



Associate Head for Finance and Operations

The Park School of Baltimore, Maryland, is an independent, gender inclusive, non-sectarian and progressive PreK through Grade 12 day school, located on a 100-acre wooded campus just minutes from Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Park invites applicants, nominations, and inquiries as it embarks upon a search for its next Associate Head for Finance and Operations. The successful candidate will demonstrate financial acumen and leadership experience, as well as a deep commitment to contributing to a student-centered, mission-driven, highly collaborative independent school and a genuine desire to engage actively in Park's vibrant campus and community life.

The Park School

Devoted to intellectual inquiry, a collaborative spirit of learning, and an appreciation for the diversity of human experience, The Park School of Baltimore is a community founded on positive expectations of our students and respect for individual differences.

We cultivate children's innate curiosity by nurturing their interests and engaging them as active participants in their own education.

We support young people in becoming confident questioners and responsible citizens of the world.

~The Park School Mission

Founded in 1912 as one of the early progressive independent schools, Park serves 820 students in three Divisions: Lower School (PreK-Grade 5), Middle School (Grades 6–8), and Upper School (Grades 9–12). Park continues to embrace its distinct progressive educational philosophy that puts students at the center of the work of the School. The core values today, as in 1912, are a belief in children's capacity to love learning, to grow academically and emotionally when inspired by highly qualified, caring teachers, and to develop self-discipline, confidence, and creative problem-solving skills through deep exploration and constant challenge. At every grade level, from Pre-Kindergarten through Upper School, Park actively encourages questioning and conversation as essential elements of the learning process. The school philosophy emphasizes a belief in positive expectations and expects that students, as they mature, will take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Referred to as "a city school in the country," Park is located ten miles from Downtown Baltimore with a second campus a few miles away that houses some athletic fields. Park maintains a deep sense of engagement with, and responsibility to, the community in which it resides. The campus, a thriving learning laboratory that includes woodlands, a pond and stream, the *Appalachian Challenge* outdoor education course, trails, and gardens, also features interconnected academic buildings, a rooftop observatory, a freestanding Kindergarten building and adjacent playground, a 44,000-square-foot arts center, and a

student-designed lower school playground. Students train and compete on nine athletic playing fields, including a state-of-the-art AstroTurf surface, and an NCAA regulation baseball field.

The faculty comprises 100 full-time and 19 part-time inspired and inspiring teaching professionals who put students at the center of every decision. Park faculty members hold 89 master's or other advanced degrees, including six Ph.D.s, one Ed.D., and one J.D. Teachers average 21 years of teaching experience with an average tenure of 13 years at Park. Twenty-four percent of faculty and 31% of administrators identify as people of color. Park's average class size is 15 and student/teacher ratio is 7:1. The community of lifelong learners, including students, teachers, parents, and grandparents, is active and engaged. The school values its strong relationship with alumni, 74 of whom are current Park parents. The Head of School is committed to building a senior administrative team that is broadly representative of the Park community as a whole. Forty-one percent of members of the senior administrative team identify as BIPOC.

Board members, staff, faculty, parents, students, and alumni are deeply passionate about and dedicated to The Park School. This is demonstrated by Park's 95% retention rate, which exceeds the independent school average; the many parents who have passed on job opportunities in other cities in order for all of their children to benefit from the Park experience; the alumni who return to Baltimore so that their children may attend Park; the alumni who comprise 25% of the board; and the lengthy tenure of faculty and staff.

Park's financial condition is strong, despite some difficult circumstances brought on by the pandemic. Park has an endowment value of \$45 million, an annual operating budget of \$21 million, and reserves of \$2.5 million. Park benefits from a generous annual giving campaign that raised \$1.6 million in 2019-2020. Robust auxiliary programs such as facilities rentals, extended day options, supplemental music programming, and summer camps generate additional sources of revenue.

