THE ATHENIAN SCHOOL

Director of Educational Technology

SUMMARY

Location | Danville, CA

Post Date | February 12, 2018

Application Deadline | March 12, 2018

Decision Announced | April 12, 2018

Start Date | July 1, 2018

Reports To | Director of Teaching and Learning

BACKGROUND

Experiential. Progressive. Experimental. Democratic. Environmental. These are values to which many schools aspire, but few actually achieve. One step onto the campus of The Athenian School, situated at the base of the rolling hills of Mt. Diablo State Park on the outskirts of the beautiful San Francisco East Bay region, and you'll know right away that this is a school living these values. How many other schools construct a nearly four-week wilderness experience for the junior class and also support those same students as they spend multiple years pursuing their own construction project: a two-seater aircraft? How many schools seek environmental grants and awards with zeal—not to collect trophies, but to ignite an international movement of environmental responsibility?

At a school like Athenian with such a well-established sense of culture and identity, technology strategy must align with the School's mission and spread through personal relationships. Teachers want a thought partner who will listen, inspire, and enable intellectual experimentation via educational technology. Senior administrators want a leader to facilitate generative discussions exploring and debating innovative technologies that other schools might deploy merely to keep up with trends.

The Athenian School seeks a Director of Educational Technology to lead its technology program—instructional, systems, and IT. Although the Director will be responsible for all aspects of technology, Athenian's technology leader must be an educator first and bring a passion for supporting curricular innovation. The Director will report to an all-school curriculum administrator, the Director of Teaching and Learning.

THE ATHENIAN WAY

Respect for student ideas and leadership runs deep and, to reflect Athenian's value of equality and mutual respect, all community members are on a first-name basis. To foster intrinsic motivation, Athenian does not give academic or other awards.

At Athenian, the rigorous academic program is delivered in a way that resonates and remains with students throughout their lives—because children learn by doing. By applying what is learned in the class to real world situations, Athenian students construct meaning out of research opportunities, realistic lab activities, critical thinking exercises, and fact-based analysis. Whether in or out of the classroom, this approach allows students to incorporate their learning with their living, laying a strong foundation for a life of intellectual exploration and meaningful contribution.

KEY STATISTICS

Founded: 1965

Campus: Athenian's 75-acre campus of rolling, oak-covered hills lies at the base of Mt. Diablo State Park in Danville, CA just 32 miles east of San Francisco.

Faculty: Athenian employs over 70 full and part-time faculty, with a faculty-to-student ratio of 9:1. Approximately 74% of teachers have advanced (Master's or above) degrees.

Students: Approximately 525 students attend Athenian in grades 6 through 12 (175 students in middle school; 350 students in high school), including nearly 60 upper school boarding students coming from 16 countries on five continents. 100% of the class of 2017 gained admission to four-year colleges.

Admissions: An acceptance rate of 48% and a yield of 89%

Accreditation: California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS); Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Diversity: Nearly 50% of students come from self-identified families of color. Over 30% of faculty are people of color.

Associations: National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS); California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS); California Teacher Development Collaborative (CATDC); Council for Advancement and Support of Educations (CASE); Round Square (RS); Green Schools Alliance (GSA); Bay Area Green Business Program; Bay Area BlendEd Consortium

Financial aid and scholarships: 22% of the student body receives financial aid totaling $2.9 million.

Endowment: Approximately $10,000,000

Operating budget: $17,000,000

Website: www.athenian.org

MISSION STATEMENT

The Athenian School prepares students for the rigorous expectations of college and for a life of purpose and personal fulfillment.

We offer a challenging academic program with a difference: intellectual inquiry is active, learning is interactive, the disciplines are interrelated, and analysis and creativity thrive simultaneously. The acquisition of knowledge becomes authentic and joyous.

We cultivate the personal qualities of each student to become an integrated human being with integrity, strong moral character, aesthetic sensitivity, and physical well-being. The Athenian community requires students to face life directly through open communication, while developing their inner strength to exceed their perceived potential and emerge compassionate, responsible adults.

