



Head of School

The Hillside School is an accredited, co-ed, independent day school serving students in first through eighth grade who have language-based learning disabilities and auditory, visual, and sensory processing disorders that affect their learning. A Hillside education supports and empowers students who have struggled to find success in traditional academic settings. At this critical moment for the school and for students in need of its nationally-recognized programming, Hillside is eager to find an innovative, thoughtful, and inspiring leader to serve as its next Head of School, effective July 1, 2022.

ABOUT THE HILLSIDE SCHOOL

The mission of The Hillside School is to maximize the potential of the child with learning disabilities through excellence in education. The School is a recognized benchmark institution and has set the standard for educating children who learn differently.

Hillside was founded in 1983 by two former East Penn teachers, Roselyn Knapp and Linda Whitney. Hillside originally opened its doors to 10 students at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Emmaus, PA. Six years later, the school relocated to its current seven-acre home in Lower Macungie Township. Today, Hillside serves students from seven counties and 17 school districts. In the last 38 years, over 1,000 students have successfully transitioned from Hillside to a variety of public, religious, and private schools.

In addition to developing and refining systematic teaching and learning strategies, The Hillside School gives back to the surrounding community by providing workshops and seminars featuring nationally known educational researchers. Hillside puts Macungie on the map for educational leadership in the field of learning disabilities and draws parents, grandparents, national educators, relatives, and friends to the area. The school also promotes educational philanthropy in the greater Lehigh Valley which provides tuition assistance to students.

A HILLSIDE EDUCATION

For many of the children and their families, arriving at Hillside produces a sense of relief because they are finally in a place with like-minded students who want to learn and experience success and are, at last, being taught in a way that speaks to them.

A Hillside education meets the needs of bright students who, because of reading-, writing-, or math-related disorders or other difficulties with language organization and memory, require a different approach to learning. The Hillside difference is evident the minute one observes a classroom in action. Students are smiling, engaged, and focused on learning. While each student and classroom is unique, Hillside faculty commit to a student-centered, mission-focused philosophy. Hillside's educational programming supports the development of the whole child — academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Current evidence-based research in the field drives programming, and faculty recognize the distinct learning styles that students with language-based learning disabilities possess.

Class sizes are limited to no more than eight students per class. Using state-of-the-art technology, students engage in traditional academics and extra-curricular activities. Hillside offers specialized curricula based on best practices and proven evidence-based teaching methods. Students also attend weekly guidance and speech and language classes and take technology classes that teach them how to best leverage technology to assist in their learning.

PROGRAMMING

Expressive and receptive language skills encompass reading, writing, speaking, and listening and are at the core of our program. Differentiated instruction across the curriculum supports individual needs and students establish a more in-depth understanding of their own learning style, including their strengths and weaknesses. Students participate in hands-on learning to build understanding in the academic subject areas, increase recall of the information, and strengthen memory for future applications.

Teachers model how to complete an assignment or solve a problem, and then step back, offering support and developing strategies as needed. Assignments can be modified to accommodate different learning styles. This approach gives students practice in how to reduce multi-step processes into manageable steps in order to be independent learners.

Direct instruction of executive skills helps students understand how to build a foundation for success in the real world. Through guided practice, students learn how to manage school and life tasks effectively, collaborate and cooperate within groups, and experiment with strategies and tools for focus and attention.

Access to assistive technology encourages students to play an active role in their education and familiarizes them with programs and software which may continue to benefit them as they progress in their educational and professional careers.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Hillside School is governed by a [Board of Trustees](#). Hillside's Board, composed of parents of former students and educational and community leaders, is responsible for providing strategic planning and vision that support the school's mission. Trustees serve three-year terms, and terms are staggered so that one-third of the Board members' terms expire each year. Trustees may be elected for no more than three successive three-year terms. The Head of School is an ex officio member of the Board and may attend committee meetings.

The Board, in conjunction with the Head of School and faculty and staff, have worked to develop a long-term strategic plan. It encompasses objectives around financial goals, personnel matters, governance, development, marketing, enrollment, and education. A fundamental goal of the strategic planning is for Hillside to maintain a nonprofit, primarily privately funded, and financially stable independent school while being a benchmark institution for the support of children with learning disabilities through excellence in the educational program. The strategic goals developed around governance, development, personnel, community outreach, and marketing all support those primary objectives.