Given \$1 million in unanticipated, Covid-related expenses in 2020, Park foresees a deficit over the next few years until robust financial planning efforts bring about a right-sizing of the budget. Park benefited from \$3 million in PPP funds in 2020, although these funds are not represented in the projected deficit as the School is still moving through the process of loan forgiveness.

When several Baltimore-area independent schools began to offer merit awards in order to attract highly qualified students from families with the ability to pay the full cost of tuition, Park leadership met to review the admissions landscape and continues to support the decision *not* to offer non-need-based tuition. This is consistent with Park's values. In addition, Park is proud of its generous full tuition remission offered to faculty and staff, many of whom send their own children to the School.

To learn more about Park, please visit parkschool.net.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

At The Park School of Baltimore, the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion is the responsibility of every member of the community and is fundamental to our practice of progressive education; the benefits of that work are an enriched society, a thriving community, and a brighter future for each individual.

Park commits to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for learning and living. Park seeks to ensure that all aspects of school life—including curriculum, admission, retention, hiring practices, and support for students, families, and employees—reflect a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Park recognizes that it exists in an ever-changing world and that its understanding of, and support for, diversity, equity, and inclusion must grow and evolve. Park brings students, families, employees, and guests of different backgrounds and experiences together to engage constructively in the life of the School and society. Learning at Park involves listening to and working with others, considering and embracing different points of view, and empathizing with and understanding multiple perspectives. Through open, honest dialogue and active, ongoing inquiry in an authentically diverse context, all members of the Park community gain awareness, wisdom, and the capacity to act as responsible, engaged citizens.

The Park School is committed to becoming an anti-racist school and to that end has developed an Anti-Racist Action Plan to ensure that its anti-racist work remains front and center and is integrated into all aspects of school life. The community-wide plan encompasses hiring and retention, curriculum, professional development, and parent programming.

Among the guiding philosophies of Park is the belief that authentic learning flourishes when people work, think, and collaborate within a diverse community. Ensuring a socio-economically diverse student body is a priority of the school that is backed by a need-based tuition assistance budget of over \$6.2 million per year. This budget allows Park to provide tuition supplements to approximately 39% of the student body.

The Park School was selected to join just 49 other independent schools in the U.S. to receive a \$2 million endowment grant from the prestigious Malone Family Foundation. Park was chosen on the basis of its academic caliber; the quality of staff; excellent accommodations for talented students; strong enrichment programs; attention to the individual student’s needs, interest and talents; financial strength and stability; a commitment to financial aid; and an economically, culturally, ethnically, and socially diverse population.

Daniel J. Paradis, Head of School

Daniel J. Paradis is in his 13th year as Head of School at The Park School. Since his appointment, Dan has led a number of important initiatives including: schoolwide professional development and program enrichment to promote social justice curricula and culturally competent classroom practices; major innovations in STEM coursework to promote computer science and engineering; complete revisioning of Park’s instrumental music program with significant focus on jazz across all areas of upper elementary, middle, and upper schools; and an overhaul of the athletics leadership team and student engagement to promote competitive program and community spirit and engagement.

Before joining Park in 2008, Dan served for 16 years at The Potomac School in McLean, VA, as Upper School Head, Academic Dean, and teacher. Dan holds a bachelor’s degree in East Asian Studies from Princeton and an M.A.T. in History from Brown.

Location and Local Culture

Baltimore is a city rich in history and culture with eclectic options in housing, activities, recreation, entertainment, shopping, dining, and nightlife.

The city's history, dating back to its colonial origins, can be revisited at sites such as the [B&O Railroad Museum](#), which boasts the oldest and most comprehensive collection of railroad history in the Western Hemisphere. Other museums include the [Baltimore Museum of Art](#)—home of the world's largest Henri Matisse collection—and the [Port Discovery Children's Museum](#).

