan.

Priority

1

Designing Learning Experiences for Tomorrow

Town will build on a vibrant and joyful educational experience by creating more challenges and learning opportunities for every boy across all academic disciplines. Curricula will be designed and differentiated to engage and stretch boys, with coursework allowing for varying paces and providing authentic opportunities for problem-solving and intellectual development. Town will ensure that every boy possesses the skills he needs to thrive and lead as a lifelong learner in the 21st century.

Priority

2

Raising Boys of Character and Impact

Town will integrate a new set of school values, which will be known and embodied by adults and students alike, to frame an expanded character education program. We will build an intentional learning journey for grades K-8 to fully realize these values in our community. With a Town School character education, graduates will be equipped to serve as leaders for good.

Priority

3

Cementing a Community of Belonging

Town will dedicate new resources and attention to expanding and nurturing an inclusive, equitable community. Broadened financial resources will ensure that more boys can join the Town community and that all students have access to the same educational, extra-curricular and social experiences and feel a deep sense of belonging. Faculty and staff will help students from all backgrounds see themselves and their experiences represented in all curriculum and program areas. We aim to expand our reach in the Bay Area through a variety of community partnerships.

Priority

4

Investing in Our Faculty and Staff

Town will become a leader in meeting the needs of a talented and diverse workforce. We aim to provide faculty and staff with benefit options that offer support wherever they are in their careers, whether they are emerging professionals or nearing retirement. We will continue to celebrate community and strive for sustainability through robust faculty engagement and appreciation. Professional development will align with parent education programs to support thoughtful partnership.

Priority

5

Bringing Our Best in Athletics and Wellness

Town will expand and enhance athletic and physical education programming to incorporate nutrition, wellness, self-care and healthy decision-making. Our program will support and connect more closely to character development across the general curriculum, and we aim to nurture athletic potential in students of all skills and abilities. Boys will learn how to apply Town values to sportsmanship, competition and school spirit as well as develop a strong sense of self in arenas outside of the classroom. We strive to broaden our teaching in athletics and wellness in order to help boys learn essential life lessons.



Signature Programs



Engineering Thinking Program

In the summer of 2023, we built our world-class Engineering Studio and launched our Engineering Thinking Program across grades K-8. This new studio serves as the central hub for our evolving engineering curriculum. Led by the Engineering Program Lead, students are actively utilizing this space to engage in projects across diverse subjects, fostering their engineering thinking skills. It's important that all students at Town know that they can think like an engineer; therefore, the program has been thoughtfully integrated across all grade levels through interdisciplinary projects within STEM, as well as in the arts, humanities, and elective courses. This approach ensures that every student gains hands-on experience in the Engineering Studio.



Art

In Lower School art, students are exposed to a diverse array of projects that foster artistic exploration and skill development. In Upper School art, boys are working on projects aimed at advancing and refining the skills. Yearly theme centers the program, and student art is showcased at the annual Festival of the Arts community event. Last year's Art department theme, *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, inspired students to create works influenced by the current phase of their lives, different eras across history, or the variety of ways in which humans have evolved to track time. From sundials and time capsules to working ceramic clocks embodying moments in time and change throughout history, boys expressed themselves across varying mediums and projects integrated with curricula from other core subjects. Integration with other academic disciplines is part of our Art department's ethos and helps to underscore the relevance of art beyond the studio.



Outdoor Education



Outdoor Education provides an experiential component of our school curriculum. Kindergarten through 4th grade students spend time in the Presidio exploring our local environment while they focus on social-emotional skills, community building, empathy, resilience, and conflict resolution. In the Upper School, 7th and 8th grade students each take a trip to a local national park to develop an in-depth understanding of California history, environmental issues, cycles of flora and fauna in specific biomes, geology, astronomy, survival and orienteering skills, and group dynamics and communication. The trips present the students with physical and mental challenges as well as leadership opportunities. Each trip is designed to build upon the skills and experiences of earlier trips, as well as their coursework and science labs, and draws upon the vast expertise of faculty as well as professional facilitators and naturalists who run the trips.



Athletics



Town's School's athletics program serves as an extension of the classroom, promoting the school's values of respect, curiosity, belonging, integrity and joy while providing an outlet for physical exertion and expression. Boys develop character, teamwork and ability through participation in Town athletics. At Town, there is a team for every boy and the athletics program includes and encourages all boys. With multiple teams for each sport and grade level depending on demand, we ensure that sports are open to boys of all ability and experience levels. Having multiple teams also facilitates the best experience for all players. We encourage boys to try a variety of sports and activities. At Town School, we endeavor to treat all players fairly while stretching each boy to realize his full potential. School-wide sports typically include soccer, baseball and basketball. Upper School sports additionally include cross country, golf, track & field and volleyball.