We instill an appreciation of the reciprocal relationship between the individual and cultures, society and the natural world. We value the power and beauty of multiculturalism within our diverse community. We embrace the principles of democratic governance, stewardship of the environment, respect for human dignity, and service as a way of life.

By providing an atmosphere of intellectual, artistic, and physical challenge within the warmth of a nurturing community, we develop in our students the confidence and skills required to meet the complexities of their future.

"The Athenian School educates students for a life of intellectual exploration and meaningful contribution. We strive to integrate technology across our curriculum in order to best foster these outcomes."

Eric Niles, Head of School

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

The Athenian School was founded in 1965 by Dyke Brown, a graduate of Yale Law School, who was then Vice President of the Ford Foundation. Dyke envisioned a school with the goal of Periclean Athens – the full development of each citizen. Intellectual growth, fitness of body and character, commitment to humane values, aesthetic sensitivity, and readiness for adult citizenship and leadership are Athenian's objectives for each student .

The Athenian School was built on what was then known as the Blackhawk Ranch, at the foot of Mt. Diablo. It was originally a boarding school, grades nine through twelve, creating a 24/7 community of learners in a rural setting. In 1979, the Middle School was added, accepting day students in grades six through eight. The demand for an Athenian education from the local community prompted the School to begin admitting more day students in the 1970s. Today, along with many new facilities and a larger number of day students, Athenian remains a close-knit family of those actively engaged in a thriving learning community.

Far ahead of his time, Dyke realized the importance of service, international understanding, diversity and adventure as integral parts of a strong academic curriculum. Nearly fifty years later, Athenian's ideals have become a model for education in the 21st century.

Today, more than 140 people live on campus, including students, faculty, staff, children, and their pets. The residential community gathers regularly on and off campus for meals and fun activities. The informal opportunities to spend time with boarding students, colleagues, and residential families foster a warm environment, creating a home away from home for our boarding students. Along with many new facilities and a larger number of day students, Athenian remains a close-knit, thriving learning community.

A ROUND SQUARE SCHOOL

As a founding member of Round Square, an international network of more than 100 schools on six continents, Athenian embraces the philosophy that binds the schools. This philosophy is rooted in six main pillars.

The six pillars of a Round Square school

- Internationalism
- Democracy
- Environmentalism
- Adventure
- Leadership
- Service

These values are embedded in everything that Athenian does. Students have countless opportunities to experience and explore these themes. Through the Round Square membership, students have unmatched opportunities to go on exchanges, service trips, and international conferences through sister Round Square schools.

A MISSION-ALIGNED TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

The Athenian community values equity, inclusion, and progressivism. Mission alignment is an important goal for not only the technology program, but also the next Director of Educational Technology. Thus, a discussion of the technology program first requires a discussion of the School's mission and culture.

Few other independent schools have such a multifaceted yet interconnected set of identities. Athenian champions a liberal-arts education, and at the same time offers a robust design and maker program that will grow even bigger when a new innovation facility comes online next year. Athenian is primarily a day school, but it also has a modest albeit vibrant boarding component in the high school. Accordingly, the campus has a sense of identity and purpose in both the local community and international arena. Meanwhile, the campus itself is adjacent to one of the most pristine natural parks in California, yet close to the metropolitan and diverse footprint of the San Francisco Bay Area. Athenian strives for a technology program that operates in harmony with these diverse characteristics of the School.

As an example, Athenian is one of the founding members of the BlendEd consortium, a partnership of five Bay Area independent schools offering students experiential learning opportunities powered by a hybrid of digital and face-to-face instructional methodologies. The technology utilized by BlendEd serves the experiential learning pedagogy of the school, and is not simply an add-on to teach students "how to learn with technology."