Recreational opportunities are as varied as Maryland's geography, with winter sports in the mountains to the west, swimming and surfing at beaches to the east, and boating, fishing, and hiking on the waterways and trails in between. Sports enthusiasts can enjoy a [Baltimore Ravens](#) football game at [M&T Bank Stadium](#), watch the [Orioles](#) play baseball at nearby [Camden Yards](#), or take a short trip to [Washington, D.C.](#), for professional baseball, football, basketball, and hockey.

Shopping options in the Baltimore area include the boutiques and antique stores of [Hampden](#), the specialty shops in the [Inner Harbor](#) area, and several malls and entertainment venues throughout the city and surrounding counties including small clubs, a world-class orchestra at the [Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall](#), and free outdoor performances at the [Inner Harbor amphitheater](#).

The city offers many transportation options, including light rail, subway, and an extensive bus system—including the free [Charm City Circulator](#). Buses, trains, several major highways, and the nearby [Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport](#) make it easy to venture outside of the city.

The Associate Head for Finance and Operations Position

The Associate Head for Finance and Operations establishes and maintains the financial infrastructure and policies for the fiscal integrity of the institution. As a strategic leader, the Associate Head attends Board meetings as the institution's chief fiscal officer and issues Board financial and management statements and reports. The Associate Head acts as a liaison to the Board and external stakeholders; provides strategic leadership and advice; and is responsible for financial strategy decisions. The Associate Head oversees accounting; finance and budget; treasury; debt and endowment management; risk management; human resources; facilities and construction management; and health services.

The Associate Head is also responsible for ancillary and support services including legal, property management, and outsourced services. The Associate Head has four direct reports (Accounting Director, Human Resources Director, Facilities and Security Director, and a Nurse) who are strong, seasoned professionals with significant tenures at Park. They are highly effective and can be relied upon for their insights, good judgement, and professionalism. The Associate Head indirectly oversees the work of approximately 28 staff members.

The Associate Head reports directly to Dan Paradis, Head of School, and partners with Dan and the senior team in planning and development to ensure that approved strategic initiatives are appropriately funded. The Associate Head serves as the staff liaison on several Board committees, including Finance, Audit, Risk Management, and Facilities.

Specifically, the Associate Head will:

- Serve as the chief fiscal advisor to the Head of School and Board on all financial matters related to the operation of the institution, including financial reporting, budgeting, accounting, audit, cash and debt management, treasury, purchasing, risk management, and various auxiliary enterprises. This position will also work collaboratively with the senior team and the faculty at large, to ensure open communication about the financial health and goals of the institution.
- Work with external auditors on the preparation, review, approval, and presentation of the audited financial results for the School.
- Oversee the analysis, interpretation, and communication of institution-wide financial information. In keeping with the academic and strategic goals, develop, evaluate, and implement business operational plans and policies; forecast critical milestones and potential obstacles; and identify and assess alternatives. Balance Park's short-and long-term strategic objectives to maximize financial performance and ensure ongoing financial strength and integrity.
- Formulate, oversee, and present Park's financial status to demonstrate sound fiscal operation and compliance with fiduciary responsibilities. Ensure the provision of accurate, comprehensive, relevant, and timely financial statements and interim periodic reporting to key stakeholders.
- Articulate multi-year strategic goals and funding sources to advance Park's mission, strategic plan, and academic vision, while supporting faculty, staff, and students.
- Increase the efficiency and impact of financial processes and oversee the development and monitor the results of the operating and capital budgets of the institution.
- Work closely with the committee chairs of the Board, serving as primary liaison to the Finance, Facilities, and Audit and Risk Management Committees to set agenda, recommend improvements, and implement changes. Attend Investment Committee meetings to ensure accurate implementation of investment decisions for endowed assets.
- Lead institutional initiatives to review and develop internal controls, procedures, and practices in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these controls.
- Direct and oversee the hiring, development, management, and evaluation of staff.
- In collaboration with the Head of School and senior leadership team, creatively identify and leverage new sources of funding and understand tuition pricing.
- Oversee new construction and renovation projects.