New Teacher Institute

In 1990, Town School launched the New Teacher Institute, a two-year program that combines both theoretical and practical aspects of classroom teaching. During the 2024-25 school year, the New Teacher Institute celebrates its thirty-fifth year at Town.

Our program emphasizes daily teaching, curriculum planning, and professional growth. The two-year experience gives the Resident Teachers the opportunity to integrate and apply the theoretical and practical aspects of classroom teaching. With this constant opportunity for immediate feedback between the Resident Teacher and Head Teacher, the returns are enormous for the boys, the Resident Teachers and the Head Teachers, all of whom benefit from the mutually rich relationships fostered at Town. Resident Teachers are considered full faculty members and are invaluable to the life of the school.



There have been over **223** individuals who have completed the two-year program, and many have gone on to hold a number of teaching and administrative jobs in the field of education.

In a recent survey, **96%** of our accurate contacts shared that they continued in the field of education upon completion of the NTI program, and **83%** of those are still in the education field.

There are **15** current Town faculty and administrators who are former NTI Resident Teachers.



Key Stats

founding year

1939

campus

City-centric building in Pacific Heights, a neighborhood of San Francisco

49%

of our students come from self-identified families of color

student count

426

student / faculty ratio

1:6 including specialist teachers



Lower School K-4

self-contained classrooms with at least two teachers in each classroom

Upper School 5-8

departmentalized classes

19%

of our families receive financial assistance

membership organizations

National Association of Independent Schools (**NAIS**)

International Boys' Schools Coalition (**IBSC**)
Founding Member

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (**CASE**)

California Association of Independent Schools (**CAIS**)

Education Records Bureau (**ERB**)

Independent School Athletic League (**ISAL**)

People of Color in Independent Schools (**POCIS**)

Independent Schools of the San Francisco Bay Area (**ISSFBA**)

Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools (**ATLIS**)

facilities

Dolby Family Center for the Performing Arts available for performances and assemblies

2 STEM labs and **rooftop garden/ outdoor STEM lab** with greenhouse

Engineering Studio—State-of-the-art space and Engineering Thinking Program emphasizing ethical problem-solving oriented toward social good

Flexible classroom spaces respond to evolving needs

Ample space available for active play—including **2 full-sized gymnasiums**, **2 rooftop play spaces**, and access to **Morton Street Field** in the Presidio

www.townschool.com



Background & Opportunities



Located in the Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, Town School for Boys is an outstanding K-8 independent day school that has a long history of all-boys education. Since its founding in 1939, Town has been committed to providing a dynamic and engaging environment that suits the developmental learning needs of boys. The school offers a robust academic program enriched by fine arts, outdoor education, athletics, and STEM-focused learning experiences that balance traditional instructional methods with student-centered approaches like inquiry and project-based learning.

Town also emphasizes character development, aiming to cultivate not only academic achievement but also well-rounded, empathetic young men who truly enjoy learning. Teachers are dedicated to nurturing students' capabilities through positive differentiation, ensuring that each boy feels supported in his growth. Faculty describe Town students as warm, gregarious, excitable, and welcoming, which extends to the collegial relationships among faculty. Town maintains an expectation of continuous growth and improvement for all faculty and provides extensive support for a wide range of professional development opportunities.

As testament to its commitment to supporting the national teacher pipeline, for the last 35 years Town has run its iconic

New Teacher Institute (NTI), which is a highly acclaimed program — originally the first of its kind on the West coast — that offers a two-year practicum and mentorship for new teachers and recent graduates. Each year, the NTI hosts 14 full-time teachers-in-residence who gain practical experience and structured feedback within the supportive community of Town. After completing the program, teachers have the opportunity to apply for permanent positions at Town School, or to take their experience to other educational institutions, both public and private, across the country. During their tenure, resident teachers are considered full faculty members and are invaluable to the life of the school.

Town School is seeking a head of upper school (HUS) to begin in summer of 2025. In addition to supervising all grades 5-8 faculty, the HUS oversees two student-facing deans that also have some teaching responsibilities. The dean of character and culture focuses on social-emotional learning; advisory, which includes daily meetings with the boys; and the integration of emotional intelligence and executive functioning education into the classroom. Meanwhile, the dean of students oversees upper school student character and conduct, working with the student learning services department to determine individualized academic support needs for each student.