The technology program at Athenian comprises many elements. The IT department is a staff of two: the Director of Information Systems, and the Technology Department Assistant. The Director of Educational Technology will manage and oversee the IT department. This oversight is critical for two reasons. First, the School has always had a unified model, in which the goal of IT is to align with and serve the needs of the academic program. Second, Athenian wants the next Director of Educational Technology to have ultimate responsibility for critical all-school systems and infrastructure, including enterprise applications and databases, collaboration suites, and end-user hardware deployments.

On the educational side, the School has two part-time technology liaisons, one in each division. These specialists, who are also members of the teaching faculty, work with other teachers on various support and integration projects. The next Director of Educational Technology will have the opportunity to evaluate what adjustments, if any, might be needed to enhance the instructional technology integration program.
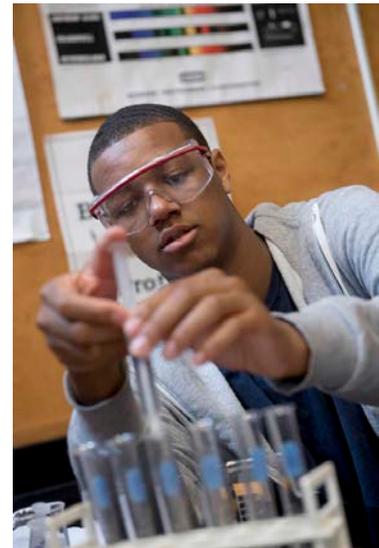
From a nuts and bolts perspective, Athenian deploys school-owned iPads to Middle School students and runs a BYOD laptop program in the Upper School. Office 365 is the main collaboration suite; Canvas is the school-wide learning management system. The Middle School is eager to evaluate the iPad program and determine whether iPads continue to be the best learning platform. Most major enterprise systems that support departments like advancement, communication, and admission run in the cloud.

While the next Director of Educational Technology needs to oversee the entire technology department, most areas of focus will be on the curricular side. Following are four opportunities and challenges for the next Director to address:

Department outreach

The Athenian community seeks a director with an open-minded, "yes" mindset. Individual faculty members want a technology partner willing and eager to discuss and explore new ideas. Those partnerships will come by working primarily in the field, not from a desk, to establish an authentic campus presence and learn about the needs of the divisions and individual teachers. The job will require energy, an outgoing personality, and a fair amount of listening and collaboration to support creative interdisciplinary projects. The Director should be knowledgeable of and passionate about technology integration and instructional design, and also possess a flexible, high-EQ mindset in recognition that one-size does not fit all.

Faculty support and professional development

Professional development is critical at Athenian. Educators are continually learning and seeking to improve at their craft. At the same time, the faculty need a professional development model that reflects a diverse set of interests and proficiencies with technology. Thus, the right approach to PD would embrace small-group cohorts and individualized coaching. Successful integration projects at Athenian will come via gradual coaching and just-in-time facilitation. Teachers want to learn from an educational technology leader who, like them, is a skilled educator—someone who has been in the classroom, and who knows how to deliver differentiated learning opportunities. As one member of the faculty put it, the next Director needs to "speak teacher."

IT services

Delivering reliable IT services on a 75-acre campus with a boarding component is no trivial task. Over the last few years, the school has made significant investment to upgrade and expand network connectivity; some of that work is ongoing. Meanwhile, as technology plays an increasing role in the fabric of the teaching and learning program, a natural tension will arise between risk management concerns like security and access, and academic needs for flexibility and nimbleness. The next Director should be adept at balancing these competing interests and helping everyone understand the big picture. Many members of the community would like the next Director to review some of the hardware and enterprise systems currently in use to make sure the right devices and collaboration tools have been deployed. Above all else, the entire community wants the Director to lead an IT department that embraces a partnership-first mindset with the various campus constituencies.