Opportunities and Challenges

The Associate Head will be an instrumental partner in addressing a number of key opportunities and challenges:

- ***Enrollment and Costs*** – Park operates in a highly competitive independent school market. Given shrinking demographics of Park’s target families in Baltimore, enrollment has been declining. In addition, an increasing portion of gross tuition is being discounted, resulting in budgetary pressure. Working with the Head of School, School leadership, and the Board, the Associate Head will help to identify ways to “broaden the funnel” of families considering Park and further distinguish Park’s special program within the crowded Baltimore market. The Associate Head will present options and implement strategies to identify additional sources of revenue, manage tuition rates, and control costs.
- ***Commitment to DEI and Anti-Racist Action Plan*** – Park is firm in its commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and in actualizing it with the *Anti-Racist Action Plan on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. The new Associate Head must embrace Park’s anti-racist agenda and the funding required for its implementation.
- ***Strategic Financial Planning and Implementation*** – Park benefits from a history of efficiently managed expenses, conservative draws from the endowment (~4.5% annually), proactively managed vendor relationships, and in-house execution of many services in an effort to optimize cost savings. The Associate Head will work closely with four Board subcommittees to examine revenue streams, endowment management, tuition structures, compensation and benefits, class size and teacher load, debt refinancing options, and auxiliary and facilities revenues, among other areas, with the goal of identifying ways to increase revenue and decrease costs, and increase the endowment to debt ratio.
- ***Facilities Planning and Construction Management*** – The Associate Head will be an integral leader in the completion and implementation of a master facilities planning and implementation process. The Associate Head will negotiate and manage vendor contracts and relationships, oversee future campus construction projects, and serve as a chief strategist around the new building campaign that aims to endow any operating expenses that new construction on campus requires for maintenance.
- ***Risk management*** – The Associate Head will ensure that processes are well coordinated across the institution, align with priorities, safeguard its assets, minimize institutional risks and costs, and are communicated openly. The Associate Head will also serve as the chief liaison with Park’s outside investment and legal counsel.

Desired Qualifications and Characteristics

The most successful candidates will:

- Be committed to the mission and expectations of a progressive independent school.
- Speak and communicate effectively with a wide range of constituencies (students, faculty, staff, trustees, parents, alumni, donors, community).

- Be willing and able to make difficult, timely, and financially responsible decisions while understanding, articulating, and resolving risk, legal, and institutional considerations in all decision making.
- Possess a high degree of professional discretion, integrity, good judgment, and high standards of professional conduct.
- Be able to pivot from one task to another within a variety of areas of responsibility smoothly and seamlessly in order to support the Head of School, senior officers, and direct reports and their departments.
- Be a strong, experienced, and sophisticated manager who can create and enforce clear and inclusive administrative systems, policies, and guidelines.
- Embrace a work environment that encourages intellectual agility and creative problem solving.
- Personally value diversity, embody the spirit of Park's anti-racist efforts, and possess a global mindset.
- Negotiate effectively, fairly, and openly and demonstrate commitment to a transparent and collaborative decision-making process with all parts of the Park community.
- Think creatively and flexibly and understand nuance.
- Thrive in a close-knit, student-focused community and possess genuine interest in engaging actively in the life of the institution.

Requirements:

Ten or more years directly related experience in a progressively responsible financial and operational administrative management position. Proven ability to affect and influence change through a collaborative and inclusive style. Excellent analytical, communication, and presentation skills. Demonstrated experience and openness with technology that supports current best practices.

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications to:



Ruth Shoemaker Wood, Partner
Nancy Helfman, Vice President and Senior Associate
ParkAssociateHead@storbecksearch.com

The Park School of Baltimore, Inc. seeks to have a diverse workforce and has a non-discriminatory policy as to employees and applicants for employment. All employment decisions, from hiring through termination, will be based on an impartial judgment of the individual's capabilities and professional qualifications. The school does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color,

national or ethnic origin, religion, ancestry, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or any physical or mental disability unrelated to a reasonable performance of an employee's duties.