The current HUS, who joined Town in 2022, has to regrettably return to Europe at the end of December due to family obligations. In the interim period of January to June, the director of teaching, learning, and innovation will temporarily be guiding the Upper School until the next HUS is hired. Come July, the director of teaching, learning, and innovation will happily step back into his role, which is an important partner to the two division heads. On that note of peers, the highly collaborative academic leadership team is led by the head of school and comprises four other senior administrators: the two division heads; the director of teaching, learning, and innovation; and the director of teacher development and strategic initiatives, who leads the NTI.

Both the director of teaching, learning, and innovation and the director of teacher development and strategic initiatives have been at Town for many years and are highly invested in areas such as curriculum development, teacher growth, and academic strategy. Division heads at Town work very closely with these two academic administrators and the head of school on many initiatives, but at the end of the day the two division heads are ultimately responsible for their respective divisions, students, and faculty. The head of school, who is in her eighth year at Town and still coaches the seventh-grade soccer team, cares deeply about the program. She values academic administrators who can not only lead with confidence in their respective lanes, but also work collaboratively, learn and appreciate the outstanding approach of academic leadership at Town, and recognize when and how to get administrator support for major change initiatives.



The culture at Town is highly positive, with an emphasis on joy, transparency, and connections between faculty and staff. During his time, the outgoing HUS implemented a variety of workflow systems and procedures particularly around student management, which brought elements of structure, protocol, and clarity to the upper school division. The next HUS should appreciate the value of systems and protocols but also understand that Town is a school where flexibility, creativity, and adaptability are equally important qualities. At a dynamic, diverse, and innovative school like Town, sometimes the best systems are ones that are socialized and piloted in the short-term, to lay the groundwork for long-term changes that ultimately take time to fully implement.

An important element of the HUS's job is to build relationships with the parent community, which values face-to-face interaction and authentic connections with faculty, staff, and administrators. Parents are huge champions of the school and support the diverse array of academic programming, student experiences, and sports offerings. On that last note: Town is a school that has over 30 basketball teams. To the reader that does not know Town, the conclusion should not be that Town is a "jock school," but rather a school that celebrates and prioritizes character building and a healthy amount of competitive drive—both individual and group—in the classroom and on the sports field. In a similar fashion, the next HUS does not need to be an athlete or sports aficionado, but should be someone who recognizes that presence at arts performances, community events, and yes, a few of those many basketball games, will be an excellent way to get to know students and connect with parents. Additionally, the HUS will have the opportunity to join the annual 7th and 8th grade outdoor trips and other field trips, which are also excellent opportunities to be involved in the upper school community and connect with students.



In alignment with the school's strategic plan, ongoing curricular work includes revisions to the social studies curriculum to add breadth and depth between divisions, and the coming years will see a similar focus on curricular development and alignment in science and English. While Town is not currently a competency-based school and still follows a traditional letter-grade model, there is a push to explore competency models and refine methods of student evaluation and differentiation. With dedicated STEM labs for both lower and upper school students, and a recently-opened Engineering Studio that serves as a makerspace, Town has also made recent enhancements to its science and engineering curriculum to give boys the opportunity to engage in more creative, project-based learning. The opening of the Dolby Family Center for Performing Arts, music classrooms, and K-8 art studio provide rich opportunities for the boys and the strategic plan calls for additional growth in arts offerings.

An ideal candidate for the HUS will be a steady but warm leader—someone who can foster a positive and collaborative environment, but not shy away from holding both students and faculty accountable to high expectations. As a school that walks the walk when it comes to developing teachers and administrators of the future, Town absolutely encourages applications from candidates even if you don't believe you meet every one of our qualifications described, but you understand best practices in pedagogy and have

some leadership/admin experience. That said, it's absolutely essential for the next HUS to be someone with exceptional emotional intelligence, academic intellectualism, and passion for building connections with students, parents, and colleagues. The team at Town School is also future-oriented and values intentional innovation, so the HUS should be forward-thinking and willing to consider how to adapt the program to meet an ever-changing future, including embracing technology in meaningful ways.

Faculty in particular will eagerly welcome a new HUS who is excited to coach, mentor, and bring a warm and approachable demeanor to the community while maintaining, auditing, and fine-tuning systems that have been recently implemented. The HUS should be able to model flexibility, have a tremendous work ethic, and model genuine kindness and respect to all members of the community. Additionally, the HUS will need to be comfortable navigating cultural dynamics and issues of diversity and inclusion that in a region like San Francisco are paramount to any educational community. The HUS should have experience fostering educational improvements through effective systems that are robust yet adaptable, and above all else be comfortable with a leadership model of highly-engaged and interconnected deans, administrators, and head of school. The HUS school reports directly to the head of school, and will begin July 1, 2025.