DIVERSITY

The Hillside School recognizes that each mission-appropriate student brings an element of diversity to the school simply by being a student who learns differently. Hillside believes that everyone's life experience

and background adds valuable perspective to the Hillside learning community and that the community is stronger because of the differences represented by students, faculty, staff, and families. The Hillside School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation in its educational, admission, financial aid, and hiring policies.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACCREDITATION

The Hillside School holds memberships with the following organizations:

- [ADVIS](#) – The Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools is a nonprofit organization that represents 133 highly acclaimed independent private schools in eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland.
- [AFP](#) – The Association of Fundraising Professionals is the professional association of individuals and organizations that generate philanthropic support for a wide variety of charitable institutions. AFP advances philanthropy through its more than 30,000 members in 230 chapters throughout the world.
- [ISM](#) – Independent School Management is dedicated to the advancement of school management. ISM provides creative strategies by combining extensive research, proven management techniques, and personalized service.
- [NAIS](#) – The National Association of Independent Schools is a nonprofit membership association that provides services to more than 1,700 schools and associations of schools in the United States and abroad, including 1,400 independent private K-12 schools in the U.S.
- [PBIDA](#) – The Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association, serving Pennsylvania and Delaware, provides support and information for individuals, families, and educational professionals concerned with the issues of dyslexia and learning differences.

The Hillside School is accredited by the [Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools](#).

LOCATION AND LOCAL CULTURE

The Hillside School is in Macungie, PA, within the [Lehigh Valley](#), an area best known as a center for postsecondary education with such institutions as Moravian College, Lafayette College, Lehigh University, Cedar Crest College, Kutztown University, DeSales University, and Muhlenberg College. Macungie offers the best of small-town living while being only a short, one-hour drive to Philadelphia and less than two hours from New York City. The town is ideally situated, allowing easy access to the Poconos, Pennsylvania Dutch Country, and everything else Pennsylvania offers residents.

More information about the Lehigh Valley can be found through [Lehigh Valley Market Place](#), [Discover Lehigh Valley](#), and the [Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation](#).

FINANCIAL

The Hillside School is financially stable, with a managed endowment currently valued at \$6.5 million and no debt on its balance sheet. The school sits on a fully owned seven-acre campus. Hillside maintains a healthy cash reserve even with last year's impact of the pandemic and achieved over 80 percent of its annual development goal during this time.

TECHNOLOGY

The Hillside School integrates a wide range of assistive technology programs into each student's education so that technological competence becomes second nature. Every day, every student works with hardware—iPads, laptops, a computer lab—and software as part of their daily routine. Once students become familiar with assistive technology applications through their weekly technology class, they create their own toolbox with the applications that help them learn best. Hillside also offers specialized technology classes that explore different facets of technology like photography, videography, writing, and coding.

Hillside's assistive technology library is extensive. Through repetition and hands-on usage, students are taught the concepts of the applications and programs available and how to apply them based on their own unique skill sets. Some of Hillside's most commonly used assistive technology includes *Learning Ally* and *Bookshare*, *Snap & Read*, *Co:Writer*, *Read & Write Gold*, and dictation software.

ALUMNI

Over the last 38 years, 1,000 children have been transformed by their time at Hillside. Alumni credit the educational foundation they built here for helping them find success in future academic settings and their careers.

Hillside has a transformative effect on students. They become:

- Self-aware and confident self-advocates;
- Creative and flexible problem-solvers;
- Resilient, independent, and enthusiastic learners;
- Empathetic and thoughtful community members;
- Happy with themselves.

Hillside graduates have attended colleges and universities like DeSales University, Georgetown University, Juilliard School, Kutztown University, Lehigh University, Moravian College, Syracuse University, and Temple University.