Philosophical conversations

Athenian will never be a school where major changes to the educational technology program come from top-down directives. The BYOD program, for example, was the result of years of thoughtful introspection and campus-wide discussion. The next Director of Educational Technology will have the opportunity to facilitate conversations among the faculty about emerging topics that emanate from the intersection of technology, innovation, and pedagogy. Should computational

thinking be a core discipline? What role might virtual reality play in a school where students are already exposed to immersive experiential learning environments? What does really good online learning look like, and how might this technology augment the existing BlendEd program? These are questions that senior administrators, educators, and students would welcome exploring with an expert facilitator and thought partner.

Many exciting opportunities lie ahead for the next Director of Educational Technology. The community is excited about embarking on this journey, which will begin with generative, mission-aligned discussions. The next Director will have the support and appreciation of everyone at Athenian as the technology program plays an increasingly vital role in realizing the strategic goals of this renowned institution.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Instructional Technology

- Working in partnership with the Director of Teaching and Learning, develop a mission-aligned educational technology strategy that inspires and serves faculty.
- Design, deliver, and manage major professional development and growth experiences for faculty in areas of technology integration and instructional design.
- Evaluate emerging technology and assessment tools and guide senior academic leaders on strategic and operational decisions involving instructional technology hardware, software, and programs.
- Assess the effectiveness of, and lead efforts to improve, the School's implementation of technology tools for instructional purposes.
- Inspire the technology team and the faculty community to model and support best practices in innovation, technology integration, and instructional design.
- Establish strong partnerships with members of the faculty to develop and implement dynamic classroom projects involving technology integration.
- Establish partnerships with outside organizations to support the strategic goals of the educational technology program at Athenian.

Information Technology

- Oversee the IT team and third-party vendor partners.
- Ensure that IT infrastructure, hardware, and systems are successfully deployed and meeting end-user needs.
- Ensure that recommended changes from IT audits are successfully implemented.
- Ensure that all members of the community receive sufficient training and support.
- Support and guide school leadership on strategic and operational decisions involving technology infrastructure and enterprise data systems.
- Ensure that IT and systems transitional projects are successfully managed.
- Establish and evaluate technology policies, procedures, and processes in areas such as: end-user support, data management, network access, and content filtering.

Leadership and Administration

- Serve on or lead committees related to technology and academics.
- Maintain an active presence in the local and national technology communities.
- Develop and maintain departmental budgets, policies, and procedures.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

The Athenian School is looking for candidates who can demonstrate:

- Experience with academic technology integration and relevant professional training. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is a minimum requirement, though a graduate degree in management, educational technology, education, or related field is highly desirable.

- A capacity to lead a school's IT program.

- A commitment to Athenian's mission and values.

- Experience leading workshops, trainings, and projects related to technology integration, instructional design, end-user training, and technology support.

- Experience as a supervisor of employees, preferably in an educational or technology setting.

- Classroom teaching experience, preferably in a school setting with grades 6 – 12.

- Excellent organizational skills.

- A desire to develop deep connections and partnerships with faculty and staff.

- An eye on the horizon of emerging educational technology systems and paradigms, with an understanding of how to thoughtfully explore and evaluate such opportunities.

- Strong communication skills—written, verbal, presentational, and instructional— that support a community of diverse technology learners and adopters.

- A collaborative, cooperative, and growth mindset.

- Integrity, empathy, and a commitment to equity and inclusion.

- A consensus-building leadership style.

- Humility, patience, and good humor.

- Visionary leadership that is in tune with the needs of a dynamic faculty.

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

HOW TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of The Athenian 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 MARCH 12, 2018.

Candidates should send the following four separate PDF attachments to jobs@edtechrecruiting.com:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to The Athenian School search committee

- CV or résumé

- A list of at least four professional references (include each person's name, organization, title, phone number, email, and relationship with you — though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)

- Statement of educational philosophy that addresses the following prompt:

  What are vital elements of a mission-aligned educational technology program, and how would you lead Athenian toward achieving this goal?

The Athenian School is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants are evaluated without consideration of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. For more information, visit www.athenian.org.