Interview with the Head of School



**Lorri
Hamilton
Durbin**
Head of School

Lorri has been the head of school at Town School for Boys since 2017. Prior to joining Town School, Lorri served as the middle school director at The Dalton School in New York City, associate director of administration at Klingenstein Institute, Teacher's College, Columbia University, and middle school head at Nueva School. Lorri has a BA in Government from Pomona College, where she was the varsity soccer captain and member of the All-League Teams and played women's lacrosse. Lorri holds a Master's in Educational Administration from Stanford University, and a Master's of Business Administration from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. When asked which of the Town School values she most identifies with, Lorri chooses *integrity*:

“

Inherently, my role as Head of School means that all of the values are central to everything I do. Leadership can unfold in many ways and I strive always to act with integrity in order to build a community of belonging where through respect and curiosity, there is great joy.

”

We invite you to [watch our interview](#) with Lorri, who describes the collaborative and joyful community at Town School and the exciting initiatives ahead for the head of upper school.



Duties



Divisional Leadership

- Serve as the intellectual leader of the upper school, overseeing all programmatic and academic operations for the division.
- Lead the hiring, onboarding, and retention of all upper school faculty.
- Nurture and maintain positive and collaborative faculty morale, encouraging professional development opportunities focused on hands-on, experiential learning.
- Evaluate faculty in the performance of their duties through classroom observation, training, and coaching.
- Collaborate with the dean of character and culture to support faculty growth with respect to implementing new systems and implementing executive functioning and emotional intelligence curricula through classes and advisory settings.
- As a member of the senior administrative team, participate in all-school administrative decisions and serve as an effective partner with multiple areas of the school including admissions, library, technology, and athletics.

Curriculum, Pedagogy, & Engagement

- Collaborate with teachers and administrators to promote continuity, coherence, and curricular alignment of the academic program.
- Develop and implement curriculum and instruction in partnership with the lower school head, director of teaching, learning & innovation, and director of teacher development and strategic initiatives.
- Support the collection of student data to align with the school's broader goals for increased transparency, data-driven decision making, and streamlined behavioral reporting.
- Oversee student life and community expectations in collaboration with the dean of students, including integrating new students into the upper school division and resolving student issues with restorative practices as necessary.

School Culture & Community

- Foster inclusivity and belonging amongst the community of upper school faculty and the student body.
- Partner with divisional deans to cultivate and support a healthy and safe school culture based on mutual respect and recognition of individual differences.
- Serve as a partner to parents, articulating the school's vision and programmatic changes warmly and proactively.
- Participate in the life of the school by teaching occasional classes, supervising student activities, attending school-wide events, and attending outdoor education trips and other field trips.
- Report directly to the head of school and perform other duties as assigned.



Qualities & Qualifications



Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; graduate degree preferred
- 5+ years classroom teaching experience
- Experience in middle school as a classroom teacher and/or administrator
- Demonstrated understanding of current education pedagogy including competency-based learning, project-based learning and SEL
- Proven success working within a dispersed, collaborative educational leadership model
- Experience guiding parents and guardians on sensitive student-related matters
- Successful track record leading academic initiatives and programs

Leadership Qualities

- A personal and professional commitment to fostering diversity and equity, and the interest and skill set to partner with leadership around this work
- Ability to architect and implement organizational systems, educational models, and operational protocols in support of all aspects of the academic program
- A warm and proactive approach to interacting with all school constituents including students, parents, faculty, staff and board members
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational and presentation skills
- An eagerness to participate in the life of the school, which may include attending occasional schoolwide special events in the evenings and/or weekends



How to Apply

12M & Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of Town School for Boys to identify exceptional academic leaders to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

jobs@12MRecruiting.com



Applications submitted by December 23, 2024 will receive priority review.

All applications must be submitted online:

www.12mrecruiting.com/jobs/Town/HUS

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

1. Cover letter introducing yourself to the Town School for Boys 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. Statement of educational philosophy

Town School for Boys admits students of any race, color, religion, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

Town School for Boys is an equal opportunity employer. Salary and benefits are commensurate with our peer schools in the San Francisco Bay Area and with similar NAIS schools. Please see the employment section of our website for additional information.