THE ROLE OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Hillside's Head of School serves as chief executive officer overseeing all aspects of the school's academic programs and operational functions. The Head of School is appointed by and reports to the Board of Trustees. They lead a senior administrative team composed of the Assistant Head of School, Director of Development, Director of Database Services & Marketing, Director of Enrollment & Community Outreach, and the Business Manager.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In addition to providing engaged and creative academic and administrative leadership to The Hillside School, the next Head of School will embrace the following opportunities and challenges:

Provide leadership in bolstering enrollment, including short- and long-term strategic approaches to admission, marketing, financial aid, and recruitment: The incoming Head of School will direct the process of attracting, enrolling, and retaining mission-appropriate students and will collaborate with the Director of Enrollment & Community Outreach and the Director of Advancement to ensure consistent, relevant, and current yet targeted messaging across constituencies. The Head will champion strategic enrollment goals using print, digital, social media, and web-based materials and strategies. The next Head will also maintain

and strengthen close relationships with feeder schools, partner organizations, and the surrounding community to elevate Hillside's brand awareness.

Strengthen and steward The Hillside School's financial future: The next Head of School will further enhance the school's financial standing by engaging alumni, friends, foundations, and other key supporters to grow and diversify its resource base, ensuring the school's long-term sustainability. In addition, to engage in strategic fiscal management, the next Head of School will develop and sustain relationships with individual donors and institutional funding sources.

Articulate the vision, mission, and philosophy of Hillside's educational model: The Head of School will be an inspiring thought leader who engages multiple audiences in person, in writing, and by example to set the present and future direction of a Hillside education. Serving as a tireless and vocal champion for the school and its unique identity and approach, the incoming Head will continue to support and shape Hillside's commitment to providing a high-quality education to students who learn differently.

Strengthen The Hillside School's inclusive, positive, and supportive climate: The successful Head will build upon a strong sense of support and camaraderie within the Hillside community of students, faculty, and staff, seizing the opportunity to strengthen the Hillside family by prioritizing communication and collaboration among all Hillside community members. The next Head will foster a diverse, inclusive and supportive school community where all children are known and valued in both their strengths and challenges. The Head of School must be a conversant learner and demonstrated leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion issues of ability, class, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation. The successful Head will serve as a model for the community, embracing and valuing new contributions and perspectives while maintaining the school's core values.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The next Head of School at Hillside must be a highly engaged and collaborative leader with a deep understanding of independent schools and students with learning disabilities. The Head of School will be energized by the unique possibilities for leadership presented by this opportunity and must have a proven track record of demonstrated leadership. First and foremost, candidates must exemplify The Hillside School's commitment to creating a caring and inclusive environment where students can thrive because they feel safe, supported, and valued. An advanced degree is required.

The next Head of School must have the capacity to inspire, motivate, and lead others in a way that encourages staff retention and student and alumni engagement and must be committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion and fostering an environment that equally welcomes, respects, and values everyone. The next Head of School will display the highest level of integrity, confidence, courage, and conviction in leading Hillside and will possess many of the following qualities and qualifications:

- Strong interpersonal, organizational, and communication skills;
- A student-centered approach as an educator;
- A firm grasp of, and the ability to articulate, the value proposition of private school, particularly one geared toward serving students with learning disabilities;
- A proven ability to lead change;
- A passion for advancing initiatives in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- A record of identifying, planning, and implementing high-level strategic priorities;
- Ability to work collaboratively and as a member of an administrative team;

- A proven track record of engaging with donors and raising funds;
- Ability to support students, faculty, and staff;
- Experience in enrollment management;
- Ability to build effective teams and empower school leaders across the community;
- The capacity to engage multiple audiences and constituencies to philosophically and financially support and sustain Hillside's distinct community and mission;
- High energy, exquisite listening skills, intellectual curiosity, emotional intelligence, and passion for education; and
- Excellent judgment and attention to detail.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The search committee for Hillside's next Head of School will begin accepting nominations and reviewing applications immediately. Requested application materials include a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae, and a list of professional references. References will not be called without explicit permission. Although applications will be welcomed until a new Head of School is selected, for best consideration, all candidates should submit materials by October 1, 2021, to the following address:

HillsideHeadofSchool@storbecksearch.com

For more information about The Hillside School, please visit <https://hillsideschool.org/>.

[Storbeck Search](#) is assisting The Hillside School in this search. For additional information, please contact:



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The Hillside School recognizes that each mission appropriate student brings an element of diversity to our School simply by being a student who learns differently. We believe that everyone's life experience and background add valuable perspective to our learning community, and that our community is stronger because of the differences represented by our students, faculty, staff, and families. The Hillside School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation in its educational, admission, financial aid and hiring policies.